

Staff Report City of Loma Linda

From the Department of Community Development

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF MAY 2, 2012

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KONRAD BOLOWICH, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN (PPD) NO. 11-105

SUMMARY

The applicant requests to construct a three-story, 8,921 square-foot motel inn and suites. The proposed project would include the construction of 23 rooms and the associated on-site improvements. The project site is located on the north side of Redlands Boulevard in the East Valley Corridor Specific Plan/General Commercial (EV/CG) Zone).

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is for the Planning Commission to recommend the following actions to the City Council:

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration (Attachment B); and,
2. Approve PPD No. 11-105 based on the Findings, and subject to the Conditions of Approval (Attachment C).

PERTINENT DATA

Property Owner/Applicant:	Hitesh Patel
General Plan/Zoning:	Commercial/East Valley Corridor Specific Plan, General Commercial (EV/CG)
Site:	Vacant 0.41 acre rectangular lot
Topography:	Generally flat
Vegetation:	None
Special Features:	N/A

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING SETTING

Background

On August 20, 2008, the Planning Commission approved Precise Plan of Design PP 07-04 to develop an 8,921 square foot, 3-story motel at the subject site. Due to personal issues, the applicant was unable to continue with the project and project approval expired on August 20, 2009.

This project is essentially the same as the one unanimously approved by the Planning Commission in 2008 (PPD 07-04).

Existing Setting

The 18,000 square-foot site is vacant and devoid of any structures and vegetation. The site is bounded by the Interstate 10 Freeway to the north, Redlands Boulevard to the south, an existing fast food, drive-thru restaurant to the east, and a vacant, legal non-conforming structure to the west. The site is in close proximity to the commercial centers, located at the Redlands Boulevard/Anderson Street intersection, that accommodate a variety of retail and service oriented businesses.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) STATUS

Pursuant to CEQA, the City proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. Staff has found that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment on the basis of the Initial Study with mitigation measures in place. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared and issued on April 13, 2012. The CEQA mandatory 20-day public review period began on Thursday, April 13, 2012 and ended on Wednesday, May 2, 2012. No comments were received as of the preparation of this report.

Public Comments

Public hearing/environmental review notices for this project were posted and mailed to property owners and occupants within 300 feet of the project site on April 13, 2012. As of this report, the City has received no written or oral comments on the proposal.

ANALYSIS

Project Description

The project is a request to construct a new, three-story 8,921 square-foot motel building on an existing 0.41 acre vacant lot. The building will be placed on the western portion of the parcel with the majority of the required parking located on the east side of the property. The site will be screened by mature trees and landscaping on the north and east boundaries of the parcel. Additionally, the building will maintain the required 25-foot front set back in landscaping. The footprint of the proposed building is adjacent to the west property line of the subject parcel.

Site Analysis

The project site will be completely graded for construction. The building foot print will cover just under 3,000 square feet (15 percent) of the graded area. The EV/CG zone requires a minimum 25 foot front-yard setback and no minimum setbacks on the side yards. The rear setback adjacent to the freeway right-of-way requires a minimum 25 feet of landscape area, however, provisions for a smaller landscape area is allowed with the incorporation of landscaping enhancements elsewhere on site. At its nearest point, the proposed building is 5 feet from the property line (west property line). The rear building setback will have a minimum dimension of 25 feet. The proposed building will maintain the required 25-foot set back from the front property line.

The site plan illustrates one vehicular ingress and egress to the proposed site. The point of access is located from Redlands Boulevard. Additionally, a pedestrian access will be provided from the City sidewalk to the south via a walkway to the first floor lobby located on the south side of the building. The second and third levels of the building will be accessed by an elevator, as well as interior stairways on the north and south sides of the building.

Pursuant to the East Valley Corridor Specific Plan, Section EV4.201 (Parking Requirements), the parking ratio for a motel is 1.1 spaces for every sleeping unit. According to the project data and the prescribed parking ratio, the project is required to have a minimum of 25 parking spaces. The proposed project provides 27 spaces (including one accessible space) which meet the City's parking requirement.

Architecture Analysis

The proposed building incorporates architectural elements such as gabled tile roofs and earth toned stucco walls that would blend with the other adjacent commercial structures in the area. The building is designed in a modern and contemporary architectural style with rectangular glazed windows, decorative exterior walkway railings, and the incorporation of vertical and horizontal score lines. The use of stone veneer accents further enhances the contemporary style. The total vertical height of the building is 31 feet, which is measured from the apex of the gabled roof.

Measure V Compliance

On November 7, 2006, the Loma Linda voters passed Measure V, *The Residential and Hillside Development Control Measure*. Staff analyzed the project using the adopted development guidelines in Chapter 19.16 of the Loma Linda Municipal Code (LLMC) and determined that the project complies with the requirements of Measure V, as follows:

Section I (F)(2) of Measure V requires that traffic levels of service (LOS) be maintained at level C or better.

Section I (F)(2) – *To assure the adequacy of various public services and to prevent degradation of the quality of life experienced by the residents of Loma Linda, all new development projects shall assure by implementation of appropriate mitigation measures that, at a minimum, traffic levels of service (LOS) are maintained at a minimum of LOS C throughout the City, except where the current level of service is lower than LOS C. In any location where the level of service is below LOS C at the time an application for a development project is submitted, mitigation measures shall be imposed on that development project to assure, at a minimum, that the level of traffic service is maintained at levels of service that are no worse than those existing at the time an application for development is filed. In any location where the Level of Service is LOS F at the time an application for a development project is submitted, mitigation measures shall be imposed on that development project to assure, at a minimum, that the volume to capacity ratio is maintained at a volume to capacity ratio that is no worse than that existing at the time an application for development is filed. Projects where sufficient mitigation to achieve the above stated objectives is infeasible shall not be approved unless and until the necessary mitigation measures are identified and implemented.*

The original traffic impact analysis was prepared by Clyde Sweet and Associates in 2008 and LSA conducted a peer review of the traffic impact analysis. In December 2011 in association with this application, Clyde Sweet and Associates updated the traffic analysis and concluded that the project will generate approximately 9 trips per hour during a.m. peak hours and 11 trips per hour during p.m. peak hours of traffic, no change from the previous traffic analysis. The study concluded that the low volume of trips generated by the proposed motel project is not enough to significantly change the existing traffic levels for the intersections of Redlands Boulevard/Anderson Street, Redlands Boulevard/Richardson Street, and Redlands Boulevard/Mountain View Avenue, and Redlands Boulevard and Poplar Street.

As outlined in Section I (A)(3) of Measure V, the project includes a condition that requires the applicant to pay all required development impact fees to cover 100 percent of the pro rata share of the estimated cost of public infrastructure, facilities, and services.

The building and site meet the requirements Section I (A), Section 1(C) Principal Three, which requires that new developments be planned and constructed in a manner that preserves natural scenic vistas and protects against intrusion on view shed areas. Please refer to the Architectural Analysis section of this report, which provides a description of the proposed motel building and the project plans in Attachment D. The architectural design is compatible with other commercial complexes near the project site. The height of the building does not exceed 35 feet and the massing is appropriate to the site. The building will preserve scenic vistas to the north and will not result in intrusions into the view shed of the South Hills.

The majority of other requirements outlined in Measure V are for residential projects and do not apply to non-residential uses.

Precise Plan of Design Findings

According to LLMC Section 17.30.290, Precise Plan of Design (PPD), Application Procedure, PPD applications shall be processed using the procedure for a variance (as outlined in LLMC Section 17.30.030 through 17.30.060) but excluding the grounds (or findings). As such, no specific findings are required. However, LLMC Section 17.30.280, states the following:

“If a PPD would substantially depreciate property values in the vicinity or would unreasonably interfere with the use or enjoyment of property in the vicinity by the occupants thereof for lawful purposes or would adversely affect the public peace, health, safety or general welfare to a degree greater than that generally permitted by this title, such plan shall be rejected or shall be so modified or conditioned before adoption as to remove the said objections.”

The project is consistent with the General Plan Land Use designation (Commercial) and in compliance with the East Valley Corridor Specific Plan/General Commercial Zone, which permits both motels and hotels. The proposed motel use is compatible with the existing and future land uses in the surrounding area.

The project will provide improvements in the form of a new 8,921 square-foot, three-story motel inn and suites with on-site improvements including parking and drive aisles, pedestrian walkways, and landscaping. Staff recommends approval of the project to facilitate the development of a commercial business. The project will not adversely affect the public peace, health, safety or general welfare of the community.

In an effort to ensure that the foregoing project is consistent with the General Plan, compliant with the zoning and other City requirements, compatible with the surrounding area, and appropriate for the site, staff and the City Attorney have opted to apply the Conditional Use Permit Findings in LLMC §17.30.210 to this project, as follows:”

1. *That the use applied for at the location set forth in the application is properly one for which a conditional use permit is authorized by this title.*

The proposed use is a permitted use within the East Valley Corridor Specific Plan/General Commercial Zone (EVCSP/CG). The proposed 8,921 square-foot three-story motel structure is compatible is use with the existing commercial uses near the site. The proposed project has been designed in accordance with the standards and requirements of the EV/CG zone and it is consistent with all provisions contained in the General Plan.

2. *That the said use is necessary or desirable for the development of the community, is in harmony with the various elements and objectives of the general plan, and is not detrimental to existing uses specifically permitted in the zone in which the proposed use is to be located.*

The project is consistent with General Plan (July 25, 2008) Guiding Policy 4.6.3, which encourages the protection of the fiscal and financial health of the City. As with any new development, the developer will be required to pay for its fair share of new infrastructure and facilities in order to ensure that no increase will occur to the cost of public services provided to existing development. In addition, the proposed motel will provide the City with revenue through transient occupancy taxes.

As indicated in the discussion of Measure V Compliance, the project is also consistent with the General Plan as amended by Measure V.

3. *That the site for the intended use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate said use and all of the yards, setbacks, walls, or fences, landscaping and other features required in order to adjust said use to those existing or permitted future uses on land in the neighborhood.*

The subject parcel is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed use. The lot coverage of the new facility is approximately seventeen (17) percent of the overall project site. The project meets the development criteria prescribed for the EV/CG zone including setbacks, yards and landscaping. Therefore, the project site can accommodate the proposed use which will be compatible with the existing and future land uses along the Redlands Boulevard corridor.

4. *That the site or the proposed use related to streets and highways is properly designed and improved to carry the type and quantity of traffic generated or to be generated by the proposed use.*

The project site proposes a commercial driveway approach on Redlands Boulevard that will provide ingress/egress. Based on the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA), project trip distributions (PCE's) were estimated to be at about 9 trips per hour during the a.m. peak hour and 12 trips during the p.m. peak hour. The TIA indicates that the project will not result in any significant impacts that would substantially increase either the number of vehicle trips or the volume to capacity ratio on roads.

5. *That the conditions set forth in the permit and shown on the approved site plan are deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.*

The public health, safety and general welfare will be protected with the implementation of the Conditions of Approval for this Precise Plan of Design. Specifically, Conditions number 56 through 59 require the developer to provide sufficient lighting for site and among other things, register with the Crime Free Hotel/Motel Program that works closely with the San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department personnel to address crime prevention.

5. *That the conditions set forth in the permit and shown on the approved site plan are deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.*

The public health, safety and general welfare will be protected with the implementation of the Conditions of Approval for this Precise Plan of Design. Specifically, Conditions number 56 through 59 require the developer to provide sufficient lighting for site and among other things, register with the Crime Free Hotel/Motel Program that works closely with the San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department personnel to address crime prevention.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the project because it is consistent with the General Plan (as amended by Measure V) and in compliance with the LLMC Code and East Valley Corridor Specific Plan, General Commercial (EV/CG) requirements. The motel use is compatible with the existing and future uses in the surrounding area. The Draft NOI/Initial Study was prepared pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project as Conditions of Approval. Finally, the findings have been made to support approval of the Precise Plan of Design request.

Report prepared by:

Guillermo Arreola
Associate Planner

EXHIBITS

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI/Initial Study)
- C. Conditions of Approval
- D. Project Plans