NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

DATE: September 24, 2026

TO: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: City of Bell Gardens
Community Development Department
7100 Garfield Avenue
Bell Gardens, CA 90201

SUBJECT: Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Land Use Element Amendment, Focused Zoning Code Amendment, Zone Change, and Objective Design Standards

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Bell Gardens (City) has prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration ("IS/MND"), which is being distributed for public review pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 21092 and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15072 for the following project:

Project Title: Land Use Element Amendment, Focused Zoning Code Amendment, Zone Change, and Objective Design Standards

Project Location: Citywide

Project Description: The project consists of targeted updates to several interrelated plans and land use regulations including: a General Plan Land Use Element Amendment; a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment; a focused Zoning Code Amendment; a Zone Change/Zoning Map Amendments; and new Objective Design Standards ("Project"). This Project builds on the City's recent updates to the General Plan Housing Element, Circulation Element, Environmental Justice Element, and Climate Action Plan.

The proposed Land Use Element amendment contains goals, policies, and programs that will provide City staff and discretionary bodies with a foundation for decisions on development projects and long-range planning related to physical development and public services. Focus areas identify where additional emphasis is placed on policy implementation. The Project proposes no new General Plan Land Use categories nor any changes to densities or intensities of any existing Land Use category, other than clarifications.

The proposed Zoning Code amendments implement Housing Element policy and proposed General Plan Land Use policy. The proposed amendments span five divisions of the Zoning Code and address residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial, open space, and institutional zoning districts, as well as citywide administrative and procedural provisions. Substantively, the amendments: (1) establish development and use standards for the R-4 (Very High Density Residential) zone and revise development and use standards in the R-2 and R-3 zones to reduce constraints on housing production and align allowable densities with the General Plan; (2) establish a complete set of development standards for the Mixed-Use zone, which previously relied on Residential zone standards by default, and revise Commercial zone use and development standards for consistency across zones; (3) bring the Zoning Code into compliance with

California housing law by updating the Density Bonus Ordinance, and by adding or revising definitions, use tables, parking standards, and permitting procedures applicable to Low Barrier Navigation Centers, emergency shelters, supportive housing, employee housing, residential care facilities, and large family daycare homes; (4) reduce governmental constraints on housing production by removing obsolete and duplicative use classifications, streamlining Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Review procedures, establishing a new administrative Design Review Modification process, and removing the Parking and Buffer District Overlay; and (5) revise citywide parking standards, including bicycle parking, accessible parking, and parking requirements for changes of use in small tenant spaces.

The Project proposes the adoption of objective design standards for multifamily residential and mixed-use development to fulfill the requirements of SB 35 and other California laws relating to the streamlined review of qualifying residential and mixed-use development projects. “Objective design standards” are defined in California Government Code Sections 65913.4 and 66300(a)(7) as standards that “involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official before submittal.”

The proposed Project includes a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment that changes the General Plan and Zoning designations of one 1.41-acre parcel within the city. This parcel was identified as a housing opportunity site within the adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element and was inadvertently omitted from the City’s 2023 effort to update their General Plan Land Use Map and Zoning Map. Zoning Map Amendments also include removal of the Parking and Buffer District Overlay and a revision to the Historic Preservation District Overlay to reduce the geographic area to which it applies.

Environmental Determination: An Initial Study of environmental impacts was prepared pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14 (“CEQA Guidelines”), Section 15063. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, the City has determined that this Project would not result in significant environmental impacts. A Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed for this Project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15367 and 15070. Mitigation measures for cultural resources, geology and soils, and tribal cultural resources will be required to reduce impacts to less than significant. Accordingly, the City intends to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(c).

Hazardous Waste Sites: The City includes properties on the list of hazardous materials facilities, hazardous waste properties, or hazardous waste disposal sites enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (Cortese List).

Public Review/Public Comment Period: Copies of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration and related documents will be available for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning **Thursday, September 24, 2026** and ending **Monday, October 26, 2026.** Any person may submit written comments to the Community Development Department before the end of the review period. Copies of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for public review at the City of Bell Gardens, Community Development Department, 7100 Garfield Avenue, Bell Gardens, CA 90201. These materials are also available for review on the City’s website at: https://www.bellgardens.org/government/city-departments/community-development/land-use-element-update-multifamily-mixed-use-objective-development-standards. Written comments should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026, to the City of Bell Gardens Community Development Department. If you would like to comment, please send written comments to:

Alfonso Hernandez, Acting Community Development Director
City of Bell Gardens
Community Development Department
7100 Garfield Avenue
Bell Gardens, CA 90201
(562) 806-7722

ahernandez@bellgardens.org

Public Hearing: A public hearing to consider the proposed Project and Mitigated Negative Declaration is scheduled before the Bell Gardens Planning Commission on **Wednesday, October 28, 2026 at 5:15 P.M**., at City Hall at 7100 Garfield Avenue, Bell Gardens, CA 90201. A public hearing regarding adoption of the Project and Mitigated Negative Declaration is scheduled before the Bell Gardens City Council on **Monday, November 9, 2026 at 6:00 P.M**., at City Hall at 7100 Garfield Avenue, Bell Gardens, CA 90201. **Public Hearing dates are subject to change and shall be noticed accordingly.**