



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: OCTOBER 8, 2024

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARD: 3
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: DP-2022-00036 (REZONE) - ADOPT AN ORDINANCE REZONING A 17.37-ACRE
PARCEL FROM THE CG - COMMERCIAL GENERAL ZONE TO THE MU-V -
MIXED USE - VILLAGE ZONE

ISSUE:

Consideration to adopt an ordinance to amend Riverside Municipal Code, Chapter 19.090 to rezone an approximately 17.37 acre parcel, located at 5261 Arlington Avenue - Zoning Code Amendment (DP-2022-00036) - To rezone the project site from CG – Commercial General Zone to MU-V – Mixed Use-Village Zone

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council adopt the attached Ordinance rezoning the subject site from CG - Commercial General to MU-V - Mixed Use - Village (Attachment 1).

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE:

On September 17, 2024, the City Council introduced an ordinance to amend the Zoning Map pursuant Chapter 19.090 of the Riverside Municipal Code by rezoning an approximately 17.37-acre parcel from the CG – Commercial General Zone to the MU-V – Mixed Use – Village Zone, the parcel is located at 5261 Arlington Avenue, generally situated at the intersection of Arlington and Streeter Avenues, identified as Assessor Parcel No. 226-180-015

BACKGROUND:

The project site consists of a single 17.37-acre parcel, developed with a vacant 192,139 square foot former department store (Sears), constructed in 1964. The building includes an 87,900 square foot ground level retail area, a 90,526 square foot basement and a 13,713 square foot automotive center. Additionally, the site contained a vehicle fueling station, along the Streeter Avenue frontage. The fuel station ceased operation around 1985 when underground storage tanks were removed. The remainder of the fueling station island, canopy and distribution lines were completely removed in 1994. Subsequently Sears ceased business operations at the site in 2019. While the vacant main building and automotive center remain, the remainder of the site is developed with a large asphalt surface parking lot and sparse landscaping.

Development in the surrounding area consists of a medical office, community center and single and multifamily development to the north, commercial development to the south (across Arlington Avenue), single-family residential and medical office development to the west (across Streeter Avenue), and single-family residential development to the east.

The applicant filed a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Site Plan Review, Tentative Parcel Map and Certificate of Appropriateness to facilitate construction of a mixed-use development.

On January 12, 2023 the project was heard by ALUC. The project was found to be inconsistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Although found to be inconsistent, the General Plan and Zoning Code allow the City to overrule the Airport Land Use Commission inconsistency determinations consistent with California Utilities Code § 21670.

On April 17, 2024 the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) recommended to City Council to deny both the requested Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and Cultural Resources override portion of the Environmental Impact Report by a vote of 5-2 (Attachment 11).

On April 25, 2024 the Planning Commission (CPC) recommended to City Council to approve the requested General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Site Plan Review, Tentative Parcel Map and the Draft EIR by a vote of 6-0-1 (Attachment 9).

On June 25, 2024 City Council directed staff to send the draft resolution with findings to ALUC and California Department of Aeronautics for its intent to overrule ALUC's determination of inconsistency for the project and set the public hearing date for September 17, 2024.

On September 17, 2024 City Council upheld an appeal by the applicant of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), Overruling ALUC's determination; upheld the applicants appeal of Cultural Heritage Boards determination, approving the Certificate of Appropriateness; adopted Resolutions certifying the Final Environmental Impact, and General Plan Amendment; introduced an Ordinance to rezone the subject site; and approved project entitlements.

DISCUSSION:

Proposed Project

The proposed project would include the demolition of the existing structures and the surface parking lot to facilitate development of a mixed-use project containing 388 multifamily residential units and 25,320 square feet of commercial/retail.

Multi-Family Residential

The multifamily residential is located on 14.44 acres adjacent to Streeter Avenue (parcel 1). A total of 388 units are proposed in 13 three-story stacked unit buildings and 12 two-story townhome buildings. The complex includes 18 studios, 152 one-bedroom, 158 two-bedroom and 60 three-bedroom units. Units range in size from 597 to 1,307 square feet. Private balconies or patios are attached to each unit and range in size from 51 to 243 square feet.

Common useable open space totals 57,071 square feet and includes a recreational pool area, a promenade (playground, bar-b-que stations, outdoor games, picnic areas, multi-use lawn areas), clubhouse/ fitness center and a dog park open to the residence of the community and the public.

A total of 683 parking spaces are provided for the residential component of the project with over 75 percent in either fully enclosed garages or under covered carports. The remaining spaces will be uncovered.

Commercial

The commercial component of the project is located on 2.93-acres adjacent to Arlington Avenue (parcel 2). A total of 25,320 square feet of retail commercial uses are proposed, including a 20,320

square foot ALDI grocery store, and a 5,000 square foot multi-tenant commercial building. ALDI is anticipated to operate from 9:00am to 9:00pm, seven days a week. No tenants have been identified for the multi-tenant building; however, the building has been designed to accommodate a number of uses ranging from restaurant, medical/dental, retail and/or office. A total of 132 parking spaces are provided for the commercial component of the project.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Site Access

The primary vehicular entrance to the residential portion of the site is proposed from Streeter Avenue, with additional secondary access points on Streeter and Arlington Avenues. Primary vehicle access to the commercial component of the project will be from the existing signalized intersection on Arlington Avenue. ALDI delivery trucks will access the loading dock on the west side of the ALDI building with direct access from both Arlington and Streeter Avenues. Delivery trucks will not impact any primary vehicular entrances to either the residential or commercial components of the project and will not impact any pedestrian connectivity throughout the project.

The proposal includes an extensive pedestrian network of walkways, paseos, and protected and shaded walkways throughout the project. Residences within the development have multiple pedestrian connections with the commercial component of the site and to the signalized intersection for additional commercial amenities and conveniences located on the southern side of Arlington Avenue. Surrounding residences in the adjacent neighborhoods can access the extensive pedestrian walkways that lead to the proposed commercial development and amenities and gathering areas available to the public, including the proposed dog park, access to future art installation and commercial gathering /outdoor patio eating areas.

Construction Phasing

Construction is anticipated to take approximately 23 months and will be built in two phases with the first phase being the commercial component of the project, and the second phase being the residential component. Phases will overlap as construction of the residential portion would begin as construction of the commercial component nears completion.

Zoning Consistency

Zoning Code Compliance

The project proposes to rezone the project site from CG – Commercial General to MU-V – Mixed Use-Village (Attachment 4). The MU-V Zone is consistent with the MU-V General Plan Land Use designation and provides for medium to high-density residential development with retail, office and service uses primarily at street level to facilitate a pedestrian environment. It is intended to encourage new housing opportunities that are nearby to commercial services. Plazas, courtyards, outdoor dining, transit stops and other public gathering spaces and community amenities, such as art in public spaces, are strongly encouraged. The focus of the development and design standards is to provide buffering techniques for transitions from developed commercial areas to lower density residential neighborhoods.

The project has been designed to be consistent with the purpose of the Mixed Use Zones:

- To encourage a mixture of compatible and synergistic land uses, such as residential with compatible nonresidential uses including office, retail, personal services, public spaces and other community amenities;
- To strengthen the interaction between residential, commercial and employment uses in order to reduce dependency on automobiles, improve air quality, decrease urban sprawl, facilitate use of transit and encourage conservation of land resources;
- To revitalize deteriorating commercial areas by integrating residential uses into the

commercial fabric to create an active street life and enhance the vitality of businesses;

- To foster pedestrian-oriented activity nodes by providing a mix of uses in compact, walkable areas;
- To increase the area available for residential development and provide alternative types of housing;
- To encourage medium- and high-density residential development to occur in close proximity to employment and services; and
- To allow for a greater variety of land uses and structures, including flexibility in site planning.

As designed, the project strengthens the interaction between the proposed mix of uses, creating a pedestrian-oriented environment while ensuring the overall design and proposed uses are compatible with uses in the surrounding neighborhoods by incorporating specific site design practices, which reduce massing and height and increase setbacks along edges with existing single-family residential. As proposed the project is consistent with the purpose and all applicable development standards of the Zoning Code.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This project contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Plan Priority 2 – Community Well-Being (Goal 2.1 – Facilitate the development of a quality and diverse housing supply that is available and affordable to a wide range of income).

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads, as follows:

1. Community Trust: The mixed-use development required public hearings by the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission, Cultural Heritage Board, Planning Commission and City Council. Additionally, public comment is and was encouraged throughout the process; including through the Notice of Preparation, the project scoping meeting, the 45-day DEIR review period and at all public meetings as identified above.
2. Equity: The proposed mixed-use development provides housing opportunities that benefit all residences in the community and region.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: All project costs are borne by the applicant. Housing and commercial/retail will add to the City’s tax base.
4. Innovation: The proposed mixed-use development meets the growing community’s needs for increased housing opportunities while situating residents adjacent to community services and reducing vehicles miles traveled.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: All new construction will meet the most up-to-date Building Codes. The proposed development is designed to meet the current and future needs of the community.

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1. Ordinance Amending the Zoning Code