



# **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2016

ITEM NUMBER: PH-1

**SUBJECT:** GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT GP-16-05 AND REZONE R-16-05 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2850 MESA VERDE DRIVE EAST

**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

**FROM:** PLANNING DIVISION/DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**PRESENTATION BY:** MEL LEE, SENIOR PLANNER

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** MEL LEE, AICP (714) 754-5611  
mel.lee@costamesaca.gov

## **DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project description is as follows:

1. Adoption of an **Initial Study/Negative Declaration**;
2. **General Plan Amendment GP-16-05**. General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of a 2.07-acre site from GC (General Commercial) to LDR (Low Density Residential); and
3. **Rezone R-16-05**. Rezone of a 2.07-acre site from C1 (Local Business District) to R-1 (Single Family Residential District - eight (8) dwelling units per acre maximum density allowed). The General Plan Amendment and Rezone is to accommodate an 11-unit, two-story, single-family residential development which will be submitted to the City for a separate public hearing at a future date.

## **APPLICANT/AUTHORIZED AGENT**

The applicant/authorized agent is Pinnacle Residential, representing the property owners, Donald S. Ellis Trust and Leonard Family Trust.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

An Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) has been prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Adopt resolution recommending that the City Council:

- (1) Adopt the Initial Study/Negative Declaration;
- (2) Adopt Resolution for General Plan Amendment GP-16-05; and
- (3) Give first reading to Rezone Ordinance for R-16-05.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Project Site/Environs***

The site is located on the east side of Mesa Verde Drive East, north of Adams Avenue, at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East. The site approximately 2.07 acres in size. Abutting properties consist of a single-family residential development (under construction) to the north and east (across Andros Street); a church and office development to the west; and office and commercial buildings to the south. The site is zoned C1 (Local Business District) and has a General Plan Land Use Designation of General Commercial.

The site is currently occupied by commercial office buildings totaling 24,267 square feet. The current structures were constructed at the site in 1963 and 1985. The existing commercial office buildings consist of single-story buildings and associated surface parking with approximately 90 spaces. Tenants on the subject property have included various commercial tenants including medical and dental offices, real estate offices, insurance agencies, consulting firms, and a printing facility since 1963.

## **ANALYSIS**

### ***Project Description***

The proposal includes a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of the site from GC (General Commercial) to LDR (Low Density Residential) and to rezone the site from C1 (Local Business District) to R-1 (Single Family Residential District - eight (8) dwelling units per acre maximum density allowed). The General Plan Amendment and Rezone is to accommodate an 11-unit, two-story, single family residential development which will be submitted to the City for a separate public hearing at a future date.

### ***City Council Direction***

Typically, requests to amend the City's General Plan requires the submittal of a General Plan screening application, reviewed by City Council. However, in this case, on June 14, 2016, the City Council held a special meeting regarding the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2015-2035 General Plan Update. During the meeting, City Council provided direction on a 4-0 vote (Council Member Monahan absent) that the City accept for processing an application to amend the General Plan Designation and zoning for the subject property as described earlier. The applications were filed on August 22, 2016.

The staff report can be found on the City's website here:

<http://www.costamesaca.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=22115>

## PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE CONFORMANCE

### *Conformance with the City of Costa Mesa General Plan*

The Costa Mesa General Plan establishes the long-range planning and policy direction that guides change and preserves the qualities that define the community. The 2015-2035 General Plan sets forth the vision for Costa Mesa for the next two decades. This vision recognizes that Costa Mesa's focus remains on protecting and enhancing Costa Mesa's diverse residential neighborhoods, accommodating an array of businesses that both serve local needs and attract regional and international spending, and continuing to provide cultural, educational, social, and recreational amenities that contribute to the quality of life in the community. Over the long term, General Plan implementation will ensure that development decisions and improvements to public and private infrastructure are consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies contained in this Plan.

The request is consistent with General Plan and Housing Element goals, objectives, and policies as follows:

- **General Plan Objective LU-1A:** Establish and maintain a balance of land uses throughout the community to preserve the residential character of the City at a level no greater than can be supported by the infrastructure.
- **General Plan Policy LU-1.1:** Provide for the development of a mix and balance of housing opportunities, commercial goods and services, and employment opportunities in consideration of the needs of the business and residential segment of the community.
- **General Plan Policy LU-1.2:** Balance economic gains from new development while preserving the character and densities of residential neighborhoods.
- **Housing Element Objective HOU-3.1:** Encourage the conversion of existing marginal land to residential, where feasible and consistent with environmental conditions that are suitable for new residential development.
- **Housing Element Objective HOU-3.2:** Provide opportunities for the development of well-planned and designed projects which, through vertical or horizontal integration, provide for the development of compatible residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, or public uses within a single project or neighborhood.

### *Conformance with the Zoning Code*

The City's Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the City's General Plan Land Use Element and the goals and policies contained therein. For this reason, the Zoning Map must be consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map. The General Plan Land Use Map indicates the general location and extent of future land use in the City. The Zoning Ordinance, which includes the Zoning Map, contains more detailed information about permitted land uses, building intensities, and required development standards.

The existing Zoning Code designation for the project site is C1 (Local Business District). The existing C1 zoning designation allows a floor area ratio between 0.20 and 0.75 for high to very low traffic uses, respectively. The proposed request involves a rezone of the property to R1 (Single Family Residential District).

The proposed project would replace an established commercial office building with an 11-unit single-family residential development. The character of the surrounding area is defined by a mix of residential and commercial land uses. The project would not be incompatible with the mix of uses and character of its surroundings, and would maintain the quality of the environment. The proposed development project, when submitted, will be fully evaluated by the Planning Commission.

### ***Justifications for Approval***

Pursuant to Title 13, Section 13-29(g), Findings, of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, the Planning Commission shall find that the evidence presented in the administrative record substantially meets specified findings. Staff recommends approval of the request, based on an assessment of facts and findings below which are also described in more detail in the draft approval resolution.

### **General Plan Amendment**

Although Code Section 13-29(g) does not specify findings for General Plan Amendments, the project conforms to the specific goals and objectives of the General Plan Land Use Element as discussed in the previous section of this report.

### **Rezone**

- *The proposed rezone is consistent with the Zoning Code and the General Plan.* The proposed project will be required to meet or exceed the intent of the City's Zoning Code with regard to the development standards for the R1 zone, including density, setbacks, lot size, and on-site parking. The proposed General Plan land use designation for the project area is Low Density Residential (8 dwelling units to the acre maximum), which is compatible with the proposed zone change to R1. The proposed 11-unit project provides a maximum density of 5 dwelling units to the acre. The maximum density is based on the gross acreage of the site.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

An Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) has been prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15073, the IS/ND was made available for a 20-day public review and comment period beginning on September 6, 2016, until September 26, 2016. A copy of the IS/ND is included with this report under separate cover. The consultant will prepare a Responses to Comments received during the comment period at the September 26, 2016 Planning Commission hearing.

## LEGAL REVIEW

The City Attorney has reviewed the draft ordinance and resolutions and they have been approved as to form by the City Attorney's Office.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Title 13, Section 13-29(d), of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, three types of public notification have been completed no less than 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing:

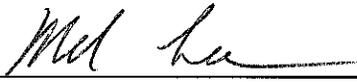
1. Mailed notice. A public notice was mailed to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project site. The required notice radius is measured from the external boundaries of the property. (See attached Notification Radius Map). Notice was also mailed to all tenants within the existing retail/office center on the property.
2. On-site posting. A public notice was posted on each street frontage of the project site.
3. Newspaper publication. A public notice was published once in the Daily Pilot newspaper.

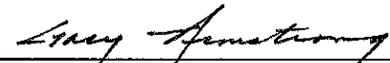
## ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend that the City Council approve the request. The Planning Commission may suggest specific changes that are necessary to alleviate concerns. If any of the additional requested changes are substantial, the item should be continued to a future meeting to allow additional analysis. In the event of significant modifications to the proposal, should the Planning Commission choose to do so, staff will return with a revised resolution and ordinance incorporating new findings and/or conditions.
2. Recommend that the City Council deny the request. If the Planning Commission believes that there are insufficient facts to support the findings for approval, Planning Commission must deny the application and provide facts in support of denial to be included in the attached draft resolution for denial. If the project were denied, the applicant could not submit substantially the same type of application for six months. The existing General Plan and Zoning designations would remain in place.

## CONCLUSION

Approval of the request will allow future development of a 11-unit detached residential ownership development consistent with proposed General Plan and Zoning designations. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the project.

  
MEL LEE, AICP  
Senior Planner

  
GARY ARMSTRONG, AICP  
Economic Development & Development  
Services Director/Deputy CEO

- Attachments:
1. Location and Radius Maps
  2. Site Photos
  3. Applicant's Project Description and Conceptual Site Plan
  4. Draft Resolution and Ordinance
  5. Initial Study/Negative Declaration (Under Separate Cover)

Distribution:

- Director of Economic & Development Services/Deputy CEO
- Interim Assistant Development Services Director
- Senior Deputy City Attorney
- Public Services Director
- City Engineer
- Transportation Services Manager
- Fire Protection Analyst

Pinnacle Residential  
Attn: David Graves  
2 Venture, Suite 200  
Irvine, CA 92618

Donald S. Ellis  
Trustee Donald S. Ellis Trust  
P.O. Box 538  
Del Mar, CA 92014

Paul Leonard and Dorit Ann Leonard  
Trustees Leonard Family Trust  
2934-1/2 Beverly Glen Circle, No. 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90077

First Carbon Solutions  
Attn: Frank Coyle, Director  
250 Commerce, Suite 250  
Irvine, CA 92602