

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** APRIL 1, 2002
FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW FOR THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL PROJECT (THE MONTANA PHASE I AND PHASE II) AT 355 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD, LOCATED WITHIN THE CIVIC CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

RECOMMENDATION

This report is provided for information purposes only.

BACKGROUND

This project summary is presented to the City Council under the Predevelopment Plan Review (PPR) guidelines, which direct that PPR information for projects of community-wide significance will be presented to the City Council for information purposes only. Nakada + Associates, on behalf of MS Property, submitted a proposal for development of two parcels, identified as The Montana Phase I and The Montana Phase II, as one project using the single address of 355 Colorado Boulevard.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Montana Phase I: The Montana I site is the vacant parcel (approximately 38,000 square feet) fronting Colorado Boulevard on the block immediately south of City Hall. The block is bounded by Colorado Boulevard and Union Street, Garfield Avenue and Euclid Avenue. The proposed first phase is the construction of a 9-story (height of approximately 120 feet), 308,466-square foot structure with 32 condominium units. Proposed for the ground floor are a fitness center, film projection rooms, lobby, retail spaces, and 25 guest parking spaces. One level of subterranean parking is provided for the residents.

The Montana Phase II: The Montana II site is the corner parcel (approximately 35,000 square feet) at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Union Street, on the block bounded by Colorado Boulevard and Union Street, Euclid Avenue and Los Robles Avenue. This phase is the construction of a 7-story, 164,745-square foot

structure with 24 condominium units. Proposed for the ground floor are a lobby (2,656 square feet) and retail space (3,485 square feet), with 30 guest parking spaces and valet area. Subterranean parking is provided for residents.

REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS

The project sites are within both the Civic Center Specific Plan Area and also the area identified as the Civic Center/Mid-Town area, which was the subject of the Mayor and Council's City Center Task Force *Programming Effort Report* of April 6, 1998. The Civic Center Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council on March 20, 1990. It has been amended for two sites. Where there are differences between the requirements of the Specific Plan and the City's Zoning Code, the Specific Plan controls. The *Programming Effort Report* gives direction for private development but does not itself establish new regulations.

In 1997, the Mayor and Council's City Center Task Force was formed in anticipation of possible development on the Plaza Pasadena site (now Paseo Colorado), the "Broadway Block" (with a Maguire Partners development project currently under review), and the sites where The Montana Phases I and II are proposed. Property representatives for these sites participated as appointed members of the Task Force. The *Programming Effort Report* included recommendations for all sites within the boundaries of the Civic Center/Mid-Town area. In some cases, the Task Force recommended that new development conform to standards that differ from those currently in the Zoning Code or Civic Center Specific Plan.

For the site of The Montana Phase I, the *Programming Effort Report* provided recommendations for height, massing, and site plan, as well as land uses. According to the Task Force's recommendations for the site, construction on the site "along Colorado Boulevard shall be a maximum of 6 stories high," and the massing of new buildings "shall be sympathetic to the surrounding buildings in all directions." As proposed, at 9 stories, The Montana Phase I would require significant modifications in order to comply with these *Programming Effort Report* recommendations on height and massing, as well as with those for ground floor uses.

The site of The Montana Phase II is on the "Broadway Block," which is also the general location of the proposed Maguire Partners project. For the Phase II project site, the Task Force recommended housing, with a height of 3 to 5 stories and massing that is similar "to the existing Maryland Apartments across the street, thus forming a gateway to the Civic Center to the west." According to the recommendations, parking is to be located underground. Phase II as proposed, with guest parking on the ground floor, has a height of 7 stories. The Task Force also recommended eliminating the required diagonal view corridor toward City Hall, from the intersection of Los Robles and Colorado to the intersection of Euclid and Union, which is currently required by the Civic Center Specific Plan.

The location of the Phase II project is consistent with the Task Force recommendation that the view corridor should not be required.

The Mayor and Council's City Center Task Force's specific recommendations for the district have provided direction for both new development and public improvements. In most cases, the recommendations will be incorporated into the draft Central District Specific Plan, because they reflect the study and agreement of the appointed task force. Until they are adopted, however, they provide guidance for evaluating proposals that vary from the requirements of the adopted Zoning Code and Civic Center Specific Plan. Staff has encouraged the applicant to consider the recommendations of the *Programming Effort Report*.

On December 4, 2001, the applicants presented the project to the City Center Implementation Task Force and requested comments and support. It will be discussed again at an upcoming Task Force meeting.

General Plan Review: The development proposal is consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the General Plan's Land Use Element. The project sites are located in Sub-Area a7, the Civic Center Master (Specific) Plan area, of the Central District. For this subarea, the Land Use Element quotes the goals of the Civic Center Specific Plan, which emphasize: bringing the "City Beautiful" vision up to date; contributing to Pasadena's cultural heritage; making the Civic Center an important destination; making a commitment to housing; supporting religious and service institutions; connecting the City Center to other areas of development, and reinforcing the Specific Plan. The project uses are consistent with the goals of the Specific Plan though not with several of the specific provisions.

Environmental Review: An initial study has not yet been prepared, so there has been no determination concerning environmental impacts or whether an environmental impact report will be required.

Amendments to the Civic Center Specific Plan: As proposed both Phase I and Phase II will require amendments to the Civic Center Specific Plan. Specifically, for The Montana Phase I, the following amendments will be required: eliminate requirement for covered arcades on Colorado Boulevard and along Euclid Avenue to the courtyard; eliminate the requirement for a major courtyard; eliminate the requirement for a 35-foot step back above a height of 50 feet along Colorado Boulevard; reduce the requirement for active retail or consumer services along Colorado; reduce the number of required entrances along Colorado,

For Phase II as proposed, the following amendments will be required: eliminate the requirement for a diagonal view corridor; eliminate the recommendation for an arcade on Euclid; eliminate the recommendations for setbacks (*i.e.*, step

backs) above an arcade on Euclid; eliminate the recommendation for outdoor spaces “around the perimeter of Euclid and Union;”

Amendments to the Civic Center Specific Plan will require a public hearing and adoption by the City Council. Other commissions will review any proposed amendments before a recommendation is submitted to the Council.

Variations: As proposed, both Phase I and Phase II will require approval of variances from the requirements of the City’s Zoning Code, which includes standards and regulations that govern the sites in addition to those in the Specific Plan. Both Phase I and Phase II require variances for tandem parking.

Phase I also requires a variance from the requirement that at least 50 percent of the ground floor frontage be limited to retail or personal service uses. Phase II requires a variance to exceed the maximum coverage limit, which is 50 percent of the site. Phase II will require an additional variance from Zoning Code requirements: (1) that at least 35 percent of ground floor gross floor area be devoted to nonfinancial pedestrian-oriented uses such as eating and drinking establishments and retail uses and (2) that the ground floor as a whole shall be devoted to financial institutions, building lobbies, retail and other commercial uses.

Design and Historic Preservation: Each phase will require architectural review by the Design Commission.

Affordable Housing: The project is subject to the city’s inclusionary housing requirements, either for units on site or for an alternative. If it receives a discretionary approval by September 12, 2002, the requirement will be 6 percent of the units. If the first discretionary approvals are received after September 12, the requirement will be 15 percent.

Cultural Affairs Review: As mixed-use development, the project is subject to the Public Arts requirement for new development. One percent of the building valuation must be allocated for public art. The Arts Commission will review and approve the art program.

Timeline: The requirements for environmental review will determine a minimum timeline. For the project as proposed (*i.e.*, two phases of a single project), if an initial environmental study determines that an environmental impact report (EIR) is not required, the following timeline will apply.

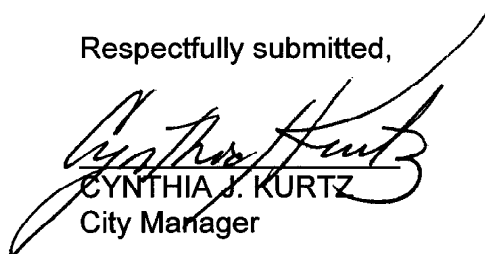
- Applicant will submit a development application for amendments to the Civic Center Specific Plan for both parcels, with information for environmental review.

- Within 30 days, staff will determine whether the application is complete and, if the application is complete, will begin an initial study.
- Within 60 days after the application is determined to be complete, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on a recommendation concerning the Civic Center Specific Plan amendments. Prior to the Planning Commission hearing, the Design Commission will review the proposed Specific Plan amendments, and the City Center Implementation Task Force will consider whether the proposal is consistent with the *Programming Effort Report*.
- The City Council will hold a public hearing on the Specific Plan amendments and environmental documents within 30 days after the Planning Commission makes a recommendation.
- Within 90 days after submittal of a separate complete application for the variances, and if the Council adopts the amendment to the Specific Plan, a hearing officer will hold a public hearing on the Zoning Code variances.
- The applicant may submit drawings for Concept Design Review by the Design Commission following an approval of the variances.

FISCAL IMPACT

Fees will be paid for the various actions required for the project. The project will also generate plan check and permit fees, in an amount that cannot be determined at this time.

Respectfully submitted,




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