

SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS

200 E. 14th Street

Application No. 2001-21 (SPR20-001)

January 14, 2021

Site Plan Review Findings

Pursuant to Section 21.25.506 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, the site plan review committee or the planning commission shall not approve a site plan review unless the following findings are made. These findings and staff analysis are presented for consideration, adoption and incorporation into the record of proceedings:

- 1. THE DESIGN IS HARMONIOUS, CONSISTENT AND COMPLETE WITHIN ITSELF AND IS COMPATIBLE IN DESIGN, CHARACTER AND SCALE, WITH NEIGHBORING STRUCTURES AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED;**

Positive Finding: The applicant proposes to develop the currently vacant property into a 36-unit condominium development among four buildings located at the northeast intersection of 14th Street and Locust Avenue. The incorporation of four distinct buildings to house the 36 residential units works to break up the massing and scale of the development as well as to allow the inclusion of common open space that corresponds to the adjacent park uses located on 14th Street.

The project is designed in a contemporary architectural style, using high-quality materials, contrasting colors, varied roof heights, and asymmetrical design to add visual interest. Materials include stacked stone at the base of some of the residential units, and smooth stucco and fiber-cement siding as the main body of each building in nine different colors ranging from earth tones to different shades of gray.

Surrounding land uses include the following:

- North – Open space/park land followed by a 4-story, multifamily residential development;
- South – 1-story commercial buildings (rock-climbing and brewery) followed by a 7-story, multifamily residential development;
- East – Strip commercial uses;
- West – 2-story church building.

The surrounding neighborhood at large consists of a variety of residential, commercial, institutional and transit-oriented land uses that reflect its zoning designation Midtown Specific Plan (SP-1). The proposed development will add 36 dwelling units to the neighborhood and approximately 60% of the units will be income-restricted affordable units. Each unit will be 3 stories, with maximum heights not to exceed thirty-seven (37) feet. The proposed development will not

overwhelm the existing scale of the neighborhood that is varied and includes several multifamily residential properties currently exceeding 3-stories. The project is designed and scaled to be compatible with the future development of similar projects that are anticipated on comparable lots in the SP-1 District. Furthermore, the project will activate a vacant lot and contribute to the City's housing supply in the midst of the State of California's housing crisis and consist of large two- and three-bedroom family units which are not well-represented among typical market-rate projects.

2. THE DESIGN CONFORMS TO ANY APPLICABLE SPECIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OR SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS, SUCH AS THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR R-3 AND R-4 MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT, THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES, PD GUIDELINES OR THE GENERAL PLAN;

Positive Finding: The General Plan's Land Use Element, adopted in December 2019, designates the project site as Transit-Oriented Development-Moderate (TOD-M) PlaceType. The TOD-M PlaceType is applied directly adjacent to the Metro A Line (formerly Blue Line) stations and encourages multi-family housing at densities that support mass transit's function and public investment. New housing and public amenities are desirable near each station along the transit corridor (Long Beach Boulevard). The PlaceType and the corresponding Midtown Specific Plan Transit Node District support higher-density development within a one-quarter mile of the local rail stations. Also, urban, moderate density apartments and condominiums with an average density of 62 units/acre are envisioned in the TOD-M PlaceType.

One of the citywide goals identified in the Land Use Element is to offer an increasingly diverse housing stock (Goal No. 5 of the Land Use Element) whereby policies and practices would continue to promote and expand affordable housing options by accommodating a range of housing types. Under this goal, the City aims to ensure an equitable distribution of housing types for all income groups throughout the City, thus avoiding concentrations of below-market-rate housing in underserved and low-income neighborhoods.

The proposed project consists of the development of thirty-six, 3-story condominium units among four different buildings on a site of approximately one acre. Each unit will have a garage on the ground level, in either a standard or tandem configuration. The unit mix consists of sixteen, 3-bedroom/3.5 bathroom dwellings and twenty, 2-bedroom/2.5 bathroom dwellings. The project will include affordable housing units as follows:

- Two (2) very-low-income units (5.5%);
- Twenty (20) low-income units (55.5%);
- Fourteen (14) near market rate units (38.8%)

The proposed 36-unit condominium is consistent with the City's Goal No. 5, of offering an increasingly diverse housing stock. Specifically, the project addresses the City's housing needs through Strategy No. 12 – to “diversify Long Beach's housing stock” and Strategy No. 13 – to “facilitate housing type distribution”. In particular, LU Policy 12-1 sets out to allow a variety of housing types in new residential developments with the goal of establishing new opportunities for persons of varied income ranges, ages, lifestyles and family needs. Furthermore, LU Policy 12-2 encourages the provision of housing opportunities, services, and amenities for all income levels, age groups, and household types, with opportunities to age in place; the proposed project is consistent with this policy and, in particular, it provides affordable and market-rate multi-bedroom family units which tend to be in short supply and fulfill an important need in the City's housing stock.

The proposed project features an assortment of housing layouts for 2 and 3-bedroom units ranging from 1,638 square-feet to 1,961 square-feet in size. The inclusion of very-low-income and low-income dwelling units into the project is consistent with the goal of expanding affordable housing options throughout the City. Furthermore, the introduction of a condominium complex that allows individual ownership of each unit will further contribute to the variety of housing in the immediate area, which has several single-family residential properties and multi-family residential rental properties. The project site is located only ½ a block away from the Long Beach Boulevard transit corridor. The nearest Metro A Line station is located approximately 545 feet from the project site. Therefore, the project captures the intent of the TOD-M PlaceType to locate new housing development within a one-quarter mile radius of local rail stations.

The Urban Design Element of the General Plan also sets forth several goals aimed at providing quality development that correlates directly with the proposed project. Strategy No. 14 within the Urban Design Element calls for building types and forms to “contribute to the PlaceType they are sited within...”. Policy UD 14-1 calls for the proper scaling of a building's form (i.e. height and massing) to the primary street it fronts on. Further, Policy UD 14-9 looks to “support development which blends the form, mass, and profile of individual homes with the natural terrain and neighborhood context in order to minimize the visual impact on the site and surrounding neighborhood.”

The project site is located on the northeast corner of 14th Street and Locust Avenue, two local collector streets. As these streets are not considered major thoroughfares, 3-story residential development with ownership opportunities is appropriate. The inclusion of open space between building structures further contributes to the appropriate massing along 14th Street, which breaks up the building streetwall and provides visual relief. Based on the surrounding land use composition (commercial strips, 7-story multi-family residential development, and single-family dwellings), the proposed development appropriately blends form,

mass and profile. The proposed project is consistent with LU Policy 12-1 and 12-2, Policy UD 14-1 and Policy UD 14-8.

3. THE DESIGN WILL NOT REMOVE SIGNIFICANT MATURE TREES OR STREET TREES, UNLESS NO ALTERNATIVE DESIGN IS POSSIBLE;

Positive Finding: The project site is currently a vacant dirt lot with no trees on-site. As shown on the submitted site plan, this project will result in the inclusion of 30 new trees on-site. Furthermore, Conditions of Approval are included to require compliance with any applicable regulations of the Department of Public Works Street Tree Division. These regulations include the requirement for parkway trees to provide shade cover at a minimum of 50% of the total area of public right-of-way after 5 years.

4. THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL NEXUS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THIS ORDINANCE AND THE LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;

Positive Finding: Improvements to the public right-of-way adjacent to the project site will include a number of dedications and other exactions required by code and conditions of approval in order to offset the capital improvements to public infrastructure necessary to support this project. These include:

- Demolition and reconstruction of adjacent sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and adjacent alleys (north-south alley Palmer Court and east-west alley);
- Provision of an 8-foot-wide parkway along the Locust Avenue sidewalk with the installation of tree wells, new street trees, and root barriers;
- Upgrading of all existing crosswalks in the vicinity of the project;
- Removal of all unused driveways and curb cuts, or portions thereof along East 14th Street and Locust Avenue;
- Undergrounding of existing utilities adjacent to the project site; and
- Further right-of-way and off-site improvements as detailed in the project file and conditions of approval.

There is an essential nexus between these improvements, which will bring the public right-of-way adjacent to the project site up to current code standards. Unused curb cuts and lack of parkway trees and landscaping characterize the existing condition of the sidewalks along the project site. Said improvements are necessary to bring the roadway and right-of-way up to current standards adjacent to the project site and in the off-site areas that will be most immediately used by the project site's generated vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

5. THE PROJECT CONFORMS WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN CHAPTER 21.64 (TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT), WHICH REQUIREMENTS ARE SUMMARIZED IN TABLE 25-1; AND

Positive Finding: The proposed project consists of the construction of a 36-unit condominium development. Chapter 21.64 of the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) does not include any requirements specific to residential development projects. However, in accordance with EIR Mitigation Measures and conditions of approval, the applicant will be required to prepare a site-specific traffic study to evaluate the project's potential traffic and transportation impacts and to identify specific improvements, as deemed necessary. Furthermore, the applicant will be required to make fair-share payments to the City of Long Beach toward construction of several traffic improvements in the vicinity of the project area, as required by Mitigation Measure TRAF-2 of the Midtown Specific Plan Program Environmental Impact Report. These traffic improvements are shown below and are deemed necessary to mitigate impacts of the Midtown Specific Plan:

- Atlantic Avenue and Spring Street: Improve the northbound approach by modifying the shared through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. The intersection is currently built out to capacity and would require right-of-way acquisition by the City of Long Beach.
- Long Beach Boulevard and Spring Street: Improve the northbound approach by modifying the shared through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. Given the 74-foot cross section of Long Beach Boulevard, this improvement could be completed with restriping of the approach.
- Pacific Avenue and Willow Street: Improve the northbound approach by modifying the shared through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. Given the 74-foot cross section of Long Beach Boulevard, this improvement could be completed with restriping of the approach.
- Atlantic Avenue and Willow Street: Improve the northbound approach by modifying the shared through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. Given the 50-foot cross section of Atlantic Avenue, this improvement could be completed with restriping of the approach.
- Atlantic Avenue and Spring Street: Improve the southbound approach by modifying the shared through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. Implementation of this improvement also requires improving the southbound approach by modifying the shared

through-right lane to an exclusive through lane and an addition of an exclusive right-turn lane. The intersection is currently built out to capacity and would require right-of-way acquisition by the City of Long Beach.

- Atlantic Avenue and 27th Street: Construct a traffic signal at the intersection.

6. THE APPROVAL IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT, AS LISTED IN SECTION 21.45.400.

Positive Finding: Based on Section 21.45.400 of the LBMC, the proposed project is not subject to green building standards since it is a new residential development project of less than 50 units.