



CITY OF LONG BEACH

THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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November 15, 2005

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing and declare the Ordinance, amending the Downtown Long Beach Planned Development District (PD-30) Ordinance, read the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading (Case No 0507-07). (Districts 1, 2)

DISCUSSION

On September 15, 2005, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council adopt an ordinance to adjust the density for a portion of the Downtown Mixed-Use District of the Downtown Long Beach Planned Development (PD-30) District (see Attachments 1 and 2). The amendment would allow, on average, a 25% density increase for projects that are at least four stories in height.

The proposed amendment was requested by the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency as a part of a redevelopment effort for the "West Gateway" development project. The West Gateway project is a unique public/private economic development partnership to develop a new transit-oriented urban neighborhood on all or portions of eight (8) square blocks situated at the western entry to the City's downtown core. The master planned effort includes a new public elementary school (now completed) and the development of approximately 800 ownership and rental housing units, incorporating resident-serving retail within an enhanced urban community. This development is a critical element in the revitalization of greater downtown Long Beach.

The first phase of housing development in the West Gateway, known as "Jamboree," is currently under construction. The second phase of housing development is three full city blocks between Broadway and 3rd Street and Maine and Chestnut Avenues. The final phases will consist of infill development on portions of several city blocks between 3rd and 4th Streets.

The current development proposal consists of medium-density housing in four- and five-story buildings with subterranean parking and ground floor commercial space. This phase of development is located within the Downtown Mixed-Use subarea. The three proposed developments comply with parking, open space, height and building setbacks while achieving residential densities in excess of the current limitations. Based on this ability to provide quality residential opportunities at this high density, the Redevelopment Agency is requesting an increase in density limitations up to 75 dwelling units per acre for development in the Downtown Mixed-Use subarea.

Additionally, the Redevelopment Agency is requesting to incorporate language in Division VII (Public Improvement Requirements) of PD-30 to ensure that future developments in the West Gateway project area provide off-site public improvements consistent with the West Gateway Master Plan that includes, but is not limited to, special pavement treatment, pedestrian bulb-outs, and street trees.

To date, staff has not received any opposition to this amendment.

In accordance with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), EIR 09-04 was prepared for the West Gateway project and included the proposed zoning code amendment. The EIR found that the proposed amendment will have a less than significant impact to the environment.

Assistant City Attorney Michael Mais reviewed this Council letter on October 25, 2005.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

The Long Beach Municipal Code requires that the Planning Commission's decision be heard within sixty (60) days or no later than November 14, 2005. However, since the City is the applicant in this case, the requirement is not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

MATTHEW JENKINS
CHAIRMAN, CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

By: 

SUZANNE M. FRICK
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Attachments:

- 1) Map
- 2) Planning Commission staff report and minutes dated September 15, 2005 (including attachments)
Ordinance