



Staff Report

City of Pomona Planning Commission

April 22, 2026

FILE NOS: CODE-000378-2025

Request to amend the Pomona Zoning & Development Code to modify objective design standards, use definitions and standards, and administrative processes.

ADDRESS: **Citywide**

APPLICANT: City of Pomona

PROJECT PLANNER: Alina Barron, Senior Planner

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: This project may be considered exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule Exemption of the California CEQA Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve PC Resolution No. 26-005 recommending approval to City Council of Zoning Code Amendment (CODE-000378-2025) (Attachment No. 1).

Executive Summary

On July 1, 2024, the City of Pomona adopted Ordinance No. 4345, approving a comprehensive update to the Pomona Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. The new Pomona Zoning & Development Code ("New Code") successfully implements the goals and policies of the 2014 Pomona General Plan ("General Plan") and meets the grant objectives set by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in its SB 2 and LEAP programs for permit streamlining to accelerate housing production. The update of the New Code began in July 2021 and took approximately three years to complete. It was written collaboratively with the community and involved multiple public discussions with the Planning Commission, community meetings, pop-up events, and one-on-one stakeholder meetings.

The following amendment is the modification of objective design standards, use definitions and standards, and administrative processes. The goal of the Planning Division is to make amendments to the New Code on an annual basis to ensure that the New Code is executing development as intended to achieve the goals of the General Plan. Regularly updating the code will assist in addressing necessary modifications in a timely manner.

Request:

The proposed Zoning Code Amendment is a request to modify objective design standards, use definitions and standards, and administrative processes in the New Code (Attachment No. 2). The proposed amendment will achieve the following:

- 1) Provide clarity to administrative processes.
- 2) Revise language related to application of design standards for consistency.
- 3) Update the Use chapter to provide clarity and address new use land uses that have become prevalent since the 2024 adoption.

Other amendments included in this action include clerical errors, revisions to general rules, and revisions to Public Art as approved by the Cultural Arts Commission on December 22, 2025.

Staff Analysis:

A. Applicable Code Section

Pursuant to Pomona Zoning & Development Code Section 1150.D.(2), the City Council may, by ordinance and upon written recommendation of the Planning Commission, amend, supplement, or change the ordinances codified in this Zoning and Development Code whenever the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, or good zoning practice so requires.

A Zoning Code Amendment must be acted upon by the Approving Authority based upon the information provided in the submitted application, evidence presented in the Planning Division's written report, and testimony provided during the public hearing, only after considering and clearly establishing all of the below-listed findings, and giving supporting reasons for each finding. The application must be denied if one or more of the below-listed findings cannot be clearly established.

1. The proposed Zoning and Development Code Amendment is consistent with the goals, policies, plans and exhibits of the General Plan; and
2. The proposed Zoning and Development Code Amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City.

B. Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment includes 46 revisions that are outlined in the Index of Proposed Revisions (Attachment No. 3). These revisions may be found in Part 3. – *Form*, Part 4. *Frontage*, Part. 5 – *Use*, Part. 6. – *Site*, Part 8. *Historic & Other Supplemental Provisions*, Part 10. – *Division of Land*, Part 11. – *Administration*, Part 12. – *General Rules*, and Part 13. – *Appendix* of the Pomona Zoning & Development Code.

These revisions follow a year and half of documentation on the New Code's usability from the perspective of the general public as well as Planning Division staff and include both major and minor revisions. Below is a summary of the eight major revisions proposed.

Part	Revision Section	Intent
1. FORM	Section 380.B.2. Outdoor Amenity Design Standards	To require shade for any proposed balconies intended to satisfy outdoor amenity space requirements.
2. FRONTAGE	Section 470.B.4. Build-To Measurements	To provide clarity on how to measure the build-to zone and include a new graphic.
3. FRONTAGE	Section 420.A. Neighborhood Yard Frontage Modules	The required transparency for the N1 is off-scale for some traditional residential structure styles. The proposed revision is the reduction of the transparency requirement from 20% to 15% in the Neighborhood Yard 1 Frontage Module.
4. USE	Section 550.C.6 Home Occupation Section 550.C.8 Home Based Business	To create more simplified tiers of Home Occupation Types with Home Occupation to be reserved for office use only.
5. USE	Section 550. Allowed Uses, Definitions, & Use Standards.	1) To define and allow limited small-scale industrial in purpose-built industrial structures not located within the industrial workplace districts. 2) To define and prohibit detention centers as an assembly use in all zoning districts.
6. SITE	Section 620.H.2. Fence and Wall Standards, Applicability	To require a fence permit and allow for the replacement of up to 50% of fencing with no permit.
7. SITE	Section 620.H.3.c. Design & Installation (Fence & Wall)	1) To revise allowed material. 1) Prohibition of all security fencing.
8. ADMINISTRATION	Section 1160.G. Development Plan	To create a tiered review process for Development Plan Reviews for review of applications by the Development Services Director and the Planning Commission.

Form

Form regulates the placement, scale, and intensity of buildings and structures on a lot. Form modules ensure that building forms are compatible with their context and promote projects that support the General Plan and community needs.

The proposed revisions to Form are further refinements of existing standards and will provide clarity on the application standards. Additionally, these revisions will also require the shading of balconies to improve the usability of amenity spaces.

Frontage

Frontage regulates portions of a lot and building facades that impact the public realm. Frontage modules ensure that projects respond to the public realm appropriately. Frontage Modules range from flexible standards for open space frontages with limited buildings to more robust standards for shopfront frontages where buildings need to support an active and high-quality public realm with strong associations with uses inside buildings.

The proposed revisions to Frontage are the minor modification of numerical standards that have been tested over the last 18 months. These include revisions to the measurement of build-to zone, transparency requirements, and setback measurements.

Site

Site regulates the overall site design, including the location and characteristics of access, parking, landscape, and other site features. Site consists of a combination of regulations that are appropriate to a variety of contexts such as transit-oriented centers, special campuses, suburban neighborhoods, and open spaces.

The proposed revisions to Site contain revisions related to vehicle access, fence & wall regulations, transition buffers and screening. The minor modification of these standards will allow for a more equitable approach to the application of fence & wall standards and provide clarity on standards throughout the chapter, including the allowance of low decorative fencing in front yard areas where previously prohibited.

Use

Use regulates land use and includes use standards and definitions which regulate activities on properties and mitigate potential impacts within and surrounding a property as a result of those activities.

The proposed revisions to Use include the creation of a new land use category, Small-Scale Industrial. This new land use category would enable the continuation of small-scale industrial uses in nonindustrial districts to remain in structures purpose-built for industrial uses that were constructed prior to the adoption of the Code. The small-scale industrial uses include distribution, manufacturing, microbusiness, and contractor's indoor storage. These uses are proposed to be permitted to operate in units less than 10,000 square feet and less than 5,000 square feet for contractor's indoor storage, with all operations required to occur indoors with no outdoor storage allowance.

Administration

The Administration chapter of the code defines the procedures for various approvals under the New Code and defines nonconformities. Additionally, it provides relief exceptions from specific requirements for existing lots, buildings and structures, and uses that conformed to the zoning regulations, if any, at the time they were lawfully established, but do not conform to current district standards or use permissions.

The proposed revisions to Administration include text corrections, compliance with state law, revisions to the chart of authority for clarity purposes, and the creation of a new tiered Development Plan Review process.

C. General Plan Conformance

The land use and community design chapters of the General Plan place high priority on building form and places focus on design that supports public activity and strengthens safety. The reiterated goals and policies in the General Plan promote the efficient use of land that encourage walking, bicycling and transit use across all place types. To accomplish this, the General Plan discusses moving away from "exclusively auto-oriented shopping and toward open-air, amenity driven formats that have both daytime and nighttime activity and are clustered at major crossroads". Additionally, the community design chapter emphasizes the creation of more walkable & accessible street environments, strives to improve pedestrian safety, and improve the livability and cultural life of the community through physical design considerations.

To implement the vision set by the General Plan, regular maintenance of the New Code, including the proposed revisions, must occur to ensure intended outcomes as envisioned by the General Plan. Development standards found within the New Code should continue to safeguard life, health, property and public welfare and continue to change with the changes that occur at the national, state, and local scale politically, economically, technologically, and environmentally.

Community Input and Noticing:

A public hearing notice was published in the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin on April 2, 2026 (Attachment No. 4). As of the date of this report, Staff has not received any public comment.

Environmental Review:

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires analysis of agency approvals of discretionary "projects." A "project," under CEQA, is defined as "the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). The proposed project is considered a "project" under CEQA.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission determine that this project may be considered exempt under CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), of the CEQA Guidelines. In compliance with Section 15061(b)(3), the proposed project is covered by the general rule exemption which exempts activities that can be seen with certainty to have no possibility for causing a significant effect on the environment. The project may be considered for the general rule exemption in that the proposed project only includes the amendment of text of an adopted document previously studied in the 2014 Pomona GPU Final EIR. The proposed project described above hereby meets the guidelines. Therefore, no further environmental review is required.

Active Projects Affected by the Zoning Code Amendment:

All applications currently under review will be subject to Section 100.E(5) of the Pomona Zoning and Development Code, which establishes the applicability of projects in process with the enactment of the Zoning & Development Code, or any subsequent Zoning Code Amendments.

Next Steps:

Upon Planning Commission approval of a recommendation, the New Code will be brought forward to the City Council for an ordinance first reading, tentatively scheduled for Monday, May 18, 2026, with an anticipated second reading on Monday, June 1, 2026.

Attachments:

1. PC Resolution No. 26-005
2. Draft Pomona Zoning & Development Code, *redlined* (EXHIBIT A)
3. Index of Proposed Revisions
4. Public Hearing Notice & Proof of Publication