

CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 West Ocean Boulevard, 5th Floor Long Beach, CA 90802 (562) 570-6194

June 6, 2019

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Find the proposed vacation of a segment of Maple Way in conformance with the adopted goals and policies of the City's General Plan. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Nathan Pitters for Onni Contracting (California), Inc.
315 W. 9th St., Suite 801
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(Application No. 1903-04A, GPC19-001)

DISCUSSION

The applicant requests a finding of conformance with the General Plan of the City of Long Beach for the vacation of a 10-foot-wide public alley, named Maple Way. Maple Way runs east-west between Long Beach Boulevard and the western edge of Alamo Court (a named alley that runs north-south), in the block between 3rd Street and Broadway (Exhibit A – Location Map). The segment of Maple Way to be vacated is 250.28 feet long and separates Lots 16 and 18 of Block 91 of the Town Site of Long Beach Tract (Exhibit B – Legal Description and Plat). The alley is bounded by a vacant lot to the south, a vacant lot and the designated Historic Landmark building Acres of Books to the north, and a residential development to the east on the opposite side of Alamo Court. All of the lots bounded by Long Beach Boulevard, Broadway, 3rd Street, and Alamo Court are owned by the applicant and are part of the Broadway Block development project, which was approved by the Planning Commission on March 1, 2018 (Application No. 1708-10, SPR17-068). Maple Way currently provides vehicular access to the vacant lots south of the Acres of Books building. However, access is available from other driveways into the site (Exhibit C – Site Photos).

Maple Way is within the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30), which allows a wide variety of mixed residential and commercial uses in an intense downtown urban center. Vacation of the subject alley would not create a nonconformity or increase the potential for expansion of a nonconforming use.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

Before an application for the vacation of an alley can go before the City Council, a finding of conformity with the maps and policies of the Long Beach General Plan must be made by the Planning Commission. The General Plan consists of eleven (11) elements; each element carries the same authority concerning land use issues. Staff reviewed this project's conformance with all elements of the General Plan, and the proposed vacation was found to be in conformance with all applicable elements. A review of the relevant elements and specific General Plan consistency findings are presented below.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element divides the City into 21 land use districts, which provide general guidance as to the appropriate type and density of land uses. The alley is located within Land Use District (LUD) No. 7—Mixed Use District. The Land Use Element states that LUD No. 7 allows a "careful blending of different types of land uses...to save time and energy in transportation and communications, simplify and shorten transactions of goods and services, vitalize a site, and give it more importance in the urban structure of the City...The area will benefit from the synergistic effects of this blending." The development project that is fundamentally related to this alley vacation request, known as the Broadway Block project, consists of two main residential buildings; one a 23-story tower and one a 7-story midrise, together totaling 400 dwelling units with approximately 23,000 sq. ft. of non-residential space on the ground and second floors, including adaptive reuse of the 9,600-sq. ft. Acres of Books building, and a total of 582 parking stalls in two levels of subterranean garage on a two-acre site. Vacation of Maple Way is necessary to the previously-approved development project, as the alley currently bisects the heart of the development site and would otherwise preclude construction of the project. Vacation of the alley would be in conformance with the Land Use Element, as the alley vacation supports a key objective of LUD No. 7, which is to promote vital activity centers as opposed to disparate development.

Mobility Element

The City's Mobility Element is aimed at transforming Long Beach into a city of flexible, convenient, affordable, and energy-efficient transportation options for residents and visitors alike. The alley to be vacated is regarded by the Department of Public Works as no longer necessary for present or prospective public use or convenience. Existing rights-of-way (Long Beach Boulevard, 3rd Street, Broadway, and Alamo Court) provide adequate vehicular and pedestrian access to the development site. Alley vacation would therefore not prove detrimental to the movement of people and goods through the subject block. Additionally, an east-west pedestrian paseo will be granted by the developer in the form of a surface easement at project completion, providing a path for pedestrians and cyclists between Long Beach Boulevard and Alamo Court and connecting with the pedestrian paseo of the residential development east of Alamo Court. The alignment of this easement will be parallel to the vacated Maple Way approximately 40 feet to the north.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

A General Plan Conformity Certification does not require a public hearing or public noticing. However, the Department of Public Works conducts a public notification for the alley vacation in accordance with State law, as the alley vacation is processed through the Public Works Department.

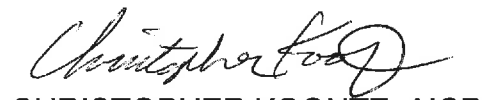
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW


This action to make a finding of conformance with the General Plan is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per Section 15378 of the CEQA Guidelines, and no environmental review is required.

Respectfully submitted,


SCOTT KINSEY, AICP
PROJECT PLANNER


ALEXIS OROPEZA
CURRENT PLANNING OFFICER


CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER


LINDA F. TATUM, FAICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

LFT:CK:AO:SK

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
 Exhibit B – Legal Description and Plat
 Exhibit C – Site Photos