PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE:	June 3, 2026
TO:	Hearing Officer
SUBJECT:	Single-Family Compatibility Permit #7377
LOCATION:	3140 East California Boulevard
APPLICANT:	JWDA-MS Architects
ZONING DESIGNATION:	RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre)
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:	Low Density Residential
CASE PLANNER:	Alison Maldonado-Walker
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:	1) Adopt the Environmental Determination that the project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15303, Class 3, New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures); and 2) Adopt the Specific Findings in Attachment A to **approve** Single-Family Compatibility Permit with the conditions in Attachment B.

PROJECT PROPOSAL: Single-Family Compatibility Permit: To facilitate the construction of a new 4,955 square-foot, two-story single-family dwelling with a 467 square-foot attached garage that exceeds Neighborhood Compatibility. Based on a Neighborhood Compatibility Analysis, the allowable floor area of the house is 3,630 square feet. Applicant may exceed Neighborhood Compatibility subject to approval of a Single-Family Compatibility Permit, up to the maximum allowed gross floor area of all structures on the site (5,799 square feet).

BACKGROUND:

Site characteristics: The subject property is a 20,499 square-foot, rectangular-shaped parcel that is improved with a 2,116 square-foot, two-story residence and a 378 square-foot, attached two-car garage. Vehicular access to the site is provided from a driveway along East California Boulevard.

Adjacent Uses:
North – Single-Family Residential
South – Single-Family Residential
East – Single-Family Residential
West – Single-Family Residential

Adjacent Zoning:
North – RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre)
South – RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre)
East – RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre)
West – RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre)

Previous Zoning Cases: Exception #23598 – Permit to build on a portion of lot in Zone E. Approved April 9, 1929.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant, JWDA-MS Architects, has submitted a Single-Family Compatibility Permit (SCP) application to exceed the Neighborhood Compatibility maximum square footage by allowing a residence with a total floor area of 4,955 square feet. Based on a Neighborhood Compatibility Analysis, the allowable floor area of the house is 3,630 square feet. Applicants may exceed Neighborhood Compatibility subject to approval of a SCP, up to the maximum allowed gross floor area of all structures on the site (5,799 square feet). The proposed living area would exceed the Neighborhood Compatibility maximum allowed square footage by 1,325 square feet. The project also includes the construction of an attached 467 square-foot two-car garage.

The existing 2,116 square-foot two-story dwelling and 378 square-foot attached garage would be demolished. In its place, the applicant proposes a two-story dwelling comprised of five bedrooms and five bathrooms. A new circular driveway is proposed to provide access to the property. Three outdoor balconies are proposed, with one above the entryway and two extended beyond the second story bedrooms overlooking the rear yard. There are no protected trees proposed for removal as part of this project. The proposed project would comply with all other applicable development standards of the Zoning Code including maximum allowed gross floor area for the site.

ANALYSIS:

Single-Family Compatibility Permit

The subject property is located in the RS-2 (Single-Family Residential, 0-2 Dwelling Units Per Acre) zoning district. Pursuant to Table 2-3 (RS and RM-12 Residential District Development Standards), Zoning Code Section 17.22.040 (RS and RM-12 Residential Districts General Development Standards), the allowable floor area of a house shall not exceed 35 percent above the median house size of all properties within a 500-foot radius of the subject property. The 500-foot radius shall serve as the project's "neighborhood" for purposes of neighborhood compatibility. Los Angeles County Assessor information is used to determine the sizes of the existing houses within the radius and to calculate the Neighborhood Compatibility maximum. Note that the data obtained from the Los Angeles County Assessor only includes the square footages for the house; the data does not include basements, attics, attached garages, accessory dwelling units, and any detached structures.

A radius of 500 feet from 3140 East California Boulevard encompasses 60 properties within the City limit, all of which are developed with residences. The median size of the residences within the neighborhood is 2,689 square feet and 35 percent above the median value is 3,630 square feet. The data obtained for the median calculation is included in Attachment C. As proposed, the single-family residence would be 4,955 square feet in area and would exceed 35 percent above the median value by 1,325 square feet.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.22.090 (Single-Family Compatibility Permit), the allowable floor area of the residence may exceed 35 percent above neighborhood compatibility, up to the maximum gross floor area of all structures on the site, with the approval of a SCP application. However, compliance with the maximum floor area allowed for the Zoning District is still required. In this case, the maximum floor area allowed for all structures on the site is 20 percent of the lot size plus 1,700 square feet, which equates to 5,799 square feet. As proposed, the project results in a gross floor area of 5,422 square feet, which includes the 4,955 square-foot residence and the 467 square-foot attached garage. Thus, the project complies with the maximum gross floor area requirement.

The proposed project complies with all applicable development standards as required by the City's Zoning Code, including, but not limited to, building height, encroachment plane, parking, setbacks, floor area, and site coverage. A summary of development standards is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: RS-2 Development Standards

Development Standards	Requirement	Proposed	Compliance
Min Setbacks			
Front	46'-4'	48'-8"	Complies
Side (East)	10'	23'-2"	Complies
Side (West)	10'	11'	Complies
Rear	25'	87'-1"	Complies
Max Site Coverage	35% of the lot size (7,174 sf)	30.5% of lot size (6,267 sf)	Complies
Max Floor Area (Gross)	5,799 sf	5,422 sf	Complies

	(20% of lot size + 1,700 sf)		
Max Building Height	32’	29’	Complies
First Story Top Plate Height	10’	10’	Complies
Second Story Top Plate Height	20’	20’	Complies
Encroachment Plane	30-degree angle	30-degree angle	Complies
Neighborhood Compatibility	3,630 sf	4,955 sf	*SCP*
Parking	2 covered spaces	2-car garage	Complies

The purpose of the SCP is to provide a review process for the City to consider the appropriateness of proposed development in single-family zones to ensure that a proposed project is consistent in size and scale with existing dwellings within a 500-foot radius. The applicable review authority may approve a SCP application, only after making the required two findings. The first finding is that the design, location, and size of proposed structures and/or additions or alterations to existing structures would be compatible with existing and anticipated future development along both sides of the blockface in terms of aesthetics, height, materials, massing, and scale. The second finding is that the proposed project includes contextual front yard setbacks and residence entryways consistent in scale with entries on both sides of the blockface.

The subject property is situated on the south side of East California Boulevard within a blockface extending between Carroll Way and Brightside Lane. Within the neighborhood, one- and two-story single-family residences that were built during different development periods and in various architectural styles, including Spanish Revival, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch style houses. The proposed design of the new residence features characteristics of the Spanish Revival style including an articulated form, a hipped roof form clad in clay tiles, exterior walls clad in stucco, rectangular and arched windows and openings, and second-story balconies. The façade is designed with a balanced composition that incorporates a hierarchy of articulated elements including the central main entrance, fenestration pattern consisting of varied but balanced groupings of window openings, and projecting forms along the front elevation. There is an attached garage proposed on the east side of the house.

The proposed aesthetics and materials are compatible with the proposed architectural style of the house, and of the houses on the blockface designed in the same Spanish Revival architectural style. Additionally, the proposed project height, massing, and scale would not overpower the existing blockface, as the project maintains contextual consistency with the original height of the house, setbacks, and incorporates second-story balconies which further break down the massing and scale of the house. Much of the proposed footprint of the house would sit within the footprint of the original house, reducing visible impacts to the neighborhood.

The proposed dwelling would maintain compatibility in massing and scale within the blockface and would not create an incompatible building form. Although the proposed project will result in an increase in building height, it will be compatible with the surrounding single-family residential context since it is located within a neighborhood that consists of both one- and two-story single-family residences.

The proposed dwelling and the new entryway would be in generally the same location as the existing dwelling. The existing dwelling provides a 52-foot front yard setback, and the proposed project would be located at least 48 feet from the front property line. The existing Spanish Revival architecture would be represented in various elements of the proposed dwelling, such as the

arched double door entryway framed by two concrete columns. Therefore, staff finds that the project is consistent with the residential character on both sides of the blockface and would not pose an impact to the contextual front yard setbacks and entryways.

Project Review, Notice, and Hearing

Projects involving a new two-story dwelling and subject to the Single-Family Compatibility Permit are required to provide a Notice of Application to all properties within 500 feet of the subject property upon determination of a complete application and installation of story poles. The Notice of Application shall provide a minimum 14-day notification period to properties within 500 feet of the subject property.

If no request for a hearing is received during the Notice of Application period, the Zoning Administrator may render a decision on the application, which is appealable to the Board of Zoning Appeals. If a request for a hearing is received, a staff report would be submitted for consideration by the Hearing Officer at a publicly noticed hearing. The Hearing Officer shall conduct a public hearing on the application before the approval or disapproval of the permit.

The applicant installed story poles prior to the Notice of Application period that depict the outline and location of the proposed dwelling unit. The Notice of Application period for this project was April 1, 2026, through April 15, 2026. During the Notice of Application period, a request for hearing was received; therefore, the Hearing Officer is the decision-making authority for this project. The comments provided during the Notice of Application period have been provided to the Hearing Officer for review.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

The subject site is designated as Low Density Residential in the General Plan Land Use Element. The existing site would continue as a single-family residential use; therefore, the character of the neighborhood, consisting of single-family residences would be maintained and enhanced.

The proposal would maintain consistency with General Plan Land Use Policy 21.5 (Housing Character and Design) which encourages that when replacement housing is proposed, these should reflect the unique neighborhood character and qualities, including lot sizes; building form, scale, massing, and relationship to street frontages; architectural design and landscaped setbacks. The proposed dwelling has been designed to contribute and enhance the architectural character of the residential neighborhood. The placement of the dwelling is generally in the same location as the existing structure and minimizes potential impact to the adjoining properties by providing sufficient setbacks from the front and side property lines. Moreover, the contextual materials of the finished design are consistent with the materials found throughout the surrounding dwelling units.

General Plan Land Use Policy 22.1 (Appropriate Scale and Massing) requires building scale and massing that is compatible with existing development in single-family neighborhoods. As proposed, the dwelling would comply with the maximum site coverage, floor area, encroachment plane, and setback requirements. The proposed dwelling would be located at least 48 feet from the front property line, therefore minimizing any potential massing as viewed from the public right-of-way. The proposed design would center the massing on the lot and be an appropriate scale and massing with the neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with this Policy of the General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This project has been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15303, Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt classes; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. Section 15303 exempts the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. This includes but is not limited to one single-family residence, or a second dwelling unit in a residential zone. In urbanized areas, up to three single-family residences may be constructed or converted under this exemption. The project includes the construction of a new single-family dwelling unit and therefore, it is exempt.

REVIEW BY OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

The project was reviewed by the Building and Safety Division, Design and Historic Preservation Section, Departments of Fire, Water and Power, Public Works, and Transportation. As part of the Design and Historic Preservation review, a Historic Resource Evaluation was conducted to assess if the property is eligible for designation as an individual historic resource. Staff determined that the property is not eligible for designation as the existing structure is not historically significant. Thus, the proposed demolition of the existing residence is allowed.

The Departments of Public Works and Water and Power provided comments that are included as recommended conditions of approval in Attachment B. In addition to the recommended conditions of approval, all departments would review the project for compliance during the building permit plan review process.

CONCLUSION:

It is staff's assessment that the findings necessary for approving the SCP can be made. The proposed project would comply with the applicable development standards of the Zoning Code, apart from neighborhood compatibility. The design, massing and scale of the proposed dwelling would be compatible with the residential development within the surrounding neighborhood and would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the City. The approval of the SCP request would allow the property owner to expand the existing single-family use and allow enjoyment of the residence without impacting the character of the surrounding residential neighborhood. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer adopt the environmental determination and the specific findings in Attachment A to approve the application with the conditions in Attachment B.

Attachments:
Attachment A: Specific Findings for Single-Family Compatibility Permit
Attachment B: Recommended Conditions of Approval for Single-Family Compatibility Permit
Attachment C: Neighborhood Compatibility Data