



Community & Economic Development Department


3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 |

Planning Division

RiversideCA.gov

PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING DATE: OCTOBER 8, 2015
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 6

PROPOSED PROJECT

<i>Case Numbers</i>	P15-0326 (Specific Plan Amendment)	
<i>Request</i>	To amend Section 9.5.2 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) to allow a maximum building height of 80 feet for a portion of the Prospect Place Office District where 35 feet is currently the maximum height.	
<i>Applicant</i>	Pacific Medical Buildings (PMB)	
<i>Project Location</i>	Portion of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) Prospect Place Office District bounded by Fourteenth Street, Olivewood Avenue, Prospect Avenue, and State Highway 91.	
<i>APN</i>	Several	
<i>Project area</i>	Approximately 5.7 acres	
<i>Ward</i>	1	
<i>Neighborhood</i>	Downtown	
<i>Specific Plan</i>	Downtown	
<i>General Plan Designation</i>	DSP – Downtown Specific Plan	
<i>Zoning Designation</i>	DSP – PPO – Downtown Specific Plan Prospect Place Office District	
<i>Staff Planner</i>	Kyle Smith, AICP, Senior Planner; 951-826-5220; kjsmith@riversideca.gov	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to Chapters 2.40 and 19.050.030 of the Riverside Municipal Code, the Planning Commission shall review the proposed project subject to its consistency with the Zoning Code (Title 19), which includes the Conditional Use Permit and Design Review. Specifically, Staff Recommends that the City Planning Commission:

1. **RECOMMEND that the City Council DETERMINE** that Planning Case **P15-0326** (Specific Plan Amendment) is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15061(b)(3), as the proposed development standard is a height

limit that currently exists in the Prospect Place Office District and is only being expanded to be consistent over the entire District, and that no specific physical development is included in this request; therefore the General Rule of CEQA applies since it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the amendment would have the potential to significantly effect on the environment;

2. **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of Planning Case P15-0326 (Specific Plan Amendment), based on the findings outlined in the staff report and summarized in the attached findings and subject to the recommended conditions;
3. **RECOMMEND ADOPTION** of attached exhibit 6, subject to recommended conditions of approval.

SITE BACKGROUND

The Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) was established in 2002 to facilitate and encourage development and improvements that help realize the community's vision for Downtown. Of the nine land use districts established by the DSP, the Prospect Place Office District is generally bounded by State Highway 91, 14th Street, Magnolia Avenue, and Riverside Community College. This area is intended to provide for a variety of high quality office uses, and be an entry point to the Downtown from areas to the south and east.

Development standards are established in the Prospect Place Office District to accommodate compatibility with existing historic structures, provide for adaptive reuses and the development of low-density office uses. The maximum height for structures in the Prospect Place Office District is 35 feet, except that development within the entire block bounded by 14th Street, Olivewood Avenue, Prospect Avenue and Orange Grove Avenue has a maximum building height of 80 feet. This block is an area primarily developed with the Press Enterprise facility, and five story office building currently occupied by Riverside County. The Prospect Place Office District is depicted on exhibit 6.

On the easterly side of Olivewood Avenue, existing office buildings serving the Riverside Unified School District, and the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency exist; and there are two existing historic Victorian homes situated along Prospect Avenue (the McIntyre and Sweatt residences).

PROPOSAL

The applicant has submitted a Specific Plan Amendment to amend Section 9.5.2 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) to allow a maximum building height of 80 feet for the portion of the Prospect Place Office District bounded by Fourteenth Street, Olivewood Avenue, Prospect Avenue, and State Highway 91. If approved, a maximum 80-foot high building would be permitted for all parcels in the area indicated in the map on page 1 of this report.

No development is proposed or considered under this amendment.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Chapter 19.820 of the Zoning Code establishes provisions to amend Specific Plans, in which it specifies that development standard revisions should further the Specific Plan's applicable goals, objectives, and policies.

The Prospect Place Office District, in which the proposed amendment applies, is bounded by 14th Street, Orange Grove Avenue, Prospect Avenue, and State Highway 91. This area is the southeast boundary of the Downtown Specific Plan, and is immediately adjacent to the 91 freeway on/off ramps. As such, it serves as a gateway area for drivers approaching the downtown from the south, on Olivewood Avenue, including residents to the south of Riverside City College; and for drivers approaching the downtown from the east on 14th Street, or regionally on the 91 freeway using the 14th street off-ramps. Prospect Place Office District is also adjacent to the Downtown Specific Plan's Justice Center District, to the north.

As a district adjacent to the 91 freeway, and as a buffering area between the Justice Center District and the lower intensity area surrounding the College, a proposed maximum building height should establish an appropriate intensity and character for Prospect Place Office District to establish both a local and regional destination.

The balance in raising building height in areas considered transition zones between residential and urban development is compatibility between higher density building masses and lower density, smaller structures, some of which could contain sensitive receptors and/or historic resources. To address these challenges, staff notes several tools that currently exist in the DSP and Zoning Code could be utilized for future development in the Prospect Place Office District. The DSP contains site planning guidelines and development standards for the Prospect Place Office District which aim at preserving the "residential character" by siting driveways onto Olivewood Avenue, and requiring a greater building setback when adjacent to the Victorian style McIntyre and Sweatt residences, at the corner of Prospect Place and Olivewood Avenue. Additionally, the X-Building Setback Overlay and S-Height of Building Overlay Zones are available to provide project specific compatibility with the existing built environment.

As a matter of information and clarity, the DSP contains several references to the "Olivewood Corridor" as being within the Twogood Neighborhood Conservation Area. Design guidelines in Section 9.6 of the DSP provide recommended site planning and building features to provide consistency with the one of Riverside's first residential neighborhoods, originally established in the 1880s. The Twogood Neighborhood Conservation Area covers much of what is today the Prospect Place Office District of the DSP. However, upon the establishment of the DSP in 2002, many of the homes that were originally located in the Twogood Neighborhood Conservation Area were removed to accommodate the Press Enterprise expansion on the westerly side of Olivewood Avenue. Subsequently, from 2006-2008, many historic residences on the easterly side of Olivewood Avenue were relocated, and the Neighborhood Conservation Area was de-designated as many of the qualifying features no longer exist. Nonetheless, the proposed Specific Plan Amendment to allow an increase in the maximum building height to 80 feet will not inherently result in development incompatible with existing historic resources.

Staff recommends approval of the Specific Plan Amendment found on exhibit 7.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

As no specific development proposed, and an 80 foot maximum height is already established with the District, therefore it can be seen with certainty that this project will not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3).

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Public hearing notices were mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the site.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the City Planning Commission, including any environmental finding, may be appealed to the City Council within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Department Public Information Section, 3rd Floor, City Hall.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Staff Recommended Findings
2. Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
3. Aerial Photo/Location
4. General Plan Map
5. Zoning Map
6. Downtown Specific Plan land use districts
7. Proposed Specific Plan Amendment

Report and Recommendations Prepared by:
Report and Recommendations Reviewed by:
Report and Recommendations Approved by:

Kyle Smith, AICP, Senior Planner, Title
Jay Eastman, AICP, Interim City Planner
Jay Eastman for Emilio Ramirez,
Interim Community Development Director



EXHIBIT 1 – STAFF RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

PLANNING CASES: **P15-0326** (Specific Plan Amendment)

- a. The proposal involves modifications to development standards pertaining to maximum building height in portions of the Prospect Place Office District of the Downtown Specific Plan. The proposal is consistent with the **General Plan 2025**, in particular, the amendment will facilitate development consistent with Objective LU-47, which seeks to “Make Downtown Riverside a regional employment, governmental, arts and entertainment center with unique and interrelated districts offering a wide range of opportunities for residential lifestyles, work environments, shopping, entertainment, learning, culture and the arts.”
- b. The proposal is also consistent with the **Downtown Specific Plan (DSP)**, in particular Policy LU 1.1 as it pertains to the Prospect Place Office District, which seeks “Building intensity and design philosophy ranges from a residential scale in the vicinity of Prospect Place and Olivewood Avenue to intense urban development in character with the Justice Center toward Fourteenth Street.”



CITY OF RIVERSIDE

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PLANNING DIVISION

EXHIBIT 2 – STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Case Number: P15-0326 (Specific Plan Amendment)

CONDITIONS *All mitigation measures are noted by an asterisk (*).*

Case Specific

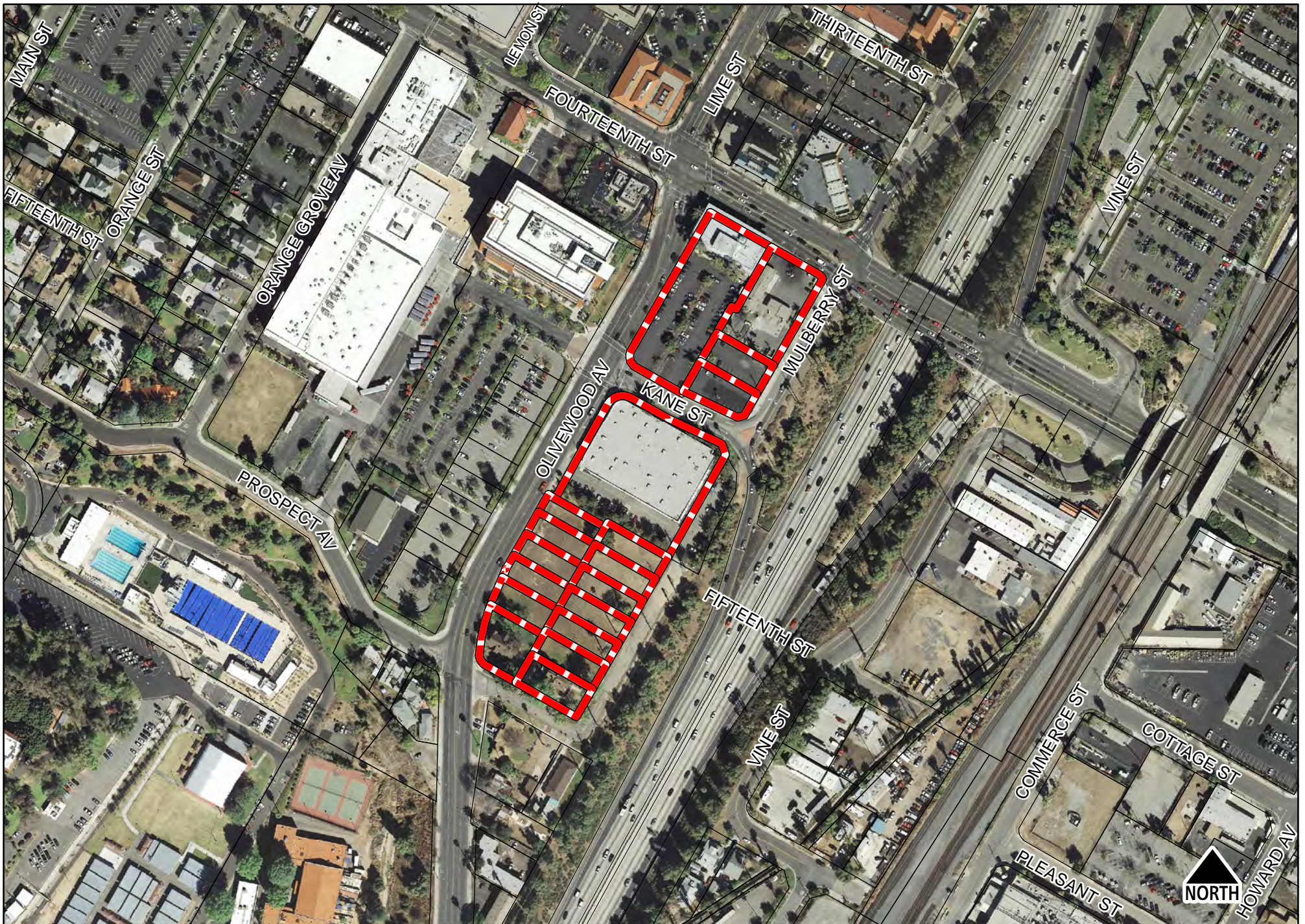
- **Planning**

1. The Downtown Specific Plan shall be amended as shown on Exhibit 7.
2. The exhibits and text of the Downtown Specific Plan shall be revised as appropriate, in conformance with the standards discussed in the body of the report.
3. The City Attorney's Office shall prepare the appropriate Resolution for Council adoption of the Specific Plan amendment.

Standard Conditions

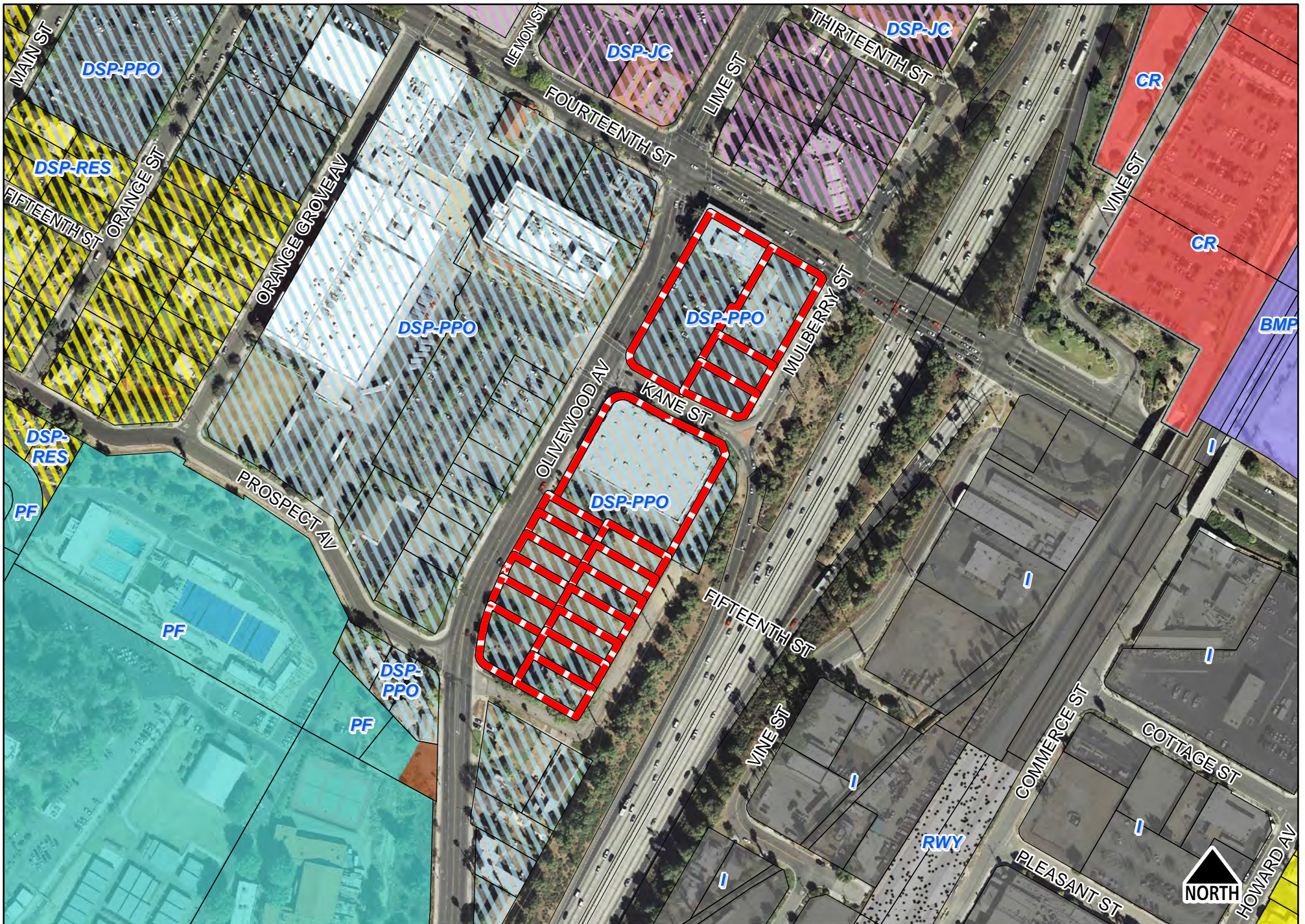
- **Planning**

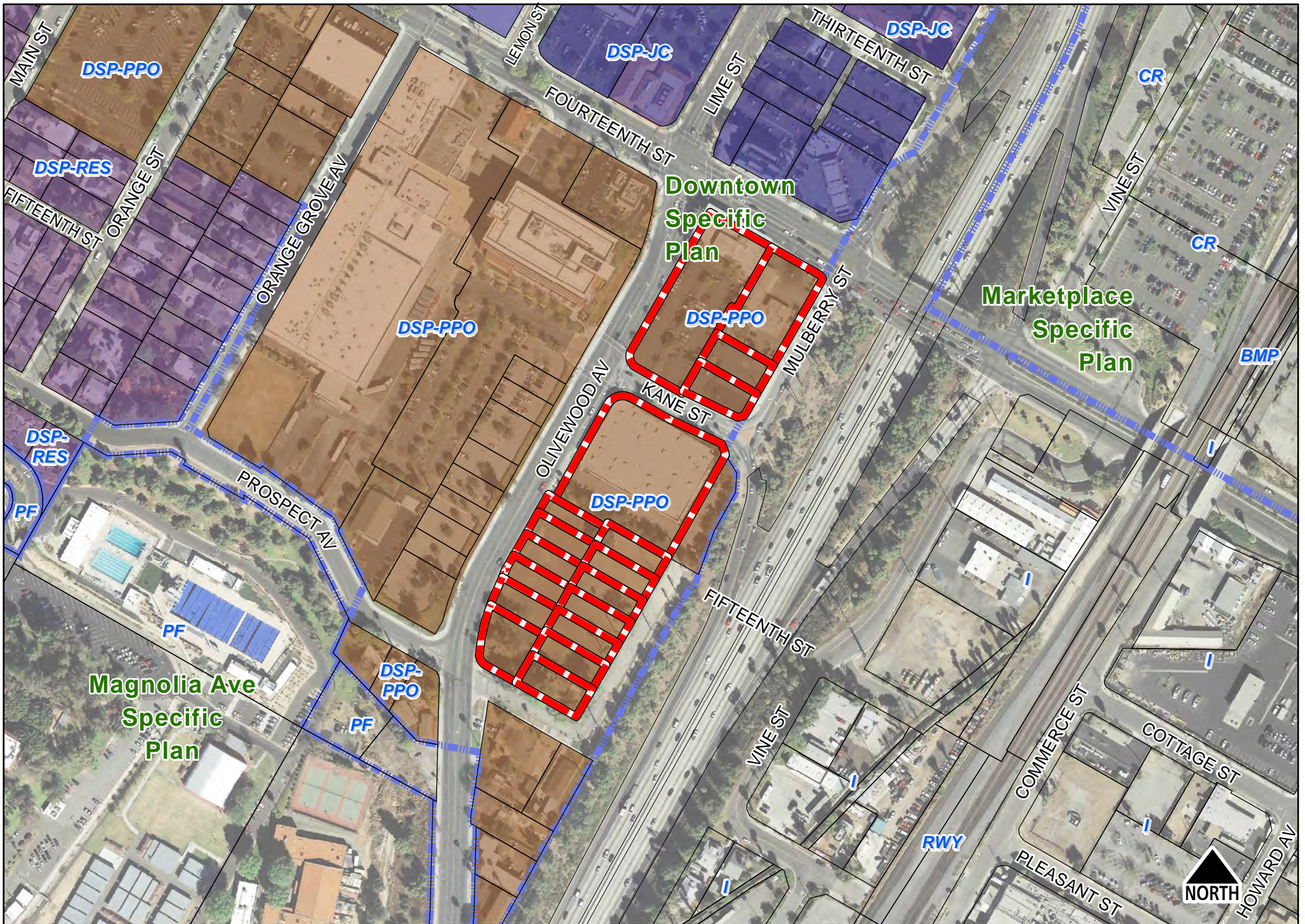
4. There shall be a two-year time limit in which to satisfy the following conditions and finalize this action. Subsequent one-year time extensions may be granted by the City Council upon request by the applicant. Any extension of time beyond five years may only be granted after an advertised public hearing by the City Council.
5. All necessary parcel description describing the exact area subject to the Specific Plan Amendment shall be prepared, signed and sealed by a licensed Land Surveyor or Civil Engineer authorized to practice Land Surveying in the State of California for the area of the property to be rezoned. Descriptions are required to be on 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch paper with the title "Attachment A" at the top.



P15-0326, Exhibit 3 - 2012 Aerial Photo







P15-0326, Exhibit 6 - Downtown Specific Plan land use districts

9.5 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR THE PROSPECT PLACE OFFICE DISTRICT

All property in the Prospect Place Office District shall be developed in accordance with the following standards:

9.5.1 Maximum Floor Area Ratio

The maximum floor area ratio shall be 1.5, except for the following:

- (1) For parcels that have frontage on 14th Street, the maximum floor area ratio shall be 4.0.

9.5.2 Maximum Height

The maximum building height shall be 35 feet, except for the following:

- (1) For parcels that have frontage on 14th Street, the maximum building height shall be 80 feet to a depth of 300 feet from the front property line, except that development within the entire block bounded by 14th Street, **Olivewood Avenue State Highway 91**, Prospect Avenue and Orange Grove Avenue may have a maximum building height of 80 feet, subject to approval of a site plan to ensure compatibility with surrounding historic residential structures.

9.5.3 Minimum Lot Size

The minimum lot size for new parcels shall be 20,000 square feet.

9.5.4 Front Yard Setback

The minimum front yard setback shall be 15 feet, except for the following:

- (1) The minimum front yard setback along 14th Street shall be 10 feet.

No parking is permitted in the front yard setback area, except that for single-family residential uses, parking in the front yard on an approved driveway is permitted. The setback area shall be landscaped or improved pursuant to the design standards set forth in Chapter 15 of this Plan. The front yard setback shall also apply to side and rear yards adjacent to a street.

9.5.5 Rear Yard Setback

No minimum rear yard setback is required, except for the following:

- (1) Where the rear parcel line abuts the Prospect Place Historic District, the minimum rear yard setback shall be 15 feet if there is a public alley (distance from building to rear property line or alley easement), and 25 feet where there is no public alley.