

**SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS  
333 W. Ocean Boulevard  
(Long Beach Civic Center)  
Application No. 1504-04  
November 9, 2015**

**Site Plan Review**

Pursuant to Section 21.25.506 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, the Site Plan Review Committee or the Planning Commission shall not approve a Site Plan Review unless the following findings are made. These findings and staff analysis are presented for consideration, adoption and incorporation into the record of proceedings.

The findings from the Zoning Regulations, which must be answered, are presented in bold. Staff's answer to each finding, describing how the project does (positive finding) or does not (negative finding) comply, is below.

- 1. THE DESIGN IS HARMONIOUS, CONSISTENT AND COMPLETE WITHIN ITSELF AND IS COMPATIBLE IN DESIGN, CHARACTER AND SCALE, WITH NEIGHBORING STRUCTURES AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED;**

The proposed project consists of a new Long Beach Civic Center. The six-building development would be spread over four blocks of Downtown Long Beach and consist of a new City Hall building, a new Port Building for Harbor Development administration, a new Main Library, a redeveloped Lincoln Park, one private residential building, and two private commercial mixed-use buildings. The project also includes three parking garages, public street extensions of Chestnut and Cedar Avenues, related infrastructure and landscaping, and the demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse and the existing City Hall and Main Library buildings.

The design of the Long Beach Civic Center is harmonious, consistent, and complete within itself. Through a lengthy, comprehensive, and iterative planning process the developer has carefully designed the new Civic Center to fit within the context of downtown. By extending Chestnut and Cedar Avenue south, through the project site to Ocean Boulevard, a regular pattern of smaller-scale, more pedestrian-friendly blocks will be introduced. These street extensions also allow for the grouping of uses on the three blocks that comprise the heart of the Long Beach Civic Center. The western, Civic Block, would contain City Hall and the Port Building and a large civic plaza; the middle, Center Block, would contain two private mixed-use buildings separated by a privately-operated extension of First Street; and the eastern, Library-Lincoln Park Block would contain the new Main Library and Lincoln Park. The street extensions and roadways surrounding

the project site would feature wide, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks with a diverse parkway planting palette of street trees and groundcover. Bikeways and crosswalks would be incorporated throughout the site, as well as wayfinding signage and properly-scaled lighting that would assist in the safe movement of people through the Civic Center and to the residential and commercial neighborhoods, transit facilities, and dining and entertainment venues nearby.

Specific building locations and their respective designs have been well-thought out and are in keeping with the principles of civic architecture, sustainable design, and the public realm. The Civic Block buildings would be situated near the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. This positioning will allow the buildings to frame a public use plaza that runs east-west, between the two buildings, for the length of the block before it terminates at the Council Chambers wing, which extends south from the primary City Hall massing. The two buildings would feature similar building masses and stand 11 stories each, with City Hall featuring a more understated glass and white metal panel curtain facade and the Port Building incorporating a similar facade treatment but with the incorporation of solid-colored opaque panels. The broad sides of each building would be orientated north-south so as to capture the most natural light and maximize building performance. The lower floors of City Hall would consist of a podium that contains building entries and certain public customer functions. These visually permeable podiums serve to separate the main building massing from the public plaza level and give the buildings a more inviting, pedestrian-oriented feel.

The plaza would visually connect with the Center Block's First Street extension, an expanse of non-traditional paving and curb-less design that would function as a privately owned and operated street. North and south of the extended First Street would sit commercial mixed-use buildings that would be lined with active retail and restaurant spaces that would give the block – and the larger Civic Center development – vibrancy and activation. Specific design of these buildings will be subject to separate, future Site Plan Review approvals.

The Civic Block's public plaza and Center Block's First Street extension would visually connect with Library-Lincoln Park Block (and the Long Beach Transit Mall, further east). This connection would run through the center of the new Lincoln Park, a programmed public open space that would feature multiple activity areas designed to expand the demographics of park users. These areas include large segments of turf, a dog park, and a children's playground area. The park is also designed as a flexible space that can accommodate large events such as concerts and markets. Situated at the north end of the block, at the corner of Broadway and Pacific, would be the new Main Library. This three-story structure (one story below grade, two stories above grade) would feature wood-frame construction and heavy use of natural materials to complement the adjacent park use. It features a light-filled, visually permeable design that's

intended to draw downtown (and city) residents and visitors to this community space.

The remaining project block, the Third and Pacific Block, would be developed with a mid-rise residential building. Like the Center Block development, this project component would be privately developed and be subject to a separate, future Site Plan Review approval.

A mix of uses, including residential, retail, commercial office, and public open space, surround the site. These uses are located in buildings that generally range from one story to more than 20 stories in height. The proposed Civic Center Development, as summarized above, would be compatible in design, character, and scale with these neighboring structures and uses, which are similarly dense and urban in nature.

2. **THE DESIGN CONFORMS TO ANY APPLICABLE SPECIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OR SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS, SUCH AS THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR R-3 AND R-4 MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT, THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES, PD GUIDELINES OR THE GENERAL PLAN;**

The Long Beach Civic Center is located in the Height Incentive Area of the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30). PD-30 was adopted by the City Council in January 2012 to establish development and design standards aimed at promoting a distinctive downtown skyline and a vibrant urban core. The plan places a heavy emphasis on the design and character of buildings and streetscapes, with specific interest in how they contribute to defining and activating the downtown's public realm.

The codified design language applicable to a development on the project site is contained within Sections 4 and 5 of PD-30. Section 4, Design Standards, includes both "guidelines" (seen as recommendations) and "standards" (seen as requirements) for development, as well as specific design criteria for individual building types. Section 5, Streetscape & Public Realm Standards, includes landscape and hardscape design standards and language on acceptable public open space treatments.

The developer's Civic Center proposal reflects an understanding of the PD-30 design criteria. The three institutional buildings – City Hall, Port Building, and Main Library – are appropriately scaled and feature distinct architecture that incorporates high-quality building materials. To achieve downtown development sustainability objectives, these buildings are being designed to meet, at minimum, the LEED Gold standard of performance. The Civic Center project also incorporates a complete streets approach that emphasizes multi-modal transportation and connectivity between the project site and the uses and

neighborhoods that surround it. Landscaping for the project will feature primarily non-invasive, drought-tolerant plantings in keeping with PD-30 standards for plantings and streetscape design.

3. **THE DESIGN WILL NOT REMOVE SIGNIFICANT MATURE TREES OR STREET TREES, UNLESS NO ALTERNATIVE DESIGN IS POSSIBLE;**

The four-block project site contains a number of mature trees that would be removed as part of demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed project. The highest concentrations of these trees are located within Lincoln Park, along the Civic Center's Ocean Boulevard frontage, within the groundcover areas lining the perimeter of the Broadway parking garage, and in the pedestrian walkway area that currently separates City Hall from the former Long Beach Courthouse. While mature, none of these trees are significant in the sense that they have a specific value to the city or the community that could not be fulfilled by their replacement with new trees and landscaping. As conditioned, on-site trees removed as a result of demolition and construction activities would have to be replaced at a 2:1 ratio, and street trees removed as a result of demolition and construction activities would have to be replaced at a 1.5:1 ratio. Proposed tree plantings would be a diverse blend of flowering accent and large canopy trees that would complement the project's diverse water-wise and native landscape palette.

4. **THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL NEXUS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THIS ORDINANCE AND THE LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT; AND**

The proposed project is being developed under a public-private partnership. The proposed public improvements in and around the project site have been promoted and directed by City staff and have been found to be necessary for the project's function and success. The project necessitates these public improvements to ensure that development does not adversely impact other public and private facilities and services. Necessary improvements will be included in the project's conditions of approval.

5. THE PROJECT CONFORMS WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN CHAPTER 21.64 (TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT), WHICH REQUIREMENTS ARE SUMMARIZED IN TABLE 25-1 AS FOLLOWS:

**Table 25-1**  
Transportation Demand Management Ordinance Requirements

TDM Requirements	New Nonresidential Development		
	25,000+ Square Feet	50,000+ Square Feet	100,000+ Square Feet
Transportation information area	*	*	*
Preferential carpool/vanpool parking		*	*
Parking designed to admit vanpools		*	*
Bicycle parking		*	*
Carpool/vanpool loading zones			*
Efficient pedestrian access			*
Bus stop improvements			*
Safe bike access from street to bike parking			*
Transit review	For all residential and nonresidential projects subject to EIR		

The proposed project contains more than 100,000 square feet of new, nonresidential development and is therefore subject to the transportation demand management ordinance requirements. A condition of project approval will require all measures listed above be incorporated into the final project design to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services.

Supplemental EIR (SEIR) 02-15 was prepared for the project, and within the document potential project-related traffic and transit-related impacts were analyzed. The analysis found that the project would not result in significant impacts to local intersections in the project area, and that traffic generated by the proposed project is less than what was considered in the Downtown Plan Final EIR. Furthermore, the SEIR found that the proposed project would not result in any new significant impacts to alternative transportation plans or increase the severity of significant impacts to alternative transportation plans.