

THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA
July 28, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mahecha called the Special Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of La Habra to order at 5:18 p.m. in the Atrium Conference Room.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: LED BY COMMISSIONER MANLEY

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: MAHECHA
MANLEY
CARDENAS
LOGAN-CANNON

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: RAMSLAND

OTHERS PRESENT: DIRECTOR: KIM
CITY ATTORNEY: ROBERTO
PLANNING MANAGER: LUI
SENIOR PLANNER: SYED
SECRETARY: LOPEZ

STUDY SESSION

Secretary Lopez explained the Study Session procedures.

Planning Manager, Sonya Lui, introduced Lisa Brownfield, Principal from MIG Consultants and Roger Dale, Economic Consultant from the Natelson Dale Group, Inc.

Lisa Brownfield presented the Commission with the latest updates made to the La Habra Boulevard Specific Plan based on community input and through an online survey. Ms. Brownfield described each of the proposed districts along the La Habra Boulevard corridor including the Idaho Street Residential Area, Village Square, Commercial Core, Cultural Core, Washington Middle Area and Harbor Gateway. Ms. Brownfield explained how slowing down vehicular speeds and implementing circulation/pedestrian improvements would be key to creating a more pedestrian friendly downtown as well as allowing for new residential development that could help support corridor activity. She started with describing how the proposed update will not dramatically change the existing residential makeup found within the Idaho Street Residential Area, but noted how this district could serve as a west end gateway that transitions to the Village Square district. She then described the Village Square as an opportunity to serve as a community gathering area along with mixed-use development potential. She further explained the next transition to the Commercial Core, which could provide more gathering spaces and prioritize local and small businesses. Ms. Brownfield stated that the plan will aim to retain existing single-unit housing along Erna Avenue and mixed-use potential be applied to the properties south of the alley. She then explained how the Commercial Core would transition to the Cultural Core, which could capitalize on the existing public facilities and explained that the specific plan will aim to provide opportunities to connect the existing parks and public facilities. She emphasized how the specific plan envisions increased pedestrian safety for the Washington Middle Area given the existing Washington Middle school. Finally, she noted how the Harbor Gateway could allow underutilized land to be developed for a future sub regional destination given the area's proximity to Harbor

Boulevard. She stated that Harbor Gateway could also benefit from focusing on mixed-use opportunities and also include gateway monumentation at the east end of the corridor.

Roger Dale, Economic Consultant from the Natelson Dale Group, Inc., spoke about a variety of ways that the specific plan could incentivize private investment. Mr. Dale then highlighted potential funding sources. He cited examples of city resources, outside grants, developer contributions and district-based tools. He explained that incentivizing private development may go a long way with helping make the specific plan changes.

The Commissioners discussed the benefits of keeping the properties along Erna Avenue as residential versus being part of the mixed use overlay. Ms. Brownfield noted that another possible roadway connection could include extending Erna Avenue all the way out to Harbor Boulevard. Chair Mahecha responded that as a longtime resident of La Habra, she opposed extending Erna Avenue because she would be concerned about increased vehicle hazards. Ms. Brownfield explained that the roadway connection could be designed pedestrian traffic only and questioned if the Commission could then support the connection. The Commission generally agreed that they could support a connection for pedestrian traffic only. Commissioner Cardenas also asked Ms. Brownfield to consider changing the name of the "Harbor Gateway" area to "La Habra Gateway" because the name "Harbor Gateway" has already been associated with areas outside of La Habra. The Commissioners expressed a general consensus that MIG and staff were supportive of the progress made on the La Habra Boulevard Specific Plan update.

Ms. Brownfield said that they will continue to take comments from staff and Council and go back and work on the plan.

Seeing no one in the audience to offer public comments, the Chair closed the meeting and adjourned to the regular Planning Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:18 p.m. to the Planning Commission meeting of July 28, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Lopez,
Secretary