

FINDINGS

General Plan Findings

The General Plan defines the foundation for all land use decisions. The City of Los Angeles' General Plan consists of the Framework Element, seven required Elements that are mandated by State law including Land Use, Transportation/Mobility, Housing, Conservation, Noise, Safety, and Open Space, and optional Elements including Air Quality and Service Systems. Thirty-five individual community plans comprise the Land Use Element for the City of Los Angeles. This section provides relevant goals, objectives, policies, and programs that are established in the General Plan that form the basis for the Staff's recommended actions for the proposed project.

1. General Plan Land Use Designation

The Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") is located within the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan ("Community Plan"), which was adopted by the City Council on June 17, 1998 (City Planning Case No. 95-0351 CPU). The Community Plan map designates the subject properties in the Palisades Village project as Community Commercial.

2. General Plan Text

General Plan Framework Element

The Citywide General Plan Framework Element is a guide for communities to implement growth and development policies by providing a comprehensive long-range view of the City as a whole. The Framework Element establishes categories of land use including Single-Family Residential, Multi-Family Residential, and Community Commercial that are broadly described by ranges of intensity/density, heights, and lists of typical uses. The definitions reflect a range of land use possibilities found in the City's already diverse urban, suburban, and rural land use patterns.

The Citywide General Plan Framework text, adopted in December 1996, establishes the City's long-range comprehensive growth strategy and provides guidance on Citywide land use and planning policies, objectives, and goals. The Framework defines policies related to growth and includes policies for land use, housing, urban form/neighborhood design, open space/conservation, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure/public services. The proposed Project is in conformance with several objectives and policies of the Framework Element as described below.

Land Use Policies (Chapter 3)

The Community Plan designates the project site as Community Commercial. Community Centers are intended to be identifiable focal points and activity centers for surrounding groups of residential neighborhoods and contain a diversity of neighborhood-oriented uses. Generally, Community Centers range from FAR 1.5:1 to 3:1 and the scale and density of community centers would be greater than the neighborhood districts, generally with building heights ranging from two- to six-stories depending on the character of the surrounding area. Community Centers should be planned for both night and day use. Street, pedestrian, and area lighting shall be provided to recognized standards commensurate with planned nighttime use.

The Project proposes approximately 116,215 square feet for a 0.9:1 FAR with building heights of one and two stories which is consistent with the scale and density of Community Centers.

The proposed changes to the adopted Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan further enhance the function of the Specific Plan to implement the land use policies of the Framework Element. The Specific Plan is an implementation tool for redeveloping the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village, and the requested changes will revitalize the portion of the Village encompassed by the Project Site that has experienced a gradual decline over the years, accommodate a broad range of uses that includes retail, personal services, restaurant uses, office, a neighborhood cinema, residential uses, and a specialty grocery market, and create a pedestrian friendly Village with appropriately scaled buildings that include a diverse array uses. The proposed changes are a further refinement to the Specific Plan's intent to organize and locate precise uses, densities and design characteristics that are unique to the Pacific Palisades.

Within the Land Use chapter of the Framework Element, the following goals, objectives and policies relevant to the Community Center are applicable to the Project:

Goal 3. *Pedestrian-oriented, high activity, multi- and mixed-use centers that support and provide identity for Los Angeles' communities.*

Objective 3.9. *Reinforce existing and encourage new community centers, which accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of adjacent residents, promote neighborhood and community activity, are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and are developed to be desirable places in which to live, work and visit, both in daytime and nighttime.*

Policy 3.9.5. *Promote pedestrian activity by the design and siting of structures in accordance with Pedestrian-Oriented District Policies 3.16.1 through 3.16.3.*

Policy 3.9.6. *Require that commercial and mixed-use buildings located adjacent to residential zones be designed and limited in height and scale to provide a transition with these uses, where appropriate.*

Policy 3.9.7. *Provide for the development of public streetscape improvements, where appropriate.*

Policy 3.9.8. *Support the development of public and private recreation and small parks by incorporating pedestrian-oriented plazas, benches, other streetscape amenities and, where appropriate, landscaped play areas.*

The proposed Project would revitalize Swarthmore Avenue which has experienced a gradual decline over the years with a number of vacant storefronts and neglect of building facades, landscaping, and streetscape elements. It would also replace auto-oriented uses such as a corner gas station and surface parking lot with pedestrian amenities, housing, a park space and paseos. The Project would accommodate a broad range of uses that includes retail, personal services, restaurant uses, office, a neighborhood cinema, residential uses, and a specialty grocery market that is compatible with the Specific Plan's vision for the Village and wanted by Palisades residents who desire to have convenient options within their neighborhood rather than driving to more distant locations.

Central to the Project vision is to create a pedestrian friendly Village with appropriately scaled buildings that include a diverse array uses. The core principles of creating a pedestrian friendly

environment and enhancing walkability in the Village is achieved with enhanced sidewalks and pedestrian promenades and paseos between buildings that connect to a series of courtyards, parks, plazas and small gathering places. Complementing the pedestrian experience are streetscape and landscape elements that include new mature trees, flowerbeds and other plantings. Opportunities for sidewalk seating and dining terraces are incorporated along Swarthmore Avenue, Sunset Boulevard, and within the Project. A landscaped open space is proposed within a portion of the existing surface parking lot flanked with retail spaces and restaurants with outdoor terraces and is designed to accommodate occasional events, group activities and relaxation.

The Project respects the surrounding low density residential uses with buildings no more than two stories in height, consistent with the existing scale of development on the Project Site and surrounding commercial development in the Village.

The provisions for Pedestrian-Oriented Districts in the General Plan Framework are also applicable to the project, including the following:

Goal 3L. *Districts that promote pedestrian activity and provide a quality experience for the City's residents.*

Objective 3.16. *Accommodate land uses, locate and design buildings, and implement streetscape amenities that enhance pedestrian activity.*

Policy 3.16.1. *Enhance pedestrian activity in areas designated as a Pedestrian-Oriented District by the design and siting of buildings in accordance with the policies contained in Chapter 5: Urban Form and Neighborhood Design.*

Policy 3.16.2. *Locate parking in pedestrian districts to the rear, above, or below the street-fronting uses.*

Housing Policies (Chapter 4)

The proposed project includes eight residential units on the second floor level of Building H. Building H is oriented towards Sunset Boulevard, the main thoroughfare in Palisades Village. Although transit options are generally limited in Pacific Palisades, the Project Site is located within 1,500 feet of a Metro Bus Line 2/302 and Big Blue Bus 9 bus stop at the intersection of Swarthmore Avenue and Sunset Boulevard. As part of the request, detailed development standards are proposed in the Specific Plan to ensure that the project, once built, is compatible with neighborhood needs and to streamline the approval of future commercial amenities. The proposed changes to the Specific Plan allows for the construction of two-story buildings with appropriate ceiling heights for each floor, without flat roofs. The inclusion of architectural roof elements in the Specific Plan amendments will allow for building articulation while reducing a monotonous feel along the local streets in the Commercial Village. Building H will be designed as a two-story, mixed-used development with a pitched roof, which will add to the variety of architectural styles in the Palisades Commercial Village.

The revised Specific Plan is in conformance with the Housing policies of the Framework Element listed below.

Objective 4.2. *Encourage the location of new multi-family housing development to occur in proximity to transit stations, along some transit corridors, and within some high activity areas with adequate transitions and buffers between higher-density developments and surrounding lower-density residential neighborhoods.*

Policy 4.4.1(a). *Establish development standards that are sufficiently detailed and tailored to community and neighborhood needs to reduce discretionary approvals requirements*

Urban Form & Neighborhood Design Policies (Chapter 5)

The Project would directly implement Objective 5.1 of the Framework Element by complying with the urban design standards already established in the Specific Plan as identified above. Consistent with Policy 5.2.1, the Project Site is located in an established area where commercial uses are already concentrated and the Project proposes a range of uses already existing in the Village, envisioned, and permitted under the Specific Plan. Further, consistent with Policy 5.2.2, the Project would result in additional business, retail, and development near public transit available on Sunset Boulevard and within close walking distance to the surrounding residential neighborhoods and commercial areas in the Village.

Within the Urban Form and Neighborhood Design chapter of the Framework Element, the following policies would be applicable to the Project:

Objective 5.1. *Translate the Framework Element's intent with respect to citywide urban form and neighborhood design to the community and neighborhood levels through locally prepared plans that build on each neighborhood's attributes, emphasize quality of development, and provide or advocate "proactive" implementation programs.*

Objective 5.2. *Encourage future development in centers and in nodes along corridors that are served by transit and are already functioning as centers for the surrounding neighborhoods, the community, or the region.*

Policy 5.2.1. *Designate centers and districts in locations where activity is already concentrated and/or where good transit service is, or will be provided.*

Policy 5.2.2. *Encourage the development of centers, districts, and selected corridor/boulevard nodes such that the land uses, scale and built form allowed and/or encouraged within these areas allow them to function as centers and support transit use, both in daytime and nighttime.*

Objective 5.5. *Enhance the liveability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.*

Policy 5.5.4. *Determine the appropriate urban design elements at the neighborhood level, such as sidewalk width and materials, street lights and trees, bus shelters and benches, and other street furniture.*

Objective 5.8. *Reinforce or encourage the establishment of a strong pedestrian orientation in designated neighborhood districts, community centers, and pedestrian-oriented subareas within regional centers, so that these districts and centers can serve as a focus of activity for the surrounding community and a focus for investment in the community.*

Policy 5.9.1. *Facilitate observation and natural surveillance through improved development standards which provide for common areas, adequate lighting, clear definition of outdoor spaces, attractive fencing, use of landscaping as a natural barrier, secure storage areas, good visual connections between residential, commercial, or public environments and grouping activity functions such as child care or recreation areas.*

Policy 5.9.2. *Encourage mixed-use development which provides for activity and natural surveillance after commercial business hours through the development of ground floor retail uses and sidewalk cafes. Mixed-use should also be enhanced by locating community facilities such as libraries, cultural facilities or police substations, on the ground floor of such building, where feasible*

Open Space and Conservation (Chapter 6)

The Project includes a 0.35 acre landscaped open space within a portion of the existing surface parking lot (which will be eliminated in the project) flanked with retail spaces and restaurants with outdoor terraces and is designed to accommodate occasional events, group activities and individual relaxation available to the public.

Within the Open Space and Conservation chapter of the Framework Element, the following policies are applicable to the proposed Project:

Policy 6.4.9. *Encourage the incorporation of small-scaled public open spaces within transit-oriented development, both as plazas and small parks associated with transit stations, and as areas of public access in private joint development at transit station locations.*

Policy 6.4.10(a). *Provide for the joint use of open space with existing and future public facilities, where feasible.*

Economic Development Policies (Chapter 7)

The project will enhance the commercial vitality of the Pacific Palisades community. Since the 1950s when the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village was created, revitalization efforts have been undertaken almost every 20 years. The current tenant spaces located in the proposed Commercial Village Subarea A will be redeveloped with up to 40 individual storefronts to provide more neighborhood-serving uses that are allowed under the C2 zones, such as retail spaces, movie theater, restaurants, a specialty grocer and a walk-up bank. This project will also include residential units, which could possible serve as housing for local residents that work in the Commercial Village. This pedestrian-oriented development will include public access ways and paseos that will connect to the other businesses in the Commercial Village.

The following Economic Development policy is applicable to the project:

Policy 7.3.2: *Retain existing neighborhood commercial activities within walking distance of residential areas.*

The Project would enhance commercial activities at the Project Site, which is within walking distance of residential areas, by attracting local Palisades visitors and creating an urban and interactive pedestrian environment.

Mobility Element

The adopted Specific Plan includes a network of local streets, which are in conformance with the 2035 Mobility Element of the General Plan. The proposed changes to the Specific Plan do not modify street designations or widths to Albright Street, Monument Street and Swarthmore Avenue (local streets) or to Sunset Boulevard (a Scenic Corridor Avenue II). Swarthmore Avenue is being reconfigured from a two-way street to a one-way street, but will retain the right-of-way standards for a Local Street. Therefore, the revised Specific Plan is in conformance with the Mobility Element policies listed below.

Policy 1.2 Implement a balanced transportation system on all streets, tunnels, and bridges using complete streets principles to ensure the safety and mobility of all users.

Policy 2.3 Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.

Policy 2.6. Provide safe, convenient, and comfortable local and regional bicycling facilities for people of all types and abilities.

Policy 2.14 Designate a street's functional classification based upon its current dimensions, land use context, and role.

Policy 3.3 Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.

Housing Element

The Housing Element of the General Plan contains several policies that are implemented through the adopted Specific Plan. The proposed amendments to the Specific Plan will continue to enforce these policies and provide for a more livable community for residents. The proposed changes to the Specific Plan allows for the construction of two-story buildings with appropriate ceiling heights for each floor, with the option of having a variety of roof types. Building H will be designed as a two-story, mixed-used development with a pitched roof, which will add to the variety of architectural styles in the Palisades Commercial Village. Therefore, the revised Specific Plan is in conformance with the policy of the Housing Element listed below.

Objective 2.4. Promote livable neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, quality design and a scale and character that respects unique residential neighborhoods in the City.

Brentwood – Pacific Palisades Community Plan

The Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan contains the following goals, objectives, and policies, all of which are reflected in the adopted Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan. The proposed changes to the Specific Plan do not conflict with any of these objectives, goals, and/or policies. The project reduces the visual impact of parking and driveways on the local neighborhood and wider community by removing two existing parking lots and by creating an underground parking structure that will be accessed only from the existing alley. The project will include a large, landscaped open park space in the location of one of the existing parking lots. Utility equipment will be screened from view from the public right-of-way through landscape buffering and screening. All rooftop equipment will be screened from view from the public right-of-way either by dedicated screen walls or by careful building roofscape and massing. The proposed eight buildings will be connected by paseos and plazas. The building designs will be comprised of a variety of architectural styles, building materials and a combination of flat and pitched rooflines to provide articulation and avoid a monotonous feel along the public streets. Eight residential units, which are located within 1,500 feet of a bus stop, will create multi-housing opportunities along Sunset Boulevard. Trash compactors and other service equipment shall be screened from view from the public right-of-way through the use of gates, screens and landscape buffering. Service and back of house facilities have been minimized and embedded within the building forms of buildings. Green technology is proposed for the project, such as solar panels, electric car charging stations and 'smart irrigation' for landscaping to minimize water usage. The

project will include a bikeshare program and provide on-site bicycles to be used by the community. The project also includes a master sign program and streetscape design that will complement the surrounding commercial buildings in the Commercial Village.

Therefore, the revised Specific Plan is in conformance with the policies of the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan listed below.

Objective 1-2. *To locate new housing in a manner which reduces vehicular trips and makes it accessible to services and facilities.*

Policy 1-2.1. *Retain higher residential densities near commercial centers and major bus routes where public service facilities, utilities, and topography will accommodate such development and circulation system.*

Policy 2-1.1 *New commercial uses shall be located in existing established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.*

Policy 2-1.3. *Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.*

Objective 2-3. *To enhance the appearance of commercial districts and to identify pedestrian-oriented areas.*

Policy 2-3.2. *New development should add to and enhance the existing pedestrian street activity.*

Policy 2-3.3. *Ensure that commercial projects achieve harmony with the best of existing development.*

Policy 2-3.4. *New development in pedestrian oriented areas shall provide parking at the rear of the property or underground.*

Policy 2-3.5. *Require that the first floor street frontage of structures, including mixed use projects and parking structures located in pedestrian oriented districts, incorporate commercial uses directed at pedestrian traffic.*

Policy 2-3.6. *Promote mixed-use projects along transit corridors, and in appropriate commercial areas.*

Policy 2-4.1. *Establish commercial areas and street identity and character through appropriate sign control, landscaping, and street scape.*

Goal 3. *Provide adequate recreation and park facilities which meet the needs of the residents in the plan area.*

Objective 11-1. *To pursue transportation management strategies that can maximize vehicle occupancy, minimize average trip length and reduce the number of vehicle trips.*

Policy 13-1.2. *New development projects shall be designed to minimize disturbance to existing traffic flow with proper ingress and egress to parking.*

Objective 14-2. *To promote pedestrian oriented areas and pedestrian routes for commuter, school, recreational use, economic revitalization, and access to transit facilities.*

Policy 15-1.1. Consolidate parking where appropriate, to minimize the number of ingress and egress points onto arterials.

Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhood Specific Plan

The project is also located within the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhood Specific Plan and designated as a Commercial Village with a C2-1VL and R3P-1VL Zone and Community Commercial land use designation. The Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhood Specific Plan was adopted by City Council through Ordinance 160,515 (effective on December 31, 1985) with more recent amendments through Ordinance 168,579 (effective on March 21, 1993). The proposed project is consistent with the following Purposes in Section 2 of this Specific Plan by ensuring that the visual continuity of the Commercial Village is retained through the design of low-rise buildings and the implementation of a streetscape design for streets connecting to surrounding neighborhoods and businesses:

- A. To assure that the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods continue to function as significant commercial areas in the Pacific Palisades and that any future development is compatible with the surrounding residential community, the character of the commercial areas and the capacity of the circulation system as defined in the District Plan;
- B. To enhance the aesthetic qualities of development, protect the low intensity, community-oriented uses and preserve the individual qualities of the areas;
- C. To enhance the pedestrian-orientation of the business centers by reducing the size and location of signs within the Specific Plan Area; by promoting design coordination between a building or structure and its use; by removing temporary signs and clutter; by enhancing windows as display areas for merchandise; and by unifying the characteristics of each of the Specific Plan Areas through block signs, promotion banners and symbol signs;
- D. To assure that the commercial uses are consistent with the general character of the Pacific Palisades community, which consists of single-family residences, some multiple residential structures and significant open space and park-like development;
- E. To provide guidelines and a process for review and approval of exterior and site design, renovations, signs for buildings and structures and other developments;
- F. To promote orderly, attractive and harmonious development, minimize environmental effects of development, stabilize land values and investments and promote the general welfare by prohibiting buildings, structures or uses which are inconsistent with the purposes or standards of this Specific Plan or which are inappropriate to their sites, surroundings, traffic circulation impacts or their environmental setting; and
- H. To assure that development along Sunset Boulevard incorporates design characteristics that provide a unifying element to the Commercial Village and to each Neighborhood and enhances their status as scenic highways while providing a beautifying element to the Commercial Village and Neighborhoods through landscaping and other means.

City Charter Sections 556 and 558

Section 556 of the City Charter requires that the City Planning Commission make findings that determine whether the requested Specific Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change are either

in substantial conformance or not in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan.

Section 558 of the City Charter establishes the procedures for the adoption, amendment or repeal of ordinances, orders or resolutions proposed by the City Council, City Planning Commission, or Director of Planning or by application of the owner of the affected property if authorized by ordinance.

The proposed Specific Plan Amendment does comply with Charter Sections 556 and 558 in that the recommended amendments do reflect the land use patterns, trends and uses in the immediate area and do further the intent, purposes and objectives of the Community Plan.

The requested Vesting Zone Change is consistent with the Community Plan land use designation of Community Commercial, as well as the Community Plan's Objectives and Policies such as:

Objective 2-1. *To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development.*

Policy 2-1.1 *New commercial uses shall be located in existing established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.*

Policy 2-1.3. *Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.*

Objective 2-3. *To enhance the appearance of commercial districts and to identify pedestrian-oriented areas.*

Policy 2-3.1. *Pedestrian-oriented areas to be identified and preserved.*

Policy 2-3.2. *New development should add to and enhance the existing pedestrian street activity.*

Policy 2-3.3. *Ensure that commercial projects achieve harmony with the best of existing development.*

Policy 2-3.6. *Promote mixed-use projects along transit corridors, and in appropriate commercial areas.*

Policy 2-4.1. *Establish commercial areas and street identity and character through appropriate sign control, landscaping, and street scape.*

Entitlement Findings

Specific Plan Amendment and Vested Zone Change Findings

Findings under Charter Section 556 and 558: Conformance with the General Plan and Procedure for Adoption, Amendment

The Project requests the adoption of two land use ordinances that includes an amendment to the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhood Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") and a Vesting Zone Change from C2-1VL and R3P-1VL to [T][Q]C2-1VL for the entirety of Commercial Village Subarea A.

Los Angeles City Charter ("City Charter") Section 558 and LAMC Section 12.32(C)(7) require

that prior to adopting a land use ordinance, the City Council make findings that the ordinance conforms with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice and that proposed land use ordinance conform to the goals, objectives and policies General Plan.

As required by City Charter Section 556, the Specific Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change are in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan. As described above under the Section A., General Plan Findings, the project would conform to the goals, objectives and policies General Plan Framework, and General Plan Transportation Element, the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan ("Community Plan"), and Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan ("Specific Plan").

Findings under Charter Section 558: Procedure for Adoption, Amendment

In accordance with City Charter Section 558, and as discussed in detail below, the Specific Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change would conform with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and represent good zoning practice.

a. Public necessity.

Redevelopment of the project site and construction of a mixed-use development with eight (8) new buildings comprised of retail, personal services, restaurant uses, office, a neighborhood cinema, eight apartment units, and a specialty grocery market, connected by pedestrian walkways, plazas, paseos, landscaping, and open space would revitalize the Village and create a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood centerpiece that would strengthen the existing commercial area. As part of the amendment to the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan, a new subarea within the Commercial Village will be created to establish regulations for development and use for the project site. Additionally, the master sign program and streetscape design will contribute to the overall urban design of the Commercial Village Subarea A. The master sign program includes regulations and standards for appropriately scaled tenant and wayfinding signage. The subarea would establish the maximum number of establishments permitted within the subarea that may offer alcohol and define the procedures for when specific tenants are identified. The Specific Plan Amendment will limit alcohol uses up to a total of six (6) on-site establishments and two (2) off-site establishments.

As part of the Specific Plan Amendment, a streetscape design is proposed to guide the implementation of the street configuration, paving materials, landscaping, street trees, street lighting, and street furnishings. The project proposes to transform the remaining portion of Swarthmore from the alley to Monument Street from two-way to one-way access that would narrow the existing street width. Narrowing the street width would create a safer and pedestrian-friendly street experience with enhanced sidewalks, provide opportunities for landscape plantings and street trees, and accommodate café seating. Tightening the width of the street would also serve as a traffic calming measure by reducing vehicular speeds making it safer for pedestrians walking on the sidewalks and crossing Swarthmore Avenue. In addition, this change allows for diagonal parking along Swarthmore Avenue which is consistent with Objective 3: Augment the Streetscape Environment with Pedestrian Amenities in the Citywide Design Guidelines for On-street Parking, and will also increase the amount of street parking from what exists today from 21 to 29 stalls.

The Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan designates the project site as Community Commercial that corresponds to the CR, C2, C4, P, PB, RAS3, and RAS4 zones. The portion of Project Site on the north side of Swarthmore Avenue are split zoned C2-1VL and R3P-1VL with the existing buildings within the C2-1VL zone and the surface parking to the rear of the buildings within the R3P-1VL zone. The portion of Project Site on the south side of Swarthmore Avenue is also split zoned C2-1VL and R3P-1VL. The portion of the project site with buildings fronting on the south side of Swarthmore Avenue is within the C2-1VL zone with a small portion to the rear of the buildings within the R3P-1VL zone. The triangular shaped surface lot adjacent to the east is zoned R3P-1VL. The portion of the project site along Sunset Boulevard are zoned C2-1VL. As noted, the entire project site has a Community Commercial land use designation. The Project proposes a Vesting Zone Change from C2-1VL and R3P-1VL to [T][Q]C2-1VL for the entirety of Commercial Village Subarea A.

b. Convenience.

The proposed project will provide a concentration of pedestrian and commercial activity in an established neighborhood, thereby increasing the amenities and services within convenient walking distance of hundreds of local residents. Residents within the Pacific Palisades neighborhood will have access to grocery stores, retail stores, eateries, and a theater without the need to drive out to surrounding regional centers such as Santa Monica. The diversity of food service and the ancillary sale of alcoholic beverages provide a desired and expected amenity for patrons and are vital to the success and operation of restaurants and the other proposed establishments.

Furthermore, the Vesting Zone Change would facilitate the unified development of the project on the project site. The project proposes uses that are permitted within the C2 zone and therefore would not introduce a new use within the Specific Plan area. As such, Vesting Zone Change does not propose any new land uses, but rather uses have already been determined to be appropriate for this area, and are necessary to facilitate the development of the project as proposed. Without a Vesting Zone Change, the Applicant could not develop the R3P-1VL zoned portions with multi-use buildings, plazas and public access ways, and the landscaped open space as these areas would likely remain as surface parking which would not allow for the pedestrian-oriented design as proposed by the project.

c. General welfare.

The proposed project will increase the activity of the Commercial Village by creating a walkable urban neighborhood center at the heart of the Palisades community and more 'eyes on the street' to promote public safety. The project removes all surface parking from the site and improves the flow of Swarthmore Avenue and the vehicular alley in exchange for clustered commercial mixed-use structures connected by pedestrian paths and paseos, thereby organizing circulation patterns and eliminating opportunities for potential vehicle-pedestrian conflict wherever possible. Enhanced paving, landscaping, and lighting will further improve pedestrian safety by clearly identifying clear paths of travel and directing pedestrian activity along strategic paths, thereby reducing opportunities for crime.

Furthermore, the Specific Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change would promote orderly and harmonious development, meanwhile minimizing environmental effects of development, stabilize land values and investments and promote the general welfare

by prohibiting buildings, structures, or uses which are inconsistent with the purposes of the Specific Plan or which are inappropriate to their sites, surroundings, traffic circulation impacts or their environmental setting.

In consideration of the character of the proposed operations, it is anticipated that the restaurants will attract patrons primarily interested in full meal service or light snacks, and who may wish to accompany such meal or snack with wine, beer or another alcoholic beverage. The grocery store will attract individuals, likely drawn primarily from surrounding neighborhoods and will therefore serve the convenience and/or general welfare of the local public. The sale of alcohol within the project would not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety. The project would be required to incorporate security design features subject to approval by LAPD relative to security of semi-public and private spaces within the project, which may include but not be limited to access control to building, secured parking facilities, well-illuminated public and semi-public spaces, and provision of onsite security as may be necessary. In addition, the sale of alcohol would be regulated by the Specific Plan. Each individual establishment selling alcohol would be required to obtain a subsequent Plan Approval. The decision-maker may consider additional conditions, as appropriate to a particular establishment, such as hours and days of operation, security; maximum seating capacity, noise, mode, character and nature of the operation, food service and age limits.

d. Good zoning practice.

The Vesting Zone Change from C2-1VL and R3P-1VL to [T][Q]C2-1VL zoning for the entire Commercial Village Subarea A would represent good zoning practice by creating a single zone that is consistent with the underlying Community Commercial land use for the Commercial Village in the Specific Plan. The R3P-1VL zone is an antiquated zone no longer used by the City and is not a corresponding zone under the Community Commercial land use designation whereas C2 is consistent with this underlying land use. The Vesting Zone Change would reconcile this inconsistency.

The Project represents good zoning practice by collocating community-serving uses with public open space, emphasizes pedestrian activity over vehicular traffic, and is in conformance with the General Plan and other related requirements. The Project will not contain any type of use which may typically be associated with adverse effects upon the welfare the surrounding neighborhood such as a night club or stand-alone bar. The Project will positively affect the economic vitality of the community by comprising a well-balanced development including the market use, cinema, restaurants, and retail uses. Under the proposed amendment to the Specific Plan, the operators of the alcohol-serving establishments will be required to obtain plan approvals from the Director of Planning, who will review the details of the establishment's operations for consistency with the Specific Plan regulations and in compliance with LAMC Section 12.24. Additionally, the master sign program has been tailored to complement the scale and development pattern of Buildings A –H. For these reasons, and the reasons discussed above, the approval of the Vesting Zone Change and the Specific Plan amendment will not detrimentally affect nearby residential zones or sensitive uses in the area.

Overall, the Specific Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change conforms to public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.

Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance and Design Review Board Findings

Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance

In accordance with LAMC Section 11.5.7, the Project satisfies each of the following requirements.

- A. That the project substantially complies with the applicable regulations, findings, standards and provisions of the specific plan.

The project has been designed within the existing development parameters of the Specific Plan's Commercial Village as feasible. Given the assemblage of properties by the Applicant and the unique opportunity to create a vibrant new Village to replace the declining series of storefronts, buildings, and streetscape that currently define the project site, there is a need to create for the project to seek certain amendments to the Specific Plan development standards to facilitate the project as envisioned. Upon adoption of the Specific Plan amendment, the project would substantially comply with applicable regulations, findings, standards and provisions of the specific plan as set forth below.

- a. Land Use. As specified in the Specific Plan, in the Commercial Village, lots zoned C2 are permitted uses allowed in the City's C4 zone. The Project proposes a Vesting Zone Change for the entire Project Site currently zoned C2-1VL and R3P-1VL. With approval of the Vesting Zone Change, the entire project site would be zoned [T][Q]C2-1VL, consistent with the underlying Community Commercial land use designation. The proposed mix of uses that includes retail, restaurant, residential units, a movie theater, grocery store, office, and ancillary uses are all permitted uses in the C2-1VL zone as set forth in the City's Supplemental Use List.
- b. Height. The Specific Plan currently limits height to two stories and 30 feet and provides that no building shall exceed 27 feet in height, as measured from grade to the ceiling of the upper story. The Specific Plan does not contain a definition for grade. The LAMC defines grade as "the lowest point of elevation of the finished surface of the ground, paving or sidewalk within the area between the building and the property line, or when the property line is more than 5 feet from the building, between the building and a line 5 feet from the building."

The project site slopes downward from the surrounding residential neighborhoods with an elevation ranging from 327 to 335 feet along its northern border (Albright Street) to 322 to 329 feet along its southern border (Sunset Boulevard). Given the slope differential across the site, measuring the building height from the lowest elevation five feet from a building would create an artificial height measurement. The project proposes to add a definition of height added to the Commercial Village Subarea A to confirm that the height of a building as measured from any point along adjacent sidewalk grade to the top of the building's roof features vertically above would not exceed 34 feet.

All proposed buildings are designed to comply with the 27-foot height rule (grade to uppermost ceiling) and are no more than two stories in height. The Project proposes to allow architectural elements such as roof pitches and dormers above 30 feet up to a maximum of 34 feet to create an organic aesthetic and street appearance. The amendment to the Specific Plan would add a definition for architectural roof features which the Project would comply with.

- c. Floor Area Ratio. The floor area ratio of a project within the Commercial Village shall not exceed 1.5:1; except that a mixed-use project shall be permitted a floor area ratio of 2:1. The lot area for the project is 135,505 square feet (prior to lot area proposed to be acquired with vacation of the alleys on the site). The project proposes 116,215 square feet of lot area for a floor area ratio of 0.9:1.
- d. Setbacks. All buildings are proposed to be setback a minimum of 2 feet from the sidewalk.
- e. Parking. The Specific Plan contains parking standards that supersede the standards set forth in the Municipal Code. Based on the proposed mix of uses, the Project requires a total of 476 parking spaces. The Project would utilize the permitted by-right bicycle parking reduction set for in LAMC 12.21.A.4 to reduce four vehicular parking spaces. Therefore, the Project's 470 parking spaces would comply with the Specific Plan. Pursuant to LAMC 12.21.A.4, the Project could utilize up to 20 percent, or 94 required vehicle parking may be replaced by bicycle parking.
- f. Bicycle Parking. The Specific Plan currently requires bicycle parking at an equivalent to one percent of the floor area of a Project or at a ratio of two bicycle parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area of the building or structure, whichever is less. The Specific Plan also requires that the bicycle parking shall be located as close to the front entrance of the building and not within the sidewalk public right-of-way. The Project requests an amendment to the Specific Plan to provide bicycle parking spaces in compliance with the Citywide Bicycle Parking Ordinance (Ordinance No. 182,386) adopted in 2013. The Ordinance includes standards that require both long and short-term bicycle spaces, design standards for permitted racks, location and installation to better meet the current needs of cyclists. Under the Ordinance, long-term space must be secured from the general public and enclosed on all sides and protect bicycles from inclement weather.
- g. Underground Utilities. The project would place all utilities underground.
- h. Landscaping Standards and Urban Design Features. The amendment includes an appendix with a streetscape design that would guide the improvement of the Project's public realm that includes street configuration, paving materials, landscaping, street trees, street lighting, and street furnishings. The project would provide new street trees along Swarthmore Ave, Albright St, Sunset Blvd, and Monument St that conform to the overall streetscape design. Landscaping would be placed along the sidewalks, along the walkways and paseos, and in the new open space park area. In addition, the Applicant would be responsible for maintaining all landscape and hardscape features within the project site.
- i. Signage: The project would comply with the existing Specific Plan signage regulations with the exception of the proposed cinema marquee which serves as a defining architectural element of the Project. The amendment would allow the marquee to exceed the maximum 100 square feet for any individual sign to permit a 200 square foot marquee as outlined in the Master Sign Program (Appendix B). The amendment would also allow the marquee to project outward from Building B. The height of the marquee is limited to 30 feet, consistent with the heights of the surrounding buildings.
- j. Alcohol: The Amendment proposes adding provisions to regulate the limited sale and consumption of alcohol. The Commercial Village Subarea A would include standards

and procedures to regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol within the project's restaurants, cinema, specialty retail and market. Alcohol is typically permitted in the Zoning Code with approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUB). The Subarea would set a limit on the maximum number of establishments within the Subarea that may offer alcohol and create a regulatory framework to approve such uses when specific tenants are identified.

- B. That the project incorporates mitigation measures, monitoring measures when necessary, or alternatives identified in the environmental review which would mitigate the negative environmental effects of the project, to the extent physically feasible.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared in compliance with CEQA that analyzed the potential environmental effects that could result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. The MND identifies mitigation measures and monitoring measures which would mitigate the negative environmental effects of the project (and incorporated into the Conditions of Approval herein).

Design Review Board

In accordance with LAMC Section 16.50 and as set forth in Section 14.A of the Specific Plan, the Project complies with the Specific Plan's design criteria and guidelines.

- A. All proposed buildings or structures shall be designed in such a fashion that all ventilation, heating or air conditioning ducts, equipment or other related appurtenances are adequately screened from public view;

The Project has been designed such that all ventilation, heating or air conditioning ducts, equipment or other related appurtenances are adequately screened from public view. Utility equipment such as electrical transformers will be screened from view from the public right-of-way through landscape buffering and screening. Any rooftop equipment will be screened from view from the public right-of-way either by dedicated screen walls or by careful building roofscape and massing. Trash compactors and other service equipment shall be screened from view from the public right-of-way through the use of gates, screens and landscape buffering or by locating underground.

- B. Any exterior treatment of a building or structure including color, texture, windows or other architectural features shall be applied to all exterior walls in a similar manner;

The Project includes eight distinct buildings as shown on the Project elevations. The exterior treatment of the proposed eight buildings along all facades incorporates and alternates different textures, colors, materials, and distinctive architectural treatments that add visual interest while maintaining continuity. The architectural language for the Project is varied in form, style and articulation with distinctive facades and details to create an organic street character with unique tenant storefronts and elements compatible with the Palisades village character. Proposed building materials will be authentic, high-quality and consistent with the architectural style of the buildings. The buildings propose a combination of flat and pitched rooflines and other architectural elements to provide articulation and create an interesting profile along the street wall. The architectural design for all the buildings will create a credible streetscape that integrates with and enhances the existing village-like urban fabric and texture of the area while creating the architectural variety, including among others mid-century modern, modern/contemporary, coastal village style, of a street that has been built over the course of time.

- C. Colors and types of building materials shall be reasonably consistent with the colors and types of building materials used in existing structures in each area and shall be harmonious with the character of each area;

Under existing conditions, the assortment of neighborhood serving commercial uses are developed with various architectural styles along the Sunset Boulevard corridor. Existing businesses are relatively eclectic and reside in highly altered buildings displaying a wide range of materials and elements including wood shingles, stucco-clad concrete, red clay tiles, brick, stone, flat and pitched roofs, and rectangular and arched windows. Commercial development nearest to the Project Site consists of one- and two-story buildings that display a variety of architectural styles including Spanish, Mission Revival, modern, and mid-century modern.

Similar to the architecture of the existing commercial district, the architectural design of the Project varies in form, style, and articulation and features distinctive facades, flat and pitched rooflines, and other elements to avoid a monotonous, single theme that is appropriate to the character of the commercial village.

- D. The exterior building components, sun shading devices, lighting plan and fixtures shall be compatible with the general character of each area;

Low key building signage, building lighting, street lighting, street signage, utility and service elements are carefully designed and integrated into the Project aesthetic to complement the pedestrian scale experience and organic building composition. New custom designed street lighting is an integral part of the overall Project design to highlight pedestrian paths and entrances, and to create a comfortable pedestrian experience at all times. These new fixtures will be installed along the length of Swarthmore Avenue, around the perimeter of the project and internally at all pedestrian walkways, promenades and other open spaces. The design and placement of lighting fixtures will be carefully considered to avoid uneven light distribution, harsh shadows and any light spill onto adjacent properties.

- E. The proposed buildings or structures shall be designed, to the extent feasible, so as not to cast shadows on adjacent property;

The new buildings are designed as to not cast shadows on adjacent properties. Along Sunset Boulevard, the easternmost proposed two-story building (Building H) located adjacent to an existing two-story commercial building of similar scale. Buildings D and E, two-stories in height, are buffered from the residential development to the north by the Monument Street right-of-way which is approximately 70 feet wide as measured from the property line. Buildings B and C are located adjacent to an existing three-story multi-family building fronting on Albright St. A shade study was prepared that concluded the two proposed buildings would not cast shadows on the multi-family building.

- F. Buildings and structures shall be oriented to maximize the potential for landscaped areas and public spaces and to minimize obstruction of mountain views;

Due to the existing development and landscaping near the Project Site and in adjacent neighborhoods, views to and from the Project Site are limited to the immediate area. Long and/or broad views to the mountains from the Project Site and nearby roadways are blocked and restricted by surrounding development and mature landscaping. Specifically, the presence of one and two-story commercial and residential development and tall, spreading street trees limit the availability of views to the Santa Monica Mountains.

The orientation of the Project and buildings are intended to maximize landscaped areas, public spaces, and to minimize obstruction of limited mountain views. The project proposes pedestrian promenades and paseos between buildings that connect to a series of courtyards, parks, plazas and gathering places that create an open feel and provide view corridors throughout the Project site. A large, landscaped open space park replaces the existing asphalt parking lot. The park is flanked with retail spaces and restaurants with outdoor terraces and is designed to encourage pedestrians to linger and to accommodate occasional events and group activities. Throughout the Project are numerous landscape and planting areas, including mature trees. In addition, the Project has been designed with low scale one and two story buildings, consistent with the existing scale in the surrounding Palisades commercial village.

- G. The size of proposed buildings or structures shall be similar in scale to surrounding buildings or structures and shall be appropriate to the character of the areas;

Existing commercial retail spaces on the Project Site are located in one- and two-story structures and proposed commercial/retail uses would likewise be located in one and two-story structures. The surrounding neighborhood includes an assortment of neighborhood serving commercial uses that includes the Ralph's grocery store, a single-story pharmacy, the two-story Norris Hardware building, the two-story Madison building on Swarthmore, multiple two-story buildings on Sunset Boulevard between Monument and Swarthmore, and two two-story buildings on Monument north on Sunset., Single-story retail storefronts are located along the southern end of the corridor. Commercial development nearest to the Project Site consists of one- and two-story buildings. Immediately across the Project Site, along Monument and Albright Streets are two-story single-family residential dwelling. Immediately to the west and abutting the Project Site is a three-story multi-family residential building.

The Project proposes demolition of existing multi-tenant neighborhood serving commercial retail space and existing surface parking lots, and redevelopment of the site with neighborhood-serving commercial/retail uses. The Project proposes eight new buildings one and two stories in height which is consistent with the range of building scale of the existing development on the Project Site and surrounding neighborhood.

- H. All open areas not utilized for buildings, driveways, parking areas, recreational facilities or walks shall be landscaped so that multifamily or commercial uses are substantially buffered from the view of single-family dwellings;

Courtyards, parks, plazas, landscape, and planting areas are proposed throughout the Project Site. A landscaped open space park is proposed within a portion of the existing surface parking lot along a portion of Monument Street across from single-family residences located to the north. In addition, numerous mature street trees and landscaping will also be planted along the length of Monument Street to buffer the views of the Project from these residences. Street trees and dense landscape planting will also be incorporated along the Albright Street frontage to buffer the views from single-family residences located to the west of the Project Site.

- I. Landscape design and plant types shall be compatible with the building design, site location, and the general character of each area.

Complementing the proposed buildings are streetscape and landscape elements dispersed throughout the Project. The proposed landscape plan includes new street trees along

Albright, Monument, Sunset and Swarthmore. In addition, a variety of shrubs, flowers, ground covers, vines, and turf elements are proposed in a number of courtyards, plazas, bulb outs along Swarthmore, and within the park area that enhance the character of the Project Site and surrounding commercial village.

CEQA Findings

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2015-2715-MND) was issued on February 18, 2016. The MND was published for a period of 20 days. The MND includes mitigation measures that address the impacts of the project on Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, Public Services, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Transportation/Traffic. Under Case No. AA-2015-3312-PMLA, the Deputy Advisory Agency approved ENV-2015-2715-MND and the associated Mitigation Monitoring Program on March 31, 2016.

On the basis of the whole of the record before the lead agency including any comments received, the lead agency finds that, with imposition of the mitigation measures described in the MND, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. The attached Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the Environmental Review Section of the Planning Department in Room 750, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA.

On April 28, 2016, the City of Los Angeles City Planning Commission adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration [ENV-2015-2715-MND] ("Adopted MND") for the Palisades Village project ("Proposed Project") which includes 3.11 acres of land in the Commercial Village Area of the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan in the Brentwood – Pacific Palisades Community Plan area. The Proposed Project is generally bounded by Sunset Boulevard to the southwest, Monument Street to the east, and Albright Street to the north. The Adopted MND analyzed the demolition of six existing buildings and surface parking lots and construction of a mixed-use project comprised of eight new buildings with a total floor area of 116,215 square feet for a 0.9 floor area ratio. The Proposed Project proposes one- and two-story buildings with a maximum building height of 34 feet, including architectural roof features. The Proposed Project proposes a mix of uses that total approximately including retail, restaurants, offices, eight residential units, a specialty grocery store, walk-in bank, a movie theater, and a community room. The Proposed Project proposes open space that totals approximately 18,000 square feet (0.39 acres) and 470 off-street vehicle parking spaces in two levels of subterranean parking.

An Addendum to the Adopted MND has been prepared to analyze minor changes to the Proposed Project that include: (1) the addition of one more level of underground parking, which would result in a total of three underground parking levels for a total of 560 spaces as opposed to two levels of underground parking; (2) increase in the overall residential square footage from 10,000 square feet to 17,500 square feet, while maintaining eight residential units in Building H, (3) and the addition of a 1,250 square foot community room on the second level of Building F ("Modified Project").

The Addendum to the Adopted MND addresses the proposed minor changes to the Proposed Project set forth in the Adopted MND. The Adopted MND included all statutory sections required by CEQA and supporting technical appendices. CEQA establishes the type of environmental documentation required when changes to a project occur after an MND is adopted. Specifically, Section 15164(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that:

“The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.”

Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines requires a Subsequent MND when an MND has already been adopted and one or more of the following circumstances exist:

1. Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
2. Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken, which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or
3. New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:
 - a. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;
 - b. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;
 - c. Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or
 - d. Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

Likewise, California Public Resources Code Section 21166 states that unless one or more of the following events occur, no subsequent or supplemental MND shall be required by the lead agency or by any responsible agency:

- Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the environmental impact report;

- Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken which will require major revisions in the environmental impact report; or
- New information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time the environmental impact report was certified as complete, becomes available.

As demonstrated in the Addendum to the Adopted MND, the Modified Project would not result in any additional significant impacts, nor would it substantially increase the severity of previously anticipated significant impacts. Rather, all of the impacts associated with the Modified Project are within the envelope of impacts addressed in the Adopted MND and do not constitute a new or substantially increased significant impact. The Addendum included an adequate explanation of the decision not to prepare a Subsequent MND pursuant to Section 15162 and is supported by substantial evidence.

None of the public comments to the Addendum or elsewhere in the administrative record constitute substantial evidence that would require preparation of a Subsequent MND or that would require substantial revision of the previously Adopted MND.

Based on this determination, the Modified Project does not meet the requirements for preparation of a Subsequent MND pursuant to Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines.