

FINDINGS

A. General Plan Findings

- a. **General Plan Land Use Designation.** The subject property is located within the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan area which was updated by the City Council on November 17, 1999 and designates the subject property for Community Commercial land uses corresponding to the CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, and PB Zones. The site is zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO Zone. The new mixed-use buildings with 112 new residential units and 15,160 square feet of ground floor commercial uses is consistent with development permitted in the proposed (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO Zone, which permits a maximum density of 138 units across the site. Therefore, the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan as reflected in the adopted Framework Element and Community Plan.

b. **Land Use Element.**

The proposed project complies with applicable provisions of the Los Angeles Municipal Code and the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan. There are twelve elements of the General Plan. Each of these elements establishes policies that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. The majority of the policies derived from these Elements are in the form of Code requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan is divided into 35 Community Plans. The subject property is located within the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan, which designates the site for Community Commercial land uses corresponding to the CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, and PB Zones.

The proposed project, which includes new construction of a mixed use building is consistent with the following goals and policies of the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan:

Goal 1: A safe, secure, and high quality residential environment for all economic, age, and ethnic segments of the community.

Objective 1-1: To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.

Policy 1-1.1: Designate specific lands to provide for adequate multi-family residential development.

Objective 1-3: To promote and ensure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, or ethnic background.

Policy 1-3.1: Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, price and location of housing.

Policy 1-3.2: Promote housing in mixed use projects in transit corridors, pedestrian oriented areas, and transit oriented districts.

Policy 1-3.3: Ensure that new housing opportunities minimize displacement of residents.

The proposed project is a mixed-use development consisting of two buildings with 112 new residential units. The project will provide much-needed housing with a variety of unit types, including a mix of studio, one, two, three-bedroom, and live/work units. The project will not result in the displacement of any residents, as there are no existing residential units on the site. The project will result in the net gain of 112 dwelling units for the Reseda-West Van Nuys community, in the heart of the Downtown Reseda district, with 23 studio, 43 one-bedroom units, 35 two-bedroom units, and 11 three bedroom units split between two buildings. Building B will have one one-bedroom and two two-bedroom units also be live/work units with direct access from the alley to further activate the project's alley frontage.

Goal 2: A strong and competitive commercial sector which best serves the needs of the community through maximum efficiency and accessibility while pressing the historic commercial and cultural character of the community.

Objective 2-1: To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts, to promote the economic health, revitalization, and public convenience by promoting orderly development and enhancement of the Commercial Business District.

Policy 2-1.2: New commercial uses shall be located in existing established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.

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

Objective 2-2: To enhance the identity of distractive commercial districts and to identify Pedestrian Oriented Districts (PODs)

Policy 2-2.2: New development needs to enhance and increase the existing pedestrian street activity.

Objective 2-4: To maintain and increase the commercial employment base for community residents whenever possible.

Policy 2-4.1: Protect commercial plan designations so that commercial development is encouraged.

The proposed project is a mixed-use development consisting of two buildings with 112 new residential units, and 15,160 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail uses. The project will provide opportunities for new neighborhood serving commercial uses. As a result, the development will strengthen the existing commercial development in the community by adding to the consumer base through the introduction of new residents. The project is also an infill development that will replace underutilized commercial and parking zoned land.

The proposed project is designed with commercial and pedestrian uses oriented towards Sherman Way and the alleyway, encouraging pedestrian activity and minimizing curb cuts.

The alley is designed to function as a vehicular thoroughfare and pedestrian paseo, with the respective spaces being delineated by decorative pavers and landscaping. The project's alley fronting pedestrian improvements will align with existing adjoining pedestrian improvements, thereby creating a seamless pedestrian pathway to serve Sherman Way fronting businesses.

The project's commercial setbacks mirror existing development in the area and will comply with the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay. The building's perceived massing along Sherman Way will be reduced by the use of differing colors and materials along the façade. Building B's perceived massing along Cantlay Street will be further reduced by stepping back the building's tallest portion (45 feet) an additional 40 feet from the northern property line. At the northern property line, the building would be two stories and approximately 25 feet in height (with the exception of an architectural feature with a height of 35 feet).

- c. The **Framework Element** for the General Plan was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element includes the following goals, objectives and policies relevant to the instant request:

Goal 3A: A physically balanced distribution of land uses that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a healthful living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more livable city.

Objective 3.1: Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City's existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.

Policy 3.1.4: Accommodate new development in accordance with land use and density provisions of the General Plan Framework Long-Range Land Use Diagram and Table 3-1 (Land Use Standards and Typical Development Characteristics).

Objective 3.2: Provide for the spatial distribution of development that promotes an improved quality of life by facilitating a reduction of vehicular trips, vehicle miles traveled, and air pollution.

Policy 3.2.1: Provide a pattern of development consisting of distinct districts, centers, boulevards, and neighborhoods that are differentiated by their functional role, scale, and character. This shall be accomplished by considering factors such as the existing concentrations of use, community-oriented activity centers that currently or potentially service adjacent neighborhoods, and existing or potential public transit corridors and stations.

Objective 3.4: Encourage new multi-family residential, retail commercial, and office development in the City's neighborhood districts, community, regional, and downtown centers as well as along primary transit corridors/boulevards, while at the same time conserving existing neighborhoods and related districts.

Policy 3.4.1: Conserve existing stable residential neighborhoods and lower-intensity commercial districts and encourage the majority of new commercial and mixed-use (integrated commercial and residential) development to be located (a) in a network of neighborhood districts, community, regional, and downtown centers, (b) in proximity to rail and bus transit stations and corridors, and (c) along the City's major boulevards, referred to as districts, centers, and mixed-use boulevards, in accordance with the Framework Long-Range Land Use Diagram.

The proposed project will contribute toward and facilitate the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability by redeveloping an underutilized site with a new mixed-use development including 112 dwelling and a total of 15,160 square feet of commercial uses. The project's proximity to transit connections and its mix of uses will encourage the reduction of vehicular trips to and from the project, vehicle miles traveled, and help reduce air pollution. The project's location within an existing, under-utilized commercial and parking zoned area will enable the city to conserve nearby existing stable residential neighborhoods and lower-intensity commercial districts.

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 3.9.1: Accommodate the development of community-serving commercial uses and services and residential dwelling units in areas designated as "Community Center" in accordance with Tables 3-1 and 3-5. The ranges and densities/intensities of uses permitted in any area shall be identified in the community plans.

The proposed project will reinforce existing commercial development with the addition of 15,160 square feet of new commercial uses and the addition of 112 new dwelling units to further promote daytime and nighttime neighborhood activity. The new commercial spaces along Sherman Way and the alley will compliment other existing neighborhood serving commercial uses including restaurants, markets, offices, and retail.

The proposed project has been permitted a height of up to 55 feet and is proposed in conjunction with a building design that observes a 5-foot residential setback that is in compliance with the RAS4 Zone, ensuring that the project maintains a more pedestrian-oriented scale along the dual street frontages. The reduced 5-foot setbacks for Building B

allow for the provision of private open space that serves the residential units. In addition, the building's façade is broken up by articulation and balconies that helps to reduce the overall mass of the building, in compliance with the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay (CDO).

Goal 5A: A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.

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 5.2.2: 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. Additionally, develop these areas so that they are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed project is located in a multi-modal area in close proximity to transit lines, bicycle infrastructure, and readily accessible to ride sharing services. Given the existing transit, bicycle, and vehicle infrastructure in the area, it is appropriate to locate a project at the proposed density at the subject property. The project will redevelop an under-utilized commercial and parking zoned property that is within ¼-mile of the Metro Rapid 744, Metro Local 150/240 and 163/162, Dash Northridge (connections to Metrolink Ventura County Line), and is within 2 miles of the Metro Orange Line. The project, with 112 dwelling units and 15,160 square feet of commercial floor area will provide new housing and commercial opportunities within walking distance to surrounding residences and public transit.

- d. **Mobility Element.** The Mobility Element of the General Plan (Mobility Plan 2035) is likely to be affected by the recommended action herein through the imposition of street dedications and improvements surrounding the project site. Sherman Way is a designated Boulevard II under Mobility Plan 2035, dedicated to a half right-of-way width of 45 feet and improved with asphalt roadway and concrete curb, gutters, and a sidewalk. Cantlay Street is a Local Street under Mobility Plan 2035, dedicated to a half right-of-way width of 30 feet and improved with asphalt roadway and concrete gutter. The alley that bisects the site is dedicated to a width of 20 feet and is presently improved with concrete sidewalk and asphalt parking.

The Bureau of Engineering (BOE) is requiring that a 5-foot dedication be provided along Sherman Way to complete a 55-foot half right-of-way in accordance with Boulevard II standards of Mobility Plan 2035. No dedications are required along Cantlay Street (Local Street) or the alleyway. BOE is requiring sidewalk improvements along Sherman Way (18-foot wide) and Cantlay Street (12-foot wide). BOE is also requiring that the alley be improved with asphalt pavement and concrete gutter and that the improvements allow for a suitable transition to join with existing improvements. Dedications and improvements have been imposed under the (T) Tentative Classification conditions contained within this staff report.

The project as designed and conditioned will meet the following goals and objectives of Mobility Plan 2035:

- 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 2.10: Facilitate the provision of adequate on and off-street loading areas.
- 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.
- Policy 3.8. Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.

The proposed project will provide an approximately 18-foot sidewalk along Sherman Way while orienting new commercial uses toward the street and providing a high-quality, safe and comfortable walking environment. The project also calls for the construction of a 12-foot sidewalk along the Cantlay Street frontage, providing pedestrian facilities for the adjoining residential neighborhoods to the north.

The project will maintain an approximately 42-foot wide driveway on the west side of the site to allow for vehicular and pedestrian access to the alley directly off of Sherman Way. Conforming with the Mobility Plan's concept of "Streets as Places," the project will improve the alley by fully improving it to alley standards and providing additional pedestrian facilities, further improving safety and access around the site. The project's alley frontage will be fully improved to 20 feet and will allow for a suitable transition to join with existing improvements. Along the alley frontage, the project will provide an additional 10-foot setback along Building A and a 5-foot setback along Building B to create an approximately 37-foot wide walk street environment that serves both cars and pedestrians.

Vehicular ingress and egress to Building A will be from the alley, while access to Building B will be from Cantlay Street. With the exception of the existing driveway, new curb cuts and driveways along Sherman Way were specifically avoided in order to reduce any impact on circulation in the surrounding area, including the performance and reliability of transit services and to avoid conflicts with pedestrians.

- e. The **Housing Element** of the General Plan seeks to meet the variety of housing needs of the City's growing population through the provision of affordable housing and amenity-rich, sustainable neighborhoods for its residents. The proposed project is consistent with the following objectives and policies of the Housing Element:

- Objective 1.1: Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing in order to meet current and projected needs.

- Policy 1.1.2: Expand affordable rental housing for all income groups that need assistance.

Policy 1.1.3 Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the city's households.

Objective 1.3: Forecast and plan for changing housing needs over time in relation to production and preservation needs.

Policy 1.3.5 Provide sufficient land use and density to accommodate an adequate supply of housing units by type and cost within the City to meet the projections of housing needs, according to the policies and objectives of the City's Framework Element of the General Plan.

The proposed project will result in the construction of 112 new market rate rental dwelling units. The project would be comprised of 23 studio, 43 one-bedroom units, 35 two-bedroom units, and 11 three bedroom units split between two buildings. The proposed 112 net new dwelling units are located within a multi-modal area, consistent with the City's policies and objectives to encourage new development in areas where public transit is readily available and the range of different housing types will help meet the particular needs of the city's households.

Zone Change Findings

1. **Pursuant to Section 12.32-C and G of the Municipal Code, the zone change is in conformance with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

The site and surrounding area's current [Q]C2-1D-CDO zoning limits structures to a maximum height of 45 feet and an F.A.R. of 1.5 to 1, with the exception of RAS Zones, which are permitted a maximum height of 50 feet and an F.A.R of 3 to 1. The site is also subject to a D limitation, which limits structures to a maximum 10 stories in height. The project has proposed a height of 55 feet for Building A in order to accommodate a 15-foot in height ground floor that contains commercial tenant space and a driveway/porte cochere. The driveway/porte cochere is located along the western edge of the property and provides direct access off of Sherman Way to the alley, garage entrance to Building A, as well as the commercial component of Building B. Building B does not provide a driveway/porte cochere and therefore is proposed to have a maximum height of 45 feet. The proposed zone change to RAS4 hereby revises the (Q) to permit a height of 55 feet for Building A in order to facilitate access between Sherman Way and the alley. Building A's subsequent floors two through four have a height of 10 feet resulting in the overall building height of 55 feet.

- a. **Public Necessity:** Approval of the Zone Change to the (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO Zone is necessary in order for the project to be considered under one zone rather than multiple zones. The mixed-use development is consistent with the type of development encouraged by the General Plan Framework Element and the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan, with regard to Community Commercial development, as outlined above. The requested Zone Change will allow for additional height and F.A.R. to maximize the development's potential benefit to the surrounding community.
- b. **Convenience:** The project will redevelop an under-utilized commercial and parking zoned property that is within ¼-mile of the Metro Rapid 744, Metro Local 150/240 and 163/162, Dash Northridge (connections to Metrolink Ventura County Line), and is within 2 miles of the Metro Orange Line. The project, with 112 dwelling units and 15,160 square feet of commercial floor area will provide new housing and commercial opportunities within walking distance to surrounding residences and public transit. Further, the site will

maintain an existing driveway along Sherman Way to facilitate access to the alley and parking lots that serve Sherman Way fronting businesses.

- c. General Welfare: Granting the Zone Change to the (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO Zone allows for the development of a 55-foot in-height, mixed-use project with 112 dwelling units and 15,160 square feet of commercial floor area, which will support the Reseda community by providing additional housing, dining and retail opportunities, as well as enhancing the urban environment by encouraging daytime and nighttime activity on an under-utilized site within the Community Commercial land use designation. Given the project's proximity to existing transit services, the project will provide new housing opportunities and amenities at both the local and regional scale.
- d. Good Zoning Practices: The purpose of the RAS Zones are to "provide a mechanism to increase housing opportunities, enhance neighborhoods, and revitalize older commercial corridors." The project would redevelop commercial and parking uses with a new mixed-use development. Approval of the Zone Change to the (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO Zone with 112 dwelling units and 15,160 square feet of commercial floor area is consistent with the type of development encouraged by the General Plan Framework Element and the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan. The project will create pedestrian-oriented retail spaces and a mixed-use center that will enhance the urban environment and encourage daytime and nighttime activity within the currently under-utilized site. The project is proposing a height of 55 feet and proposing an FAR of less than 3:1, which is consistent with the Community Commercial General Plan Land Use designation as defined by the Framework Element.

2. Pursuant to Section 12.32-G of the Municipal Code, Findings for "T" and "Q" Classifications.

Pursuant to LAMC Sections 12.32-G,1 and G,2(a), The current action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with new "T" and "Q" conditions of approval, and project specific conditions of approval imposed herein. Such limitations are necessary to ensure the identified dedications, improvements, and construction notices are executed to meet the public's needs, convenience and general welfare served by the required actions. The conditions that limit the scale and scope of the development along with site operations, are also necessary to: protect the best interests of and to assure a development more compatible with, the surrounding properties and the overall pattern of development in the community; to secure an appropriate development in harmony with the General Plan as discussed in the above sections, and to prevent or mitigate the potential adverse environmental effects of the recommended actions.

Site Plan Review Findings

3. The project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan.

General Plan – Framework Element

The Framework Element of the City's General Plan was adopted on December 11, 1996 and re-adopted on August 8, 2001. The Framework Element sets forth a comprehensive long-range growth strategy for the City and defines citywide policies regarding such pertinent issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. As such, the Framework Element serves as an essential qualitative analysis tool in providing the general policy context

within which to assess the merits of the proposed project relative to the project site and its surroundings, and against the established goals of the City.

The Framework Element defines Community Commercial as being those designated areas within the City which are “intended to serve as the focal points and activity centers for surrounding groups of residential neighborhoods, serving a population of 25,000 to 100,000.” The proposed development is consistent with the following Community Commercial goals, objectives and policies identified within the Framework Element (Chapter 3 – Land Use):

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 3.10.1: Accommodate the development of community-serving commercial uses and services and residential dwelling units in areas designated as "Community Center" in accordance with Tables 3-1 and 3-5. The ranges and densities/intensities of uses permitted in any area shall be identified in the community plans.

Relative to the site's Community Commercial designation under the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan, the project site is currently underutilized as it is improved with a two-story approximately 40,200 square-foot commercial retail/office building and associated surface parking lot. The applicant proposes a medium density mixed-use development consisting of two buildings with a total of 112 residential units and 15,160 square feet of ground floor commercial space. The project will help create a pedestrian-oriented, high activity, mixed-use center that will help revitalize the Downtown Reseda commercial district. As such, the proposed project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan Framework Element.

Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan

The subject property is designated for Community Commercial uses under the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan, with the corresponding zones of CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, P, and PB zones. The proposed mixed-use development is consistent with the Community Commercial designation and uses permitted under the (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO Zone applicable to the project site. Furthermore, the surrounding properties are currently developed with commercial retail, office, and multi-family residential uses, and as such, the proposed project will be compatible with the existing uses in the surrounding area.

Objectives of the Community Plan include the following:

Objective 1-1: “To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area....”

The project site is currently underutilized as previously described. The proposed mixed-use development is consistent with the above Community Plan objective as it would result in a net increase of 112 residential units and 15,160 square feet of new commercial and retail services.

The land use policies for commercial uses under the Community Plan identifies the Commercial Business District (CBD), “located along Sherman Way between Lindley and Wilbur Avenues and along Reseda boulevard between Saticoy and Kittridge Streets”, as the “center” of the commercial area of the Community Plan.

Land Use – Commerce: Plan policy provides for the development of single or aggregated parcels for mixed use commercial and residential development. These structures would, normally incorporate retail office, and/or parking on lower floors and residential units on upper floors. The intent is to provide housing in close proximity to jobs, to reduce vehicular trips, congestion, and air pollution, to assure adequate sites for housing, and to stimulate pedestrian oriented areas to enhance the quality of life in the Plan area.

The project site is located within the Central Business District as described in the Community Plan. The mixed-use development will provide housing opportunities within close proximity to jobs and neighborhood serving commercial uses, thereby reducing vehicular trips, congestion, and air pollution. The ground floor retail will help activate the surrounding area with pedestrian oriented uses and will enhance the quality of life in the Plan area.

Other Applicable Regulations, Standards, Specific Plans, and Overlays

The subject property is zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO and is located within the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay. The proposed zone change to (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO would allow for the proposed mixed-use development. The subject property is located within the Reseda/Canoga Park Earthquake Disaster Assistance Project for Portions of Council District 3 Project Area of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Although the CRA was eliminated by state authority in 2012, its adopted redevelopment plans continue to exist. Redevelopment plans also typically include limited land use controls and design guidelines. Any determination of compliance with the Reseda/Canoga Park Earthquake Disaster Assistance Project for Portions of Council District 3 is not included as part of this grant and the applicant will be required to obtain the appropriate approvals required under the Redevelopment Plan as part of the building permitting process. As such, the proposed project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, and the applicable community plan.

- 4. The project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on neighboring properties.**

The surrounding properties consist primarily of low-rise commercial retail and office buildings (approximately 20-feet in height), and multi-family, and single-family dwellings. The northern adjoining properties (across Cantlay Street) are zoned R1-1 and are developed with single-family dwellings. The eastern adjoining property is zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO and is developed with commercial building and a surface parking lot. The southern adjoining properties (across Sherman Way) are zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and are developed with commercial buildings. The western adjoining property is zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO and is developed with commercial buildings and a surface parking lot.

The site and surrounding area’s current [Q]C2-1D-CDO zoning limits structures to a maximum height of 45 feet and an F.A.R. of 1.5 to 1, with the exception of RAS Zones, which are permitted a maximum height of 50 feet and an F.A.R of 3 to 1. The site is also subject to a D limitation which limits structures to a maximum 10 stories in height. The project has proposed a height of 55 feet for Building A in order to accommodate a 15-foot high ground floor which includes a 15-foot in height driveway/porte cochere on the property’s western elevation that

provides direct access off of Sherman Way to the alley and garage entrance to Building A and the commercial component of Building B. Building B is proposed to be constructed to a maximum height of 45 feet. Building A has an F.A.R of 2.77 and Building B has an F.A.R. of 1.83.

The proposed project consists of a mixed-use development consisting of two buildings (Building A and Building B) totaling 129,634 square feet with 112 residential units and 15,160 square feet of ground floor commercial retail space with two levels of subterranean parking accommodating parking for a total of 228 vehicles and 155 bicycles. The site is currently improved with a two-story 40,200 square-foot commercial building and an associated surface parking lot. The site is located within the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan area and designated for Community Commercial land uses. The subject property is currently zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO and is subject to the Reseda Business District Community Design Overlay.

The proposed mixed-use development will have retail frontage along Sherman Way and along the alleyway. The project will maintain an existing driveway access point along Sherman Way and the structure will cantilever over the driveway. The pedestrian lobby for the residents of Building A will be accessible off of the driveway/porte cochere while Building B will be accessible off of Cantalay Street. There will also be four surface parking spaces located along the alley. Access to the parking garage for Building A will be from the alley while Building B will take access from Cantalay Street. The project has been conditioned to ensure that convenient and efficient public access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles will be provided. The project also includes loading areas to serve the commercial tenants accessible from the alley.

Height/Bulk:

The Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay's imposed [Q] Condition limits structures to a maximum height of 45 feet, with the exception of RAS Zones, which are permitted a maximum height of 50 feet and an F.A.R. of 3 to 1. The project has proposed a height of 55 feet for Building A in order to accommodate a 15-foot high ground floor which includes a 15-foot in height pass-through/porte cochere on the property's westside that provides direct access off of Sherman Way to the alley and garage entrance to Building A and the commercial component of Building B. With the approval of the zone change/height district change from C2-1D/P-1D to (T)(Q)RAS4-1D-CDO, the project's maximum height of 55 feet would be consistent with what is allowable under the proposed zoning.

The proposed project will result in a total floor area of approximately 129,634 square feet with an F.A.R. of 2.48 to 1. The Project has design elements that are compatible with existing and future developments on neighboring properties. Neighboring commercial properties range in height from one- to two-stories (approximately 20 feet in height). Neighboring residential properties to the north are generally single-story single-family dwellings. There is a four-story 55-foot in height apartment building to the northwest of the site. With the project's existing zoning, buildings could be developed to a height of 45 feet and an F.A.R of 1.5 to 1. The project's design and setbacks will help reduce perceived massing, creating a more pedestrian oriented project.

Setbacks:

The setbacks applicable to the project are established initially under Section 12.11.5 of the LAMC, wherein a 5-foot front yard setback is required, no side yard is required for the ground floor portion of buildings when used for commercial purposes, otherwise a 5' setback is required, and a rear yard of not less than 5 feet in depth, since the property is not located

adjacent to the RD or more restrictive zone. The project site plan (Exhibit "A") dated April 5, 2017 indicates the following yard provisions:

Yards	RAS4 Yard Requirements	Building A		Building B	
Front	0' for commercial 5' for residential	South (Sherman Way)	0' for commercial 5' for residential	North (Cantlay Street)	2.5' residential
Side	0' for commercial 5' for residential	East	0' for commercial 5' for residential	East	0' for commercial and 5' for residential
Side	0' for commercial 5' for residential	West	0' for commercial and 5' for residential	West	5' for residential and 0' for commercial
Rear	0' for commercial 5' for residential	North (alley)	10' for commercial 5' for residential	South (alley)	2.5' for commercial 2.5' for residential

The project has requested a Zoning Administrator's Adjustment to allow a 0-foot side yard setback for Building A in order to accommodate a loading zone/trash enclosure/driveway. The reduced setback is compatible with surrounding commercial development that observes no side yard setback. The reduced side yard accommodates improvements that will help the building operate more efficiently and be compatible with surrounding improvements.

Further, the project has requested a Zoning Administrator's Adjustment to allow a 2.5-foot front and rear yard setback for Building B to accommodate open space/private balconies. The reduced setbacks are compatible because they accommodate open space and the project will provide enhancements along the alley including pedestrian lighting and differentiated paving materials so that reduced separation is warranted. The intent of the setbacks is to provide open access to the air and sky. With the expanded alley area, the project will provide a fully dedicated and improved 20' alleyway and an expanded 10' and 5' pedestrian accommodation to allow for access through and around the site to be maintained. Above the ground level, the building will comply with the 5 foot setback and except for the balconies, the mass of the building complies with the RAS4 Zone setback requirements and still provides the air and light access that setback requirements are designed to preserve.

Off-street Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Driveways:

The project is required to provide 211 automobile parking spaces along with 133 bicycle parking spaces. The project will provide a total of 228 off-street automobile parking spaces

and 155 bicycle parking spaces. The applicant is proposing to provide 134 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 21 short term bicycle parking spaces.

Ingress/egress to and from the Building A subterranean garage will be provided by a two-way driveway accessed off of the alleyway. Ingress/egress to and from the Building B subterranean garage will be provided by a two-way driveway accessed off of Cantlay Street. Building B also includes four retail vehicular parking spaces along the alley to allow for convenient short-term parking for the alley fronting retail space. Per Exhibit "A", short term bicycle parking will be provided on the ground floor in a manner to allow convenient access for bicyclists entering and leaving the site.

Lighting:

Lighting will be provided per LAMC requirements. The project has been conditioned to provide pedestrian oriented lighting along all street frontages and the alley. (Condition No. 12).

On-Site Landscaping:

The project is in compliance with Section 12.21-G of the LAMC. Per Exhibit "A", the project will include new street trees at the ground level, along the building frontage, as well as on the ground level courtyard, second-floor "pool deck" and rooftop decks. The plant pallet includes ginkgo biloba, Western Redbud, bisbane box, bamboo, ficus, brush cherry and pine trees. Additionally, all other open areas not used for buildings, driveways, parking areas, recreational facilities or walks are to be landscaped and maintained in accordance with a landscape plan to be approved by the Director of Planning or their designee.

5. That any residential project provides recreational and service amenities in order to improve habitability for the residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

The project is required to provide 18,500 square feet of open space throughout the site, including within both common and private open space areas. The proposed project includes 20,478 square feet of open space throughout the site, including within both common and private open space areas, exceeding code requirements. Common open space areas consist of court yards, roof decks, pool areas, and a gym and recreation room. Private open space consists of individual unit balconies. The project will also provide 15,160 square feet of ground floor commercial floor area, which may include restaurant and retail uses, which will provide an additional amenity to the project's residents. Therefore, the proposed project provides recreational and service amenities in order to improve habitability for the residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

Zoning Administrator Adjustment Findings

1. While site characteristics or existing improvements make strict adherence to the zoning regulations impractical or infeasible, the project nonetheless conforms with the intent of those regulations.

The proposed project is the construction of a mixed-use development that includes two buildings (A and B). The RAS4 Zone allows for a front yard of not less than 5 feet; a rear yard of not less than 15 feet when the property is located adjacent to RD or less restrictive zones, or not less than 5 feet; and a side yard of not less than 5 feet for residential portions of the building and no side yard required for commercial purposes. The project is proposing a 0-foot eastern side yard setback for Building A to accommodate a driveway ramp, loading zones, and stairwells. Building A's residential component will observe a 5-foot setback from all surrounding property lines. The project is proposing a 2-foot 6-inch setback along the front

(northern) and rear (southern) setbacks for Building B in order to accommodate some of the project's open space facilities (ie. patios and balconies).

The intent of the setback requirements in the Zoning Code is to ensure all properties enjoy adequate access to light, air and privacy. Properties to the west and east of the site are zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P-1D-CDO and are developed with commercial buildings and surface parking lots. The northern adjoining single-family dwellings are oriented away from Cantlay Street and front Darby Avenue and Darby Place, respectively.

Adherence to the setbacks is impractical and infeasible because to do so would violate the existing height restrictions and prevent development at the reduced density proposed by the project. With regards to the reduced rear yard setback, commercial development in the RAS4 and C2 zones can observe a 0-foot setback along the alley. The project proposes a 5-foot setback for the commercial component and a 2-foot 6-inch setback along the residential portions to accommodate project parking, common, and private open space. Within the provided reduced setbacks, the project includes landscaping to provide privacy, aesthetic improvements, and buffer the residential units from surrounding properties. Further, the reduced setbacks also provide an adequate transition between the 0-foot commercial setbacks along Sherman Way and the residential uses to the north. Thus, the reduced setbacks conforms with the intent of the yard regulations.

As such, the proposed project, with its reduced rear yard setback, would not impact access to light, air and privacy for any residences. As proposed, the project would be more functional and would improve upon the existing development. Therefore, it can be found that strict adherence to the zoning regulations is impractical and that the project conforms to the general intent of the zoning regulations.

- 2. In light of the project as a whole including any mitigation measures imposed, the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.**

As conditioned, the project will be compatible with adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood. The reduced setbacks along the front and rear yards of Building B and the eastern side yard of Building A will not have a negative impact on future development in the area. The project will provide landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular amenities, and parking facilities that enhance the surrounding neighborhood and commercial district. The project will improve the alley and ensure connectivity with adjoining privately owned surface parking lots.

The project's proposed RAS4 Zone requires a minimum 5-foot setback for residential uses. Building A is proposing a 0-foot eastern side yard setback to accommodate driveway ramps and a trash enclosure area. Building B is proposing a 2-foot 6-inch front and rear yard setback to accommodate private open space. The reduced setback would not degrade the appearance of the project from the public right of way. The eastern adjoining property is zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO [Q]P-1D-CDO and is developed with a commercial building and surface parking lot. The commercial use to the east is constructed up to the property line and observes no side yard setback. The project's proposed improvements will mirror the abutting use with a 0-foot eastern side yard to accommodate the parking access ramp and trash enclosure area. The northern adjoining properties are zoned R1-1 and are improved with single-family dwellings. The R1 properties are buffered from the project site by Cantlay Street, which is improved with a 60-foot right-of-way. Building B's front yard will also be attractively landscaped to further soften the multi-family development from existing single-family developments to the north. The southern rear yard is flanked by an alley that will be improved for pedestrian and

vehicular traffic and will not have an impact on future development. The improvements will not impede access to light and ventilation for the residential units or impact adjoining neighbors. As conditioned, the request is not anticipated to result in any adverse impacts to the surrounding area or degrade adjacent properties.

3. The project is in substantial conformance with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any specific plan.

The Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan designates the property for Community Commercial land uses with corresponding zones of CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, P, and PB. The property's proposed zone change to RAS4 is consistent with the Community Plan land use designation and corresponding zone categories. The property is not located within a Specific Plan Area and is located within the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay. The Community Plan identifies the following goals and objectives:

Objective 2-1 To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts, to promote the economic health, revitalization and public convenience by promoting orderly development and enhancement of the Commercial Business District (CBD).

The project is consistent with the following Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay Standard:

Standard 2a: Screen automobiles within parking structures through the use of building parapets, landscape, and other architectural treatments.

The plan does not specifically address the issue of setbacks. The applicant has requested the following deviations; a 0-foot eastern side yard setback for Building A to accommodate a driveway ramp to a subterranean garage, loading zones, and stairwells; a 2-foot 6-inch setback along the front (northern) and rear (southern) setbacks for Building B in order to accommodate some of the project's open space facilities (ie. patios and balconies). By providing on-site, private open space and ancillary facilities, the project minimizes its impact on the surrounding community's existing open space and provides a desirable amenity for residents and visitors to the site. By having parking facilities that are fully enclosed, the project enhances the overall appearance of the commercial district, and will help buffer the commercial component from existing adjacent residential uses. The project will be consistent with the General Plan's land use designation and is in general conformance with the intent and purpose of the Community Plan and the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay.

Community Design Overlay Findings

4. As conditioned, the project substantially complies with the adopted CDO Design Guidelines and Standards, as follows:

The project complies with the provisions of *Guidelines 1-4: Parking*, of the Design Guidelines, in that the project's parking will be screened from the street as it is mostly subterranean. Parking on the ground level is accessed from the alley. The alley parking will not be visible from surrounding residential properties.

The project complies with the provisions of *Guideline 5: Pedestrian Walkways* and *Guidelines 14 & 15: Lighting*, of the Design Guidelines, in that direct pedestrian access will be provided to the project from Sherman Way and Cantlay Street. The project will also provide a pedestrian walkway along the project's alley frontage. As conditioned, there will be pedestrian lighting at

the ground-floor entrance. Furthermore, as conditioned, the lighting will be shielded directly onto the property.

The project complies with the provisions of *Guideline 7: Equipment Screening* because loading docks will not be visible from Sherman Way and the trash bins will be enclosed. The submitted landscape plan in Exhibit A complies with the provisions of *Guideline 8 - 9: Landscaping* of the Design Guidelines, and as conditioned will further detail a drought-tolerant planting and irrigation layout which will soften and enhance the overall building aesthetic.

The project complies with the provisions of *Guidelines 10 & 11: Building Materials*, *Guidelines 12 & 13: Building Colors*, *Guidelines 16 - 18: Façade Treatment*, *Guideline 19: Windows*, *Guideline 20: Roof Forms*, *Guidelines 23 & 24: Awnings and Canopies* of the Design Guidelines, in that the plans for the new mixed-use development will employ the use of decorative building materials, architectural elements, visual breaks, and a variety of stucco colors, to provide relief to the flat portions of the exterior building walls. Furthermore, the glass, stucco, canvas awning, and aluminum finish create a vibrant ground floor frontage along Sherman Way, the alley, and Cantlay Street.

The overall building materials and color scheme will consist of primarily composed of Brownstone (tan) color stucco, French Toast (light brown) color stucco, and El Dorado (cream) color stucco, with painted steel railings, stained wood balconies, glass windows and doors. An articulated façade, recessed entryways, and balconies help create variation in both the building depth and differentiation in what could otherwise be a flat façade.

The project complies with the provisions of *Guideline 21: Security Devices* by conditioning the project to comply with design standards for security devices including prohibiting barbed wire and requiring that security devices do not have a negative impact on building design.

The proposed project does not currently include a signage plan, and has instead been conditioned to comply with the standards identified in *Guidelines 31 - 35: Signage* of the Design Guidelines, which call for the uniform, orderly, and attractive identification of businesses within the Plan area. To ensure a consistent signage theme for the building, new wall signs shall be limited to the channel letter sign type. The use of channel letter signs, and appropriate sign lighting, will create orderly and attractive signage to complement the existing building design. The signage conditions otherwise reinforce all other applicable standards of the Guidelines, such as number of signs, sign type, prohibited signs. As conditioned, the proposed mixed-use building is harmonious with the guidelines and standards in the Reseda Central Business District CDO.

5. The structures, site plan, and landscaping are harmonious in scale and design with existing development and any cultural, scenic, or environmental resources adjacent to the site and in the vicinity.

The surrounding properties includes commercial development fronting Sherman Way to the east and west and parking to the rear of Sherman Way fronting buildings, and single-family residential developments fronting Cantlay Street to the north. The commercial developments are generally zoned [Q]C2-1D-CDO and [Q]P1-1D-CDO and consist of one- to two-story commercial buildings and surface parking lots. The single-family residential developments with frontages along Cantlay Street are zoned R1-1. Neither property takes access from Cantlay Street, but rather take access from their respective frontages along Darby Avenue and Darby Place. A number of these surrounding buildings generally employ the use of stucco walls, and some variations in depth along the building façade, as well as flat or slightly angled roofs. The proposed project mirrors these elements, and also provides modern architectural features such as painted recessed features to create variation in the building depth and

roofline, and multiple colors of stucco on the façade for visual interest. The plans, elevations, and renderings for the new mixed-use development illustrate that it will enhance the presently built environment. Additionally, the site is not adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, any other recognized and/or known cultural, scenic, or environmental resources.

Environmental Findings

6. **Environmental Finding.** A Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2016-2866-MND) was prepared for the proposed project. 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 lead agency further finds that the attached Mitigated Negative Declaration reflect the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis; and the mitigation measures have been made enforceable conditions on the project. 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.

7. **Flood Insurance.** The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone C, areas of minimal flooding.