



CITY OF COVINA

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT ITEM NUMBER PH 1 NOVEMBER 8, 2016

TO: Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Brian K. Lee, Community Development Director
Nancy Fong, Planning Consultant

SUBJECT: Environmental Impact Report (EIR) with Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs and Applications for General Plan Amendment (GPA) 16-001, Covina Forward Specific Plan (SP) 16-001, Zone Change (ZCH) 16-002, Vesting Tentative Tract Map (TTM) 74512, Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-023, and Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-033 and Development Agreement (DA) 16-001. A proposed development on the 10.66 acre site (former K-Mart and an existing institutional use), consisting of a residential development of 117 townhomes on approximately 6.12 acres, a Transit Center and Park and Ride on approximately 3.07 acres and a public/civic use component on approximately 1.47 acres, for property located generally at 1162 North Citrus Avenue – APN: 8406-019-019, 8406-019-020 and 177 East Covina Boulevard – APN: 8406-019-17.

BACKGROUND

The following provides a brief background of the project from the first submittal up until the Planning Commission hearing.

- **January 19, 2016:** MLC Holdings, Inc., Foothill Transit and the City of Covina entered into a Non-Binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to propose a public/private partnership redevelopment of the former K-Mart site located at 1162 N. Citrus Avenue into a transit-oriented development project.
- **January 19, 2016:** The Covina City Council approves a Deposit Agreement between MLC Holdings, Inc., Foothill Transit and the City of Covina to jointly share costs incurred by the City during the due diligence portion of the project entitlement process.
- **February 16, 2016:** City Council Study Session.
- **May 11, 2016:** Notice of Preparation of the project Environmental Impact Report.

- *July 19, 2016*: City Council Study Session.
- *September 10, 2016*: Community Meeting held at the project site.
- *September 13, 2016*: Planning Commission Study Session.
- *September 13, 2016*: Start of the 45-day EIR public comment period.
- *October 27, 2016*: End of the 45-day public comment period for the project EIR.

PROJECT HISTORY

The proposed project commenced in the late summer of 2015 when MLC Holdings, Inc. approached City staff with a proposal to redevelop the former K-Mart site into a residential development. Over the following several months, discussions with MLC commenced as to what would be the appropriate future land use for the project site, numerous economic discussions on the viability of traditional commercial uses at the project site and potential development scenarios that would provide the best overall outcome for the entire City of Covina. In approximately the same time period, discussions with Foothill Transit were occurring regarding their need to provide adequate transit service to their existing customers in the Covina area. In January 2016, commencing with the approval by the City Council of the Non-Binding Memorandum of Understanding and the Deposit Agreement, discussion with MLC Holdings, Inc. and Foothill Transit on the formal development concept.

As multiple discussions were occurring with MLC Holdings, Inc. and Foothill Transit, visioning for future and changing needs of the Covina community were being discussed. It was concluded that a pragmatic approach to the former K-Mart property that took into account the realistic economic viability of a traditional commercial-retail reuse of the property along with addressing the future needs of the Covina community was prudent. The project as presented began to take shape when negotiations with MLC Holdings, Inc., Foothill Transit and the City of Covina on a public/private partnership that became memorialized in the Non-Binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) adopted in January 2016.

The resulting land use vision was the repurpose of the former K-Mart property into a transit-oriented mixed use project that would include a residential component, a transit component and a civic component that the City would utilize for a future public event center and/or a business innovation center. Because the aforementioned project is unique, there is no existing City zoning category that would accommodate the project vision. Therefore, a specific plan would need to be created.

The proposed project includes a series of land use entitlements that would facilitate the redevelopment and reuse of the former K-Mart property, and the adjoining institutional/former daycare property into an innovative reuse of a visually prominent property located within the interior of the City of Covina.

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The project site comprises three (3) properties owned by two (2) separate parties. All the properties are under contract with MLC Holdings, Inc. and are subject to the provisions of the Non-Binding MOU, the proposed Development Agreement and the proposed land use entitlements. The total project site is 10.66 acres in size. The existing institutional use/former daycare property is 10,865 square feet in size. The former K-Mart property comprises the remainder of the 10.66 acre project site. Since the former K-Mart store ceased operation in December 2014, no subsequent commercial retail use has occupied the building (Note: an automotive repair use utilized the former K-Mart's automobile service facility until late 2015). Access to the project site is provided via driveways located along North Citrus Avenue and East Covina Boulevard.

To the north of the project site is an existing approximate 6.20 acre multiple-family residential townhouse development. Immediately to the east is an existing low density single family detached residential neighborhood. To the south of the project site is an existing approximate 4.14 acre neighborhood commercial shopping center and an approximate 3.08 acre multiple-family apartment complex. To the west of the project site, across Citrus Avenue is an existing low density single family detached residential neighborhood. It should be noted the approximate 21,719 square foot commercial property located on the "hard corner" of Citrus Avenue and Covina Boulevard is not part of the proposed project.

The following table provides the General Plan designation, Zoning and existing uses for the site and surrounding areas.

Table 1: Site and Surrounding Land Uses

	General Plan	Zoning	Existing Uses
Site	GC General Commercial	C-3A Commercial – Regional or Community Shopping Center and C-R Commercial Recreation	Under contract with MLC Holdings, Inc.
North	Medium Density Residential	RD (Multiple Family Residential)	Multiple family residential
South	GC General Commercial and RD (Multiple Family Residential)	C-2 Neighborhood Shopping Center and R-1-7500 (Single Family Residential)	Commercial shopping center and multiple family residential
East	Low Density Residential	R-1-7500 (Single Family Residential)	Single-family homes
West	Low Density Residential	R-1-7500 (Single Family Residential)	Single-family homes

ANALYSIS

A. Project Description:

The complete and detailed project description is provided in the proposed Covina Forward Specific Plan (“Specific Plan”) which is attached as Exhibit 1. The Specific Plan document contains the following:

Chapter I. Introduction and Purpose of Specific Plan. This chapter describes the purpose of the Specific Plan; content, chapters, and components of the Specific Plan; and the Specific Plan’s relationship to the City’s General Plan.

Chapter II. Description of Specific Plan Area. This chapter describes the Specific Plan area, including existing conditions; onsite structures, buildings, and uses; and the underlying General Plan and Zoning designations.

Chapter III. Description of Specific Plan Area. This chapter describes the proposed project, including development concepts and intended land uses; conceptual development plans; and required conceptual utilities and services.

Chapter IV. Allowable Uses. This chapter describes those uses permitted within the Specific Plan area.

Chapter V. Development Standards. This chapter provides development standards to regulate future redevelopment and design within the Specific Plan area.

Chapter VI. Design Guidelines. This chapter provides guidelines and direction on how future development should be designed, including architectural theme; building elevations and facades; 360-degree architecture; site planning and building orientation; quality of materials and colors; landscaping theme; wall and fences; signage theme; parking facility/lot layout; vehicular access and circulation; integration of pedestrian-level elements, etc.

Chapter VII. Administration and Implementation. This chapter explains how future development within the Specific Plan area will be reviewed and approved.

Chapter VIII. Attachments. This chapter will provide relevant exhibits and illustrations to the Specific Plan.

B. General Plan Amendment:

The proposed project includes the request for a General Plan Amendment from the site's current designation of GC – General Commercial into two (2) General Plan designations. The portion of the Specific Plan area (or project site) that contains the public uses (the Transit Center and the civic component) will remain as GC – General Commercial. The northerly portion of the Specific Plan area, or project site, designated for the residential component will change to High Density Residential (15 – 22 dwelling units/acre). Institutional and public uses are allowed within the GC – General Commercial land use designation. Therefore, no alteration to the existing General Plan land use designation is necessary for the portion of the Specific Plan area, or project site, proposed for the Transit Center and the civic component. The proposed High Density Residential land use designation will provide a logical transition along Citrus Avenue, from the current Medium Density Residential townhouse complex to the north of the Specific Plan area, to the proposed Transit Center and civic use component to the south of the proposed residential component of the Specific Plan.

Typically higher building intensity is more appropriate along transit routes and arterial roads. Therefore, the High Density Residential designation serves as an appropriate buffer (transition of density) between medium-density residential area to the north and the public uses to the south. The proposed project would also contribute 117 housing units to the City's remaining unmet need for 928 housing units, reducing the unmet housing need in the City by more than 12 percent (Covina Draft Housing Element Update, dated November 15, 2010).

The southerly portion of the project site will retain the existing GC – General Commercial General Plan land use designation. Within the General Commercial land use designation, public uses, such as those proposed within the Specific Plan, are designated as compatible land use activities. Specifically, the General Plan policies the proposed project would support are presented on pages 3 – 7 of the Covina Forward Specific Plan.

C. Specific Plan:

Due to the unique nature of the proposed development project, and how there isn't an existing Covina Zoning designation that would address the mixture of proposed uses and development concept, the preparation of a Specific Plan was determined to be the best approach. The underlying concept of the project is to create a transit-oriented project with a significant public use component. Furthermore, because of the location of the project site, one-half (1/2) mile north of the Covina Metrolink station, within close proximity to downtown Covina, there is an opportunity to create a regional destination activity that would further promote Covina in the region and continue to support Covina economic development efforts.

The Specific Plan area is comprised of three (3) Planning Areas. Planning Area No. 1 is located within the northerly portion of the Specific Plan area and is approximately 6.12 acres in size. Planning Area No. 2 occupies a central location within the interior of the Specific Plan area and is approximately 3.07 acres in size. Planning Area No. 3 is located in the most southerly portion of the Specific Plan area, immediately adjacent to Covina Boulevard, and is approximately 1.47 acres in size.

The Specific Plan area is intended for development of a transit-oriented mixed use development that includes a civic/community use component. For purposes of this Specific Plan, the land use designation for the residential component in Planning Area No. 1 will be amended to High Density Residential and will remain as General Commercial for the Transit Center and Civic/Community components in Planning Area Nos. 2 and 3. Accordingly, the intent of this Specific Plan is to provide for the orderly redevelopment of a vacant, prominent disused commercial property within the City in a manner that addresses the community's needs for transit-oriented residential development, regional transportation facilities and civic/community facilities. This Specific Plan also provides additional development and design standards and guidelines, which will ensure that each future component of the Specific Plan area are creatively and sensitively site planned and developed with high quality architectural treatments and features, site amenities and infrastructure. This Specific Plan will therefore establish the Specific Plan area as a landmark regional destination and location within the City and will improve the overall economic vitality within the Specific Plan area, surrounding areas, and the entire City.

D. Zone Change:

The proposed zone change will implement the Specific Plan and be consistent with the proposed General Plan land use designation. The portion of the project site that comprises Planning Area No. 1 (Residential Component) of the Specific Plan is proposed to have a General Plan land use designation of High Density Residential. Therefore, the proposed zoning designation for this portion of the project site is proposed to be Covina Forward Specific Plan – Residential, Multiple Family, or CFSP – RD (MF). The southerly portion of the project site comprises the public use features consisting of the Transit Component and the Civic Component, or Planning Area Nos 2 and 3 of the Specific Plan. This portion of the project site, the General Plan land use designation remains GC – General Commercial, but the proposed zoning designation for this portion of the project site is Covina Forward Specific Plan – Institutional Uses, or CFSP – I.

The list of allowable uses and those allowed with the approval of a Conditional Use permit is specified in the Covina Forward Specific Plan document attached as Exhibit 1.

E. Vesting Tentative Tract Map:

The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map will create a total of thirty-five (35) parcels within the project boundaries. Currently, the project area consists of three (3) parcels; two (2) comprising the former K-Mart properties and the third the institutional/daycare property. The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map will result in the following:

- Elimination of the existing three (3) parcels comprising the project area;
- The creation of a total of twenty-three (23) numbered parcels and twelve (12) letter parcels as follows:
 - ✓ Residential Component (Specific Plan Planning Area No. 1): twenty-one (21) numbered lots and twelve (12) letter-lots;
 - ✓ Transit Component (Specific Plan Planning Area No. 2): one (1) numbered lot; and,
 - ✓ Civic Component (Specific Plan Planning Area No. 3): one (1) numbered lot – (includes the parcel for the “park area” and the second parcel for the “public benefit” to be conveyed to the City pursuant to the Development Agreement).

The proposed 117 residential townhomes will be spread within the twenty-one (21) numbered lots and the residential community’s common area comprising the community area, driveways and pedestrian paths will form the twelve (12) lettered lots.

F. Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-023: (Residential Component)

SPR 16-023 comprises the Residential Component. This Site Plan Review is the development plan for the Residential Component and provides for the development of 117 transit-oriented residential townhomes within the 6.12 acre portion of the project site that is designated as Planning Area No. 1 within the Covina Forward Specific Plan. The Residential Component will have a single primary access from Citrus Avenue, with a secondary emergency vehicle access-only along the northerly boundary line of Planning Area No. 1 and the overall Specific Plan.

In addition to the primary vehicular access and the secondary emergency vehicle-only access from Citrus Avenue, there will be multiple pedestrian access points along the southerly boundary line of Planning Area No. 1, which is the shared boundary line between Planning Area Nos. 1 and 2. The pedestrian access points will allow residents of the Residential Component direct access to the Transit Center immediately south of Planning Area No. 1.

The Residential Component site plan provides for a 44 foot setback along the northerly boundary of Planning Area No. 1, a minimum 16 foot front setback along the Citrus Avenue frontage, a 15 foot setback along the easterly Planning Area No. 1 boundary and a 10 foot setback along the southerly, shared boundary between Planning Area Nos 1 and 2. The site plan for Residential Component is presented as an exhibit in the Covina Forward Specific Plan.

G. Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-033: (Transit Component)

SPR 16-033 comprises the Transit Component, which is also Planning Area No. 2 within the Covina Forward Specific Plan. As currently proposed pursuant to modifications made after community input, the Park and Ride parking structure will accommodate 372 vehicle parking spaces. The location of the parking structure will be setback approximately 58 feet from the easterly property line, a setback increase of approximately 28 feet from where the parking structure was originally proposed to be located.

In addition to the parking structure, the Transit Component includes a Transit Center comprising six (6) bus stops, a public plaza and a 4,000 – 4,500 square foot retail building. Ingress/egress vehicle access to the Transit Component will be available only from Citrus Avenue. Foothill Transit buses will ingress into the Transit Center only from Citrus Avenue, and egress from the Transit Center only onto Covina Boulevard. The buses will exiting only onto Covina Boulevard will only turn right to travel westbound on Covina Boulevard after exiting. No left turns will be allowed. There will be no public ingress into the Transit Component from Covina Boulevard.

In addition to the vehicular access, there will be multiple locations for pedestrian access from the Residential Component to the north of the Transit Component. The purpose of the pedestrian access link is to strengthen and encourage the residents of the Residential Component to utilize the transportation services provided by Foothill Transit.

H. Development Agreement:

The Development Agreement is essentially a contract between MLC Holdings, Inc., the entity that has the project site under contract, and the City of Covina. The Development Agreement stipulates the public benefit resulting from the project, as well as conveying the expectations and responsibilities of both MLC Holdings, Inc. and the City of Covina. In addition to the land use, economic development and aesthetic improvements of the project, the public benefit the City of Covina receives will be 1.47 acres of property, which comprises Planning Area No. 3 within the Covina Forward Specific Plan.

I. Site Characteristics:

The approximately 10.66 acre Specific Plan area is located northeast of the Citrus Avenue and Covina Boulevard intersection. Citrus Avenue abuts the Specific Plan area to the west, Covina Boulevard to the south, a residential townhouse development to the north, and a single-family residential neighborhood to the east. The project location consists of a former K-Mart store and

parking lot and an existing religious use on a separate parcel located at the southeast of the project site. The former K-Mart structure is a masonry block “big box” store building of approximately 88,500 square feet in size. The building was constructed in 1968. The second property contains a former residential structure that was converted to a day care facility and subsequently an institutional use. The building is approximately 2,186 square feet in floor area.

In addition to the existing buildings, the project site is improved with an asphalt parking lot, driveaisles, landscaped planters and similar improvements typical of a commercial retail establishment. The approximate 21,719 square foot commercial property located on the “hard corner” of Citrus Avenue and Covina Boulevard is not included in the proposed project or Specific Plan.

J. Community Outreach and Input:

A critical component to the development of this Specific Plan has been public outreach and sincere dialog with the community. To that extent, the project proponents have developed a robust community outreach and input effort as part of the Specific Plan’s entitlement process. It is estimated that over 500 residents and interested community members reached in the community outreach and input effort. It is important to note that residents were provided with contact information for outreach representatives, as accessibility was an important component of the outreach strategy. The community outreach and input effort has basically consisted of the following efforts:

- **Public Workshops.**

The public workshops consisted of two (2) City Council Study Sessions held on February 16, 2016 and July 19, 2016; a Planning Commission Study Session held on September 13, 2016 and a community meeting at the Specific Plan area held on September 10, 2016. The September 10, 2016 community meeting was specifically geared toward the adjoining residents, with various project representatives available to provide Specific Plan information to the public and answer specific questions. The September 10, 2016 event was heavily advertised via e-mail and social media by both the outreach team and City representatives. As a result, over 60 community members met with project representatives and engaged in discussions about the Specific Plan, sharing both concerns and praises for the Specific Plan.

- **One-on-one Resident Outreach & Engagement.**

Between the dates of April 2016 and October 2016, project representatives walked adjoining neighborhoods to the Specific Plan area and knocked door-to-door, in person to distribute Specific Plan information and solicit input. Where residents were not home or unavailable, return efforts were made; and where necessary, return visits were made to residents with follow up information and updates on the Specific Plan design revisions

addressing expressed concerns. Two (2) community meetings were held on April 28, 2016 and September 7, 2016 at the Village Green Community, just south of the Specific Plan area. For those residents the outreach team was unable to connect with in-person, an invitation to participate in the September 10, 2016 community event was extended.

- **One-on-one Business Outreach & Engagement.**

Between the dates of April 2016 and October 2016, project representatives visited with the adjacent businesses to the south and southwest of the Specific Plan area. Specific Plan information was distributed and input solicited. A follow up visit occurred to provide businesses with updates on project design revisions. In addition to the adjacent businesses, other Covina businesses throughout the City were identified and engaged to further inform the larger Covina business community.

- **Civic and Community Groups.**

Presentations were scheduled between April 2016 and October 2016 with various civic and community groups to further discuss the Specific Plan. A combination of large group presentations and one-on-one meetings with organization representatives occurred. This included the Covina Chamber of Commerce, Covina Rotary Club, Sunrise Rotary Club, Downtown Covina Merchants Association and the Covina Lions Club.

- **Public and Quasi-public Agencies.**

In an effort to reach largest possible pool of groups and individuals, outreach was conducted to interested public agencies and quasi-public agencies. Examples of this outreach to public and quasi-public agencies include the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Planning Technical Advisory Committee (SGCOG), Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (LA Metro), Citrus Valley Health Partners, Mt. San Antonio College and Covina Valley Unified School District.

- **Print and Electronic Media.**

A wide range of print and electronic media was included in this outreach effort. This included Specific Plan flyers, public notices and FAQ brochures. A Specific Plan website was also created and was prominently featured on all print material. This website was consistently updated as the project design evolved, based on community input.

The public outreach efforts have helped transform the project design to the ultimate version. Feedback garnered from the community, particularly from the adjacent residents, has influenced the site design and has addressed various concerns expressed by the community. Issues relating to privacy, public safety and parking have been specifically addressed through this engagement process.

DISCUSSION OF PROJECT ISSUES

Pursuant to the public outreach efforts and Planning Commission and City Council study sessions, several design and project issues were raised. As a result of those raised concerns, project design revisions and other adjustments have been incorporated into the Specific Plan and the correlating Site Plan Review for the Residential Component and the Transit Component.

A. Transit Component.

Concerns expressed regarding the design of the Transit Center and Park and Ride facility have primarily focused on the following design and operational features:

- **Easterly setback of the parking structure.**

Originally proposed, the easterly setback dimension of the Park and Ride parking structure was located approximately thirty (30) feet from the easterly property line (the shared property line with the single family residences to the east of the project site). The residents adjoining the portion of the project site adjacent to the parking structure were concerned that the proposed distance of the parking structure was too close to the easterly property line.

The design of the parking structure has been modified to reduce the number of parking spaces from 450 to 372, thus the size of the parking structure was reduced. In addition, the location of the parking structure footprint was moved westerly where the new setback is approximately fifty-eight (58) feet from the easterly property line. The result is the parking structure's easterly elevation will be in the same location as the existing former K-Mart building's easterly wall. Therefore, the distance between the easterly property line and the parking structure has been increased by twenty-eight (28) feet from what was originally proposed.

- **Visual screening/privacy for the single family residences to the east of the parking structure.**

The residents adjacent to the eastern perimeter of the parking structure expressed another concern relating to the potential viewshed impacts from Foothill Transit patrons parking on the second and third levels of the structure. Residents expressed apprehension with the open parking structure design, as it provided commuters with a direct view into their residences. In addition to project revisions that increased the parking structure setback from thirty (30) feet to approximately fifty-eight (58) feet, the design will also include a solid concrete wall that will be built along the easterly elevation of the parking structure, on the second and third levels. Additional height was also added to the original proposed wall at the top level, from a three (3) foot parapet to a 6 feet, 6 inches solid concrete wall. The result will be that patrons parking on the top and middle deck will not have a view to the east, towards the adjacent single family residences.

In addition to the concrete screen wall, the increased setback between the easterly property line and the parking structure will allow for increased landscape planting of evergreen trees to further reduce potential visual impacts. The evergreen trees within this increased buffer zone will be configured in a “triangle style”, where there will essentially be a double row of evergreen trees, creating a more robust tree buffer.

The original parking structure design was to incorporate a “green wall” design feature, where climbing vine plant material will grow upwards along screen mesh material attached to the facades of the parking structure. The “green wall” design feature continues to be proposed. The combination of (1) the increased setback and landscaped buffer of the parking structure; (2) the solid concrete wall on the second level along the eastern elevation; (3) the addition of the 6 foot, 6 inch concrete screen wall along the easterly edge of the top deck of the structure and (4) the originally proposed “green wall” design feature will mitigate potential visual and privacy concerns of the easterly single family residences.

- **The buffer along easterly bus exit driveway onto Covina Boulevard.**

Adjoining residents expressed concern about the close proximity of the bus exit driveway along the eastern property line in relation to the common property line. The setback dimension originally proposed was five (5) feet. The originally proposed five (5) foot setback along the easterly property line would incorporate a landscape buffer. The revised design would increase the landscape buffer setback to twenty (20) feet. The fifteen (15) foot increase in landscape buffer would provide increased space to create the “triangle” evergreen tree planting arrangement proposed in the parking structure landscape buffer.

- **Public safety within the Transit Center.**

One of the concerns consistently expressed was public safety. The primary public safety feature proposed to be utilized within the Transit Center and parking structure will be the Covina Police Department’s real-time surveillance camera system. Currently, Covina Police utilizes the real-time surveillance camera system within the downtown area, City Hall, Heritage Park and Cougar Park. The benefit of the surveillance camera system is that it is monitored 24/7 by Covina Police Department personnel. The Police Dispatcher and Watch Commander both have a real-time video feed at their respective work stations. Suspicious activities that are observed by the Police Dispatcher and/or Watch Commander can immediately be addressed by directing Covina Police to the potential issue. The real-time surveillance camera system has been extremely effective in reducing public safety issues within the downtown area, City Hall, Heritage Park and Cougar Park.

In addition to the installation of the real-time camera surveillance system, the Transit Center will have a dedicated parking space for Covina Police Department vehicles. Covina Police out on patrol in the community will be able to always have an accessible location to park their police vehicle at the Transit Center.

- **Operational concerns with the bus operations.**

Residents also expressed concern regarding potential operational impacts associated with the Transit Center and Park and Ride facility. One misconception shared by residents concern was that the Transit Center was comparable to a bus depot, a place where buses are sheltered and where bus service is provided 24/7. On the contrary, the proposed Transit Center will provide Foothill Transit Commuter Express service to downtown Los Angeles. The patrons of this service are existing residents within the Covina community who currently park on city streets and private parking areas to use the existing Foothill Transit commuter bus service.

Foothill Transit's Commuter Express will service the proposed Transit Center between 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. every 30 minutes, Monday through Friday only. Commuter Express service will not operate on weekends or holidays. Approximately 6 to 8 Commuter Express buses will travel to the Transit Center in the morning and 6 to 8 buses in the afternoon hours.

It should be noted, the existing Foothill Transit local line 281, which currently operates and stops on the corner of Citrus Avenue and Covina Boulevard, will continue to operate Monday through Friday between 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., every 30 minutes. On weekends and holidays, Line 281 will operate from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. every 60 minutes. When Foothill Transit buses are not operating, there will be minimal activity at the Transit Center. There will be no late night operations and weekend service for the local bus line will be very limited.

Another concern expressed was the potential noise and emissions of the Foothill Transit bus fleet. Currently, all Foothill Transit buses are either CNG or electric powered bus vehicles. Foothill Transit does not operate any gasoline or diesel-powered buses. In addition, Foothill Transit has a goal to transition their entire bus fleet to 100% electric powered by 2030. Therefore, noise and emissions concerns typically associated with conventional gasoline or diesel-powered buses will not be a factor at the Foothill Transit facility.

B. Residential Component.

Concerns expressed regarding the design of the Residential Component have primarily focused on the following design features:

- **Access through the Residential Component to the single family residences to the east.**

One of the concerns expressed by the residents in the single family residential properties to the east of the Residential Component the trespasser access from the former K-Mart property into the private residences. Trespassers have continually climbed the existing retaining wall on the common property line. When the Residential Component is constructed, this problem will be mitigated, as the ability to “cut through” the neighboring single family properties to the east will be eliminated.

- **Privacy concerns of the single family residences to the east of the residential component.**

As with privacy concerns expressed by the residents adjoining the Transit Component, the proposed Residential Component design has been sensitive to potential privacy impacts. The proposed residential site plan has a landscaped setback along the easterly property line of fifteen (15) feet or more, which will be landscaped with evergreen trees and shrubs. Only four (4) residential units will be placed along the setback and they are situated as “side on”, where the side elevation and secondary windows will be oriented towards the easterly property line (as opposed to the front of the townhomes). The result is to minimize the number of windows that will be located facing the easterly property line. Furthermore, the units (and windows) along the easterly landscaped setback will be screened with landscaping and evergreen trees to maintain and enhance privacy for both the existing single family residences to the east and the future townhouse owners in the Residential Component.

The Residential Component also features a community recreation area along the easterly setback. A single story pool building with restrooms, showers and storage has been located adjacent to the easterly property line to minimize noise and provide a buffer from the swimming pool, open space patio, landscaping and bar-b-que area. The anticipated use of the community recreation area will be typical of residential backyard activity, which is compatible with the adjoining single family residences and rules and regulations within the community’s CC&R’s regarding the use of the community area; this will be managed by the Homeowner’s Association and property management company.

- **Adequate on-site parking.**

Each residential unit will have two (2) enclosed garage parking spaces. In addition to the two (2) enclosed parking spaces per unit, the Residential Component will provide 69 on site guest parking spaces distributed throughout the community. Along the Citrus Avenue frontage, on-street parking will be available to accommodate approximately ten (10) vehicles. The ratio of guest parking space per dwelling unit is .58. If Citrus Avenue on-street parking is considered, then the ratio of available guest parking rises to .67 spaces per dwelling unit.

In addition to the vehicle parking, each residential unit is required to provide accommodations inside the garage for two (2) bicycles, such as hanging racks or wall racks. When considered with the adjoining Transit Component and Civic Components, there is potential access to 112 public parking spaces on the Civic Component and when available, 375 parking spaces within the Park and Ride parking structure. Thus, when included with the sixty-nine (69) on-site guest parking spaces, the ten (10) parking spaces on Citrus Avenue and the potentially available 487 parking spaces within the Transit Component and Civic Component, 566 parking spaces are either on-site or within immediate proximity of the Residential Component.

It should be noted the intent of the proposed project is a transit-oriented development, where the Residential Component will have direct pedestrian access to the Transit Component and nearby Covina Metrolink station. The marketing of the Residential Component will be to attract those buyers who value the ability to live within walking distance to public transportation resources. The flexibility to commute to downtown Los Angeles and other regional employment centers via various transportation services, including the Foothill Transit Center, Metrolink and the nearby Gold Line, will be prominently featured in sales and marketing material and is expected to be strong attraction to the project.

C. Civic Component.

Concerns expressed regarding the design of the Civic Component have primarily focused on the following design features:

- Potential noise and activity impacts associated with the Event Center.

The uses envisioned for the Civic Component is a community event center and/or a business incubator/innovation center use. Other than the conceptual design, the actual design of the Civic Component has not proceeded through the Site Plan Review application process. The actual and detailed design of the Civic Component will require Site Plan Review as articulated in the Covina Forward Specific Plan. Therefore, specific design issues will be addressed as part of that formal design approval process. In addition, the on-site availability of alcohol in conjunction with banquet uses will require the approval of a conditional use permit.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE AND NOTIFICATION

The applicant was given a copy of the staff report with associated attachments, all property owners within a radius of at least 300 feet from the overall project site were mailed notices of the Planning commission public hearing on October 26, 2016, a minimum of ten (10) days before the hearing as required by law. In addition, the public hearing notice was published in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune newspaper on October 24, 2016.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Pursuant to CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, 14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15000, et seq, the City staff determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was necessary to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Project. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune on May 11, 2016 for the required 30-day review period. The Further, the NOP was posted at the Los Angeles County Registrar Office and the City of Covina City Clerk's office and was distributed to the State Clearinghouse, agencies, organizations, and interested parties. Subsequent to the EIR Notice of Preparation, a State Clearinghouse number was assigned as follows: SCH # 2016051053 - Covina Transit-Oriented Mixed-Use Development Project. Input was received during this period from public agencies and the general public regarding environmental issues and concerns related to the Project. The City received four comment letters in response to the NOP.

The City subsequently contracted for the independent preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (the "Draft EIR") for the Project, including all necessary technical studies and reports in support of the Draft EIR. In September 2016, the Draft EIR was completed for the Project. In accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, the Draft EIR fully analyzed and disclosed the Project's potential impacts on the environment, proposed mitigation measures where appropriate to reduce potentially significant impacts to the extent possible, and evaluated potential alternatives to the Project.

The Draft EIR identifies that the Project would result in no impact or less than significant impacts in the following environmental impact categories: agricultural and forestry resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. With the incorporation of mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR, the potentially significant impacts of the Project in the following categories would be reduced below a level of significance: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise. No significant and unmitigable impacts have been identified in the EIR. A Notice of Availability of the Draft EIR was published in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune on September 13, 2016 and the Draft EIR was released for a 45-day public comment period beginning on September 13, 2016 and ending on October 27, 2016. The City received five comment letters on the Draft EIR during this period.

The Project has been environmentally reviewed pursuant to the provisions of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. The Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the Draft and, in the exercise of its independent judgment, recommends that the City Council certify the EIR, make appropriate environmental findings, and adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project. The Planning Commission recommends that the mitigation measures set forth therein be made applicable to the Project. The Planning Commission further finds that substantial evidence in light of the whole record supports the conclusion, as found in the Draft EIR, that the Project will not result in any significant effect on the environment following the incorporation of mitigation. Public agencies and interested members of the public have been afforded ample notice and opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR and the Project. Therefore,

the Planning Commission finds that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Development recommends the following action to the Planning Commission:

1. Recommend to the City Council certification of the Covina Transit-Oriented Mixed-Use Development Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR) with Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs (SCH # 2016051053);
2. Recommend approval to the City Council of General Plan Amendment (GPA) 16-001;
3. Recommend approval to the City Council of Development Agreement (DA) 16-001;
4. Recommend approval to the City Council of the Covina Forward Specific Plan (SP) 16-001;
5. Recommend approval to the City Council of Zone Change (ZCH) 16-002;
6. Recommend approval to the City Council of Vesting Tentative Tract Map (TTM) 74512;
7. Recommend approval to the City Council of Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-023; and,
8. Recommend approval to the City Council of Site Plan Review (SPR) 16-033.

Prepared by:


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EXHIBITS

1. Covina Forward Specific Plan
2. Covina Forward Revenue and Cost Summary
3. PC Resolution No. 2016-029PC (EIR)
4. PC Resolution No. 2016-030PC (Project)
 - Exhibit A: (GPA) 16-001
 - Exhibit B: (SP) 16-001
 - Exhibit C: (ZCH) 16-002
 - Exhibit D: (TTM) 74512
 - Exhibit E: (SPR) 16-023
 - Exhibit F: (SPR) 16-033
 - Exhibit G: (DA) 16-001
5. Draft EIR under separate cover
6. Covina Forward project comment letters
7. Development Plan for SPR 16-023
8. Conceptual Plan for SPR 16-033