



Date: May 7, 2026
To: Planning Commission
From: Sheri Bermejo, Director of Community Development
Subject: 222 East Cypress Avenue – Consideration of Draft Land Use Standards

The Planning Commission will review and discuss an *Initial Draft* of proposed land use standards and regulations for the City-owned property at 222 East Cypress Avenue during a Special Study Session of the Monrovia Planning Commission on May 13, 2026.

Background

On January 21, 2025, the City Council approved the purchase of the real property located at 222 East Cypress Avenue. The subject property is located on the south side of Cypress Avenue, just east of Ivy Avenue. The property totals approximately 32,514 square feet (0.75 acres) and is developed with a two-story, 2,736-square-foot single-family residence constructed in 1892. The property's large size and historical significance make it unique.

On April 15, 2025, the City Council approved the City's participation in the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) Affordable Housing Incubator Program to evaluate options related to the 222 East Cypress Avenue property.

On October 21, 2025, SGVCOG, along with Studio One Eleven, which conducted a feasibility study, presented three potential affordable housing development opportunities at the site. Following that initial meeting, the City Council sought public input on the site's goals and vision, and an online survey was launched shortly thereafter. During a final Study Session with the City Council on March 17, 2026, staff received direction to work with Studio One Eleven to develop a set of land use regulations that achieved the following six goals:

1. Preserve the Victorian-era residence constructed circa 1892 as a permanent on-site historic resource and ensure its integration as a prominent and valued feature of any future development of the site;
2. Enable compatible infill residential development, with an affordable component, at a density and configuration that is financially feasible while remaining respectful of the surrounding low-density residential neighborhood character;
3. Advance the City of Monrovia's housing goals by establishing a regulatory framework that supports development of new housing on a City-owned site, consistent with the City's Housing Element;
4. Protect mature trees that contribute to the neighborhood character and the historic setting of the Victorian structure;



5. Ensure that new construction is compatible in scale and character with the surrounding Residential Low-zoned neighborhood, particularly along the site perimeter; and
6. Provide a clear, objective land use regulatory framework.

Overview Initial Draft Planned Development Standards

The proposed Planned Development – Area 30 (PD - Area 30) standards, attached as Exhibit “A,” have been prepared as an initial draft for discussion purposes only. These standards are intended to establish a site-specific regulatory framework that enables compatible infill housing development while preserving the existing Victorian-era structure.

At this stage, no decisions are being made, and the Planning Commission is not being asked to take formal action. Rather, the purpose of this Special Meeting is to:

- Provide an overview of the draft standards;
- Receive early input and feedback from the surrounding neighborhood and Planning Commission; and
- Identify key issues or considerations prior to refinement.

The draft standards will be further refined before being presented to the City Council for additional direction. Following City Council review, the project will proceed through a formal public hearing process, including environmental review and hearings on the proposed adoption of a General Plan Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment.

This early engagement is intended to ensure that the proposed standards are well-vetted and aligned with community values, policy objectives, and implementation feasibility before advancing to the formal entitlement process.

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT – AREA 30 (PD-30)

222 E. Cypress Avenue, Monrovia, CA | APN 8515-013-903

1. Site Description and Background

1.1 Site Identification

The subject property is located at 222 E. Cypress Avenue in the City of Monrovia, CA (APN 8515-013-903). The City-owned parcel comprises approximately 0.75 acres (32,880 square feet), with dimensions of approximately 180 feet by 180 feet. The site is situated on the south side of E. Cypress Avenue, between S. Ivy Avenue to the west and California Avenue to the east.

1.2 Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning

Properties to the east, west, and south are zoned RL (Residential Low) and developed with single-family homes typical of Monrovia's established residential neighborhoods, generally one to two stories in height with front yard setbacks of approximately 20–25 feet. Properties across E. Cypress Avenue to the north are zoned O/RD/LM (Office/Research and Development/Light Manufacturing) and are developed with a two-story multi-tenant office buildings and associated parking.

1.3 Existing Victorian-Era Residence

The principal structure is a Victorian-era, two-story, wood-frame residence constructed in approximately 1892, with a floor area of approximately 2,550 square feet. It is sited toward the front (north) portion of the lot, set back approximately 15 feet from the E. Cypress Avenue property line, with a large undeveloped rear yard to the south and side yard to the east.

1.4 Existing Mature Trees

The site contains several mature trees of significant canopy value distributed across the middle and southern portions of the parcel, including existing oak trees. These trees contribute to the neighborhood character and the historic setting of the residence.

2. Purpose and Intent

2.1 Purpose

The Planned Development designation for 222 E. Cypress Avenue (PD-30) is established to achieve the following public purposes:

1. Preserve the Victorian-era residence constructed circa 1892 as a permanent on-site historic resource and ensure its integration as a prominent and valued feature of any future development of the site.
2. Enable compatible infill residential development at a density and configuration that is financially feasible while remaining respectful of the surrounding low-density residential neighborhood character.
3. Advance the City of Monrovia's housing goals by establishing a regulatory framework that supports development of new housing on a City-owned site, consistent with the City's Housing Element.
4. Protect mature trees that contribute to neighborhood character and the historic setting of the Victorian structure.

5. Ensure that new construction is compatible in scale and character with the surrounding Residential Low-zoned neighborhood and, to the extent feasible, compatible with office and light manufacturing uses across Cypress Avenue, particularly along the site perimeter.
6. Provide a clear, objective land use regulatory framework.

2.2 Intent

This Planned Development Area is expressly created to emphasize historic preservation as a public benefit. Any development of the site must incorporate and actively preserve the Victorian-era structure in its current on-site location. Demolition or off-site relocation of the historic structure is not permitted under this PD designation. Any proposal that would remove the structure from the site would be inconsistent with the PD designation and could not be considered without City Council reconsideration of the applicable zoning.

3. Applicability and Relationship to the Municipal Code

These Planned Development Area Standards apply to the entirety of the parcel located at 222 E. Cypress Avenue (APN 8515-013-903). All development, rehabilitation, demolition, tree removal, and site modification activity on the parcel shall be consistent with these PD Standards and other applicable provisions of the Municipal Code.

These standards require that the existing Victorian structure be retained in its existing location on-site and incorporated into the development as a contributing element. Any development proposal that does not retain the Victorian structure in place would be inconsistent with this PD designation.

These PD standards constitute the governing land use and development regulations for this site. Where a development standard, use regulation, or procedural requirement is specifically addressed in these PD standards, those provisions shall control over any inconsistent standard in the Municipal Code. For any matter not expressly addressed herein, the applicable standards and procedures of the Monrovia Municipal Code shall apply.

4. Permitted Uses (By Right)

- Low- to Medium-density, as specified in Table 5.1, multi-family residential units, including attached and detached units.
- Adaptive reuse of the Victorian structure for residential use, subject to historic preservation requirements in Section 6.
- Accessory structures associated with residential use (storage, bicycle parking, utilities).
- Non-residential uses as permitted in the RL zoning designation (Zoning Code Section 17.08.020)
- Any uses that would compromise the structural integrity, character-defining features, or historic setting of the Victorian structure are prohibited.

5. Development Standards

The following objective development standards apply to all new construction and rehabilitation within PD-30.

5.1 Main Buildings

Development Standard	PD- 30 Requirement	Notes
FAR	0.5 maximum	Customized FAR to provide development flexibility.

Development Standard	PD- 30 Requirement	Notes
Density	17.4 du/ac	Density matches Medium Density Residential land use designation. For the 222 E. Cypress site, this is estimated to yield 14 units.
Min. unit size	Attached Units: Studio - 500 sf; 1-bedroom – 600 sf; 2-bedroom – 800 sf; 3-bedroom – 1000 sf; Detached Units: 500 sf	Standard matches RM zone
Building Height	2 stories/ 27' maximum	Standard matches RM zone
Front Setback	25' minimum for new construction; existing setback for Victorian era structure is legal and non-conforming	Modified RL standard
Side Setback	1 st floor and 2 nd floor - 43.2' / 24% of lot width (spread across both side yards with a minimum of 5')	Modified RL standard (same setback for 1 st and 2 nd floors) to provide development flexibility
Rear Setback	1 st floor and 2 nd floor - 30' / 16.67% of lot depth; 20' minimum	Modified RM standard (20% reduced to 16.67% for both 1 st and 2 nd floors)
Building Separation (Between new buildings)	1 st floor and 2 nd floor - 8' minimum	Customized standard to provide development flexibility
Building Separation (between new buildings and Victorian home)	1 st floor and 2 nd floor - 10' minimum	Customized standard to provide development flexibility
Parking	1 stall per unit	Customized to provide development flexibility. Standard applies to units in existing Victorian structure.
Recreation Space	40% of gross dwelling unit floor area	Modified RM standard

5.2 Accessory Structures

Development Standard	PD-30 Requirement	Notes
FAR (detached or attached)	0.2 maximum	Matches RM standard
Height	Max 9' (top plate) and 14' (ridge)	Matches RL standard
Front Setback	25' minimum	Matches RL standard

Development Standard	PD-30 Requirement	Notes
Side Setback	3' or Main structure side yard (within 80' of PL)	Matches RL standard
Rear Setback	3'	Matches RL standard

6. Preservation Requirements for Victorian Structure

6.1 Statement of Historical Significance

The Victorian-era residence at 222 E. Cypress Avenue (constructed circa 1892) is among the oldest surviving residential buildings in the City of Monrovia. Its significance derives from its association with the early settlement and residential development of Monrovia in the late nineteenth century, and from its architectural character as a well-preserved example of Victorian-era residential design.

6.2 Retention in Place and Adaptive Reuse

The Victorian-era structure shall be retained and rehabilitated in its existing on-site location. Demolition or off-site relocation of the structure, with the exception of the one-story addition to the south façade, which was built later than the original structure, is expressly prohibited under the PD designation. Any proposal that would remove the original Victorian structure from the site would be inconsistent with the PD and cannot be considered without City Council amendment of the applicable General Plan and Zoning framework.

The Victorian structure may be converted to accommodate dwelling units consistent with the following standards:

- Unit separation shall be accomplished through interior means; no exterior addition of an independent entry, stairway, or feature that compromises the historic character of the primary street-facing elevation is permitted without HPC approval.
- Where a second unit is required to provide an exterior entry by applicable law, such entry shall be located on a side or rear elevation in a location that minimizes visibility from the public right-of-way, except for life and safety purposes.

The structure shall remain visually prominent and legible as the historic anchor of the development. Site design shall not screen or subordinate the Victorian structure from the primary street frontage.

6.3 Preservation Requirements for the Victorian Structure

All work affecting the Victorian structure shall be reviewed for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, incorporated herein by reference, with particular emphasis on the Standards for Rehabilitation. Review shall be conducted by the Historic Preservation Committee in accordance with Monrovia Municipal Code Section 17.40.110 prior to commencement of any work. The Historic Structures Report prepared for this site shall inform HPC review.

In applying these standards, the following sequential approach shall guide treatment decisions:

- Protect and maintain character-defining historic features that are extant and in good condition, using the least intervention possible;
- Repair historic features that have been damaged, obscured, or partially removed or destroyed, using the least intervention possible. A feature shall not be replaced if it can be repaired; and
- Replace historic features that are entirely missing only where adequate documentation exists to guide accurate reproduction; where documentation is insufficient, new compatible features shall reflect the scale, materials, and character of the historic building without creating a false historic appearance.

Prior to HPC review, the developer shall submit:

- A Historic Preservation Plan prepared by a qualified Historic Preservation Professional meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards;
- Existing conditions documentation, including measured drawings and photographic documentation of all exterior elevations; and
- A materials and finishes schedule for all proposed work.

7. Neighborhood Compatibility

7.1 Architectural Character and Materials

- New construction shall be compatible in scale and architectural character with the Victorian structure and the surrounding residential neighborhood. Compatibility does not require historical replication; new construction shall be clearly differentiated from the historic structure while avoiding styles or materials that would detract from the residential character of the site and streetscape. The Victorian structure shall remain the primary visual feature of the site as seen from E. Cypress Avenue.
- Building materials shall be high quality and durable. Colors and materials for new construction may be subject to City design review and shall be compatible with, but clearly differentiated from, the historic structure.

7.2 Site Planning and Open Space

The E. Cypress Avenue frontage shall present a residential character consistent with the neighborhood context. Surface parking, carports, and utility areas shall not be located within the front setback area. The front setback area shall be landscaped, and clear pedestrian paths shall be maintained from the public sidewalk to the Victorian structure and to the entrances of all future residential units. A low-profile fence with a maximum height of 4 feet and 50% open may be provided along the front property line.

Along the east, west, and rear property lines, setbacks shall be maintained in accordance with the standards in Section 5, and a solid wall shall be required at the property line. The setback shall be landscaped to provide a buffer between new construction and adjacent single-family residential properties.

8. Tree Preservation

The preservation of mature trees on the site is encouraged as a guiding principle of this Planned Development. Mature trees contribute to neighborhood character, the historic setting of the Victorian structure, and the ecological value of the site.

Prior to any project entitlement application, a Certified Arborist shall survey, identify, and assess all trees on the site. The arborist's report shall document tree health, root zone conditions, and preservation feasibility for each tree, and shall serve as the basis for site planning decisions regarding tree retention and removal.

Site plans shall be designed to retain mature trees to the maximum feasible extent, consistent with the recommendations of the arborist's report. All Protected Trees, as defined in the Monrovia Municipal Code, shall be subject to the City's existing tree protection and removal provisions. Removal of any Protected Trees will be assessed during Site Plan Review on a case-by-case basis. Tree retention, removal, and any required replacement shall be determined through the project entitlement and conditions of approval process, informed by the arborist's report. Construction activities within the dripline of any retained tree

shall be conducted in accordance with a Tree Protection Plan prepared by a Certified Arborist and approved by the City prior to ground disturbance.

9. Development Review

Development of the site consistent with this PD designation shall require at least the approvals listed below. Project-specific proposals may require additional approvals.

- CEQA review
- Historic Preservation Commission Special Review of all proposed alterations to the Victorian structure and all new residential units, in accordance with Monrovia Municipal Code Section 17.40.110, to evaluate consistency with applicable historic preservation standards and overall site compatibility.
- Design standards as specified (staff level), including development sign on-site
- A Parcel Map to consolidate existing parcels into a single lot, or equivalent covenant to hold parcels as one, prior to project approval, subject to City Engineer approval.
- Landscape Plan, Arborist report, and Tree Protection Plan approval by the Design Review Committee prior to any ground disturbance.
- Building permits and all other standard construction-related approvals per the Monrovia Municipal Code and applicable California Codes.