



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: January 11, 2006 REPORT NO. PC-06-005

ATTENTION: Planning Commission  
Agenda of January 19, 2006

SUBJECT: Initiation of an amendment to the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan to redesignate a 4.4-acre site from Religious Facility to General Institutional.  
Project No. 87798

OWNER/  
APPLICANT: Palomar Pomerado Health

### SUMMARY

Issue – Should the Planning Commission INITIATE a land use plan amendment to the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan pursuant to Municipal Code Section 122.0103? An Amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan has been requested to redesignate a 4.4-acre site from Religious Facility to General Institutional.

Manager's Recommendation – INITIATE the plan amendment process.

Community Planning Group Recommendation – At the regularly scheduled and noticed planning board meeting of December 7, 2005, the Rancho Peñasquitos Planning Board voted 10-1-1 to recommend approval of the plan amendment initiation (Planning Board minutes not available).

Environmental Impact – If initiated, the proposed plan amendment and future discretionary actions will be subject to environmental review.

Fiscal Impact – Processing costs are paid by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact – None.

Housing Affordability Impact – None.

**This initiation request does not constitute an endorsement of the project proposal. A staff recommendation will be developed once the project has been fully analyzed. This action will allow the staff analysis to proceed.**

## BACKGROUND

The Rancho Peñasquitos community planning area is located in the northern portion of the City of San Diego. Interstate 15 provides the eastern boundary of the planning area and State Route 56 traverses east-west through the south-central portion of the community. Adjacent communities include Carmel Mountain Ranch and Sabre Springs to the east, Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Mira Mesa to the south, Del Mar Mesa and Torrey Highlands to the west, Black Mountain Ranch to the northwest and Rancho Bernardo to the north (see Attachment 1 – Location Map).

The subject property is a 4.4-acre site located south of State Route 56 and east of Black Mountain Road (see Attachment 2 – Aerial Map). The property is designated in the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan as Religious Facility. The property is currently developed with three buildings accommodating a church, primary school, and child care center. Existing development on adjacent properties includes residential and commercial uses. Land use designations which border the subject property include Very Low-Density (0-1 du/ac) and Low-Density (1-5 du/ac) Residential to the east, south, and west, and Community Commercial and Medium-Density (10-22 du/ac) Residential to the north (see Attachment 3 – Land Use Map).

The proposed amendment would redesignate the 4.4-acre site from Religious Facility to General Institutional. This would create a new land use category in the Community Plan. The City of San Diego's General Plan General Institutional designation provides for uses that are identified as public or semi-public facilities in the community plan, and which offer public and semi-public services to the community. Uses may include but are not limited to airports, community colleges, university campuses, communication and utilities, transit centers, water sanitation plants, schools, libraries, police and fire facilities, cemeteries, post offices, hospitals, park and ride lots, government offices, and civic centers. The applicant has indicated the desire to develop the property with a satellite healthcare facility, which would likely include an outpatient clinic and medical offices. Should the proposed plan amendment be initiated, it is anticipated it would be processed concurrently with any required development permits, including a rezone.

The community plan discusses the need for the consideration of locating a community health clinic centrally in Rancho Peñasquitos to serve the north city area. The plan states that the clinic could provide community health education and information services, as well as operate as a center for prevention and detection services provided by the county. Limited emergency, diagnosis, and treatment services could also be possible. Healthcare service needs of the community are currently being met by other facilities located in Escondido, Poway, and the north-central portion of the City of San Diego.

Currently, there is one other plan amendment that has been initiated within the Rancho Peñasquitos community (Cresta Bella initiation). This amendment is intended to analyze the increase in residential density, including a commercial component, on a 30.7-acre site located near Interstate 15 at the southwest corner of Carmel Mountain Road and Peñasquitos Drive.

## DISCUSSION

Before a community plan amendment can be initiated, Section 122.0104 of the Municipal Code requires that any one of three initial criteria or all four supplemental criteria, specified in the code, must be met. The Planning Department does not believe that any of the following three initial criteria can be met:

- (1) **The amendment is appropriate due to a mapping or textual error or omission made when the original land use plan or local coastal program was adopted or during subsequent amendments;**
- (2) **Denial of initiation would jeopardize the public health, safety or general welfare;**
- (3) **The amendment is appropriate due to a material change in circumstances since the adoption of a land use plan or local coastal program whereby denial of initiation would result in a hardship to the applicant by denying any reasonable use of the subject real property.**

The Planning Department does, however, believe that all of the following supplemental criteria can be met:

- (1) **The proposed land use plan amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan.**

An important goal in the General Plan is to assure that adequate public facilities and services are available to meet the City's needs. Providing medical services is critical, given the continuing growth and aging nature of the population. In the City, healthcare is entrusted to a variety of public and private entities, rather than being a municipal responsibility. The proposed plan amendment would fulfill medical service needs by modernizing and expanding facilities consistent with the City's long-range planning goals.

A primary goal in the Public Facilities and Services Element of the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan is to maintain a high level of public facilities and services as the community grows. The healthcare service needs of Rancho Peñasquitos are currently being met by facilities in the north-central portion of the City and surrounding cities. The community plan states that consideration should be given to a centrally located community health clinic in Rancho Peñasquitos to serve the north city area. The proposed amendment would be consistent with these objectives by providing for a land use designation which would allow for a healthcare facility.

- (2) **The proposed land use plan amendment appears to offer a public benefit to the community or City.**

The proposed plan amendment would allow for the expansion of healthcare options in the Rancho Peñasquitos community and address the need of a community health clinic identified by the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan.

The site is in close proximity to existing residential, commercial services, as well as convenient freeway and transit access. The subject property is well located to give residents access to a number of public and commercial services, key goals in the Strategic Framework Element and the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan.

**(3) Public services appear to be available to serve the proposed increase in density or intensity of use.**

Public services appear to be available to serve the proposed land use designation change, as Rancho Peñasquitos is an urbanizing community, and services are available for this and surrounding uses. However, the adequacy of all public services to serve the proposed increase in intensity of use will be examined in more detail if this initiation request is approved.

**(4) City staff is available to process the proposed land use plan amendment without any work being deferred on General Fund supported programs or ongoing plan updates.**

Staff is available to process this amendment request without delaying general fund programs or ongoing plan updates, as the Planning Department's work program includes staff time for non-general fund development projects. However, delays in processing the plan amendment could occur based on staff levels and workloads. The costs associated with processing this amendment will be paid for by the applicant.

## CONCLUSION

As outlined above, the proposed plan amendment meets all of the supplemental initiation criteria; therefore, staff recommends that the proposed amendment to the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan be initiated.

The following land use issues have been identified with the initiation request. If initiated, these issues, as well as others that may be identified, will be analyzed and evaluated through the community plan amendment review process:

- Analysis of an appropriate land use and zoning designation for the subject property
- Compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding uses
- Evaluation of traffic impacts of the proposed change in use and determine if any circulation improvements would be necessary
- Compatibility between the proposed general/community plan amendment and the City's Progress Guide and General Plan and Strategic Framework Element

Although staff believes that the proposed amendment meets the necessary criteria for initiation, staff has not fully reviewed the applicant's proposal. **Therefore, by initiating this community plan amendment, neither staff nor the Planning Commission is committed to recommend in favor or denial of the proposed amendment.**

ALTERNATIVES

Find the proposed land use plan amendment does meet the criteria as described and deny the general/community plan amendment initiation request.

Respectfully submitted,

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Acting Program Manager  
Planning Department

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Jennifer Cordeau  
Associate Planner  
Planning Department

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- Attachments:
1. Rancho Peñasquitos Location Map
  2. Rancho Peñasquitos Aerial Map
  3. Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan – Land Use Map
  4. Ownership Disclosure Statement
  5. Site Photographs