



LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING RECOMMENDATION REPORT



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: **April 10, 2008**
TIME: **after 8:30 a.m.***
PLACE: **City Hall**
200 N Spring St, Room 1010
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Public Hearing Held
February 26, 2008
February 28, 2008

CASE NO. CPC-2007-1262-CDO-ZC COMMUNITY DESIGN OVERLAY PLAN

CEQA: ENV-2008-0146-ND
Incidental Cases: None
Related Cases: CPC-2004-7422-ICO
CPC-2006-5244-CDO-ZC
Council District: 1, 13 & 14
Plan Area: Northeast Los Angeles
Neighborhood Council: Glassell Park, Greater Cypress Park
Plan Land Uses: Limited Manufacturing, Heavy Manufacturing, Neighborhood Commercial, General Commercial, Public Facilities, Low Residential, Low Medium I Residential, Low Medium II Residential, Medium Residential, Open Space
Zones: M1-1, M2-1, M3-1, MR1-1, CM-1, [Q]M1-1, [Q]MR1-1, [Q]MR1-1VL, [Q]CM-1, [Q]CM-1VL, [T][Q]M1-1, [T][Q]MR1-1, [Q]C1.5-1VL, [Q]C2-1VL, [Q]C4-1VL, [Q]C4-1XL, PF1-1, R1-1, RD2-1, RD1.5-1, RD3-1, R3-1, [T][Q]RAS3-1VL, OS-1XL
Applicant: City of Los Angeles

PROJECT LOCATION: A Community Design Overlay that applies design guidelines and development standards related to site planning, building design, architectural features, landscaping, signage and mechanical equipment to an established district within the Cypress Park and Glassell Park communities.

PROPOSED PROJECT: A Community Design Overlay District including Design Guidelines and Development Standards that will enhance the visual and aesthetic qualities of the District by encouraging pedestrian oriented development, restricting signage, and placing design controls on new developments and alterations of existing buildings.

REQUESTED ACTIONS: Pursuant to Section 12.32(S) of the Municipal Code, the adoption of a **Community Design Overlay** District with corresponding design guidelines and development standards.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

APPROVE the staff report and **ADOPT** attached findings;
APPROVE Negative Declaration No. ENV-2008-0146-ND dated January 28, 2008;
APPROVE the proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) boundaries;
RECOMMEND that the City Council adopt the Ordinance establishing the boundaries as shown (Exhibit A);
APPROVE the proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) Design Guidelines and Standards (Exhibit B).

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ADVICE TO PUBLIC: *The exact time this report will be considered during the meeting is uncertain since there may be several other items on the agenda. Written communications may be mailed to the *Commission Secretariat, Room 532, City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012*. While all written communications are given to the Commission for consideration, the initial packets are sent to the week prior to the Commission's meeting date. If you challenge these agenda items in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing agendaized herein, or in written correspondence on these matters delivered to this agency at or prior to the public hearing. As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to this programs, services and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or other services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request not later than three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by calling the Commission Secretariat at (213) 978-1300.

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PROJECT ANALYSIS

Project Summary

The Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay (CDO) proposal is comprised of two plan components:

1. The Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO Boundary Area (established by ordinance);
2. The Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO Guidelines and Standards Document, with text and image details that articulate and implement the overlay plan.

A CDO is a planning tool to implement the objectives of the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan (or any other Community Plan); it can enhance the visual and aesthetic qualities of an area by providing design guidelines and standards, applicable to new developments and to alterations of existing buildings. The proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO provides guidelines and standards for development projects on properties with the Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods. The intent of the CDO is to provide design guidance and direction to enhance the visual identity, and to improve the walkability of the two communities.

Physical Setting and Characteristics

The Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO covers approximately two square miles (over 1,300 acres) of land located east of the Los Angeles River, south of the Glendale City boundary and north of the Pasadena Freeway. The District includes a variety of parcel types, topographies, land use types and designations described in detail below.

Commercial Boulevards:

Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods were historically developed around the prominent commercial boulevards: Figueroa Street, Cypress Avenue, Eagle Rock Boulevard, Verdugo Road and Fletcher Drive. Many of these streets included Pacific Electric railways and were developed with traditional neighborhood serving commercial buildings. Neighborhood villages evolved in areas such as Eagle Rock Boulevard (formerly Glassell Boulevard) near Avenue 34, Cypress Avenue near Avenue 28 and along Figueroa Street. These streets were primarily developed with one and two-story commercial structures that were built along the front property line at the public street with traditional store-fronts, pedestrian entrances and a high level of architectural detail and craftsmanship.

However, past decades have seen these boulevards function primarily as regional thoroughfares, connecting more prominent communities such as Glendale, Eagle Rock, Silver Lake and Downtown. While many structures that were built during the communities' early years remain, many have suffered neglect or have been altered in such a way that they are no longer inviting to pedestrian use or conducive to continued investment on the part of new businesses: store-front windows have been filled-in, sidewalk entrances have been removed in favor of rear-facing parking lot entrances and architectural details have been removed rather than maintained. Furthermore, most new commercial projects along these boulevards have departed from the pedestrian oriented scale and site-planning paradigm established by earlier development. More contemporary commercial projects tend toward strip-mall style development intended to provide an ease of use for automobile users. With such projects, commercial buildings tend to be set back behind generous parking lots with sparse landscaping. There is little connection to the sidewalk and little relationship with surrounding development.

Industrial Strips:

The westerly portions of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods have historically been a hub of industrial activity. Developed along the Southern Pacific Railway and Taylor Yard site (formerly the City's largest rail yard) manufacturing uses have a long-standing precedence along the adjacent San Fernando Road corridor and surrounding area.

San Fernando Road – The San Fernando corridor features a complex mix of land uses and parcel types. To the west exists what was formerly the Taylor Yard site which consists of roughly 300 acres of massive industrial parcels (M1, M2 and M3 zones). This area was historically used as a railway transfer station, though today freight trains no longer stop at this destination. In 2000 the State of California acquired most of the site and has since partnered with the City in developing a park master plan. In 2006 the City Council adopted the Los Angeles River Master Plan which seeks to maximize community access to the waterway, provide recreation opportunities, preserve and enhance the quality of the surrounding watershed and maximize surrounding land uses and the Taylor Yard site is a significant opportunity site within that plan.

To date, the southern portion of this area is used as a Metrolink train yard and the northern portion has been developed with larger industrial buildings such as a FedEx facility. A large central portion of the Taylor Yard complex has been converted into an approximately 40-acre park with active recreation fields, trails and passive recreation landscape area and there are plans for further expansion of the park space. Plans are also pending for a High School to the north of the existing park as well as for a large mixed use development north of the Metrolink site.

Industrial lots along the east side of San Fernando Road are mostly smaller 6,000 to 8,000 square foot lots that have been developed with smaller manufacturing buildings. Many undeveloped or sparsely developed lots have been developed with open-air automotive repair facilities, outdoor storage areas, recycling facilities and other somewhat noxious land uses. The eastern industrial parcels are immediately adjacent to R1 lots and much of the open-air land uses have created a significant impact to single family home occupants with regard to aesthetics, noise, odor and general safety. While sidewalk improvements along the western side of San Fernando Road, including landscaping, and decorative lighting have improved both pedestrian access to the existing park and the overall walkability of the Class II Highway, San Fernando Road is, itself a busy motorway that is in many places difficult, if not unsafe, to navigate as a pedestrian. Most structures that were originally built with pedestrian entrances and street-facing windows have been altered, most lots are concealed with all manner of fencing, and car traffic moves at high speed along the narrow strip throughout much of the day.

Verdugo Road/Eagle Rock Boulevard – The Verdugo Road/Eagle Rock Boulevard industrial strip consists of a narrow portion of land located between Verdugo Road and Eagle Rock Boulevard spanning from their junction with San Fernando Road at the south to Avenue 35 at the North. In Glassell Park's early years through the 1950's this area was largely undeveloped and functioned primarily as a watershed drainage basin with sparse development fronting Eagle Rock Boulevard. The strip was zoned for industrial uses in the 1960's and today most of the strip is developed with heavy industrial uses such as truck repair, machine shops and automotive repair, however along Verdugo Road a number of residential structures remain, creating a similar land use conflict as along the eastern side of San Fernando Road. Additionally this area features a number of traditional storefront-style buildings along Eagle Rock Boulevard that appear to be either vacant or used for non-commercial uses and have had their windows and doors filled in along the public street.

Multi-family Neighborhoods:

The majority of multi-family residential development within the district is small in scale and consists primarily of second and third dwelling units constructed on parcels that were originally developed with single family homes; duplexes, triplexes and four-flats. During the 1970's and 1980's when residential zoning provisions allowed for higher density development (generally R3) the district began to experience larger multi-parcel residential development that was substantially out of scale with adjacent uses and a radical departure from the architectural character of the neighborhood. In 1998, following the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan update most of the multi-family residential areas were down-zoned to RD zones allowing only smaller-scale multi-family projects.

Cypress Park – The central Cypress Park area contains three non-contiguous multi-family areas all of which are designated for Low Medium II Residential and Low Medium I Residential use and are zoned RD1.5, RD2 and RD3. This area was originally developed with single family structures, bungalow courts and some larger three story apartment buildings closer to the intersection of Cypress Avenue and Figueroa Street. Today there is a mix of older historic homes and newer medium density apartment buildings, though much of the multi family development within these areas consists of additional dwelling units in the rear yard or primary structures having been subdivided into multiple dwelling units. The prevailing character of the area is that of a low density multi-family neighborhood developed with mostly pre-war structures. While there is a preponderance of older Victorian and Craftsman era structures much of the newer multi-family development has been at the expense of the neighborhood's character. Buildings have been covered with stucco in lieu of their original batten board or shingle siding, window openings have been altered or removed and yards have been covered with concrete to accommodate an increased need for parking and to minimize the need for maintenance.

Drew/Estara – The Drew/Estara neighborhood (so referenced for the two major streets within the neighborhood) was originally developed with a mix of single family structures and smaller duplexes, triplexes and four-flats. At this time the neighborhood, which is located between San Fernando Road and the Forrest Lawn Cemetery to the west and east and Chapman Road and the Glendale Freeway to the north and south is designated for Low Medium II Residential use and zoned RD1.5 and RD2. In the 1960's through 1980's, land use provisions allowed for a substantially greater density and many of the parcels within the area were developed with three and four-story apartment buildings (the Drew/Estara neighborhood is perhaps the densest multi-family neighborhood within the District). Many of the apartment buildings constructed during this time are poorly designed and constructed, and offer little by way of residential amenities, building design and pedestrian orientation. Several of the larger buildings within this area have acquired a notorious reputation within the community because of criminal activity, and their design features, such as outdoor hallways and stairwells have been alleged by community members to be contributors to the lack of safety within the area. While many smaller structures from the neighborhood's original phase of development still exist, most have suffered the same neglect or alteration found throughout the District's residential neighborhoods: decorative building materials have been removed, rather than maintained, window and door openings are frequently replaced with newer elements that lack scale and proportion, yards are covered with concrete and landscaping is minimized.

Upper Verdugo – A strip of Verdugo Road located between Wawona Road to the south and the Glendale City boundary to the north is designated for Low Medium II Residential use and is zoned RD1.5. This area is developed with a number of two-story post-war apartment buildings and smaller bungalow courts and duplexes and triplexes. For the most part, residential structures within this area are well maintained, provide landscaping and an overall sense of pedestrian orientation.

Eagle Rock Boulevard – The Eagle Rock Boulevard corridor, between upper Verdugo Road and San Fernando Road is designated for Low Medium II Residential and Medium Residential uses and is mostly zoned RD1.5, RD2 and RD3 with a small portion of R3. The area has been developed with a number of minimalist apartment buildings, most of which are out of scale with adjacent R1 uses and which create the same land use issues found in other multi-family neighborhoods, minimal open space amenities, lack of pedestrian orientation, incompatible architectural character and minimal landscaping. Additionally, many of the lots along the south side of Eagle Rock Boulevard and Verdugo Road are sparsely developed with smaller cottages and remnant out buildings or are vacant and some parcels are used for junk and salvage storage.

Single Family Neighborhoods:

Flat Lands – Much of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park District is designated for Low Density Residential use and is zoned R1. The majority of homes within these areas are of the Craftsman Bungalow style, with a number of other architectural styles that were popular at the time represented as well (Queen Anne, Spanish Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, etc). While many of the homes retain features that contribute to a walkable, safe and sustainable neighborhood (landscaped and permeable yards, architectural features maintained, front porches kept in place, parking at the rear, etc.), over the years many of the homes of succumbed to alterations that have diminished the quality and livability of the neighborhood as a whole. Massive front yard fences are regularly constructed, yards are covered with concrete, significant architectural features are removed rather than maintained and additions have taken place without regard for scale or style.

Hillside Areas – The District contains a number of hillside areas. Single family lots cover the hillsides along the upper Verdugo Road area and surround the Forest Lawn Cemetery. Additionally many of the lots between Cypress Avenue and Isabel Street and north of Figueroa are on hillsides. While the hillside lots within the Cypress Park area are developed mostly with pre-war era cottages and bungalows, those in the Glassell Park area are a mix of pre-war and post-war structures. For this reason there is a mixture of architectural types, with pre-war structures tending to be smaller in scale and more consistent in architectural character to the rest of the District. Post-war structures tend to be somewhat minimalist stucco structures that maximize buildable lot area and have necessitated a significant amount of grading.

Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO is to improve the physical appearance of Cypress Park & Glassell Park by providing clear guidelines for new construction. The CDO is intended to bolster the District's strength as a viable business district and to allow for neighborhood growth while preserving architectural and cultural resources within the greater neighborhood context. In particular, the commercial boulevards of the two communities along Eagle Rock Boulevard, Verdugo Road, Cypress Avenue and Figueroa Street, provide a central location to the surrounding residents who have been severely underserved with respect to basic neighborhood services and the CDO endeavors to create a desirable and walkable commercial district within these two communities, to reinforce the pedestrian linkages between the commercial boulevards and the residential neighborhoods, and to ensure that growth within the residential neighborhoods incorporates the best design features that already exist within the surrounding context. To this end, the CDO has established six goals:

1. To promote design for commercial projects which invite pedestrian interest and activity and communicate a sense of permanence to the area;

2. To provide direction for site planning standards that facilitates ease of pedestrian movement and minimize automobile and pedestrian conflicts;
3. To reemphasize the underlying pedestrian scale that can exist within the existing Cypress Park & Glassell Park street network;
4. To provide direction for storefront rehabilitation and guide new infill development that is consistent with successful commercial districts;
5. To preserve the historically and architecturally significant buildings in the District including the residential neighborhoods and to encourage new development that is appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood context.

The design guidelines and standards are flexible in application, providing direction for design articulation without mandating one particular architectural style or form. The implementation of these guidelines ensures that each project contributes to a more functional, walkable, and appealing community, without stifling design creativity or imposing design criteria that would be inaccessible to homeowners or small business owners. In this way, improvements to individual properties can, over time, re-establish a unique sense of place within these two communities and enhance the function of the various streets and neighborhoods.

Project Initiation and Public Process

Work on the Cypress Park & Glassell Park commenced following the adoption of the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan in 1998 wherein there have been essentially three phases of development.

Initial Draft and Community Advisory Committee

In February of 2003 the City Council passed a motion establishing a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) comprised of community members from both Cypress Park and Glassell Park to review three different drafts of a CDO plan prepared by the Planning Department. The three drafts prepared by the Planning Department varied in scope and size, ranging from one which involved only the San Fernando Road corridor and portions of Eagle Rock Boulevard and Cypress Avenue, one which included that same area as well as the adjacent multi-family neighborhoods. The last scenario included the single family neighborhoods and also included the Drew/Estara neighborhood, the Fletcher Square area and, at the direction of then Council Member Villaraigosa, the Council District 14 portions of Verdugo Road, Eagle Rock Boulevard and the adjacent neighborhoods.

The CAC selected the third scenario under the belief that the various divisions that the Cypress Park and Glassell Park communities have endured over the years (being comprised of various Council Districts, bifurcation by the Glendale Freeway etc.) have contributed to a decline in the quality of life with regard to the built environment, and that a CDO which covers the entirety of the community would be the most effective means of implementing the goals of the CDO: namely re-establishing a sense of neighborhood identity. In January, 2004, the CAC provided written feedback on the third scenario to the Planning Department at which time work on the CDO was suspended for lack of staff resources within the Department.

Fletcher Square ICO and CDO/Zone Changes

In December 2004 the City Council adopted an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) that applied to the northwesterly portion of the proposed CDO area. The ICO was adopted in response to the

eminent threat of land uses and building types that were proposed for the area that were contrary to the goals of the pending CDO. Following the adoption of the ICO the Planning Department prepared zone changes for the Fletcher Square area that limited the size of individual retail establishments to 75,000 square feet and prepared a CDO for that area. The Zone Change and CDO were adopted and became effective in January 2007.

Re-commencement of the Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO

Following the adoption of the Fletcher Square CDO the Planning Department circulated a new draft of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO and re-commenced outreach with the larger community. During the 2007 year the Planning Department conducted 10 Community Outreach events, 8 focus groups with unique stakeholder groups, 3 of its outreach meetings were held in Spanish and the two neighborhood councils involved were asked for formal input in December 2007 prior to the commencement of public hearings. During this time the draft plan was revised four times to reflect ongoing comments and involvement from the community. Extensive efforts were made throughout the public process to actively engage the community and go beyond minimal noticing requirements.

Issues and Conclusions

The neighborhood residents, business owners and other stakeholders have been instrumental in providing meaningful comments during the development process of the Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO. By way of summary, many of the issues presented by the community that have shaped the Plan as it is proposed today are outlined below:

Boundaries – At the time when the Planning Department re-commenced outreach regarding the CDO in January, 2007, the plan boundaries included all of the single family neighborhoods not currently within the adjacent Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan, all of the multi-family neighborhoods and most of the commercial and industrial corridors within the two communities. Questions arose as to why portions of Eagle Rock Boulevard, Verdugo Road and Cypress Avenue were omitted from the District. The existing Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan boundaries are defined along many of these street edges and initially the south sides of Eagle Rock Boulevard and Verdugo Road and the east side of Cypress Avenue were excluded from the CDO, so as not to present a conflict between the two plans. However, the community expressed an interest in maintaining design consistency on both sides of these streets to ensure the success of the plan. Furthermore it became clear that the Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan does not provide land use provisions or design guidelines for commercial uses and that the Specific Plan's multi-family provisions and guidelines are somewhat minimal. For this reason it was determined that the two plans could overlap without creating an obvious conflict and that this strategy would better implement the purpose and goals of the plan.

Administrative Review for Simple Projects – During various community workshops and focus groups a number of stakeholders expressed concern that a lengthy project review procedure for simple projects could have various negative ramifications: the process could detour businesses from investing in the area; the process could encourage illegal construction activity on the part of constituents not willing to submit formal applications to the Planning Department; and the process could create a bottleneck within the Planning Department which would be forced to review a substantial number of applications within the CDO area. In response to this issue, which has been raised numerous times throughout the City, the Planning Department initiated a code amendment to LAMC 13.08 to allow for a minor project review process for CDO projects. This amendment, approved by the Planning Commission in January 2008, allows for minor projects, as specified by individual CDOs, to be issued a building permit clearance without

formally submitting an application to the Planning Department. The Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO would allow clearance of signs and awnings that comply with the Guidelines and Standards and would allow clearance of single family projects that do not necessitate formal review as determined by the Single Family Project Checklist (Exhibit B, Appendix 1). The intent is to allow for an efficient review of projects where compliance with the guidelines can be easily determined.

Simple Guidelines and Review for Single Family Lots – Discussions with the community regarding the provision of Design Guidelines and Development Standards on single family lots were many and varied. Some stakeholders within the community acknowledged that there is a preponderance of historic pre-war and in some cases, pre 1900's homes within both communities and that these historic structures and architectural styles create a unique sense of place within Cypress Park and Glassell Park. Others pointed out that while there may be historic homes within the District there is also a significant number of new homes or older homes that have been significantly remodeled. Historic issues notwithstanding, many within the community expressed concern over additions and new construction that were out of scale with the prevailing massing, configuration and appearance of their streets and many expressed concern over rapidly diminishing front yards and landscaped green space. The Guidelines and Standards, as proposed are intended to establish a baseline whereby the unique characteristics of single family streets within the district might be preserved and where new development would remain consistent with the prevailing character without necessitating specific architectural styles or prohibiting specified heights or amounts of floor area. Furthermore, the Plan provides a simple review process whereby home maintenance that does not dramatically alter the appearance of existing homes can be reviewed administratively (see "*Administrative review for small projects*" above)

Flexibility for Hillside Lots – Involvement with the community made it clear that many of the same issues that effect flat lots—preservation of historic building features, massing, landscaping, etc.) also effect hillside lots and it would therefore be advisable to include these areas within the CDO. However, concern was also expressed that there are a number of idiosyncrasies related to development and enjoyment of land on hillside lots that might make full compliance with all of the CDO provisions problematic. For instance, the Guidelines and Standards require that parking areas are kept to the rear of lots and that front entrances face the street. While these principles, which encourage pedestrian orientation, are easily applied to a flat residential lot, many hillside lots may not provide access to rear yards for vehicles or may not have buildable area along the street setback for a front entrance. For this reason the CDO would allow greater flexibility with those Design Guidelines and Development Standards

Existing City Ordinances/Plans – Many within the development community expressed a concern that Design Guidelines and Development Standards would be inconsistent with existing municipal requirements and that it would therefore be difficult to execute a project because the regulations would be unclear and/or contrary. Earlier iterations of the Plan contained unique signage and landscape requirements that were in fact found by the Planning Department to be inconsistent with the existing Sign Code and the Landscape Design Guidelines adopted by the City Planning Commission. For instance, the signage guidelines specified unique square footages that would be allowed based upon linear building feet. It was determined that the overall effect of providing such unique and contrary guidelines could in fact be confusing for multiple City departments and to parties wishing to develop property in the District and such contrary provisions were eliminated referring instead to the existing City Landscape Design Guidelines and Sign Code and offering additional design criteria that would not effect factors such as sign square footage, required landscape area, etc.

Relevance to Other Plans

The Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District exists in close proximity to numerous other Supplemental Use Districts and Overlay Zones. Immediately west of portions of the District boundaries is the existing Fletcher Square CDO. Immediately southeast of portions of the District boundaries is the Highland Park HPOZ. Each of these districts has boundaries that do not overlap with the Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO and therefore their respective land use and design provisions do not directly pertain to the District.

The Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan, which covers most of the hillside area to the east of the CDO District, overlaps with portions of the easterly CDO boundaries. While the Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan contains various provisions related to the development of single family lots, the provisions for multi-family lots are minimal (articulation of facades and freestanding concrete walls is required) and there are no provisions related to commercial or industrial lots. For this reason, all multi-family, commercial and industrial lots that would otherwise share a street-front with parcels within the CDO have been incorporated into the CDO. This strategy will allow for the development of both sides of the street within the parameters established by the Design Guidelines and Development Standards. Wherever the provisions of the CDO are in conflict with the provisions of the Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan that plan shall supersede the CDO. However projects shall still require review for compliance with the CDO for those provisions not addressed within the Specific Plan.

Future Efforts

River Improvement Overlay

Following the adoption of the Los Angeles River Master Plan by the City Council, the Planning Department has begun work on the River Improvement Overlay (RIO) a tool that will address land use, landscape and watershed issues along the LA River corridor. This plan has not yet been finalized, though it is anticipated that portions of the RIO will overlap with the proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO boundaries. Initial review of the draft RIO plan has not presented any concerns with regard to conflicting policies or provisions and it is intended that the two documents, the CDO and the RIO would work in concert to address building design and site planning issues to the benefit of the LA River corridor.

Q-Conditions

In January 2008 Council District 1 put forth a motion requiring that the Planning Department include as part of the CDO's scope of work, Qualifying Conditions (Q-Conditions) to regulate against "auto related, auto oriented uses and other incompatible uses and encourage pedestrian oriented uses." The Planning Department is currently engaged in a discussion with local business owners, property owners and stakeholders within the CDO District to analyze the impact of such uses and determine the extent to which such uses, if at all, should be limited or prohibited within the district. At such a time that the Planning Department has completed its outreach with the local community and has completed the appropriate environmental analysis a zone change plan with Q-Conditions or other appropriate land use provisions will be prepared with a recommendation for the City Planning Commission.

FINDINGS

CDO Boundaries: Charter, Municipal Code, and General Plan Findings

- 1. In accordance with Charter Sections 556 and 558, the proposed CDO boundaries are in substantial conformance with all applicable provisions of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) and the purposes, intent and provisions of the City's General Plan.**

The proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) and boundaries are established in accordance with the provisions of Section 12.32 (S) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), and are consistent with the purpose of a CDO as set forth in Section 13.08(A) of the Municipal Code. The establishment of a CDO within the boundaries shown in Exhibit A will enhance the physical qualities—functional and aesthetic—of this community, relative to its unique environmental setting.

Section 12.32(S) of the Municipal Code requires action on the part of the City Council, City Planning Commission, or Director of Planning to initiate a CDO District. On February 21, 2003, the City Council approved a Motion to establish a Citizen Advisory Committee to review and provide written feedback on the various drafts of a proposed CDO. The Council Motion acknowledged the necessity for creating a CDO for the area though the exact boundaries had not yet been defined. On December 22, 2004 The City Council adopted an Interim Control Ordinance for the Fletcher Square area which acknowledged again that work on a CDO was underway for the greater Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods. On December 14, 2007, the City Council adopted a motion establishing the boundaries of the proposed CDO as reflected in the draft plan presented for approval to date.

The proposed Cypress Park & Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) and Zone Change boundaries are established in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the City's General Plan. The General Plan is divided into 12 Elements, including the Framework Element and a Land Use Element comprised of 35 Community Plans. The Community Plan that contain the CDO boundary area is Northeast Los Angeles, which calls for the creation of one or more CDOs to meet the Plan Objectives and/or Design Policies. How the proposed CDO meets the specific provisions of the Community Plan is addressed below in Finding 3. The General Plan Framework Element designates Figueroa Street within the CDO area as a "Mixed Use Boulevard" and states that such corridors serve to connect the City's neighborhood districts as well as community, regional, and Downtown centers. Mixed use development is encouraged along these boulevards, to be compatible with the surrounding areas. The proposed CDO meets the intent of the Framework Element; how the proposed CDO meets specific provisions of this Element is addressed below in Finding 5.

- 2. In accordance with Charter Section 558(b)(2), the proposed CDO boundaries will be in conformance with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

Los Angeles City Charter Section 558 and LAMC Section 12.32(C)(7) require that prior to adopting a land use ordinance, the City Council make findings that the ordinance conforms with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. The Cypress Park and Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) conforms to these objectives as follows:

Public Necessity. The purpose of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) is to ensure that development within the two communities reflects the overall vision of a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly and vibrant commercial district with stable, attractive and compatible residential development. The CDO will ensure that storefronts and building façades both cater to the pedestrian and maintain visual continuity and that residential development is consistent with the prevailing neighborhood character, maintaining neighborhood features that are essential to community identity. The CDO can help to generate concentrations of pedestrian activity to support both transit and an active street environment. The proposed plan is necessary because the existing condition of the commercial boulevards is unsightly and unwelcoming to pedestrians and to continued business investment. New structures tend to be low-rise strip malls with large expanses of parking, driveways that produce pedestrian and vehicular conflicts, and excess signage resulting in visual clutter while older pedestrian oriented structures are altered so that their form and function are scarcely recognizable. Furthermore, the residential neighborhoods have experienced substantial development that has been detrimental to scale and character and has had a negative effect on property values.

Convenience. The proposed CDO will result in Design Guidelines and Development Standards that are broadly applicable, and require basic design features. The Design Guidelines and Development Standards are flexible in application, providing direction for design articulation without mandating one particular architectural style or form. The implementation of these guidelines ensures that each project contributes to a more functional, walkable, and stable community, without stifling design creativity. In this way, improvements to individual properties can, over time, enhance the function of the District as a meaningful space.

General Welfare. The Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO is intended to visually improve the physical environment of a two distinct neighborhoods, and as a result, improve the quality of life for Los Angeles Citizens. The effort was initiated by Council Districts 1 and 13 as encouraged by community members and existing local improvement efforts.

Good Zoning Practice. The CDO is a planning tool to implement the objectives of the Community Plan; it enhances the visual and aesthetic qualities of an area by imposing design guidelines and development standards, applicable to new developments and to alterations of existing buildings. The proposed Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO will require additional review of development projects on properties within the District boundaries. The CDO incentivizes quality design, building types, uses, and design features that are compatible with a pedestrian-oriented district.

CDO Guidelines and Standards: Municipal Code and General Plan Findings

3. The proposed CDO design Guidelines and Standards are consistent with the policies of the General Plan and adopted Community Plans

Pursuant to Section 13.08(A) of the Municipal Code, one purpose of a CDO is to assure that development within communities is in accordance with design policies adopted in the applicable Community Plans. The Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO boundary area is contained within the boundary of the Northeast Los Angeles (NELA) Community Plan Area. The Cypress Park & Glassell Park CDO is consistent with the design policies and programs contained in the NELA Community Plan. The proposed CDO provides visual identity and improves the walkability and appearance of the

commercial streets (San Fernando Road, Figueroa Street, Eagle Rock Boulevard, Cypress Avenue, Figueroa Street, Verdugo Road and Fletcher Drive), thereby promoting these boulevards as a pedestrian serving commercial corridors in the Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods. It incentivizes quality design while limiting building types, uses, and design features that are incompatible with a pedestrian-oriented district. Furthermore, the CDO provides design criteria that will serve to facilitate multi-family and single family development that is consistent with the prevailing character of the existing neighborhoods and preserves existing visual and architectural assets.

The establishment of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan in the following ways:

General. The CDO actively advances the objectives, policies, and programs addressed in the Northeast Los Angeles (NELA) Community Plan, intended to enhance the identity of commercial districts; to encourage pedestrian-oriented uses and development; and to preserve and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods. The Community Plan, within the Introduction section articulates the complexities of land use that exist within these neighborhoods and sets forth issues and opportunities that were identified at the time of the Community Plan's preparation and adoption:

General Issues

- Incompatibilities among types of land uses and scale of development that detract from established neighborhood or community character.
- Lack of features providing community and neighborhood identification and cohesion.
- Unsightliness of and lack of amenities and public access to areas adjacent to the Los Angeles River, Arroyo Seco, and other flood control channels.
- Destruction and deterioration of community resources, including scenic views and viewsheds, open space, open space corridors, and historic structures.

General Opportunities

- Revising land use and zoning patterns to minimize incompatibilities and reinforce the character of neighborhoods and communities through community-based design standards.
- Development of community-based design standards and promotion of features to reinforce the unique identities of neighborhoods and communities.
- Development of measures to require that hillside development be of low density, appropriate in scale, and minimally disruptive of the natural terrain.
- Development of regulations and incentives to preserve historic and architecturally important structures, context elements, and neighborhoods.

The CDO relates directly to the issues raised within the General section in as much as it is a tool by which new construction and significantly remodeled structures are reviewed for compliance with pre-established design guidelines and development standards that endeavor to avoid development that detracts from neighborhood character, would be considered unsightly or would contribute to a deterioration of visual and historic resources. The Opportunities raised within this section suggest that the implementation of a tool such as a CDO would be an appropriate and effective means to minimize such incompatibilities and to reinforce a positive neighborhood identity.

Residential Issues

- Encroachment of incompatible uses and inappropriately-scaled development into single-family and low density neighborhoods.

- Impacts on residential neighborhoods from adjacent commercial and industrial activity, including, building signs and billboards, traffic, parking, and noise.
- Deterioration of housing stock, including historic residences and other architecturally significant structures through neglect or inappropriate remodeling.
- Imbalance in quality of housing stock.
- Recent construction that is out of scale and of poor quality in design, construction, and maintenance.
- Lack of open space buffering or landscaping in and near apartment projects.

Residential Opportunities

- Undertaking planning and zoning actions to minimize incompatibilities between residential uses and commercial or industrial use.
- Development and implementation of regulations and incentives to promote identification and preservation of historically or architecturally significant structures.
- Identification, preservation, and rehabilitation of historic residences.

The issues raised within the Residential section underscore that the degradation of existing residential neighborhoods, either through inappropriate remodeling or through new construction that defies conventions of scale and style, has been an ongoing issue within the Community Plan Area. The proposed CDO contains Design Guidelines and Development Standards (through a CDO) would be an effective means to preserve historically significant architectural features and would reestablish the prevailing architectural and historic character of the Cypress Park and Glassell Park neighborhoods. Furthermore, the CDO Design Guidelines and Development Standards provide needed buffering, landscaping and site planning provisions that would diminish the impact of industrial uses that are located adjacent to residential uses.

Commercial Issues

- Incompatibility between some commercial uses and nearby single-family and low-density residential or industrial uses.
- Overlong or discontinuous commercial strips, interrupted by multi-family residential uses, and lacking complementary uses or cohesive design.
- Unsightliness of new construction because of the lack of landscaping, architectural character and scale.
- Absence of features that express and strengthen community identity.
- Sign clutter.

Commercial Opportunities

- Undertaking planning and zoning actions to minimize conflicts and increase compatibility of commercial areas with nearby residential, industrial, and institutional uses.
- Undertaking planning and zoning actions to increase complimentary uses, cohesiveness and vitality of commercial areas, incorporating such features as pedestrian-friendly shopping areas, improved parking and access, and ground-floor retail activity.
- Implementing community-based design standards for new construction and supporting efforts for preserving and rehabilitating historic commercial structures.
- Supporting and publicizing efforts to incorporate features to identify individual commercial areas.
- Advocacy of stronger sign enforcement.
- Support for efforts to preserve and rehabilitate commercial historic structures.

- Complement any unique existing development/uses to reinforce desirable design characteristics and uses to enhance community and neighborhood identity.
- Establish appropriate transitions between commercial and adjoining uses, especially residential.
- Create pedestrian-friendly shopping areas by incorporating street trees, benches, convenient parking/ access, and maintaining retail frontage at ground level.
- Develop and implement regulations and incentives to reduce visual blight including open storage and sign clutter adjacent to residential neighborhoods and in neighborhood-serving commercial areas.

Issues raised within the Commercial section call attention to the impact that inappropriate commercial projects have had upon neighboring residential uses, on the pedestrian environment and on the commercial districts as a whole. The CDO would implement Design Guidelines and Development Standards that would provide appropriate buffering between commercial and residential uses, would address scale and massing issues and would steer development away from auto-oriented strip mall development and facilitate attractive, pedestrian oriented, well designed commercial projects that reinforce a sense of neighborhood identity and vibrancy.

Industrial Issues

- Incompatibility of industrial uses with nearby residential, commercial, or institutional uses.

Industrial Opportunities

- Undertaking planning and zoning actions to ensure that industrial uses maximize opportunities for off-street parking and buffering with walls and landscaped setbacks to minimize conflicts with other nearby land uses.

The primary issue raised within the Industrial section relates to the impact that industrial uses have upon adjacent residential uses. The implementation of the CDO's Design Guidelines and Development Standards would provide appropriate landscaping, fencing and site planning measures that would assist in minimizing the potential for such impacts.

Plan Objectives

Residential Objectives

Objective 1-1. To preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods.

Objective 1-3. To preserve and enhance the residential character and scale of existing single family and multi-family neighborhoods

Objective 1-4. To preserve and enhance neighborhoods with a distinctive and significant historical or architectural character.

The CDO provides Design Guidelines and Development Standards that apply specifically to multi-family and single family projects. The multi-family guidelines and standards apply to the construction of new multi-family structures with provisions that will ensure that new structures are appropriate in scale and are thoughtfully designed, drawing on the best attributes of the surrounding neighborhood context. Additionally the multi-family guidelines and standards address rear-yard additions ensuring that rear yard structures are compatible with existing structures on site and in the surrounding context. The single family guidelines address new construction and additions and endeavor to preserve the prevailing one and two story character of the neighborhoods. The

guidelines and standards for both multi-family and single family structures, address the preservation of building types that have historically existed within the residential neighborhoods (houses with front porches, rear yard garages or parking areas, attic style second floors) as well as the preservation of significant architectural features and building materials.

Commercial Objectives

Objective 2-2. To enhance the identity and appearance of commercial districts

Objective 2-3. To minimize conflicts between auto-related and pedestrian-oriented activities and encourage use of public transportation in commercial area.

The proposed CDO strengthens the opportunity for viable commercial development by ensuring high quality design, thereby improving the function and attractiveness of District's commercial corridors. The proposed Design Guidelines and Development Standards will ensure that development within the area is appropriately scaled to pedestrian traffic and that it facilitates a coherent identity as a commercial corridor with necessary commercial uses and desirable aesthetic qualities. The CDO makes certain that commercial projects will be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with appropriate surrounding uses and properties. Furthermore the CDO will reduce the prevalence of visual clutter such as inappropriate signage, fencing and saw-tooth street setbacks that plague many of the commercial streets within the District and are a hindrance toward continued investment within the District.

The Design Guidelines and Development Standards enhance the identity of Commercial Streets within Cypress Park and Glassell Park as a distinctive commercial corridor by improving the quality of development, and walkability of the streets. The CDO addresses such considerations as storefront design, building orientation, site layout, parking lot placement, landscaping, and signage. For each of these elements, the CDO calls for pedestrian-oriented design features. Additionally, the CDO provides provisions whereby pedestrian-auto conflicts would be minimized, among these are requirements that commercial buildings front public streets, that curb-cuts along major streets are minimized and that parking areas are kept to the rear of development sites.

Industrial Objectives

Objective 3-1. To minimize conflicts between industrial uses and other adjacent uses

Objective 3-2. To provide for existing and future industrial uses that contribute job opportunities for residents and minimize adverse environmental and visual impacts on the community.

The proposed CDO ensures high quality design, thereby improving the function and attractiveness of the San Fernando Road corridor and other industrial areas within the District. The proposed CDO provides Design Guidelines and Development Standards that seek to limit many of the conflicts that are common between industrial and residential land uses. The provisions require that service areas, loading docks and other similar sources of visual and audio disturbance are located away from adjacent residential structures to the greatest extent possible. The provisions also require that attractive fencing and landscape buffers are installed to mitigate the potential for visual and audio impacts. The CDO also allows for continued job opportunities and job growth by not limiting or prohibiting specific land use types within industrial zones.

Circulation Objectives

Objective 13-2. To promote pedestrian oriented areas, greenways, and pedestrian routes for commuter, school, recreational use, economic revitalization, and access to transit facilities.

The CDO promotes pedestrian activity as a viable and essential part of daily life within the District and draws upon the neighborhoods' historic precedence of small walkable residential streets that feed directly into commercial villages and corridors. The CDO seeks to limit the necessity for car trips within the district by promoting an environment where pedestrian mobility is comfortable and encouraged and where commercial streets are adorned with development and land uses that meet the needs of the local community.

Cultural and Historic Heritage Objectives

Objective 14-1. To ensure that the Plan Area's significant cultural and historical resources are protected, preserved and/or enhanced.

Objective 14-2. To protect and enhance historic and architectural resources within commercial areas in a manner that will encourage revitalization and investment in these areas.

Objective 14-3. To enhance and capitalize on the contribution of existing cultural resources in the community.

There is substantial discussion with the NELA Community Plan with regard to cultural and historic resources within the Plan Area. The basis of this discussion centers around the age and character of structures within the community (the area is among the first developed within Los Angeles) and the significant number of historically significant structures and places that remain in the area. Cypress Park and Glassell Park were both primarily developed during the 1910's and 1920's and the prevailing character of these neighborhoods is heavily influenced by the preponderance of Victorian era, Craftsman, Mission and Spanish Colonial style homes and traditional commercial storefronts. The Design Guidelines and Development Standards for all project types within the CDO contain provisions that facilitate the maintenance and preservation of historic architectural features, require building additions that are complementary in scale and style to existing structures and that mandate new structures that are compatible with the surrounding district.

Economic Development Objectives

Objective 15-1. To improve the visual environment of existing commercial and industrial areas.

The Design Guidelines and Development Standards target commercial areas with a push toward creating a unique sense of place, which draws upon historic architectural features and building types; and which encourages a lively pedestrian oriented environment thus encouraging continued investment within the District.

Objective 16-2. To streamline, and where appropriate, revise regulations, including zoning, that create barriers to economic development.

As a result of input from the local community (as well as members from other community within the City) the LAMC was amended to streamline the review of projects within CDOs. The revision created a minor project review process wherein simple projects such as signs, awnings and any other individual projects types as identified within

individual CDOs may be approved “over the counter” without the necessity of a written and appealable determination from the Planning Department. Along with signs and awnings, the Cypress Park and Glassell Park allows for a simple review process for minor modifications to single family homes pursuant to the “Single Family Home Checklist” in Appendix 1 of the CDO document.

4. The proposed CDO design Guidelines and Standards are in conformance with Section 13.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC)

The proposed Cypress Park and Glassell Park CDO Design Guidelines and Development Standards are consistent with the purposes of a Community Design Overlay District as stated in Section 13.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. Implementation of the CDO assures that development in the area takes place in accordance with the Plan Objectives and Design Policies contained in the adopted Community Plan for Northeast Los Angeles. The CDO promotes distinctive character, stability and visual quality in the existing community, and ensures that future development provides a ‘sense of place’ in terms of design, because it considers the unique architectural character and environmental setting of the district. The CDO protects the integrity of previously attained entitlements by fostering a more attractive, pedestrian-serving commercial corridor and helping to prevent the addition of structures with exterior design not compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed CDO consists of Design Guidelines, that encompass Development Standards applicable to new developments and to alterations of existing buildings. Site planning guidelines address setbacks and parking/vehicular access. Building Design guidelines address mass, scale, and openings. Architectural Features guidelines address ground-floor façade articulation, massing and articulation of upper stories, historic architectural features, entrances, residential ground floor restrictions, and awnings/canopies. Landscaping guidelines address general landscaping location and materials, and landscaping of parking lots and structures. Signage guidelines address wall signs, projecting signs, awning or canopy signs, multi-tenant building signage, monument signs, and other signs.

Geographic Area Findings

8. The boundaries of the proposed Cypress Park and Glassell Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) include those parcels on approximately two square miles of land in the northeast Los Angeles area; the subject area spans from areas east of the Los Angeles River, South of the Glendale City limit, west of the Mount Washington hillside area and north of the Pasadena Freeway, as show on Exhibit A.

CEQA Findings

9. A Negative Declaration (ENV-2008-0146-ND) was prepared for the proposed project on January 28, 2008. On the basis of the whole of the record, the Department of City Planning, the lead agency, determines that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. The attached Negative Declaration (*Exhibit E*) reflects the lead agency’s independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the Environmental Review Section of the Department of City Planning in Room 750, 200 North Spring Street.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMUNICATIONS

A Public Hearing was held for the proposed CDO on February 26, 2008 in the Cypress Park neighborhood and on February 28, 2008 in the Glassell Park neighborhood and the public comment period regarding the project was left open through March 13, 2008. A public notice was sent out on January 22, 2008. The following information and feedback below is a synthesis of public comments received:

February 26, 2008 Public Hearing

1. A public hearing on this matter was held at the Cypress Park Recreation Center at 2630 Pepper Avenue at 7:00 P.M.
2. Attendees: 45 people signed in
3. Speakers in Support: 5 people spoke in favor of the plan:
 - a. Each speaker commented that the CDO would be a valuable tool in revitalizing the commercial district;
 - b. Three speakers commented that they hoped to see some preservation of historic homes brought about by the adoption of the Guidelines and Standards;
 - c. Four speakers commented that the CDO was the result of a collaborative community process and expressed gratitude to the Planning Department for the extensive outreach done prior to the hearing;
 - d. One speaker commented that he hoped there would be additional City services such as economic development, increased graffiti abatement, street improvements to supplement the planning effort;
 - e. One speaker in support raised questions about pending Q-Conditions to limit land uses and expressed a concern that while the CDO would be positive, that the Q-Conditions, depending on what they were, could have an impact on the livelihood of residents and business owners.
4. Speakers in Opposition: 1 person spoke in opposition to the plan
 - a. The speaker referenced a Council Motion which requests that the Planning Department adopt Q-Conditions to prohibit automotive repair within the area and commented that such an action would be detrimental to his livelihood. (Note, the Public Hearing was for the CDO and no official Public Hearing has been held for Q-Conditions at this time).

February 28, 2008 Public Hearing

1. A public hearing on this matter was held at the Glassell Park Community Center at 3750 Verdugo Road at 7:00 P.M.
2. Attendees: 69 people signed in
3. Speakers in Support: 15 people spoke in favor of the plan:
 - a. Four people commented that the plan represented an extensive community process that has take several years;

- b. Four people commented that the boundaries, as proposed, were appropriate because they would provide cohesion to the entire community, noting in particular that Glassell Park has suffered enough division through freeway corridors, council district lines etc.;
 - c. Six people referenced their participation in the recent Cypress Park/Glassell Park Walkabout, and cited that the experience showed them the need for improved building design to facilitate a better pedestrian environment;
 - d. One person supported the plan but questioned the necessity and efficacy of imposing guidelines to hillside lots and expressed concern that the regulation might be cumbersome;
 - e. The plan provides rules that make sense for the community and would address the rampant and inappropriate development that has taken place over the years;
 - f. The plan would create a more welcoming environment that would encourage new business to locate and invest in the area;
 - g. Many of the historic structures within the area need to be protected and the plan provides guidelines that would accomplish this;
 - h. Residents want to have a walkable neighborhood, not a thoroughfare and believe that the plan could help accomplish this;
 - i. Better building design could create a safer looking and feeling environment and encourage people to get out of their cars;
 - j. Guidelines would supplement the various improvements that are being made at the Taylor Yard site, along San Fernando Road and the proposed streetscape plans for Fletcher Drive and Eagle Rock Blvd.
4. Speakers in Opposition: 3 people spoke in opposition to the plan
- a. Two speakers indicated that the northeastern portion of the plan area has historically been known as Eagle Rock and consequently should not be associated with the plan area
 - b. One speaker indicated that the plan area was too large and that it represented boundaries that were pre-conceived by Council Offices, adding that the San Fernando corridor would be an acceptable candidate for such a plan. He further stated that funds could be better spend on addressing public safety within the area

Written Communications Received

- Eight letters and emails were received during, or in response to, the Public Hearing that indicated support of the plan.
 - a. The goals of the plan seem to be easily administered and attainable;
 - b. The CDO will improve the quality of life for residents and business owners;
 - c. Planning staff has done an excellent job communicating with stakeholders and responding to local input;
 - d. The plan accurately reflects the desires of the community;
 - e. The Design Guidelines will make the neighborhood more accessible and safer;
 - f. CDO will set the stage for revitalization of the District;
 - g. The District has been without any tool for protection for too long;
 - h. The residential neighborhoods, and especially the hillside areas have been prey to out-of-scale development that is ruining character;
 - i. Design Guidelines will complement the improvements made along San Fernando Road and at the Taylor Yard Park;
 - j. Communities have suffered neglect and division, the CDO would unify and re-establish a sense of place

- Of those correspondences, one letter was received that indicated support of the plan with modifications, or wrote in favor but raised concerns.
 - a. Single family home Guidelines and Standards would be difficult to apply to hillside lots in the upper Verdugo Road area;
 - b. Post 1950's homes would be subject to review which would be unnecessary;
 - c. The goals of pedestrian orientation are questionable in hillside areas where sidewalks are often not present and where pedestrian mobility is challenged by topography;
- Two letters were received during or in response to the Public Hearing that indicated opposition to the plan.
 - a. Money could be better spent on public safety programs than they could on the administration of a CDO;
 - b. The December 18, 2007 Council Motion regarding banning auto repair within the CDO area indicates a disinterest in adhering to a public process on the part of the Council Offices;
 - c. The boundaries of the CDO are excessively large, could better be used to target San Fernando Corridor;
- Of those correspondences, one letter was received that included a petition signed by 15 local business owners that opposed any effort to make automotive repair illegal within the area.

EAST LOS ANGELES AREA PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

On March 26, 2008 The CDO was presented to the East Los Angeles Area Planning Commission for review and comment. All five commissioners were in attendance. The following is a summary of their comments:

- The CDO is well thought-out and anticipates a variety of scenarios and project types;
- The Guidelines and Standards appear to be flexible, which is essential given the geographic size of the CDO Area;
- The protection of historic structures is a long-standing goal within the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan Area and the CDO would accomplish this goal for the District;
- The simplified review process for single family homes and for other minor projects is essential in order to lessen the impact of implementation on small business owners and homeowners;
- The Northeast Linkages program provided guidelines for new street standards to ease pedestrian mobility, if these standards cannot be implemented through the CDO it would be essential to see them implemented through the RIO or other future streetscape plan in the near future;
- If the designation of additional park and public facility space cannot be made through the CDO it would be desirable to have other city agencies seize the momentum that could be created by the CDO and work to provide greater open space and recreation space.