



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council
Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Staff Report

File #: 22-437, **Version:** 2

Item #: PH-1.

PC - PUBLIC HEARING: Consideration of a Site Plan Review Modification to allow Relocation of an Existing Emergency Room at Southern California Hospital at 3828 Delmas Terrace (Project).

Meeting Date: November 10, 2021

Contact Person/Dept: Jose Mendivil, Associate Planner
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Phone Number: 310-253-5757 / 310-253-5706

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☒ **Action Item:** ☐ **Attachments:** ☒

City Council Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒ **Date:** N/A

Public Notification:(E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - Planning Commission (11/04/21); (Posted) City Website (10/20/21); (Mailed) Property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius (10/20/21); (Sign Posted) at Project Site (10/20/21).

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (11/01/21)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt a resolution adopting a Categorical Exemption, and approving Site Plan Review Modification P2021-0112-SPR/M, subject to conditions of approval and applicable code requirements, to allow relocation of an existing Emergency Room Department.

PROCEDURES

1. Chair calls on staff for a brief staff report and the Planning Commission poses questions to staff as desired.
2. Chair opens the public hearing, providing the applicant the first opportunity to speak, followed by the general public.
3. Chair seeks a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.
4. Planning Commission discusses the matter and arrives at its decision.

BACKGROUND

Request

The request involves relocation of the existing emergency department at Southern California Hospital at Culver ("Hospital" or "Applicant"). See the Project Summary (Attachment No. 3) and the Preliminary Development Plans (Attachment No. 4) for a synopsis of the Project details and plan lay out.

Existing Conditions

The Project site is located mid-block on the West side of Delmas Terrace between Venice and Washington Boulevards (see the Vicinity Map - Attachment No. 2) and is part of the larger hospital campus. The overall hospital campus address is 3828 Delmas Terrace, and the existing emergency department is located at 3847 Delmas Terrace with the proposed relocation at 3828 Hughes Avenue (Project Site) directly north of the existing emergency department. The hospital campus occupies both sides of Delmas Terrace and is developed with full-service hospital buildings and associated parking lots. The Project Site currently contains outpatient medical services and laboratory examination rooms.

Surrounding Area/General Plan/Zoning

In the immediate vicinity of the Project site there are a mix of medical office and hospital services and the greater Downtown Culver City area includes office, retail, and restaurant uses. The City's General Plan Land Use Element designates the site as Institutional, and it is zoned Commercial General (CG). Table 1 lists surrounding zoning and land uses.

Table 1: Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

Location	Zoning	Land Use
North	City of Los Angeles MU(EC) – Commercial Mixed Use	Medical Offices/Surface Parking
West	City of Los Angeles CR-1 Limited Commercial	Medical Offices/Structure Parking
South	Commercial General (CG) and Commercial Downtown (CD)	Surface Parking and Bank
East	Commercial General (CG)	Hospital Building

Project Description

The Project includes the relocation of the existing Emergency Room Department from within the existing tower building on the West side of Delmas Terrace to an existing seismically compliant one-story structure north of the existing location (on the same property and side of the street). Outpatient services and laboratory rooms in the one-story building will be repurposed for full emergency services requiring interior demolition and tenant

improvements. Additionally, the Project proposes demolition of 4,200 square feet of existing floor space in the one-story building to accommodate exterior ambulance and private automobile drop-off areas and parking. The remodeled structure will result in a building height of 15 feet 6 inches with an additional 2 feet of architectural projection. Pedestrians and automobiles will access the site from a new driveway off Delmas Terrace with nine new parking spaces for automobiles and three ambulances drop-off spaces. The parking and patient drop-off areas will be located directly north of the Emergency Room Department.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:

Southern California Hospital at Culver (known as Brotman at that time) was developed pursuant to Site Plan Review, PL-683 in 1968, and the proposed modification to the Site Plan Review is presented to the Planning Commission for determination.

Architectural Design and Neighborhood Compatibility

The Emergency Department structure will be clad in prefinished grey metal panels and includes a decorative blue metal screen on the top and southeastern side of the building. These finishes will create breaks and variety in the façade to minimize blank stucco walls. The reduction in floor area and exterior landscaping along the edges of the Emergency Department's surface parking will further soften the single-story building massing along Delmas Terrace and help address the pedestrian scale of the street. The rear of the relocated emergency room department faces existing medical offices with frontage on Hughes Avenue. There are no proposed architectural façade changes to the rest of the single-story building in the Project.

While the proposed architectural style differs from that of the existing hospital it is complimentary to the overall campus design. The surrounding area consists of commercial uses within the Downtown area and the modern design will compliment other nearby buildings including Culver Steps, Brick and Machine, and One Culver.

Traffic, Parking, And Circulation

A Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) or Level of Service (LOS) traffic analysis are not part of the required Project review based on the Project's size and scope. However, a Queueing and Circulation Study (Attachment No. 5) was required to assess potential spillover impacts on Delmas Terrace resulting from the relocated Emergency Room Department and emergency patient drop off area. The Study demonstrates that the ambulance drop-off area can accommodate three (3) ambulances and further states the Hospital expects 17 ambulances per day with an average peak of 3.5 vehicles per hour from 3PM to 6PM. The drop off area can accommodate additional ambulances if needed, but the ability to accommodate at least three at any one time is adequate to prevent spillover onto Delmas Terrace.

The proposed private patient drop-off area (drop offs by individuals other than by ambulances) is designed to accommodate a sufficient number of on-site passenger vehicles per the Study. The Study also reported that in 2020, the Hospital averaged 53 daily passenger vehicle visits per day or 2.2 vehicles an hour. It demonstrates there is sufficient on-site lineal feet of driveway to accommodate three vehicles in the drop off area and an additional three on-site queued vehicles. The potential vehicle capacity is greater than the reported average vehicle per hour and spillover onto Delmas Terrace is not expected. In case of unexpected demand, the applicant proposes utilizing a secondary public entrance at the existing Emergency Department patient drop off that is accessed from Hughes Avenue and exits on Delmas Terrace. This secondary drop-off off can accommodate 15 vehicles and the Hospital will provide an interior pathway from this secondary patient drop off to the relocated Emergency Department.

Additional parking for the relocation is required due to an increase of eight (8) patient beds at the new Emergency Department. Hospital parking requires one (1) space per 1.5 beds and eight (8) beds results in

five (5) parking spaces. The Project provides nine (9) spaces resulting in three (3) additional spaces and includes two (2) accessible spaces. In total, the Hospital has 73 existing on-site parking spaces and an additional 189 off-site parking spaces through various off-site parking agreements (Attachment No. 7). However, the full complement of Hospital parking and related parking utilization is not under consideration in SPR P2021-0112-SPR/M and would require further analysis.

Noise

The applicant conducted a Noise Study (Attachment No. 6) that analyzed potential construction and operational noise impacts. Temporary construction noise is expected to occur throughout the Project site and associated noise levels would not occur in a fixed location for prolonged periods of time. Standard noise related conditions of approval will limit noise impacts during construction. Operational noise is expected from redirected emergency vehicle traffic and the study indicated that a noise increase above three decibels (3 dba) is considered noticeable to the human ear. The Study analyzed the modified operational noise potential impacts to sensitive land uses within the Project vicinity. The average noise level was not expected to exceed the 3 dba limit and potential noise impacts were not identified. Additionally, uses along Hughes Avenue and Dunn Drive will experience an ambulance related noise level decrease because of Emergency Room relocation and the redirected drop off area.

Landscaping and Public Right-of-Way

The partial demolition of the building to accommodate the relocated Emergency Department and new drop-off area will result in new surface parking with 973 square feet of landscape planters along the surface parking edges. The applicant provides a total number of trees more than the code standard and provides ample ground covering. Within the public right-of-way, one street tree and one streetlight will be removed to accommodate the new driveway apron. The street tree and streetlight will be replaced consistent with Public Works Engineering and Street Maintenance requirements.

Trash Removal and Loading

The existing trash enclosure at 9832 Venice Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles, adjacent to and northwest of the Project site serves the Hospital buildings on the west side of Delmas Terrace. The relocated Emergency Department will use the same trash enclosure that is serviced by the City of Los Angeles. Culver City's Environmental Programs and Operation (EPO) Division does not object to this continued refuse servicing by the City of Los Angeles. However, EPO will require that Culver City service construction related waste.

Loading facilities cannot be located at the Emergency Department parking area because parking and circulation must be reserved for ambulances and individual patient drop off vehicles. The Emergency Department will rely on the Hospital campus' existing loading and delivery services.

California Department of Healthcare Access and Information (HCAI) formally known as Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP)

Pursuant to State law, HCAI is responsible for building permit plan check review and issuance and Culver City's Building Safety Division is not involved in the on-site building code review. However, the local jurisdiction entitlement processing with Current Planning is required and work in the public right-of-way must be reviewed and approved by the City's Engineering Division.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

As part of the Project review process, one community meeting was held on September 24, 2020 via video conference consistent with the Culver City "Safer-at-Home" Public Orders. The applicant invited interested

persons to learn about the Project, provide comments and feedback, and share any concerns regarding the proposed Project. Only one question was posed from the public regarding the entitlement's timeline and there were no objections to the Project.

Comments Received During Public Comment Period

A public notice was mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius extended to end of City block on October 20, 2021. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any written public comments.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Staff and the applicant team have worked through the entitlement process to ensure the relocation of the Emergency Department and subsequent improvements do not impact adjacent uses. The proposed design of the structure improves the existing street frontage with a low level, modern structure and increases the amount of landscaping and design elements along the right of way.

Based on the proposed preliminary development plans and recommended conditions of approval, staff considers the Project: compatible with the surrounding neighborhood; adequately served by public facilities; and, consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Code, and all CCMC and State hospital requirements. Staff believes that findings for Site Plan Review Modification P2021-0122-SPR/MOD can be made as outlined in Resolution No. 2021-P013 (Attachment No. 1).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, initial review of the Project by staff established that there are no potentially significant adverse impacts on the environment and the Project has been determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15302, Class 2 - Replacement and Reconstruction of Existing Structures, because the Project involves reconstruction of a Hospital's emergency department to provide an earthquake resistant structure that will not increase the emergency department capacity by more than 50 percent.

MOTION

That the Planning Commission:

Adopt a Resolution Adopting a Categorical Exemption and Approving Site Plan Review Modification P2021-0112-SPR/M, subject to the Conditions of Approval and applicable Code Requirements as stated in Resolution No. 2021-P013.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution No. 2021-P013 and Exhibits A and B
2. Vicinity Map
3. Project Summary
4. Preliminary Development Plans dated August 13, 2021

- 5. Queueing and Circulation Study
- 6. Noise Study
- 7. Off-Site Parking Agreements