



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0731, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing, and adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration MND-05-18;

Approve a General Plan Amendment (GPA18-001) and adopt resolution amending page 10 of the Land Use District Map of the Land Use Element of the General Plan relating to the property at 1500 East Anaheim Street from Land Use Districts #2 (Mixed Style Homes) and LUD #8A (Traditional Retail Strip Commercial) to LUD #8R (Mixed Retail-Residential Strip);

On July 18, 2019, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the proposed project (Application No. 1710-56) (Attachment A), considered public testimony, and recommended that the City Council approve the requested actions (Attachment B).

The site is located on the south side of Anaheim Street, between Walnut Avenue and an unnamed alley to the west. The site is a collection of seven lots totaling 67,200 square feet (1.54 acres) in area. The site is split-zoned between the Community Commercial Pedestrian-Oriented (CCP) zoning district, which covers the northern 143 feet of the site, and the R-2-N (Two-family Residential, standard lot) zoning district, which covers the southern 81 feet of the site.

The site is currently vacant land and does not host any land use. It is a former Successor Agency property, previously acquired by the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency (RDA). All existing improvements on the site were cleared at the time of, or shortly after, its acquisition by the RDA over a decade ago. Surrounding land uses are listed in the table below.

Surrounding Land Uses

Location from subject site	Land use
West, across alley	Small one- and two-story mixed-use building
West, beyond	Tall seven-story self-storage building
Southwest	Two one-story courtyard-style studio apartment buildings
South	One-story skilled nursing facility
East, on corner of Anaheim and Walnut	Small restaurant building and video rental store, mostly surface parking
East, on Walnut	Two-story assisted living facility

North, opposite side of Anaheim	Small commercial strip mall, detached low-density residential, detached commercial uses, vacant lot.
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Generally, uses east and west of the site on Anaheim Street are commercial in nature, while the surrounding neighborhood south of the site is a blend of mixed-density residential uses, and special group residence-type residential uses. The existing development pattern on the north side of Anaheim Street from the site is generally similar, with the exceptions of the Mark Twain Neighborhood Library at 1401 East Anaheim Street and MacArthur Park at 1321 East Anaheim Street.

Project Proposal

The applicant, BRIDGE Housing, proposes to develop a project consisting of a new 116,356 square-foot, mixed use building with a height of approximately 61 feet (up to maximum 65 feet) above ground level and a maximum of five stories. The building includes an 88-unit, 5-story restricted affordable apartment building, with 93,656 square feet of residential space on levels two through five. The ground level is comprised of 22,700 square feet that includes 18,136 square feet of medical clinic space, 1,100 square feet of commercial office space, 1,200 square feet of residential leasing office space, and 2,264 square feet of recreation and lobby space. The building also includes a three-story, 156-stall parking structure with a partial 4th floor outdoor terrace. The project's area totals are 116,356 square feet of building area and 81,903 square feet of parking garage, all on a 1.54-acre site. The project's only vehicular access (the entrance to the parking structure) will be on the west side of the property from the existing alley. The project's residential component will consist of 100 percent affordable housing units. The unit mix includes 32 one-bedroom units, 32 two-bedroom units, and 24 three-bedroom units, ranging in size from 608 square feet to 1,349 square feet (Attachment C).

Entitlements

The proposed project requires four entitlements from the City in addition to the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the acknowledgement of the affordable housing density bonus the project is entitled to under State law. The first entitlement requires a General Plan Amendment, as the existing General Plan Land Use District (LUD) designation does not allow for the implementation of the proposed CCN (HR-65/5) zoning district at the site. The second entitlement is a Zone Change, as the current zoning on the site, CCP on the northern portion and R-2-N on the southern portion, does not allow for the proposed type of development. The third entitlement is Site Plan Review, which approves the design, architecture, and layout of the proposed building and site plan. Finally, a Vesting Tentative Tract Map, which will subdivide the property and its airspace into one ground lot and four airspace lots for commercial and financial purposes; this does not include a residential condominium airspace map.

General Plan Amendment

The existing General Plan LUD for the site is split between two districts. The northern two-thirds of the site, corresponding to the CCP zoning, is in LUD #8A (Traditional Retail Strip Commercial District). The southern third of the site, corresponding to the R-2-N zoning, is in LUD #2 (Mixed Style Homes District). LUD #8A does not allow for any residential use, while LUD #2 only allows duplex-density residential development. Neither district is appropriate to the current development environment or existing development pattern on and near the Anaheim Street corridor with respect to this project location, and both preclude development of this project at this location. Staff recommends amending the General Plan LUD map to change the designation for the site to LUD #8R (Mixed Retail-Residential Strip District) (Attachment D). LUD #8R will allow for implementation of the CCN (HR-65/5) zoning district and, in general, is an appropriate LUD for a site on a major corridor in a densely-developed area.

Zone Change

The current zoning designation on the site is split between CCP (Community Commercial Pedestrian-Oriented District) on the northern two-thirds of the site and R-2-N (Two-family Residential, standard lot) on the southern third of the site. Neither of these zoning districts allow for the proposed type of development. Staff recommends a zone change to CCN (Community Commercial R-4-N District) with the addition of the High-Rise Overlay at 65 feet/5 stories, giving a zoning symbol of CCN (HR-65/5) (Attachment E). This zoning district allows for both the density and building height proposed by the applicant. Furthermore, this zoning is appropriate as the site is located on a major arterial street that is a major transit corridor in a densely-developed area.

Site Plan Review

The building is configured so the five-story residential and commercial are oriented toward the Anaheim Street and Walnut Avenue frontages. The main entrance to the residential lobby is in the middle of the Anaheim Street frontage, and the main entrance to the ground-floor medical clinic space faces the corner of Anaheim and Walnut. A three-level parking garage sits in the corner of the L-shape formed by the five-story apartment/clinic building. Pedestrian access from the garage is provided to the ground floor medical clinic, and to the residential building at each level. Additionally, an interior courtyard is included on the ground floor, wrapped on three sides by the medical clinic and abutting the eastern wall of the parking garage. This courtyard will be used by patients and visitors of the medical clinic. A rooftop terrace with recreation space is provided for the residents of the apartment building on a partial fourth level on top of the parking garage. This amenity space includes outdoor seating, shade structures, and playgrounds.

The building is designed in a modern architectural style, with a combination of smooth-troweled stucco and smooth painted cement fiber panel comprising most of the upper

building elevations. Upper-level windows consist of a bronze-colored vinyl window product. At the ground floor, glazed porcelain tile and aluminum storefront window systems make up the building façade. The parking garage makes use of a different architectural vocabulary and is wrapped in a vertical metal fin and screen design, breaking up the mass and bulk of the parking structure and concealing the parked automobiles from view. Staff has worked extensively with the applicant over 18 months and multiple building designs. The current design reflects this effort and meets the City's standards for high-quality new building design.

A number of offsite improvements are required by code and conditions of approval, as part of the Site Plan Review entitlement, to offset the capital improvements to public infrastructure necessary to support this project. These include alley dedication and widening adjacent to the site, rights-of-way dedications on Anaheim Street and Walnut Avenue, and an in-lieu fee for construction of a median in the middle of Anaheim Street, between Walnut Avenue and Gundry Avenue, to restrict left-turning movements into and out of the alley adjacent to the site. The Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the project found that without the left turn restrictions, a dangerous condition will exist caused by the long delay times drivers will experience in trying to make a left turn in or out of the alley. This long delay will encourage drivers to make high-risk moves that could lead to serious traffic accidents, thus, the median to restrict left turn movements is necessary. The applicant will also be required to provide for additional sidewalk repair and reconstruction, construction of full ADA improvements on existing right-of-way adjacent to the site, traffic signal upgrades to all signalized intersections directly affected by the project, and new tree wells, street trees, root barriers, and irrigation systems adjacent to the site.

Vesting Tentative Tract Map

The site is currently composed of seven lots totaling 67,200 square feet, or approximately 1.54 acres. The applicant plans to consolidate the lots into one ground lot and subdivide four vertical airspace lots for financial purposes, potentially allowing separate ownership of the project's land, and the airspaces for the residential building area, the medical clinic, non-medical office space, and parking garage. For this action, a Tentative Tract Map is required. The applicant has elected to apply for a Vesting Tentative Tract Map, which vests the development standards (minimum lot size, width, etc.) in effect at the time of approval of the Tentative Map, in the event that the City changes these development standards in the future (Attachment F).

Density Bonus

The applicant is utilizing a density bonus for this project under the provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code (CGC). This section of State law entitles the developer to a maximum density bonus of 35 percent over the maximum allowable density, if at least 20 percent of the dwelling units are provided as affordable to lower-income households (specific government definitions of low-income thresholds, and a deed restriction to maintain these affordable units for a 30-year term are required to qualify). The project

proposes for its units to meet the affordability requirements (except for one unrestricted two-bedroom unit for a live-in manager) and qualifies for a 35 percent density bonus. The proposed zoning district, CCN (HR-65/5) allows a density of one unit per 975 square feet of site area for a site of this size, giving a base allowance of 68 dwelling units. With the 35 percent density bonus, up to 93 dwelling units are allowed. The applicant proposes to develop 88 units under the State density bonus law (Attachment G - Density Bonus Application Letter). The entitlements to the density bonus, development standards waivers, and regulatory concessions are required to be approved ministerially under State law and are not subject to discretionary review by the City.

In addition to the density bonus, Section 65915 of the CGC entitles the applicant to development standards waivers and regulatory concessions, as needed, to make an affordable housing development physically and financially feasible. When a project qualifies for a density bonus, but the City's development standards preclude development of the density that the applicant is entitled to under State law, the City must grant development standards waivers. In this case, the applicant requests two development standards waivers: (1) for the building setback requirements (front, side, street side, rear, and rear step-backs) specified for the project in Chapters 21.31, 21.32, and 21.39 of the Zoning Regulations (Title 21, LBMC), and (2) for the vehicular and truck loading space requirements in Chapter 21.41 of the Zoning Regulations.

Additionally, when a project necessitates relief from regulatory requirements to provide for affordable housing costs, the applicant is entitled to regulatory concessions that result in actual and identifiable cost savings. Here, the applicant requests the following regulatory concessions: (1) reduced private open space for individual dwelling units; and, (2) a reduction in the number of required parking stalls. Despite the reduction in private open space, all units are still provided with a small exterior balcony or deck ranging from 18 to 73 square feet in area, with the exception of 32 one-bedroom units, which will have no private outdoor open space. On parking, the project provides significantly fewer parking stalls than would be required by the local zoning ordinance but complies with the aggregate number of parking stalls required under State density bonus law. The applicant has provided a professionally-prepared parking study, demonstrating the provided number of parking stalls will be adequate to serve the residential and commercial components of the project (Attachment H). In addition, the project is located along a high-quality transit corridor, which will serve to further reduce the actual demand for parking at the site. Overall staff finds that the density bonus, development standards waivers, and regulatory concessions are proper and appropriate for a project that will provide critically-needed affordable housing in Long Beach, and that the project, as designed with the bonus, waivers, and concessions under State law, will not result in negative impacts upon the surrounding neighborhood or land uses.

Conclusion

The project will redevelop a site that has been vacant and not utilized for a decade, as well as provide critically-needed affordable housing. The proposed building is appropriate in design

and scale to the neighborhood and site conditions and will make a positive contribution to the Anaheim Street corridor. Staff is able to make positive findings for all of the requested entitlements and recommends that the City Council approve these entitlements (Attachment I) (Attachment J).

Public hearing notices were published in the Long Beach Press-Telegram and distributed on July 29, 2019. Any written testimony received following the preparation of this report will be provided to the City Council prior to the hearing.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND-05-18, State Clearinghouse No. 2019059114) was prepared for the project and finds that, by implementing identified mitigation measures, the project will not result in significant effects to the environment (Attachment K) (Attachment L). The IS/MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period between May 24, 2019 and June 24, 2019. Staff received two comments on the MND, both from other public agencies providing standard informational comments. These comments are included in the IS/MND attachment.

At its July 18, 2019 meeting, the Planning Commission took action to recommend approval of the project: six Commissioners approved the project proposal, and one Commissioner was absent.

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael J. Mais on July 22, 2019 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa José-Murray on July 25, 2019.

City Council action is requested on August 20, 2019. Pursuant to Section 21.25.103 of the Zoning Regulations, the Planning Commission's recommendations on this matter must be transmitted to the City Council within 60 days of positive action by the Planning Commission on July 18, 2019.

This recommendation has no fiscal impact, no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties, and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

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APPROVED:

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