

Altadena Community Information and Feedback Session

Date: November 21, 2024

Location: Hosted by ACONA (Altadena Coalition of Neighborhood Associations) in partnership with the Altadena Town Council.

Meeting Agenda

Introduction and Acknowledgments

- Nic Arnzen (ACONA Chair).
- **Acknowledgments:**
 - ACONA team members, volunteers, and Supervisor Barger's office, especially Deputy Sussy Nemer.
 - Karen Gibson for supporting expanded Zoom capacity to accommodate 500 participants.

Purpose of Meeting

- Address and clarify concerns about the **West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (WSGVAP)**.
- Collect community input for a formal position letter by the Altadena Town Council to the LA County Board of Supervisors.
- Provide accurate details about the plan's impact on Altadena and its policies.

Next Meeting: February 25th. Please go to the ACONA site or let us know what topics you want to cover for February's meeting

The West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (WSGVAP) is a localized extension of the 2015 LA County General Plan. Its purpose is to guide land use, zoning, housing, conservation, and other policies while addressing the specific needs of the communities within its scope, including Altadena. The plan's goals focus on preserving community character and open spaces, supporting walkability and safety, addressing housing affordability, limiting development in hazard-prone areas, and promoting sustainable growth.

To develop the WSGVAP, a comprehensive community engagement process was conducted. This included over 50 events, 11 of which were specific to Altadena, along

with weekly virtual office hours and notifications sent through various channels. More than 6,000 letters were mailed about proposed zoning and land-use changes, 37,000 postcards were distributed about the draft plan's availability, and over 300,000 social media impressions were recorded. Through this process, feedback on key concerns like walkability, safety, housing affordability, and conservation was gathered and incorporated into the plan.

The 1986 Altadena Community Plan, which guided land use and development for decades, served as the foundation for much of the WSGVAP's framework. However, the older plan's limitations, such as outdated policies and a lack of modern tools like Geographic Information Systems (GIS), often led to mismatches between zoning and land-use designations. The WSGVAP updates and integrates these policies to align with the LA County General Plan while maintaining Altadena's unique character.

The plan introduces necessary updates to land use and zoning policies. In northern Altadena, where fire hazards, steep slopes, and ecological protections present significant constraints, density restrictions remain in place to protect public safety and preserve natural resources. Key updates include adjustments to areas like Lake Avenue and Raymond Avenue to encourage mixed-use developments that align with community goals. Importantly, the plan ensures no upzoning in fire hazard zones while addressing inconsistencies from older policies.

The WSGVAP also complies with the state-mandated housing element, addressing regional housing needs by focusing growth in areas with existing infrastructure and limiting it in under-resourced locations. The plan maintains Altadena's density regulations, including the slope-based calculations from the 1986 Community Plan, which restrict the number of dwellings allowed based on land characteristics. For example, properties with slopes over 50% are limited to one dwelling unit per 20 acres.

Environmental and safety protections are a cornerstone of the WSGVAP. The plan prohibits increases in density within Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and includes safeguards for Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) and lands with steep slopes. These measures align with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, which mandate environmental reviews to assess impacts on traffic, water, air quality, and natural resources. The accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the WSGVAP analyzed these factors in Altadena and incorporated protections for areas of high ecological value, steep terrain, and fire risk.

New land-use designations were also introduced to better align Altadena's policies with the broader LA County General Plan. Properties were evaluated based on their slope, fire hazard risk, and ecological value, with updated categories reflecting the most restrictive criteria. For instance, non-urban areas in northern Altadena were converted

to Rural Land (RL) designations with density limits ranging from one unit per one to ten acres, depending on specific conditions. Mixed-use designations along Lake and Raymond Avenues aim to foster vibrant, walkable neighborhoods while maintaining a 35-foot height limit for buildings.

The plan also addresses infrastructure needs and mobility improvements. The EIR identified areas where water, sewer, traffic, and power systems require enhancements to support future development. Policies prioritize creating walkable communities with safe routes to schools and encouraging mixed-use zones near transit corridors to reduce vehicle dependence.

The WSGVAP carefully balances growth with preservation, directing development to areas with adequate infrastructure and protecting sensitive habitats and resources. It incorporates provisions for affordable housing while respecting Altadena's established character. Concerns about government overreach and property rights were also addressed, clarifying that zoning changes are regulatory and not a form of eminent domain.

The Regional Planning Commission unanimously recommended the West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan for approval to the Board of Supervisors on September 25. Leading up to the public hearing, the commission received 77 letters and a petition with 38 signatures in support of the project, along with six letters in opposition. During the hearing, 17 members of the public provided comments: eight expressed support, seven voiced opposition, and two offered comments without stating a position.

The Board of Supervisors is scheduled to hold a public hearing on December 10. Project documents are available through the official website for review. If the Board adopts the plan, a second reading will be required before final approval. The plan will then take effect 30 days after the second reading.

As a "living document," the WSGVAP is designed to evolve with community needs and state regulations. Periodic updates will ensure it remains consistent with broader plans, such as the LA County General Plan, while adapting to new challenges and opportunities. This forward-looking approach aims to guide Altadena's growth responsibly over the next 20 years.

Detailed Explanation of Key Topics from the Presentation

Density Regulations in Altadena

1. Existing Constraints on Density:

- Altadena's northern region is characterized by significant limitations, including:
 - **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones:** State and local regulations restrict development intensity in these areas to protect public safety.
 - **Slopes Over 50%:** Development is generally not permitted on properties with such steep inclines.
 - **Ecological Protections:** Areas designated as Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) have additional protections to preserve sensitive habitats and wildlife.
 - **Infrastructure Limitations:** Northern Altadena lacks sufficient road access and infrastructure to support dense development.

2. Regulations on Buildable Density:

- **1986 Altadena Community Plan Slope-Density Calculation:**
 - Less than 25% slope: 1 dwelling unit per 1-5 acres.
 - 25-50% slope: 1 dwelling unit per 2-10 acres.
 - Greater than 50% slope: 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres.
- **Updates in WSGVAP:**
 - Existing densities are maintained, with no overall increase in allowable units.
 - Adjustments clarify maximum allowable densities based on land constraints.

The 1986 Altadena Community Plan

1. Purpose and Origin:

- Adopted in 1986, this plan provided guidance on land use and development specific to Altadena.
- Policies emphasized rural preservation, single-family residential neighborhoods, and fire hazard mitigation.

2. Challenges with the 1986 Plan:

- It predates modern tools like Geographic Information Systems (GIS), leading to mismatches between land-use designations and zoning.
- Outdated policies failed to address new priorities like sustainability and affordable housing.

3. Integration with WSGVAP:

- The WSGVAP incorporates and updates Altadena's community-specific policies while aligning them with the broader goals of the LA County General Plan.
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California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Environmental Protections

1. CEQA Requirements:

- CEQA mandates an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the effects of proposed plans and projects on:
 - Traffic and transportation.
 - Water and sewer systems.
 - Air quality.
 - Noise levels.
 - Biological and cultural resources.

2. Application to WSGVAP:

- The EIR for the WSGVAP analyzed the existing conditions in Altadena and projected the impacts of proposed land-use changes.
 - Environmental protections were incorporated into the plan, focusing on areas with:
 - High ecological value.
 - Steep slopes or landslide risks.
 - Fire hazards.
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New Land Use Designations in the WSGVAP

1. Why New Designations Were Needed:

- The transition from the Altadena Community Plan to the WSGVAP required updating land-use categories to align with the broader LA County General Plan.
- New designations aim to:
 - Clarify buildable densities.
 - Simplify zoning inconsistencies.
 - Reflect current and future land-use needs.

2. How Designations Were Determined:

- Properties were evaluated based on slope, fire hazard, and ecological value.
- Land-use categories were updated to match the most restrictive criteria (e.g., non-urban areas converted to Rural Land [RL] designations).

3. Examples of Changes:

- **Northern Altadena:**
 - Properties with existing non-urban designations were updated to RL1, RL5, or RL10, reflecting densities of 1 unit per 1-10 acres.
 - Areas with high slopes or SEAs were assigned stricter density limits.
 - **Lake Avenue and Raymond Avenue:**
 - Mixed-use designations encourage vibrant, walkable neighborhoods while retaining height limits of 35 feet.
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History and Development of the WSGVAP

1. 2015 LA County General Plan:

- The General Plan serves as the county-wide blueprint for land use, addressing housing, transportation, and conservation.
- It requires the creation of area plans for each of LA County's 11 planning areas, including the West San Gabriel Valley.

2. Process for WSGVAP Development:

- **Community Engagement:**
 - Over 50 events were held to gather input, including 11 in Altadena.
 - Feedback emphasized preserving community character, addressing fire risks, and supporting affordable housing.
 - **Outreach Efforts:**
 - 6,000+ letters sent for zoning and land-use notifications.
 - 37,000+ postcards distributed to property owners.
 - Weekly virtual office hours provided opportunities for direct communication.
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Environmental Protections in the Plan

1. Fire Hazard Mitigation:

- Policies direct development away from Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- Limitations on accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in fire zones align with county and state standards.

2. Ecological Areas:

- Development is restricted in SEAs to protect habitats and natural resources.

- Northern Altadena's SEAs include significant ridgelines, wildlife corridors, and waterways.
- 3. Rural Preservation:**
- Areas north of Loma Alta are designated to maintain Altadena's rural character, equestrian uses, and open spaces.
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Infrastructure Studies and Policies

1. EIR Findings:

- Comprehensive analysis included water, sewer, traffic, power, and other infrastructure elements.
- Identified areas where improvements are needed to support current and future development.

2. Mobility Policies:

- Enhancing walkability and safe routes to schools are priorities in the mobility section of the WSGVAP.
 - Mixed-use zones near transit corridors are encouraged to reduce vehicle reliance.
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Community Concerns Addressed in the Plan

1. Upzoning and Development Pressure:

- The plan does not upzone high fire hazard areas.
- Growth is directed to areas with adequate infrastructure and lower environmental risks.

2. Affordable Housing:

- Mixed-use zones along Lake and Raymond Avenues include provisions for affordable housing.
- Policies aim to balance growth with the preservation of community character.

3. Private Property Rights:

- Concerns about government overreach or property seizure were addressed, emphasizing that zoning changes are regulatory, not a form of eminent domain.
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Future Updates and Flexibility

- The WSGVAP is a "living document," intended to evolve with community needs and state regulations.
- Periodic updates will ensure consistency with broader plans, such as the LA County General Plan, and respond to new challenges or opportunities.

Q&A SESSION

Question: What safeguards exist to prevent large developers from acquiring unbuilt hillside land, potentially from current landowners, and convincing the county to develop special zoning areas to the detriment of existing property owners?

Answer: The Area Plan itself and its policies act as safeguards. Any proposed project of this nature would require discretionary review and public hearings. Legislative requests for zone changes or land-use changes must also be presented to and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The policies outlined in the Area Plan are designed to guide development toward appropriate locations and to restrict it in areas where it should not occur. These policies align with the General Plan and collectively serve as long-term decision-making guides for land use. Public hearings remain an integral part of the process to ensure transparency and accountability.

Question: Some oppose the plan, claiming it allows more development in northern Altadena and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ). Is this true?

Answer: No, the plan does not encourage development in these areas. Any proposed development would require a discretionary review, including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, and must adhere to the Area Plan and General Plan. These policies are specifically crafted to direct development away from inappropriate areas, including fire hazard zones, or to minimize its intensity if development occurs. Planners use these regulations to review and guide projects accordingly, ensuring that development aligns with the regulations in the Area Plan and General Plan.

Question: Under the current West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (WSGVAP), would the withdrawn Polytechnic proposal have complied with zoning requirements?

Answer: The Polytechnic proposal was not reviewed under the proposed Area Plan. However, the zoning for that area—currently R1 and proposed as A1—has identical regulatory requirements. The proposal would still have required a public hearing

process. While the plan does not facilitate such developments, it also does not entirely disallow them. The project was withdrawn based on advisement and was consistent with the current review process, which the new Area Plan would continue to uphold.

Question: How many additional people and dwelling units are anticipated for Altadena under the plan?

Answer: Altadena is not projected to experience an overall increase in density under this plan. The community does not have high-quality transit areas, which are typically determinants for where growth is directed. While there are changes in land-use zoning in certain areas, the plan does not increase density across the community. Growth is concentrated in areas with existing infrastructure and transit access, avoiding increases in traffic or development in areas without adequate resources.

Question: What agenda drives the WSGVAP? Who prioritized it, and what gives the county jurisdiction to implement it?

Answer: The WSGVAP is driven by the need for more locally responsive regulations, as required by the 2015 LA County General Plan. State law grants local jurisdictions the authority to develop land-use regulatory mechanisms to protect public health, welfare, and safety. The General Plan necessitates creating Area Plans to address specific regional needs. The unincorporated areas of LA County vary significantly, requiring context-sensitive policies tailored to individual communities. These Area Plans refine the high-level goals of the General Plan and ensure effective local implementation.

Question: What studies were conducted for infrastructure, including water, sewer, traffic, power, and transportation?

Answer: As part of the Area Plan, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared. This EIR analyzed existing conditions and the impacts of proposed changes across approximately 32 topics, including infrastructure elements like water, sewer, traffic, power, and transportation. The EIR findings are publicly available for review, detailing the differences between current conditions and the anticipated outcomes under the Area Plan.

Question: Where does northern Altadena begin?

Answer: Northern Altadena is generally considered the area north of Loma Alta. This region is characterized by a shift in land use, with foothills, equestrian areas, trails, and habitats becoming more prominent. The area also includes significant ecological and geographic features distinct from the lower parts of Altadena.

Question: Is the plan taking property from owners?

Answer: No, the plan does not involve taking private property. The county regulates land use through density restrictions and zoning policies, as mandated by state law. These regulations determine the number of units or the density allowed on a property but do not equate to property seizure. Concerns about property "takings" were addressed at the Planning Commission hearing, clarifying that such actions, known as eminent domain, are not part of this plan.

Question: Why don't locals and property owners have a direct say in zoning decisions?

Answer: State law designates local jurisdictions with the authority to regulate land use, a power derived from the California Constitution to protect public health, safety, and welfare. While individual property owners contribute through public comment and community engagement sessions, zoning regulations are implemented by local governments under this legal framework. The authority to govern land use is part of state government code, specifically Section 63, 65, 300.

Question: How does the plan account for ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in fire hazard areas?

Answer: The county does not allow ADUs in fire hazard zones. However, state law provides exemptions permitting up to two ADUs per property in these areas under stringent conditions. When referring to density, the plan focuses on primary dwelling units, not accessory units.

Question: Why does Lavinia have a separate zoning district?

Answer: Lavinia's specific plan dates back to the mid-1980s, around the same time as the Altadena Community Plan. The regulatory framework and decision-making processes of that period influenced its zoning designation. While current policies may pose obstacles to similar developments today, Lavinia's existing zoning remains consistent with the General Plan and proposed Area Plan.

Question: What happens if the community rejects the WSGVAP?

Answer: If rejected, Altadena would revert to the outdated 1986 Community Plan. Projects would be evaluated based on the 1986 policies, lacking the forward-looking vision and community-specific feedback incorporated into the WSGVAP. This would leave Altadena without updated goals for vibrant business development, natural resource conservation, and walkable central districts. Additionally, community feedback collected during the engagement process would not be reflected in future planning.

Question: Does the General Plan upzone commercial properties or allow multifamily housing in R2 and R3 zones?

Answer: Commercial zones, such as C1, C2, and C3, now function as mixed-use zones, permitting multifamily housing. R2 and R3 zones already allow multifamily residential development, consistent with regulations across all communities.

Question: Is the plan designed to increase population or attract wealthier residents to Altadena?

Answer: No, the primary goal of the plan is to respond to community-specific needs and concerns while aligning with county-wide objectives. The plan addresses local priorities such as housing affordability, walkability, and environmental conservation, not creating exclusive neighborhoods. It builds on the General Plan's requirements for context-sensitive regulations across diverse unincorporated areas.

Question: What is the process of updating the existing Altadena Community Plan if the West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (WSGVAP) is not adopted?

Answer: If the WSGVAP is not adopted, the Altadena Community Plan from 1986 would remain in effect. The 1986 plan, however, does not function as a living document and lacks updates that reflect the concerns and needs of current residents. County-wide, many unincorporated areas do not have individual community plans, which is why Area Plans like the WSGVAP are being developed to cover broader regions while including community-specific policies. These plans aim to be responsive to today's concerns, such as housing affordability and safe routes for walking and biking. Moving forward, Area Plans will function as the updated Community Plans for their respective regions, incorporating input from residents and aligning with overarching policies in the General Plan.

Question: If, five to ten years from now, parts of the WSGVAP are not working as intended for Altadena, is there a way to revise or update them?

Answer: Yes, the WSGVAP is a living document, designed to evolve in response to community needs and changes over time. Both the General Plan and the Area Plans are required by state law to undergo regular updates to remain relevant and consistent. The county works continuously with communities to address issues through Community Standards Districts (CSDs) and Area Plans. Any elements that require modification can be revisited, adjusted, or reworked to better meet community needs. Since communities are dynamic and change over time, the Area Plans are intentionally flexible to adapt to these evolving requirements.

Question: Does the plan change R1 zoning to allow for multifamily housing?

Answer: No, the plan does not alter zoning regulations. R1 zoning, which allows for single-family residences, will remain unchanged. Existing multifamily zoning, such as R2 (duplexes) and R3 (limited multifamily housing), will also stay the same. The Area Plan focuses on aligning land-use designations in the Community Plan with those in the General Plan, but it does not modify the zoning code. The goal is to ensure consistency between these plans without altering the fundamental zoning categories.

Question: There is a petition with 500 signatures opposing the plan on Change.org. Why has this not been discussed during the meeting?

Answer: The petition has been reviewed and acknowledged. One of the primary reasons for holding this meeting is to address concerns raised by the community,

including those expressed in the petition. This session aims to provide clarity, share facts about the plan, and correct any misconceptions. The county is actively engaging with residents to explain the plan's objectives and dispel any misunderstandings about its impacts.

Question: When was the Altadena Community Plan last updated?

Answer: The Altadena Community Plan was adopted in 1986 and has not been updated since. Over the years, the county has adopted other relevant documents, including the Sustainability Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Safety Element, as well as an updated General Plan in 2015. The WSGVAP builds upon these more recent documents and integrates modern planning tools and regulations to create a more responsive, forward-looking plan. Unlike the 1986 plan, the WSGVAP is designed as a living document to adapt to evolving laws and community needs.

Question: Why were some properties in Millard Canyon rezoned from one housing unit per acre to one housing unit per two acres?

Answer: The rezoning reflects the actual buildable density of the area, which is constrained by topography, natural resources, and other environmental factors. Millard Canyon has steep slopes and other limitations that reduce its capacity for development. The updated density recommendations ensure that zoning aligns with the land's physical and ecological constraints, prioritizing sustainable and safe land use.

Question: Why hasn't the county provided maps showing areas being upzoned?

Answer: Maps detailing zoning changes and land-use designations are available on the West San Gabriel Valley Area Plan's project website. These maps include current zoning and proposed changes, with areas slated for upzoning outlined in black. The housing element's focus areas, such as Lake Avenue and a block along Raymond south of Woodbury, are highlighted. The maps aim to provide transparency about zoning adjustments and are accessible for public review.

Question: What general needs and concerns have Altadena residents raised with the county?

Answer: Key concerns from residents include walkability, safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and housing affordability. Many parents expressed worries about their children’s ability to safely walk to school, prompting policies in the plan to create pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and safe routes to schools. Housing affordability was another significant issue, with residents, particularly young families, noting difficulty in affording homes in Altadena. In response, the plan addresses mismatched zoning and land-use designations to facilitate the development of R2 and R3 properties. However, as Altadena lacks extensive transit access, large-scale growth areas were not designated within the community.

Question: What are the height limitations for buildings along North Lake Avenue?

Answer: The 35-foot height limit established in the 1986 Altadena Community Plan remains unchanged. This restriction, codified in the Community Standards District (CSD), continues to guide development along North Lake Avenue.

Question: What happens if the WSGVAP is not adopted?

Answer: If the WSGVAP is not adopted, Altadena will revert to the outdated 1986 Community Plan. This would leave the community without a modernized framework to guide future development, address current challenges, or incorporate resident feedback gathered during the planning process. Projects would continue to be reviewed under the older plan, which lacks provisions for contemporary issues like sustainability, climate action, and walkable neighborhoods.

Question: Why are some residents concerned about the housing element and upzoning in Altadena?

Answer: Concerns about upzoning stem from state-mandated housing requirements, which dictate that unincorporated areas must accommodate a certain number of housing units. In Altadena, the plan primarily corrects mismatched zoning and land-use designations from the 1986 plan. The focus areas for housing include Lake Avenue (between Calaveras and Altadena Drive) and a block along Raymond south of Woodbury. The updates align zoning with existing infrastructure and transit availability, ensuring growth occurs in suitable areas while preserving community character.

Question: When walkability is mentioned, why are sidewalks not included on busy streets such as Altadena Drive, Holliston, Mendocino, Allen, and similar streets?

Answer: The lack of sidewalks on these streets is primarily a public works consideration, though we have acknowledged community concerns about these areas. These streets have been noted in our plan, and their inclusion in future pedestrian infrastructure projects is part of the action items in the community-specific section of the plan. While I can't speak to why sidewalks aren't already there, this plan enables us to apply for grants and other funding for projects like pedestrian plans, focusing on improving walkability, particularly in areas where safe walking is currently lacking.

Question: How is it not considered a "taking of land" when areas are down-zoned from allowing five units per acre to only one unit per acre? Is there any compensation for this?

Answer: When evaluating potential buildable density, we consider land use constraints and realistic buildable capacity based on land characteristics. Areas where we've reduced density are primarily due to these land constraints, such as steep slopes or other environmental considerations, which make it impractical to build at the previous higher densities. It's important to note that zoning typically includes a range of allowable densities, not a strict maximum. We may reduce the potential maximum density for certain areas, but this is based on land's natural limitations rather than arbitrary restrictions.

Down-zoning, by definition, does not equate to a "taking" of property rights. A "taking" would apply if development was entirely extinguished, which is not the case here. The zoning still allows for development, just at a lower density. For example, in some areas that are down-zoned, alternative uses such as campgrounds or other economic uses are still permitted, particularly in the national forest area where these changes are proposed.

Question: When changes to Lake Avenue are mentioned, are those changes part of the housing element that was adopted in 2022?

Answer: Yes, the changes to Lake Avenue are part of the housing element update that was adopted in 2022. What the current plan does is implement these changes. The housing element focuses on areas like East Altadena and south to Calaveras along Lake Avenue, which were updated as part of the broader housing goals. These areas

are largely commercial or mixed-use land designations in the plan. The changes include removing parking overlays on certain properties and aligning zoning to better reflect the needs of the community and the desire for a more vibrant and functional commercial corridor. These updates were adopted and are now being implemented through the Area Plan.

Question: Isn't it concerning that developments like affordable housing are being proposed in areas like Lincoln and Ventura and Lake Avenue, where the scale seems to not fit the existing structures? Will there be more developments like this?

Answer: Affordable housing projects are required by state law to meet certain quotas, and they may seek waivers from certain standards if they provide affordable units. However, this does not mean that height limits or other local regulations are disregarded. In Altadena, the local zoning code specifies a 35-foot height limit for commercial areas, and R3 zones also have a 35-foot height limit. While affordable housing developments can request waivers, there are also internal review mechanisms, such as the design review committee, which works to ensure that the designs are context-sensitive and responsive to community concerns. Projects are reviewed to ensure they are not disruptive to the surrounding area.

Though some affordable housing developments may have a larger scale, we are actively reviewing these projects and encouraging adjustments where needed to ensure they align better with community expectations.

Question: Why does Altadena have to accept significant urbanization that will destroy its small-town feel, increase traffic, and harm the environment?

Answer: One of the main goals of the Area Plan is to strike a balance between preserving Altadena's rural character and responding to the need for housing and development. Throughout the planning process, we've heard concerns about preserving the equestrian character of the area and maintaining the rural feel. As part of the planning, we engaged with the equestrian community to understand their concerns regarding trail access and road safety for riders. We incorporated these concerns into the plan and are committed to making sure that growth doesn't overshadow the aspects of the community that residents value.

Regarding the traffic concerns, the plan does not increase density in Altadena significantly. We are focused on directing growth to areas where infrastructure exists,

avoiding areas where there are no transit options or where growth could increase traffic. In this sense, we are taking into account community concerns and making sure the plan remains responsive to them.

Question: What is the zoning status for areas north of Loma Alta, which is crucial for maintaining its rural characteristics?

Answer: The area north of Loma Alta, including its foothills and equestrian zones, is subject to stricter zoning due to its topographical and environmental constraints. The plan does not propose significant development in this area because it is sensitive to environmental impacts, such as fire hazards and steep terrain. Any development proposed in these areas must meet rigorous safety standards, and density restrictions are in place to limit the scale of growth. These areas are also part of the National Forest, and any development there is heavily constrained.

The Polytechnic proposal that was previously considered was withdrawn because it could not meet critical safety requirements, including access for ingress and egress, which are necessary for any significant development in fire-prone areas.

Question: Why was the Polytechnic proposal withdrawn, and what were the reasons for rejecting the plan?

Answer: The Polytechnic proposal was withdrawn because it failed to meet basic safety requirements, particularly in relation to fire hazards. The proposal required two points of access for ingress and egress, which is a necessary condition for development in fire-prone areas. However, the site was unable to provide this, and as a result, the project could not move forward. Additionally, the proposal involved significant grading, which would have impacted neighboring properties. These factors made the development unfeasible, leading to its withdrawal.

Question: Would a four-unit rental be allowed above a four-car garage on a property with a separate assessor identification number for the back lot?

Answer: To address this question properly, we would need to review the specifics of the property in question. You are welcome to contact us directly for a more thorough examination. We are happy to set up a consultation to review the map and any

concerns you may have. Our contact information is available on our website, and we will ensure to provide the necessary assistance to address your query.

Question: What prevents a zone change after the zoning mandated by the plan has been implemented?

Answer: While zoning changes can be requested at any time by property owners, any application for a zone change requires a high burden of proof. Applicants must justify why a zone change is necessary, and it must align with the overall goals and context of the plan. For example, properties with a zone mismatch or a split zone may apply for a change, but there must be a compelling reason for it. Each request for a zone change or land-use adjustment undergoes a review process to ensure it meets the criteria established by the plan. If the request is not consistent with the plan or doesn't meet the necessary standards, it is likely to be denied.

Question: Have the approved Lake Avenue changes made large R3 multi-unit developments more desirable?

Answer: The changes to Lake Avenue are part of the broader housing element update and are focused on making improvements in areas that have mixed-use zoning and need more coherent development policies. These changes are still in the early stages, and it will take time to assess the impact. The main objective is to make sure the changes are context-sensitive and do not overwhelm the existing infrastructure. The plan does not allow uncontrolled growth, but rather focuses on directing growth where there is infrastructure to support it.