

November 17, 2022

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept Categorical Exemption CE21-157 and approve Vesting Tentative Tract Map VTTM21-008, a subdivision for residential condominium purposes, for the Bixby Walk project, a three-story, townhouse style residential development creating 15 residential unit lots and one common area lot located at 3655 Elm Avenue within the R-4-U, High Density Multi-Family Zoning District. (District 5)

APPLICANT: Steve Armanino  
Olson Urban Housing, LLC  
3100 Old Ranch Road, Suite #100  
Seal Beach, CA 90740  
(Application No. 2110-19)

**DISCUSSION**

The proposed project is a vesting tentative tract map to subdivide the air space in townhouse style residential units (Condominium Subdivision) that is part of a previously approved development. The development known as Bixby Walk is a three-story, townhouse style residential project consisting of 15 units each with a two-car attached garage, and decks and patio area a minimum of 80 square feet (sf) in area which are designated as private open space area. The units range between two and three bedrooms and 2.5 and 3.5 bathrooms each with 1,386 sf and 1,855 sf of floor area. The subject site is located on about one block east of Long Beach Boulevard at the southeast corner of 37<sup>th</sup> Street and Elm Avenue on a 0.84-acre site (Attachment A - Location Map). The R-4-U district is a high-density, multifamily residential district. It is intended to provide housing opportunities in an urban context and design style to support downtown activity center employment with adjoining housing.

The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) (Attachment B - Tentative Tract Map) would create 15 townhouse style condominium units for the purpose of allowing individual ownership of each residential unit and a common lot (Attachment C – Plans). No physical



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changes are proposed to the development which has already been approved by the Site Plan Review Committee on January 5, 2022.

Overall, the site complies with the minimum 22,500 sf lot size. However, the property has a lot width of 134.4 feet. This width does not comply with the minimum lot width of 180 feet and has not since the change in zoning to R-4-U in 2008; it is an existing legal non-conforming condition.

However, as Attachment D – Lot Width Radius Map shows, the average width for the ten properties within 300 feet of the subject property is approximately 133.8 feet. This average width is less than the width of the subject property at 180 feet. The subdivision in this case is for condominium purposes (subdivision of air space for each unit) only and the proposed development was previously determined to be an appropriate development for the subject site that met the requirements of the zoning district and other applicable development standards. The site accommodates adequate outdoor space, parking, vehicular and pedestrian circulation and proper landscaping.

The Planning Commission is the responsible authority to approve, conditionally approve, or deny a VTTM when positive findings can be made regarding compliance with the General Plan and Specific Plan, as well as suitability of the subdivision design and site plan. The proposed subdivision creating residential condominiums is consistent with the requirements of the General Plan as it creates additional home ownership opportunities in the downtown area (Attachment E – Findings). This subdivision is consistent Housing Element Policy 4.2, which encourages a balance of rental and homeownership opportunities, including high quality apartments, townhomes, condominiums, and single-family homes to accommodate the housing needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community, including large families.” For various macroeconomic and state regulatory reasons beyond the City’s control, the City has struggled to facilitate new housing starts for ownership-style housing despite substantial need. This project and similar townhome projects are critical to the City’s ability to create homeownership opportunities. The project site is not located within either of the two subareas, Downtown Plan Planned Development or Midtown Specific Plan, in which inclusionary housing is applicable is not subject to the affordability requirements.

Staff therefore recommends approval of the VTTM to allow a subdivision for condominium purposes for the Shoreline Gateway tower, subject to conditions of approval (Attachment F – Conditions of Approval).

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

A total of 250 public hearing notices were distributed on November 2, 2022, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21.21 of the Long Beach Municipal Code. No public comments were received at the time the report was prepared.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

