

# Agenda Report

July 10, 2017

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Planning & Community Development Department

**SUBJECT: PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW OF A 258 UNIT MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (URBAN HOUSING) COMPLEX, REMODEL OF AN EXISTING STANDALONE RESTAURANT BUILDING, AND PARTIAL EXTERIOR REMODEL OF AN EXISTING OFFICE BUILDING, LOCATED AT 3452-3488 EAST FOOTHILL BOULEVARD**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This report is intended to provide information to the City Council; no action is required.

**BACKGROUND:**

LCRA Architects has submitted a Predevelopment Plan Review (PPR) application for a proposed project on the subject property located on the south side of East Foothill Boulevard, between Halstead Street and Rosemead Boulevard. The proposed project includes the remodel and expansion of the existing Panda Inn restaurant, the construction of 258 multi-family units, remodeling of the existing CFT Gateway Center office building and adding additional parking. A detailed project description is included in the project summary section.

The PPR process is established in Section 17.60.040.C of the City's Zoning Code as a process by which better projects can be achieved through early consultation between City staff and applicants. The process coordinates the review of projects among City staff, familiarizes applicants with the regulations and procedures that apply to the projects, and avoids significant investment in the design of a project without preliminary input from City staff. It also helps to identify issues that may arise during application processing such as community concerns and achieving consistency with City regulations and policies.

Projects that meet the threshold of "community-wide significance" (greater than 50,000 square feet in size with at least one discretionary action, 50 or more housing units, or any project that is deemed by the Director of Planning & Community Development Department to be of major importance to the City) are presented to the City Council as a way to inform the Council and the public of significant projects. The development project proposes a total of 258 units and meets the community-wide significance threshold.

This report provides a project description, identifies the entitlement and environmental review processes, and important topic areas that staff will focus on during case processing.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

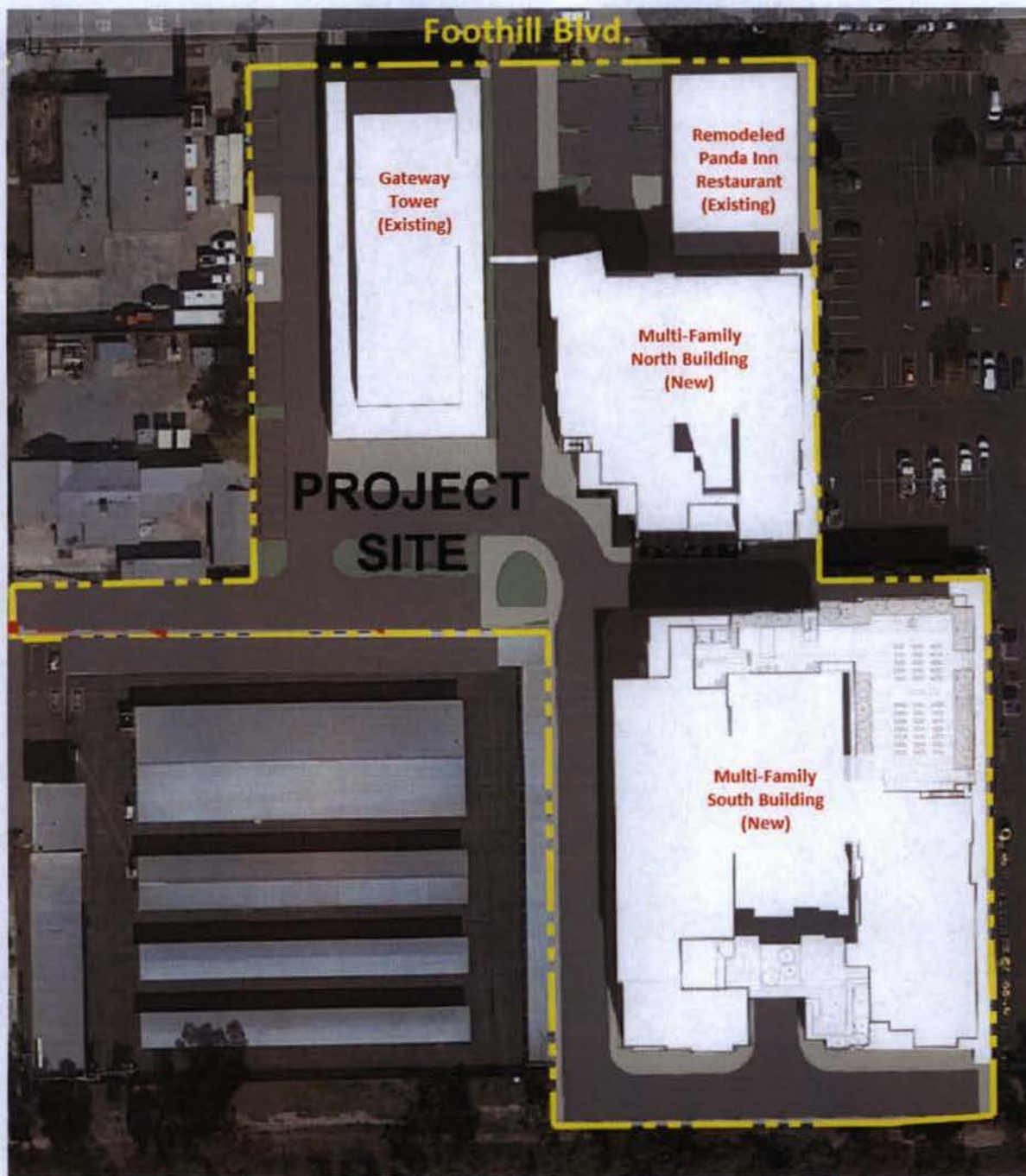
The site consists of three parcels of land and has a total size of approximately 4.3 acres (187,410 square feet). The site is currently developed with a one-story, 7,400 square foot commercial restaurant building, an 11-story, 121,590 square foot office building, and surface parking areas for the buildings. The proposed project includes:

- Construction of a 258-unit multi-family residential (Urban Housing) complex consisting of two buildings totaling 239,168 square feet;
- Remodel of an existing one-story, 7,400 square-foot Panda Inn Restaurant building and a 535 square-foot addition, resulting in a 7,935 square-foot restaurant;
- Exterior remodel of the first and second floors of the existing CFT Gateway Center office building; and
- 737 parking spaces, including spaces for the existing office building-provided in two levels of subterranean parking, two levels of above-grade podium parking, one level of at-grade podium parking, and at-grade surface lots.

**Existing Site Conditions - Southeast Corner of E. Foothill Blvd./Halstead Street**



**Proposed Site Plan (Ground-Floor)**



**Project Statistics:**

Zoning District	EPSP-d2-CG-B (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subarea d2, General Commercial, Specific Parcel B)			
General Plan Designation	High Mixed Use (0.0-3.0 FAR)			
Lot Size	187,410 sq. ft. (4.3 acres)			
Building Size	Building A = 7,935 sq. ft. (Remodeled Panda Inn restaurant) Building B = 61,888 sq. ft. (New multi-family) Building C = 177,307 sq. ft. (New multi-family) Building D = 121,590 sq. ft. (Existing CFT Gateway office building)			
	Required		Proposed	
Floor Area Ratio	2.00 FAR maximum (374,820 sq. ft.)		1.96 FAR (368,720 sq. ft.)	
Residential Density	0-60 du/acre maximum		60 du/ac (258 units)	
Building Height	60'-0" maximum		Building A = 39'-4", Building B = 60'-0", Building C = 60'-0"	
Setback - Front	10' minimum		0' (Existing Non-Conforming)	
Setback - Side	10' minimum		0' east side setback	
Setback - Rear	10' minimum		±30'	
Step backs	40' maximum height from front setback 20' inward and 60' maximum height from 20' inward of front setback to rear		Building A = 30' (within 20' of front setback) Buildings B and C = 60' (located behind 20' setback)	
Open/Community Space	Minimum of 30% (58,877 sq. ft.) of the net floor area		33.2% (66,416 sq. ft.)	
<b>Parking</b>				
Use	Units/Area	Applicable Rate	TOD Required Spaces	Proposed Spaces
multi-family units > 650 SF	215 units	1.5-2/unit	323-430	323
multi-family units < 650 SF	43 units	1/unit	43	43
multi-family guest parking	258 units	1/10 units	26	26
restaurant	7,935 sq. ft.	(10/1,000 sq. ft.) w/ 10% reduction	71	71
existing office	121,590 sq. ft.	(3/1,000 sq. ft.) w/ 25% reduction	274	274
<b>Total</b>			<b>737-845</b>	<b>737</b>

**Discretionary Entitlements:**

The project proposes new multi-family housing (Urban Housing), which is permitted by right in the EPSP-d2-CG-B zoning district. Also proposed is a slight increase in restaurant use with the restaurant remodel, which would also be permitted by right as it is less than 25,000 square feet. No additional office square footage would result from the remodel of the office building.

Based on the information submitted to-date, the proposed project has been designed to meet applicable development standards of the Zoning Code, General Plan and Specific Plan. The project would require the following discretionary entitlements:

Design Review:

- For a project with new construction that exceeds 25,000 square feet in size.

The Design Commission is the review authority for the Design Review.

**PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY:**

**Zoning:**

The site is zoned EPSP-d2-CG-B (East Pasadena Specific Plan Subarea d2 General Commercial district). The East Pasadena Specific Plan zoning district is governed by Chapter 17.32 of the Zoning Code. According to Table 3-6 (Allowed Uses and Permit Requirements), multi-family housing and additions to restaurants that are less than 25,000 square feet are permitted by right. Below is a summary of the notable PPR comments that were provided to the applicant:

*Residential Density:* Pursuant to Section 17.32.070, Table 3-8, the maximum allowable density is 60 units per acre as the site is within 1/4 mile of a Light Rail Transit Station. Based on the submitted information, the project site measures 187,410 square feet and therefore is permitted a maximum of 258 units.

The proposed project would have 258 units, or a density of 60 units per acre, and complies with the requirements.

*Floor Area:* Pursuant to Section 17.32.070, Table 3-8, the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowed for the subject site is 2.00. Based on the submitted information, the project site measures 187,410 square feet and therefore is permitted a maximum FAR of 374,820 square feet.

The proposed project would have a floor area of 368,720 square feet, or an FAR of 1.96, and complies with the requirements.

FAR is calculated utilizing gross floor area. Gross floor area is defined as the total enclosed area of all floors of a building measured to the inside face of the exterior walls including halls, stairways, elevator shafts at each floor level, service and mechanical equipment rooms and basement or attic areas having a height of more than seven feet, but excluding area used exclusively for vehicle parking or loading.

*Height:* Pursuant to Section 17.32.070, Table 3-8, the maximum height allowed is 60' as measured from the Foothill Blvd. property line. Based on the submitted information, Building A (Panda Inn) would have a height of 39'-4" and Buildings B and C (multi-family) would have a height of 60'-0".

*Setbacks:* Pursuant to Section 17.32.070, Table 3-8, the minimum required front setback from Foothill Boulevard is 10'. Building A (Panda Inn) has an existing non-conforming setback of zero feet. This existing setback would be maintained as part of

the remodel to the restaurant building. Setback requirements for Urban Housing use are established per 17.50.350.C. The required side and rear setbacks for the multi-family buildings is 10' minimum; however, through the Design Review process, the side and rear setbacks may be reduced if the reduction results in a larger courtyard. The proposed project provides a zero setback on the east property line and a rear setback greater than 30 feet. Through the Design Review process, if a reduced setback is maintained along the east elevation, the plans should reflect adequate information to show a resulting larger courtyard.

*Parking:* Permitted off-street parking is pursuant to Sections 17.46.040 (Parking and Loading) of the Zoning Code. The number of required parking spaces is based on the size of the non-residential space and the number of dwelling units and their size. Because the project site is located within a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area, the parking requirements from 17.46.040 have mandatory reductions per Section 17.50.340 (Transit-Oriented Development), as previously shown in the Project Statistics section. The parking plan as proposed would meet the parking regulations.

### **Design and Historic Preservation:**

*Historic Preservation Review:* Because the buildings proposed to be remodeled in conjunction with the proposed project are not designated or eligible historic resources, a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required.

*Design Review:* As the project consists of more than 25,000 sq. ft. of new construction, Design Commission design review is required. The applicable design guidelines for the project are the Design Guidelines in the East Pasadena Specific Plan and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Residential Districts. Based on the information contained in the preliminary plans, the following issues are likely to be analyzed during Design Review:

- The scale, massing, materials, solid-to-void relationships, the interplay of horizontal and vertical elements of the new construction and the modulation of the exterior walls facing public streets.
- The quality of materials and finishes, the proportions of window/door openings, the modulation of building walls, shade and shadow.
- Landscaping—especially in the setbacks along the sidewalks—and screening of mechanical equipment.
- Views from the interior of the site (and elevations facing the interior courtyard).

### **Specific Comments on Proposed New Construction:**

*Massing:* In general, the project's massing, including height and façade modulations and step back of the taller residential building from the frontage result in a pleasant pedestrian-oriented scale. The massing is in keeping with the surrounding context, including an office building across the street, and a new multi-family development at 3330 E. Foothill Blvd.

*Siting:* Siting of the restaurant at the minimum property setback with the focus on the front entry vestibule meets the objectives of subarea d2, including using an entrance as a special design element. The applicant may consider removing the at-grade parking area west of the restaurant building, or a portion thereof, to create an active pedestrian-oriented space and create a sense of place at the street edge, possibly including the required public art feature into this, a fountain, street furniture, outdoor dining or seating, and landscaping.

*Compatibility:* The residential building is contemporary in design with a flat roof, numerous variations in fenestration, color, and building façade articulation. This is generally compatible with the surrounding area, East Pasadena, and the overall character of Pasadena. The guidelines warn that too many different sizes and shapes of windows and doors are discouraged, so the applicant should consider simplifying these variations.

The restaurant building appears to have one elevation on the west composed mostly of glazing, as well as on the northern entry vestibule on the front façade. The building features varying roof lines, materials, shapes, the front entry vestibule, and a glazed skylight feature towards the middle of the roofline. The entry vestibule puts a strong design emphasis on the restaurant entrance, in keeping with the EPSP guidelines. The glazing should be clear glass that allows pedestrians to see into the restaurant.

The Design Commission has seen many examples of the use of large-scale thin framing devices in contemporary designs and these are generally not considered favorable design elements. Studies should be conducted to demonstrate how the development is compatible with the surrounding context and the architectural character and legacy of Pasadena, including materials, architecture, and color palette.

The surrounding context includes a National Register-listed historic resource nearby (the Stuart Company Plant and Office Building located at 3360 E. Foothill Blvd.) and the project should consider responding to the mid-century/new formalism styles such as in the Stuart building that can typically be found in East Pasadena. An example of this would be the emphasis on horizontal lines and buildings that integrate the indoors with the outside.

*Landscaping:* Landscaping will be reviewed in more detail during Final Design Review and all areas not used for building and circulation should be landscaped. There is special emphasis on landscaping in East Pasadena and a design for a low wall and landscaping to screen the at-grade parking lot west of the new restaurant should be included in the plans. Refer to the ESPS Design Guidelines Section 6.5.4, Figure 6-15, Section 6.5.8, and Figure 6-17; as well as PMC Section 17.32.080.A.

*Materials:* Materials will be reviewed in detail during Final Design Review to ensure provision of high quality, durable materials consistent with the architectural design of the building. The materials used on the building should contribute to its compatibility with Pasadena's general character and should unify the building. The overall palette, as well

as the proportions of each material specified, should be further studied to ensure that they respond to these directives. .

**General Plan:**

*General Plan Consistency:* According to the General Plan Land Use Diagram, the subject property is designated as High Mixed Use (0.0 to 3.0 FAR, 0 to 87 dwelling units per acre). The proposed project would have a FAR of 1.96 and a density of 60 dwelling units per acre; therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the FAR and density allowed by the General Plan.

The General Plan provides the following policies and objectives that are especially relevant to the project in its review:

*Policy 1.3 – Development Capacities: Regulate building intensity and population density consistently with the designations established by the Land Use Diagram. Within these, cumulative new development within the specific plan areas shall not exceed the number of housing units and commercial square feet specified in the table.*

The 2015 General Plan established caps for residential and non-residential development in each of the specific plan areas. Below is a table that demonstrates the caps for EPSP.

	Original Allocation in Existing General Plan	Balance of Allocation in Existing General Plan*
Residential Units	750	750
Commercial Square Feet	1,095,000	1,090,685

*\*Building permits Issued as of May 31, 2017*

The number of residential units proposed with this project is 258 units; 26 of the units would be provided as on-site affordable housing units pursuant to the Inclusionary Housing Requirements of the Zoning Code. The residential unit development cap does not apply to affordable housing units. The remaining 232 residential units are within the current unit allocation for residential development in the EPSP area. However, the allocation of units to a project only occurs at building permit issuance; approval of discretionary entitlements for a project does not vest unit allocation. Therefore, when there are multiple projects moving through the entitlement process, there is a possibility that units can be allocated to other projects. In this instance, there are other projects with multi-family residential components in process, and if these projects move forward and obtain the building permits as proposed, the balance of the residential unit allocation would be substantially reduced, and it could potentially affect the number of residential units to be created under the subject project.

*Policy 2.1 – Housing Choices: Provide opportunities for a full range of housing types, densities, locations, and affordability levels to address the community’s fair share of regional, senior, and workforce housing needs and provide a strong customer base sustaining the economic vitality of Pasadena’s commercial land uses. The types,*



*densities, and location of housing shall be determined by the Land Use Diagram and reflect the projected needs specified in the Housing Element.*

The proposed project would provide 258 new residential units, from studios to three-bedroom units, and would provide affordable housing units in conformance with the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

*Policy 2.5 – Mixed Use: Create Opportunities for the development projects that mix housing with commercial uses to enable Pasadena’s residents to live close to businesses and employment, increasing non-auto travel, and interact socially.*

The proposed project would provide both commercial and residential uses on a single property within an area designated for mixed-use development near transit.

*Policy 4.11 – Development that is Compatible: Require that development demonstrates a contextual relationship with neighboring structures and sites addressing such elements as building scale, massing, orientation, setbacks, buffering, the arrangement of shared and private open spaces, visibility, privacy, automobile and truck access, impacts of noise and lighting, landscaping quality, infrastructure, and aesthetics.*

The proposed project would be required to demonstrate its compatibility with the existing neighborhood and its consistency with the future development envisioned in this area as part of the General Plan Land Use Element Update.

*Policy 7.1 – Architectural Quality: Design each building as a high-quality, long term addition to the City’s urban fabric; exterior design and buildings material shall exhibit permanence and quality, minimize maintenance concerns, and extend the life of the building; and*

*Policy 7.3 – Compatibility: Require that new and adaptively re-used buildings are designed to respect and complement the defining built form, massing, scale, modulation, and architectural detailing of their contextual setting.*

In order to ensure the compatibility of the proposed project (in terms of scale, design quality, height, setbacks, etc.) to the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, the applicant would continue to work with DHP to refine the project’s design, to achieve architectural and design excellence, and to be reflective of the City’s design guidelines.

*Policy 20.1 – Neighborhood Meetings: Encourage broad representation and community participation at all steps of the planning process.*

The applicant is highly encouraged to meet with the surrounding community to discuss potential issues related to the project. Public hearings will be conducted for the Design Review and CEQA adoption.

*Goal 29 – Transit Villages: Moderate to high density mixed-use clusters of residential and commercial uses developed in an integrated “village-like” environment with*

*buildings clustered on common plazas and open spaces in proximity to Metro Gold Line stations capitalizing on their indeed market demands and land values, facilitating ridership, and reducing automobile use while increasing walkability.*

The proposed project is located within a 1/4-mile from the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station. Therefore, further review is required to ensure that the proposed project would consist of design and programmatic elements that encourage pedestrian activities and transit use.

*Specific Plan:* The project site is located within the East Pasadena Specific Plan (EPSP). The vision for the EPSP is an economically viable and attractive environment with a full range of mobility options, such as auto, light rail, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian. The EPSP is divided into three different subareas. The project site is located in Subarea d2 – Foothill, Rosemead, Sierra Madre Villa. In this subarea, the Specific Plan encourages research and technology based jobs and also office jobs. In the Subarea d2-CG, housing is encouraged around or near the Light Rail station.

### **Environmental Review:**

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an environmental review of the project would occur to analyze the project's potential environmental impacts, as identified by State and local environmental guidelines. At this time, it is not known what level of review will be required.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

Public hearings before the Design Commission are required for the proposed project. In addition, an environmental review would occur consistent with the requirements of CEQA. The following identifies the steps in the review process:

- Conduct environmental review per CEQA;
- Concept and Final Design Review by the Design Commission.

The Design Commission would be the review authority for the environmental review.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This report is for information only and will not result in any fiscal impact.


Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachment

Attachment A – Predevelopment Plan Review Plans