



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024  
701 East Carson Street, Carson, CA 90745  
Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center  
Carson Dominguez Hall  
6:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Members:	Dianne Thomas Chair	Louie Diaz Vice Chair	Frederick Docdocil
	Carlos Guerra	Del Huff	Richard Hernandez
	DeQuita Mfume	Clarence Johnson	Leticia Wilson
Alternates:	Jaime Monteclaro		
Staff:	Christopher Palmer, AICP Planning Manager	Benjamin Jones Assistant City Attorney	Laura Gonzalez Planning Secretary

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“In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call the Planning Department at 310-952-1761 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.” (Government Code Section 54954.2)

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Thomas Called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

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**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Huff led the Salute to the Flag.

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**3. ROLL CALL**

Planning Commissioners Present: Thomas, Diaz, Guerra, Huff, Docdocil, Wilson, Mfume, Johnson, Monteclaro

Planning Commissioners Absent: Hernandez

Planning Staff Present: Community Development Director Naaseh, Planning Manager Palmer, Assistant City Attorney Jones, Traffic Engineer Merrill, Planning Secretary Gonzalez

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**4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

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**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR NON-PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA (MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC)**

None

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**6. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A) Approval of Minutes – October 22, 2024**

Planning Commission Decision:

Commissioner Huff moved, seconded by Vice Chair Diaz, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried, 9-0.

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**7. PUBLIC HEARING**

**A) General Plan Amendment (2024 GPA-001)**

Request:

Consideration of a Recommendation to City Council concerning a General Plan Amendment that would add text to the General Plan Land Use Element to require approval of a Specific Plan prior to redevelopment of sites that currently operate as oil or petroleum refineries within City of Carson.

Staff Recommendation:

Planning Manager Palmer presented the staff report and the recommendation to ADOPT Resolution No. 24-2880, entitled, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON RECOMMENDING THAT THE CARSON CITY COUNCIL APPROVE CEQA "NO PROJECT"/EXEMPTION FINDINGS AND ADOPT GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 001-24, MODIFYING THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE CARSON 2040 GENERAL PLAN REGARDING SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENT FOR ANY REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING OIL OR PETROLEUM REFINERY SITES FOLLOWING CESSATION OF REFINERY OPERATIONS."

Assistant City Attorney Jones – Staff proposes a modification to the existing language of Implementing Policy LUR-P-29 on page 2-30 of the General Plan Land Use and Revitalization Element as follows (addition shown in underlined font; deletions shown in ~~strike through~~ font):

"Undertake planned development and Specific Plans for unique projects, as a means to achieve high community standards, address neighborhood or significant site-specific issues, ensure compatibility between a number of uses, on large parcels, and when needed as part of a redevelopment or environmental remediation strategy. Requires submittal and approval of a Specific Plan prior to, or concurrently with, approval of development plans for any redevelopment of the site of an existing oil or petroleum refinery or associated use for a new use following cessation of refinery operations."

Assistant City Attorney Jones – The italicized text of the next paragraph is intended to provide context and explanation for reference and is not considered adopted policy.

*Such areas that would benefit from a specific plan include the Shell Site, ~~the~~ and South Bay Pavilion, the site of the Marathon Oil Refinery (as shown in Figure 2-3), and the site of the Phillips 66 Oil Refinery, if redeveloped.”*

Commissioner Monteclaro – Is the approval of development plans subject to the approval of the Specific Plan?

Planning Manager Palmer – Yes, or concurrently. When someone proposes a Specific Plan, that Specific Plan controls the development. They can also submit the development plan concurrently with the Specific Plan as a packet.

Assistant City Attorney Jones – The development plans would need to be consistent with the Specific Plan. The intent of this language was that they could go to the approval body at the same time. For example, if we’re going to City Council it could all be brought together. The documents would be prepared such as the development plans are consistent with the Specific Plan. The City Council would approve the Specific Plan immediately thereafter as part of the same council agenda item or would approve the development plans as part of the same hearing. I think concurrently means at the same meeting.

Commissioner Guerra – Is the Land Use and Revitalization specifically targeting the existing refineries or in general?

Planning Manager Palmer – This is existing language that was already in the General Plan. We feel that adding the new language to this section it enhances it.

Chair Thomas – We already have language in the General Plan, and we are enhancing that language so that as we have the possibility for land to be redeveloped. For example, Phillips 66, or Shell, or Tesoro historically have been oil fields. If they are pulling out of that function, there’s a strong possibility that down the line we may be looking at those properties to be redeveloped for something completely different. We are making sure that that the language that we have in the General Plan will address the cleanup of the property so that it can be redeveloped for things such as housing. We would have to make sure that all the requirements are met so that houses would be able to exist on that property.

Planning Manager Palmer – The whole intent is to enhance the public health safety and welfare. The Specific Plan will do that as it adds a layer of protection because it emphasizes stricter standards. It’s going to address the environmental concerns because you have to do CEQA on any type of project. It’s going to address the compatibility of where it’s going and it’s going to look at a broader more regional scale.

Assistant City Attorney – The General Plan Land Use Element already addresses the Shell site as a formerly refinery site. When the General Plan was adopted, it contemplated that there’s a possibility that it’s going to be redeveloped so let’s require a Specific Plan to ensure cohesiveness of the redevelopment, compatibility of the redevelopment looking at it from a comprehensive perspective and it had various requirements. It was contemplated that it will be

redevelop at some point, but it didn't really contemplate that for existing refinery sites. That's what this General Plan Amendment looks at more in detail. It may be that the existing implementing policy that's being amended, which is LUR-P-29 in the Land Use Element would already cover it because the existing text does say, "Undertake planned development and Specific Plans for unique projects as a means to achieve high community standards, address neighborhood or significant site specific issues, ensure compatibility between a number of uses, on large parcels, and when needed as part of a redevelopment or environmental remediation strategy." Just to be clear and be certain about it, we are now adding language that's expressly requiring, "submittal and approval of a Specific Plan prior to, or concurrently with, approval of development plans for any redevelopment of the site of an existing oil or petroleum refinery or associated use for a new use following cessation of refinery operations."

Commissioner Monteclaro – Can you explain why this project is exempt from CEQA?

Planning Manager Palmer – This is adding language to the General Plan. It's not proposing a project or any development. That is why this particular action is exempt. If the owners of the property were to come in and propose a Specific Plan that would not be exempt from CEQA. There would be an initial study and all the associated environmental research and reports that will be tied to those properties.

Assistant City Attorney Jones – The proposed CEQA finding is in Section 3 of the Resolution. There are three bases for determining that this General Plan Amendment is exempt from CEQA. That's not to say that a subsequent project for redevelopment of a refinery site would be exempt. This General Plan Amendment helps ensure that the city would have CEQA review authority over that type of a project.

Chair Thomas opened the public hearing. There being no input, Chair Thomas closed the public hearing.

Chair Thomas – I think this is great because it addresses many communities of color where the environmental justice is very important. I'm happy to see this coming in on our General Plan to address as many things as we can address to make sure we incorporate that environmental justice and the safety for all the community. We want to make sure we are moving towards doing everything we can to make the environment as safe as possible.

Planning Commission Decision:

Vice Chair Diaz moved, seconded by Commissioner Huff, to approve staff's recommendation with revisions, thus adopting Resolution 24-2880. Motion carried, 9-0.

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## 8. DISCUSSION

- **Presentation – Carson Active Transportation and Community Connectivity Plan**

Traffic Engineer Merrill – I would like to give you an update as to the progress that we made on our Carson Active Transportation and Community Connectivity Plan. It has been about a year of public outreach and work that we have been doing with the consultant to put together this plan. Our goals today are to not only inform and brief you on what we have been up to and where we are at on the project but also to put out the message that we have public workshops

coming up both this week and next week. We want to make sure that anyone who might listen to this meeting is aware of those. One of the key things as we develop this is that staff can facilitate the discussion. Staff has a certain understanding of the community and what the community wants but until and unless we hear from the community, we can't put that into the plan because ultimately the plan is an expression of what the people of Carson really want to see as their future. Not necessarily immediate but a future vision of what we want as far as active transportation here in the city.

Devon Gelle from Alta Planning & Design provided a presentation.

Traffic Engineer Merrill – We were hoping to meet with the mayor today, unfortunately she was not able to meet with us. I want to make sure that everyone is aware that we have not talked to the mayor about this project specifically yet.

Commissioner Guerra – My question is in regards the protected bike lanes as it relates to cleaning and maintenance. I don't think we could fit a street sweeper in there. I'm curious as to how you would resolve that issue.

Devon Gelle – A lot of our class fours are on the longer-term end of implementation compared to some of our more feasible striping recommendations for example. The reason that we have so many types of class 4 options are because of things like maintenance. Some of these things like planters are a lot easier to maneuver around, maybe you don't need the street sweeper. There are options like two-way cycle tracks, they are a bit wider, and they can sometimes be as wide as a travel lane. You don't necessarily need special equipment but that is a great point and something that we'll need to consider before anything is implemented.

Chair Thomas – We always think in terms of street sweeper, but they also have the smaller street sweepers that fit right in the lane and can go right through there and takes away all the curbside trash.

Commissioner Wilson – Would you mind emailing this presentation to all the commissioners?

Devon Gelle – Yes.

Commissioner Johnson – Is there any thoughts of incorporating the paths around the storm channels for walkability or biking?

Devon Gelle – Yes, some of the class ones are along the flood control channels and most of those are taken from previous planning documents. The bicycle master plan that we're developing in the future will focus on the details for those types of recommendations.

Commissioner Monteclaro – Is this exclusively for bikes and not for motorized bikes?

Devon Gelle – It's mainly for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. One plan that we did consider is the South Bay Council of Governments Local Travel Network. It's a local network which includes all slow speed vehicles like electric bikes or even golf carts. We did consider that when we made our recommendations.

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Traffic Engineer Merrill – We are working with South Bay Council of Government to help develop that local travel network. However, because of the funding constraints that we have for active transportation we have to focus on active transportation. It doesn't mean that we couldn't touch on other nexus that we have to do those mobility constraints that people who are mobility challenge really don't have to be able to get to the places where they're going to catch a bus, a train, or the rapid transit.

Chair Thomas – We have a lot of the housing developments that we have already approved here on the Planning Commission, which means that we're going to have even more cars. We have traffic in Carson. My concern is for the unprotected bike lanes. I have attended to one of the sessions that you had, and I thought it was very informative. I stayed long enough to see bikers expressing what they wanted to see happen. How do you feel the attendance has gone in these workshops?

Devon Gelle – They have been okay. One of the reasons for this phase of engagement that we're opening is to get more feedback. Obviously, we know not everyone can attend the workshop. They are opening a virtual meeting room. Everyone can provide comments over a long period of time. I think this is going to be very beneficial for this plan. We are planning to open it at the beginning of next week.

Chair Thomas – Are we looking at some additional traffic signals to help with the calming down of traffic?

Devon Gelle – One of the things in the plan we're recommending is more so for pedestrians but is good for bicyclists too. Our leading pedestrian intervals where the pedestrian will get the walk signal before the light turns green. The pedestrian or the bicyclist will be in the crosswalk before the drivers can even go, which really helps with pedestrian and bicyclist visibility. We are also recommending a few pedestrian beacons separate from the traffic signals where if there's a busy place to cross but there are no signals or crosswalks for long stretches the pedestrians or bicyclists can activate that signal and cross.

Chair Thomas – Did I also see a traffic circle?

Devon Gelle – Those are small roundabouts. They are very useful in local streets. If you're speeding, you can't continue to speed because you have to curve around the traffic circle a little bit. They are great in managing traffic speed in residential areas. They are also great for landscaping.

Chair Thomas – Could Turmont and Del Amon have some of these traffic circles? They are very busy residential streets.

Devon Gelle – I think we're recommending a few on Turmont. On Del Amo probably not.

Chair Thomas – How would that affect residents who live on Turmont and are we looking at being able to do that without capturing some of their front yards?

Devon Gelle – Yes. We are making these concept designs for priority areas and Turmont is one of them. We are essentially doing preliminary design to make sure that things like traffic

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circles are even feasible. There will be design and engineering phases but as of now based on our preliminary findings it is feasible without disrupting residents.

Traffic Engineer Merrill – There's a lot of engineering that needs to take place. We don't have information to develop those concepts further right now. These are ideas that we're putting on paper to see what they look like and to see how the community responds. The next step after it's approved by City Council is then to get the money to study it further and develop those designs to make sure that it is feasible.

Chair Thomas – So you will be conducting feasibility studies.

Traffic Engineer Merrill – Absolutely, but we have to get it on paper so we can ask for the money to do that. The first public workshop is on November 14th at Hemingway Park at 7:00 pm. There's another meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 pm at Carson Event Center. There's also the virtual workshop on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm. We hope to see everyone there.

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## **8. MANAGER'S REPORT**

Planning Manager Palmer – In October we presented a video with the achievements of the Planning Commission over the last 12 months. I'm going to be presenting that video to the City Council on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The video will be available on YouTube after it has been presented to City Council.

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## **9. COMMISSIONERS' ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Monteclaro – We had a very important matter tonight. I'm concerned that there was no participation from the community.

Chair Thomas – People tell me that they watch the meeting on their television or their computer.

Commissioner Johnson – Thank you staff for being proactive regarding the General Plan Amendment.

Commissioner Mfume – I'm proud to be a resident of Carson. We are doing great things. The city and staff are doing wonderful things. We are making great decisions for Carson.

Commissioner Wilson – I was wondering if staff knows when the ceremony is going to happen for the newly elected city council.

Chair Thomas – There is a possibility that it may happen on the first week of December. The county may not be complete until probably around the end of November. The county has to certify the election before you can swear anybody in.

Commissioner Wilson – Please send me a copy of the Carson Active Transportation and Community Connectivity Plan presentation. I want to remind folks to mask up and to protect yourself from the RSV strain that is now harming and impacting people over 50. Let's be safe and let's do whatever we need to do to protect ourselves.

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Commissioner Docdocil – Thank you to our staff for the amazing job. Hats off to my fellow commissioners for doing our part and moving the city forward.

Commissioner Huff – It's an honor to sit on this commission. I thank everyone for their hard work.

Commissioner Guerra – To see what this amazing city has done makes me content and proud. Serving on the Planning Commission and being part of this is amazing. Can staff provide a follow-up on the status of the surveillance cameras?

Planning Manager Palmer – I will follow-up.

Vice Chair Diaz – Thank you staff for preparing the reports and for my fellow commissioners for attending to these important meetings. Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Chair Thomas – Carson Citizens Cultural Arts Foundation will be hosting their annual turkey and gift cards giveaway supported by our Mayor Lula Davis-Holmes. It will take place at the South Bay Pavilion on November 24<sup>th</sup>. Carson Citizens Cultural Arts Foundation will also be hosting its annual toy giveaway on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Event Center.

Planning Manager Palmer – I hereby cancel the meeting of November 26<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Thomas – Prayers for everyone who will be traveling and prayers so that we all have a wonderful and safe holiday.

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## 10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

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Dianne Thomas  
Chairperson

Attest By:

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Laura Gonzalez  
Planning Secretary