



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

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Item #: A-1.

PC - Presentation of Master Sign Program Design Concepts for the Ivy Station Development at 8824 National Boulevard in Planned Development Zone No.11 (PD-Zone 11).

Meeting Date: October 9, 2019

Contact Person/Dept: Gabriela Silva, Associate Planner;
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Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☐

Action Item: ☐

Attachments: ☒

Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas - Planning Commission (10/04/19).

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (10/03/19)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the proposed Master Sign Program (MSP) design concepts for the Ivy Station project located at Washington and National Boulevards adjacent to the Culver Expo Station and provide input as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND

Ivy Station is one of several major transit-oriented developments currently under construction in the Culver City Transit Oriented Development District. The 5.53-acre site is bounded by Venice, Washington and National Boulevards and the Culver City Expo Station and is located within Culver City, Los Angeles and the Metro right of way.

The property is zoned Planned Development District No. 11 (PD-11) which allows mixed-use transit-oriented development with an approved Comprehensive Plan. The Ivy Station Comprehensive Plan was approved by the City Council in March 2016.

Ivy Station is comprised of a 5 story office building with retail and restaurant uses on the ground floor, two interconnected 5 and 6-story buildings over a podium parking level, 200 residential units and a 148-room boutique hotel. A mix of retail and restaurant uses is also provided on the ground level within these buildings. The buildings are connected with a series of landscaped courtyards and open spaces at both the pedestrian and podium levels. The Project also includes ground level short-term parking and a 3-level subterranean parking structure for 1,531 cars and 300 stalls of Expo Station parking.

Lowe Enterprises, the Applicant and Property Owner, has prepared a Master Sign Program Design Concept (Attachment No. 1) for Planning Commission review and input. Per the project approval, comments received from the Planning Commission may be incorporated into the final MSP to be approved administratively by the Community Development Director.

Sign Design Concepts

Zoning Code Section 17.330.050.D.2 permits Community Development Director administrative approval of an MSP. An MSP is prepared for developments that require discretionary review to address sites that are uniquely planned or designed and allows flexibility for sign regulations to address unique site conditions.

The Ivy Station MSP identifies major project buildings (A, B and C) and signage locations. Building façades will have design and architectural features allowing for different types of sign opportunities for the various Tenant Spaces. Overall Project Identification Signs will also be incorporated. In addition, various forms of Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signs will also be implemented to direct tenants, visitors, commuters, and others to the appropriate parking areas, bicycle facilities, bus stops, light rail facilities, and other Project amenities. The sign design concept includes three (3) primary categories of signs; (1) Tenant Signs, (2) Project Identification Signs, and (3) Wayfinding Signs.

Tenant Signs: are proposed to be primarily building-mounted. The Applicant proposes to provide tenants with flexibility to allow for creativity and a spectrum of branding designs, while creating continuity based on the buildings' architectural design features that contribute to the atmosphere of a "Main Street". For the ground-floor tenants, a maximum of two signs are proposed to be allowed, with the type of sign, such as wall-mounted or ceiling-suspended, assigned based on the architectural features of the building. For example, tenants in Building B (residential building) facing the Expo Line will all be allowed to have one (1) façade sign mounted directly to the building structure in front of architectural louvers, with an option for a second projecting blade sign mounted to the building façade below the retail canopy. Tenants will have a choice between individual letters or a panel sign. Based on information from the property owner, the entire upper floors of Building A (office building) will be occupied by a single office tenant; similarly, the upper floors of Building C (the hotel building) are planned to be occupied by a single hotel operator or tenant. Identification signs for the hotel and for the residential use (i.e. "Ivy Residences") will be uniquely designed and placed, rather than following the location, size, and design standards of the ground floor tenants. For example, for Building A (office building), the office tenant is proposed to be allowed two (2) ceiling-suspended individual channel letter signs on the fifth floor and one (1) individual letter sign at the ground floor main entry along the Venice façade, as well as one (1) ceiling-suspended individual channel letter sign at the ground floor main entry facing the internal courtyard. For Building B, "Ivy Residences" is proposed to be allowed one (1) small wall-mounted individual channel letter sign at the ground floor lobby facing the southerly open area abutting the Expo Line. For Building C, the hotel tenant is proposed to be allowed one (1) projecting blade panel sign with push-through letters on the fifth/fourth floor of the Washington/National Boulevard corner of the building, and one (1) small wall-mounted metal (gold/brass finish) panel sign with dimensional letters on the east wall at the Washington Boulevard driveway entry.

Project Identification Signs: include a mix of building-mounted and freestanding signs. The Applicant developed the design, color, and material palette for these signs in consideration of the project branding and proximity to public transit abutting the site. The result is the use of curvilinear shapes and line work that mimics the Metro transit map imagery, and a mix of neutral colors, including metallics, with limited use of brighter colors at key locations. Within this context, Project Identification Signs also vary in their design and location and include: freestanding signs along Venice Boulevard (City of Los Angeles) with room for a limited number of tenant identification; and two (2) wall-mounted projecting blade signs at Building B (office building) facing the Expo Line.

Wayfinding Signs: (vehicular and pedestrian) include façade-mounted signs (wall and projecting) identifying parking areas, as well as freestanding signs. The wall-mounted signs vary in size and design and include a parking blade sign on the National Boulevard façade. The freestanding signs generally follow two styles. One style is a block design incorporating the project identification logo and displaying parking information (e.g. stall availability) and directional arrows to various buildings and amenities within the project (e.g. hotel, office, etc.); this includes a digital sign within the courtyard with directory information. The second style is a thin linear style that mirrors the lines shown on Metro transit maps.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the proposed Ivy Station Master Sign Program Design Concept and provide input, as necessary, for the final MSP which is to be approved administratively by the Community Development Director.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Master Sign Program Design Concept Package