



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL** **DATE: JULY 26, 2016**

**FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** **WARD: 2**  
**DEPARTMENT**

**SUBJECT: PLANNING CASES P14-0683 (GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT), P14-0684 (REZONE), P14-0685 (SITE PLAN REVIEW), P15-1080 (VARIANCE), P15-1081 (VARIANCE) AND P15-1082 (GRADING EXCEPTION) – BY STEVE SOMMERS OF SDH & ASSOCIATES FOR A 216 UNIT MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT– 601 CENTRAL AVENUE**

## **ISSUES:**

The issues for City Council consideration is a proposal by Steve Sommers of SDH & Associates, to permit development of 30.9 vacant acres with a multi-family development consisting of 216 residential units and 385 parking spaces. The following entitlements are to be considered: 1) amend 11.75 acres of the 30.9 acre project site from General Plan land use designation OS – Open Space to MHDR – Medium High Density Residential; 2) rezone 9.0 acres from PF – Public Facilities Zone to R-3-3000 – Multi-Family Residential Zone, rezone 2.75 acres from R-1-7000 – Single Family Residential Zone to R-3-3000 – Multi Family Residential Zone, and rezone approximately 0.8 acres from R-1-7000 – Single Family Residential Zone to PF – Public Facilities Zone; 3) Site Plan Review; 4) Variances to allow heights greater than permitted and building setbacks less than required by Code; and 5) Grading Exceptions related to on-site grading and retaining walls over six feet in height in areas not open to public view.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Determine the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment based upon the findings and mitigation measures set forth in the case record and adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration;
2. Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) found in the attached staff report, pursuant to Section 21081.6 of CEQA;
3. Approve Planning Cases P14-0683, P14-0684, P14-0685, P15-1080, P15-1081 and P15-1082 based on and subject to the Planning Commission findings and recommended conditions found in the attached staff report;
4. Introduce the attached Ordinances (Attachments 5 and 6) amending the zoning map; and

5. Adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 7) to amend the General Plan Land Use Designation.

### **STAFF/PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommended approval to the Planning Commission, subject to recommended conditions of approval. On May 19, 2016, the City Planning Commission recommended approval of Planning Cases P14-0683, P14-0684, P14-0685, P15-1080, P15-1081 and P15-1082 by a vote of 7 ayes and 0 noes, subject to staff's recommended conditions.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a 216 unit multi-family development on 11.2 acres of a larger 30.9 acre site. The development includes 13, two and three story residential buildings designed in a contemporary Santa Barbara architectural style, as well as numerous site amenities and on-site parking.

The residential mix consists of 101 one-bedroom and 115 two-bedroom units, ranging in size from 665 square feet to 1,095 square feet. All units have patios or balconies, 75 to 172 square feet in size. Variances are requested to allow more than 60 percent of residential units to be in buildings three stories in height and to allow a reduced building setback along Central Avenue. Justification findings in support of the variances were provided by the applicant and supplemented by staff.

The site provides 123,981 square feet of common useable open space and amenities, including a club house, fitness center, pool and spa, bar-be-que area, large open space turf area, nature walking path, exercise stations, raised viewing decks, and interpretive signs for the native riparian/wildlife biological sensitive areas. A total of 385 parking spaces will be provided to serve the project, and will include 156 parking spaces in enclosed garages, 135 in covered carports, and 94 uncovered parking spaces. Primary vehicular access will be provided from Quail Run Road. A secondary driveway along Central Avenue will be restricted to an exit only driveway, while retaining access for emergency vehicle access.

Staff supports the site design, as buildings, amenities, walkways, parking and internal drive aisles have been clustered around the southeast and westerly edges of the property to primarily avoid biologically and culturally sensitive areas of the 30.9 acre site. Clustering the development allows for preservation, enhancement, restoration and avoidance of riparian/riverine and sensitive hillside vegetative communities within the 19.7 acres of open space.

Grading of the project site is designed to accomplish the following: minimize impacts on biologically sensitive areas; balance grading on-site; raise the levee along the western portion of the subject site to protect Fire Station #14; raise the proposed development area out of the flood zone; and, allow the volume of the basin to maintain the same capacity as currently exists. Grading exceptions are required because the proposal includes grading pad areas that do not conform with the existing natural contours and construction of retaining walls that are higher than six (6) feet in height in areas not visible from public view. Justification findings in support of the grading exceptions were provided by the applicant and supplemented by staff.

Due to biologically sensitive areas on-site, project plans were reviewed by the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board). A restoration plan was prepared for areas of the site where impacts occur. The restored habitat will be placed in a conservation easement that will be managed by the Riverside Land Conservancy. Additionally, a hydrology and scour analysis were conducted to assess potential impacts to the storage capacity of the Box Springs Dam. Riverside County Flood Control found that the project will not have an impact on the operations or the function of the Dam.

Implementation of this project necessitates an amendment to the General Plan to amend 11.75 acres of the subject site from OS – Open Space to MHDR – Medium High Density Residential. It also needs Zone Changes as follows: 9.0 acres from PF – Public Facilities Zone to R-3-3000 – Multi-Family Residential Zone, 2.75 acres from R-1-7000 – Single Family Residential Zone to R-3-3000 – Multi-Family Residential, and approximately 0.8 acres from R-1-7000 – Single Family Residential Zone to PF – Public Facilities Zone. Staff supports the General Plan amendment and rezoning, as the proposed General Plan land use designation and zoning will further the intent of the General Plan by facilitating in-fill development while addressing the City's housing needs. Additionally, the proposed zones will be consistent with the proposed General Plan land use designation of MHDR – Medium High Density Residential and OS – Open Space.

Furthermore, the project, as proposed, is consistent and compatible with the surrounding multi-family residential developments in the Canyon Crest Neighborhood. It will protect and restore biologically sensitive areas of the subject site with native plant and tree species, strengthening riparian/riverine and hillside vegetation communities. Lastly, it will reduce dependency on automobiles, as the Canyon Crest Town Center, a regional commercial shopping center, is within walking distance of this property.

For detailed information, please refer to the May 19, 2016 City Planning Commission staff report, recommended conditions and mitigation measures and draft minutes.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no impact to the General Fund, since all project costs are borne by the applicant.

Prepared by:	Rafael Guzman, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to	
availability of funds:	Scott Miller, Interim Finance Director/Treasurer
Approved by:	Al Zelinka, FAICP Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

### **Attachments:**

1. City Planning Commission Recommended Conditions
2. City Planning Commission Report – May 19, 2016
3. City Planning Commission Draft Minutes – May 19, 2016
4. City Planning Commission Project Exhibits
5. Ordinance to amend the Zone
6. Ordinance to amend the Zone
7. Resolution to amend the General Plan Land Use Designation
8. Presentation