

Agenda Report

DATE: APRIL 5, 2004

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW FOR THE PROPOSED "UNION VILLAGE" PROJECT AT THE NORTHEAST AND SOUTHEAST CORNERS OF UNION STREET AND EL MOLINO AVENUE.

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is being provided for information purposes only at this time.

BACKGROUND:

This project summary is being presented to City Council as part of the Predevelopment Plan Review (PPR) guidelines, which directs staff to present a PPR report for projects of community-wide significance to the City Council for information purposes only. On January 12, 2004, the applicant submitted a PPR for "Union Village", a two-phase mixed-use project incorporating 104 residential units, 4,100 square feet of offices, and structured parking to serve the proposed development and replace 98 existing surface public parking spaces at the location. The project will also provide approximately 60 additional public parking spaces in the subterranean garage. The project would demolish three small office buildings of 3,207 square feet total. The project encompasses lots on both the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Union Street and El Molino Avenue. The north parcel is owned by the City and is used for surface parking.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The following description is taken from the preliminary plans which are conceptual at this stage and are subject to change:

The Union Village project incorporates four existing parcels near the corner of El Molino Avenue and Union Street, only one of which (70 N. El Molino) has existing buildings. The intent is to create a residential campus on top of two subterranean parking structures. The buildings are integrated but are intended to each have distinct character. ~~Alvarado Arms is a 20 unit senior affordable rental project.~~

Cordoba Tower and Court has 35 units over offices and the Andalucia Court has 40 rental units. The project will be designed to be integrated visually with the previously approved Granada Court project (31 condominiums under construction to the east of this project). The parking structure south of Union, in addition to one level of residential parking, will have two other parking levels accessible for office and public use, one of which opens directly to the existing Vromans' surface lot.

Some additional highlights of the project include:

- The project meets and exceeds the Inclusionary housing component through the construction of 20 affordable senior units.
- The project replaces 98 surface parking spaces currently on the City owned lot north of Union Street and places this parking in a subterranean parking structure on the south side of Union Street. In addition, the project will provide approximately 60 additional parking spaces available to the general public in the new parking structure.
- The provision of senior affordable units with reduced parking encourages transit use. Proximity of the project to Colorado Boulevard commercial services and the Lake Avenue Gold Line Station will provide an urban living component which will be beneficial to both senior residents and other tenants.
- The project will be required to fully signalize the intersection at Union Street and Oak Knoll. These upgrades will improve traffic flow, vehicular safety and pedestrian access to public transit available on Colorado Boulevard and to the Lake Avenue Gold Line Station.
- The project provides courtyard-style housing with "paseos" and a great deal of internal open space.
- The project developer has agreed to work in unison with the City to implement a plan to ensure that local residents have every feasible opportunity to obtain employment as the project is built. Similar efforts will be undertaken to ensure that local contractors and sub contractors are made aware of the project and are given every opportunity to bid on construction related services.
- The project ties together both sides of Union Street with attractive, varied architecture and modulation.

PPR MEETING SUMMARY:

Staff has met with the applicant a number of times to discuss the proposal, its processing, and to identify the requirements of various City departments. As with a number of projects in the Central District, the Union Village project is being proposed at a time where the Central District Specific Plan is nearing completion and the proposed standards differ from the current code, however the developer attempted to

design a project in conformance with the approved concept plan. Comments from City departments identified the following discretionary actions and issues:

Central District Specific Plan – The Union Village project proposes an average Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.53 for the two locations. The Specific Plan envisions an FAR of 2.00 in this area. Additionally, density is allowed at 60 units/acre under the new Specific Plan and the project is proposing approximately 40 units/acre. The project falls below the anticipated height limit (50') for the north parcel and the majority of the south parcel. For the north parcel, the applicant will work with City Staff to develop elevations that consider the “view corridor” of the City hall dome from Union Street.

Environmental Review – An Initial Environmental Study was prepared for the related Granada Court project to the east. The Granada Court project included a traffic study that reviewed all phases of the Union Village project. This traffic study has been submitted to the Transportation Division and has been approved in concept as having no significant impact on the surrounding street system. As a result, the original Initial Environmental Study will be updated and expanded when the project is submitted for either discretionary review (i.e. CUP or Variance) or Design Review. Staff anticipates a Mitigated Negative Declaration will be appropriate.

Discretionary Actions/Hearings – The project will be subject to Design Review as well as the Zoning Hearing Officer process. A Minor Conditional Use Permit will be necessary to provide reduced parking for senior housing. Other Conditional Use Permits or Variances may be necessary as the final proposal is developed.

Development Agreement – An ordinance adopting a development agreement pursuant to California Government Code Section 65864, *et seq.*, may be granted in connection with the project and the north parcel which is under City ownership

FISCAL IMPACT:

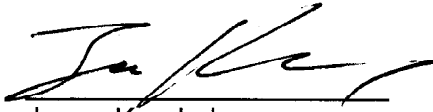
Fees will be collected for the discretionary actions required for the project. Additionally, the project will generate plan check and permit fees, in an amount that cannot be determined at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:



Jason Kruckeberg
Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director of Planning and Development

- Attachments: 1. Site Plan and Elevations
2. PPR Comments