

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: 11/12/12		Item Number: PH-1	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING – Introduction of an Ordinance Amending the Culver City Zoning Map, as Referenced in Title 17, Zoning, of the Culver City Municipal Code, Section 17.200.015, Establishing the Washington National Transit Oriented Development Planned Development (PD) Zone - No. 11			
Contact Person/Dept.: Susan Yun, Sol Blumenfeld		Phone Number: (310) 253-5755 (310) 253-5700	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☒		Action Item: ☐ Attachments: ☒	
Commission Action Required: Yes ☒ No ☐		Date: 10/4/12 Planning Commission	
Public Notification: On October 22, 2012, a notice (approximately 1,900 recipients) was mailed to all the property owners and occupants beyond a 1,000-foot radius of the project site and emailed to the Master Notification List. The notice was mailed to East Culver City Neighborhood Alliance Homeowners Association, the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Business Association. On September 13, 2012 and on October 22, 2012, the site was posted. The notice was also published in the Culver City News on October 25, 2012 and November 1, 2012; Meetings and Agendas – City Council (11/08/12)			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld: 10/30/12		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (11/05/12)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (11/07/12)		City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (11/08/12)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council introduce the proposed Ordinance, amending the Culver City Zoning Map, as referenced in Title 17, Zoning, of the Culver City Municipal Code, Section 17.200.015, establishing Planned Development Zone No. 11 (Zoning Code Map Amendment, ZCMA-P2012085) for the Washington National Transit Oriented Development (Washington National TOD). <u>PROCEDURE:</u> 1. Mayor seeks motion to receive and file the affidavit of mailing and posting of public notice. 2. Mayor seeks a motion to declare the public hearing open and calls on staff for a brief staff report and City Council poses questions to staff as desired. (As the City is the applicant in this case, the staff report will also serve as the applicant's presentation and shall be made after the public hearing has been opened.) 3. City Council receives comments from the general public.			

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

4. Mayor seeks a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.
5. City Council discusses the matter and arrives at its decision.

BACKGROUND:

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (LACMTA) recently completed the first phase of the Exposition (Expo) Light Rail Transit (LRT) system which terminates at the Culver City Expo station. Culver City is seeking to encourage Transit Oriented Development (TOD) adjacent to the new station. The City envisions the Washington National TOD as a model, sustainable mixed use development that effectively brings housing, shopping and employment together with convenient transit in order to promote the important goals of improved air quality, regional mobility, and area revitalization. The Washington National TOD site is located within two cities, Culver City and Los Angeles, and within the jurisdiction of LACMTA. The proposed Planned Development (PD) zoning is intended to support transit oriented development, while mitigating any potentially significant development impacts.

Since 2005, the City has assembled the 31 parcels known as the "Triangle Site" located at the intersection of Washington, National and Venice Boulevards and worked with LACMTA to incorporate its right-of-way with the intent of developing a TOD project. The triangular shape of the property has challenged efficient site planning and parking layout, however, the City has extensively studied various development and financial scenarios and worked with the surrounding agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that the Washington National TOD is both financially feasible and reflects good planning practice.

The recent dissolution of redevelopment has created the need to ensure City real estate assets are used for their intended purpose. Under AB 26 and 27 and follow up legislation AB 1484, former Culver City Redevelopment Agency owned real property that is to be developed may be subject to seizure by the State for sale and use. In order to address the potential problems that such action by the State would create, the City is proceeding with necessary predevelopment actions including the rezoning of the Washington National TOD site to ensure that it is developed for its intended purpose.

On October 4, 2012, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended to the City Council approval of ZCMA-P2012085 establishing the Washington National TOD PD Zone No. 11. During its deliberations the Planning Commission recommended the City Council consider allowing proposed site development to exceed the required height limit only where necessary to accommodate improved building massing and architectural design objectives

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

without exceeding the overall development thresholds outlined in the established PD Zone.

ANALYSIS:

The Planning Concept

Land Uses Plan

Transit Oriented Development provides the means to organize land uses around transit to the benefit of both transit and development. The land use plan under the proposed Washington National TOD PD Zone provides a mix of retail, office, hotel and residential uses served by convenient transit. The plan envisions land uses located toward the street edge and parking largely below grade to create a pedestrian orientation and walkability and development that promotes connectivity to surrounding TODs, the downtown, Arts District, the Hayden Tract and with the region.

Central Open Space

A large, attractive, central open space is designated for the property interior, providing a new park amenity for the community, residents, office tenants, customers and transit users. By generally locating buildings along the street and reserving the property interior as open space the project will not sit in shadow and project buildings can take full advantage of green building technologies to allow natural lighting, heating and cooling. Wherever possible, the open space should be on grade, rather than over parking structure to allow ground water recharge and the planting of mature stands of trees with shrubs, turf and ground cover, providing a sunlit, landscaped passive recreational space for residents, hotel guests and commercial tenants and a programmed space for occasional daytime or evening special events.

Pedestrian Focus

All building frontage along major streets will be activated with pedestrian amenities that include outdoor dining, street graphics, special paving, pedestrian plazas, benches and other street furniture. The site will be developed at the street elevation rather than on an elevated parking podium so that it communicates directly with the surrounding commercial neighborhood. The pedestrian environment will consist of small scale retail, hotel and cafes. Above grade parking that detracts from the project will be limited to short term hotel drop off and will be located away from view and within the project interior.

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

Transit Plaza

A dramatic transit plaza will be designed to accommodate the change in elevation from the LRT platform to the Washington National TOD with special gathering spaces and locations for retail, seating, outdoor dining and an overlook.

Project Scale and Amenities

The plan includes adequate right-of-way for wide, tree-lined sidewalks, accommodation of bike transit and the location of public plazas at each major street intersection to open up the site and provide a “window” into the project. The project scale will reflect the surrounding area, built to the current development standards but with additional development setbacks and offsets to create visual interest and attractive building massing.

Summary of PD Zoning

The Washington National TOD PD zoning establishes development and use standards, entitlement process requirements and a range of development based upon the project goals identified during the TOD planning process.

The property entitlements require two steps: Step one involves the rezoning of the Washington National TOD site from Industrial General (IG) and Transportation (T) to Planned Development (PD) allowing the mixed use TOD project (which is the subject action for consideration by the City Council this evening). Step two involves the submittal of a Comprehensive Plan by the developer which provides the precise development plan for the property. The Comprehensive Plan will require a full environmental review of the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Both steps involve review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and final approval by the City Council. As stated earlier in the report, the Planning Commission considered the rezoning action (ZCMA-P2012085) at its meeting of October 4, 2012 and recommended its approval to the City Council. The Comprehensive Plan will be submitted upon property disposition by the City.

Please see Attachment Nos. 1 through 3 (PD Zone document and all related exhibits, Project Concept Plan, and Planning Commission Staff Report and adopted Resolution) for a detailed review of the Washington National Planned Development Zoning.

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed rezoning will have no fiscal impact upon the City because the zoning is only implemented through approval of a Comprehensive Plan submitted by the project developer. The developer will be required to conduct an environmental analysis and mitigate any impacts of development through the Comprehensive Plan review process. Upon development of the site, the project will provide sales tax, property tax, utility user tax and transient occupancy tax to the City. The site is currently surface parking for the Expo Light Rail Station and will be used for that purpose until site development.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Proposed Ordinance and Exhibit A, Zone Change Map and Exhibit B, Washington National Planned Development Zone No.11 provisions.
2. Project Conceptual Plan
3. Planning Commission Staff Report and Adopted Resolution No. 2012-P012 (without attachments).
4. Correspondence

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Determine that no additional environmental information is needed based on the Planning Commission's adoption of the finding that Zoning Code Map Amendment, ZCMA – P2012085, Planning Commission ZCMA Resolution No. 2012-P012, will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment; and
2. Introduce the proposed Ordinance amending the Culver City Zoning Map, as referenced in Title 17, Zoning, of the Culver City Municipal Code, Section 17.200.015, establishing a Planned Development Zone for the Washington National TOD.