

FINDINGS

Legislative Findings / General Plan / Charter Findings

1. GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION

The Project Site is located within the Westlake Community Plan. The existing Community Plan designates the property as Highway Oriented Commercial with corresponding zones of C2, C 1, CR, RAS3, RAS4, and P. The Project Site's current zones are C2-1 and R4-1. The proposed General Plan Amendment will change the land use designation to Community Commercial with corresponding zones of C4, C2, C1, CR, RAS3, RAS4, P, and PB for both the subject Project Site and the "Add Area" (which extends to properties along both sides of Alvarado Street, between 8th Street and James M. Wood Boulevard,). Height District 2 in the C Zone allows unlimited height with a maximum FAR of 6:1.

The Project Site and "Add Area" are in an existing commercial area, a location that is able to support such developments which are in close proximity to rail and bus transit stations. It is made up of retail shops, offices, clinics, and cafés that are pedestrian oriented neighborhood and community serving uses. With approval of the proposed General Plan Amendment from Highway Oriented Commercial to Community Commercial, the Project will be consistent with the land use designation. The mix of commercial uses adjacent to multiple family residential uses give the "Add Area" a distinct identity of being a commercial corridor in proximity to MacArthur Park.

The Westlake Community Plan, last updated in 1997, considers Highway-Oriented commercial uses as drive-thru establishments, auto-repair, and other similar uses, and envisions that these uses be located away from pedestrian oriented areas. However, the built environment of the project site and surrounding properties (including the Add Area) as well as the uses present never evolved into the Highway-Oriented commercial uses identified in the Westlake Community Plan. Most of the buildings in the area are built to the property line. The Project Site and "Add Area" are within walking distance (1,500 feet) of the Metro Red and Purple Line Westlake/MacArthur Park Station. With the continuing investment in the regional and local transit infrastructure and the commitment by the City to create an environment that acknowledges all modes of transportation, the General Plan Amendment from Highway Oriented Commercial to Community Commercial is necessary and appropriate.

2. GENERAL PLAN TEXT

- a. **Westlake Community Plan:** The proposed Project is consistent with several goals, objectives, and policies of the Westlake Community Plan. The plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives and policies:

Commercial, Objective 1: *To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development in the community and to provide additional opportunities for new commercial development and services.*

The Project will develop upon an underutilized site containing a partially-vacant shopping center and will revitalize it with a new viable hotel use.

Commercial, Objective 2: *To provide a range of commercial facilities at various locations to accommodate the shopping needs of residents and to provide increased employment opportunities within the community.*

The Project will provide short- and long-term jobs, including construction, maintenance, and administrative support staff.

Commercial, Objective 3: *To improve the compatibility between commercial and residential uses.*

The proposed hotel with a first floor restaurant is compatible with the existing commercial and multiple-family residential development in the area. The existing nearby commercial uses will provide easy access to amenities and services for hotel guests, while the proposed restaurant will be a new amenity for the hotel guests and local residents. The pedestrian friendly architectural design will enhance the streetscape of James M. Wood Boulevard and Westlake Avenue.

Commercial, Policy 1: *That commercial facilities be located on existing traffic arteries and commercial corridors.*

The development is comprised of a hotel use, is essentially a "hybrid" between residential and commercial uses, and a restaurant commercial use. The development proposed is located along James M. Wood Boulevard, which is a commercial corridor improved with a church just east of the Project Site and a clothing store to the west and a restaurant and hotel to the south.

Commercial, Policy 7: *That new commercial development be oriented so as to facilitate pedestrian access by locating parking to the rear of structures.*

With the exception of a few spaces for loading/un-loading and compliance with ADA, the majority of the hotel's parking is located in two basement levels.

Commercial, Policy 8: *That adequate parking be provided for all types of retail and office commercial development, and that all parking areas adjacent to residential lands be appropriately buffered by a wall and/or landscaped setback.*

The Project's parking is provided as required by the LAMC. The majority of the hotel's parking is buffered from residential uses and pedestrians, as it is located in two basement levels.

- b. **Framework Land Use Chapter:** The Framework Element's Land Use chapter seeks to support the viability of the City's residential neighborhoods and commercial districts while encouraging sustainable growth in commercial districts.

The General Plan Framework seeks to "reinforce existing and encourage new community centers, which accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of adjacent residents, promote neighborhood and community activity, are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and are developed to be desirable places in which to live, work and visit, both in daytime and nighttime." The corresponding zones for the Community Commercial (referred to as Community Centers in the Framework) land use designation are CR, C4, and [Q]C2. The General Plan Framework defines Community Centers as "intended to be identifiable focal points and activity centers for surrounding groups of residential neighborhoods ... and contain a diversity of uses such as small offices, overnight accommodations, cultural and entertainment facilities, schools and libraries in addition to neighborhood-oriented uses."

The General Plan Framework identifies two types of Commercial Centers: 1) A multiuse, nonresidential center that encourages the development of professional offices, hotels, cultural and entertainment facilities, in addition to the neighborhood-oriented uses; and, 2) A mixed-use center that encourages the development of housing in concert with the multi-use commercial uses.

The Project supports and is generally consistent with the General Plan Framework Land Use Chapter, and it will contribute an amenity to the residents, employees, and visitors of Los Angeles in general, and the Westlake community in particular. Specifically, the Project will comply with the goals, objectives and policies for the Community Center land use designation, set forth in the General Plan Framework Land Use Chapter:

Goal 3: Pedestrian-oriented, high activity, multi- and mixed-use centers that support and provide identity for Los Angeles' communities.

Objective 3.9: Reinforce existing and encourage new community centers, which accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of adjacent residents, promote neighborhood and community activity, are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and are developed to be desirable places in which to live, work and visit, both in daytime and nighttime.

Policy 3.9.1: Accommodate the development of community-serving commercial uses and services and residential dwelling units in areas designated as "Community Center" in accordance with Tables 3-1 and 3-5.

The Community Center land use designation is a focal point for surrounding residential neighborhoods and contains a diversity of uses, Community Centers generally range from floor area ratios of 1.5:1 to 3.0:1, characterized by two- to six-story buildings, e.g., some will be two-story Centers, some four- or six-story Centers depending on the character of the surrounding area.

Policy 3.9.6: Require that commercial and mixed-use buildings located adjacent to residential zones be designed and limited in height and scale to provide a transition with these uses, where appropriate.

Policy 3.9.7: Provide for the development of public streetscape improvements, where appropriate.

The Project is consistent with the Community Centers land use designation's first typology: A multiuse, non-residential center that encourages the development of professional offices, **hotels**, cultural and entertainment facilities, in addition to the neighborhood-oriented uses. The Project is located in an area of Westlake consisting of properties with the Highway Oriented Commercial land use designation and are zoned C2-1, among a mix of Medium Residential and High Medium Residential and R3- and R4-zoned properties. The Project Site's proposed Community Commercial land use designation supports the area's diversity of uses, consistent with the Framework's characterization of Community Commercial as a focal point of activity for surrounding groups. The Project will invigorate the immediate area by replacing an obsolete shopping center and associated surface parking lot with a hotel. Approval of the Project will therefore contribute to the existing diversity of jobs and services in an urban area that is well-served by public infrastructure and transit.

- c. **Health and Wellness Element:** "Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles", the Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan, provides high-level policy vision to elevate health as a priority for the City's future growth and development. The Plan focuses on public health from the perspective of the built environment and City services. The proposed Project is consistent with the Plan's policies, as follows:

Policy 2.2: Healthy building design and construction: *Promote a healthy built environment by encouraging the design and rehabilitation of buildings and sites for healthy living and working conditions, including promoting enhanced pedestrian-oriented circulation, lighting, attractive and open stairs, healthy building materials and universal accessibility using existing tools, practices, and programs.*

Policy 3.8: *Active spaces: Support public, private, and nonprofit partners in the ongoing development new and innovative active spaces and strategies to increase the number of Angelenos who engage in physical activity across ages and level of abilities.*

Active spaces in the proposed Project include a fitness center and swimming pool. The proposed Project will comply with the state and local Green Building Codes. The project site's location, near several public transit lines, and restaurant uses at the ground level encourage pedestrian circulation in an area currently with limited pedestrian activity.

- d. **Mobility Element:** The proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change are consistent with the Mobility Plan 2035, the Mobility/Transportation Element of the General Plan, including the five goals of the plan to provide:

- i. Safety First
- ii. World Class Infrastructure
- iii. Access for All Angelenos
- iv. Collaboration, Communication and Informed Choices
- v. Clean Environments & Healthy Communities

Pursuant to Mobility Plan 2035, the designations for the Project's adjacent streets are: James M. Wood Boulevard, adjoining the project site to the south, is designated an Avenue III and has a 72-foot right-of-way; Westlake Avenue, adjoining the project site to the east, is designated a Standard Local Street with a 60-foot right-of-way. The proposed project will not impact Mobility Plan 2035 as Westlake Avenue is presently 60 feet wide while the portion of James M. Wood Blvd. that is adjoining the project site has varying widths of 78 to 80 feet. The Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering is requiring off-site improvements as part of the project's approval, including any necessary removal and reconstruction of the existing right of way improvements.

The Applicant is not requesting discretionary actions to allow relief from off-street automobile stalls and bicycle parking spaces. The project site is well-served by public transportation, including the following regional and local bus lines:

- Metro Local Line 200 runs north-south along Alvarado Street;
- Metro Local Line 66 runs east-west along 8th Street and Olympic Boulevard.
- LADOT Pico Union / Echo Park line runs in all directions but generally north-south toward Echo to the north and the Pico Union neighborhood to the south, including along Alvarado Street, Union Avenue, Westlake Avenue, Lucas Avenue and Washington Boulevard.

3. CHARTER COMPLIANCE - CITY CHARTER SECTIONS 555, 556 AND 558 (GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT)

The proposed General Plan Amendment is consistent with Charter Sections 555, 556 and 558. It sustains numerous goals, policies and objectives of the Citywide General Plan Framework and the Westlake Community Plan to provide density in commercial centers, support transit use, reduced vehicle dependency, and improve air quality. The proposed GPA will change the land use designation from Highway Oriented Commercial to Community Commercial on the land use map, promoting job and housing growth in a multi-use, non-residential center that encourages the development of professional offices, hotels, cultural and entertainment facilities, in addition to the neighborhood-oriented uses.

The Project Site and “Add Area,” which extends to properties along both sides of Alvarado Street, between 8th Street and James M. Wood Boulevard, are in an existing commercial and multiple family residential area, a location that is able to support such developments that are in close proximity to rail and bus transit stations. The recommended “Add Area” is zoned C2, and is a mix of commercial uses, in a node of urban activity. The project site and “Add Area” are located within one-half mile from the MacArthur Park Metro Red Line and Purple Line Rail Station, which is at the corner of 6th Street and Alvarado Boulevard adjacent to the popular McArthur Park. The MacArthur Park Metro Red Line station provides access to Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley, with connecting service to the Metro Orange Line (serving the west Valley and Chatsworth). The Metro Red Line and Purple Line serve Downtown, including Los Angeles Union Station, with connecting service to the Metro Gold Line (serving Azusa and East Los Angeles), Amtrak passenger rail, Metrolink commuter rail, and bus service for regional and local lines. The Metro Purple Line also serves Koreatown. The Metro Blue Line originates at the 7th Street/Metro Center station and provides access from downtown Los Angeles to downtown Long Beach, as well as connecting service to the Metro Green Line (serving Norwalk, Redondo Beach, and LAX via shuttle). Additionally, the Wilshire/Alvarado Bus Station provides access to the several Metro Bus lines that are available.

The Project Site is located within the Westlake Community Plan area, which designates the site and properties along Alvarado Street between James M Wood Boulevard and midblock between 7th and 8th Streets for Highway Oriented Commercial Land Uses. Properties located north along 7th Street up to Wilshire Boulevard are within the Community Commercial Land Use Designation. The General Plan Amendment for the Project Site to amend the land use designation from Highway Oriented Commercial to Community Commercial, is consistent with the land uses of the properties located to the north along Alvarado and 7th Streets, which includes local serving commercial uses such as local restaurants, bakeries, and retail establishments.

The Westlake Community Plan was last updated in 1997. In 2001, the City readopted the General Plan Framework, which shifted away from the use of the Highway Oriented Commercial Designation to the designations of Neighborhood or Community Commercial to describe land uses along the City’s commercial corridors. The Community Commercial Land Use Designation is a useful tool for facilitating walkable neighborhoods as the City and region have embraced a more robust public transportation system, with focused efforts on mixed-use and high density development near rail stations.

The Community Commercial Land Use Designation is a useful tool for facilitating walkable neighborhoods consistent with the region’s increasingly more robust public transportation system, including mixed-use and high density development near rail stations and bus lines.

As conditioned, the Project will be designed in harmony with the existing neighborhood and minimize impacts on neighboring properties. The Project's recommended bulk and height will be an appropriate addition to adjacent land uses. The Project will replace an underutilized shopping center and associated surface parking lot with a hotel, which is compatible with other developments and improvements in the immediate vicinity. The GPA will unify land use and zoning with adjacent and future planned land use patterns in the "Add Area." Moreover, it would allow for redevelopment of the Project Site, reflecting the typical scale envisioned by the General Plan Framework. It would also provide a hotel in the Westlake area to accommodate a growing shortage of hotel rooms and employment opportunities in the surrounding neighborhood.

Entitlement Findings

1. Zone Change Findings.

- a. Pursuant to Section 12.32 C of the Municipal Code, and based on these findings, the recommended action is deemed consistent with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

The proposed Project is a new six-story hotel comprising 100 guest rooms, approximately 10,948 square feet of office, restaurant, meeting room and support space, and two levels of basement parking. The Project includes approximately 100 vehicle parking spaces and 12 bicycle parking spaces. The Project Site is currently improved with an approximately 8,228 square-foot, single-story shopping center and related surface parking on three lots totaling approximately 22,500 square feet. The Project Site is zoned R4-1 and C2-1 and designated in the Westlake Community Plan as Highway Oriented Commercial.

The proposed Vesting Zone Change to C2-2D would lead to a development that is deemed consistent with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. The Westlake Community Plan designates the property for Highway Oriented Commercial uses, which corresponds to the C 1, C2, CR, RAS3, RAS4 and P Zones. The proposed Zone Change to C2-2D is consistent with the proposed General Plan Land Use Designation of Community Commercial, as the C2 Zone is one of the corresponding zones. For the C2 Zone, Height District No.2 allows unlimited height; however, height is effectively limited by a maximum FAR of 6:1. The proposed Project will be built to a height of approximately 82 feet and an FAR of 2.99:1. The proposed Zone Change would allow for the R4 portion of the lot to match the C2 portion.

Public Necessity, Convenience, and General Welfare. The rezoning of the site to accommodate the conditioned project will be consistent with public necessity as it will increase both job opportunities and tourism in the Westlake Community of Los Angeles. The Project site is located within an area that includes a dense collection of office buildings, hotels, stores, churches, schools and apartment buildings, as well as the MacArthur Park Metro Red Line and Purple Line Rail subway station at the corner of 6th Street and Alvarado Boulevard. The rezoning allows for the construction of commercial, residential and hotel uses. As conditioned, the design of the proposed project will enhance the neighborhood and will contribute to the Westlake Community Plan Area.

The objectives of the Westlake Community Plan include providing adequate land for strengthening existing commercial areas and designing new development to be

compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. Changing the existing zone to the (T)(Q)C2-2D Zone will allow for the development of project that complements adjacent properties and the neighborhood. Public Convenience is also served by increasing pedestrian activity and accommodating tourism, given the close proximity to downtown.

The Project reduces reliance on the car by locating a hotel use near transit access to local and regional destinations. The proposed project will be located less than a mile from an existing Metro subway station and just south of a major transportation corridor that provides substantial public transit opportunities and facilities. The site is located near many office, residential, retail and restaurant uses. These opportunities increase pedestrian activity, which in turn benefits local businesses and neighborhoods.

The proposed project will promote general welfare of the community by the following:

- Help meet local job needs.
- Enhance the sense of community in the area by providing an amenity near substantial public transit opportunities and facilities.
- Bring investment to the Westlake community.

The requested Zone Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, and is consistent with good zoning practice. It will provide for development of Project that complements both the commercial and residential character of the area. The Project's bulk and size is compatible and consistent with the dense multifamily and commercial uses in the area. The proposed Zone Change would enhance the pedestrian experience, provide new opportunities for tourism, and provide a development compatible with the surrounding area.

- b. Per LAMC Section 12.32 G.1 and 2, the current action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with new "T" and "Q" conditions of approval imposed herein for the proposed project. The "T" Conditions are necessary to ensure the identified dedications, improvements, and actions are undertaken to meet the public's needs, convenience, and general welfare served by the actions required. These actions and improvements will provide the necessary infrastructure to serve the proposed community at this site. The "Q" conditions that limits the scale and scope of future development on the site are also necessary to protect the best interests of and to assure a development more compatible with surrounding properties and the overall pattern of development in the community, to secure an appropriate development in harmony with the General Plan, and to prevent or mitigate the potential adverse environmental effects of the subject recommended action.

2. Height District Change Findings.

- a. **Pursuant to Section 12.32 of the Municipal Code, and based on these findings, the recommended action is deemed consistent with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

The proposed Height District Change from Height District 1 to Height District 2D would permit an FAR of 3:1 on the site. The proposed Height District Change will allow for the construction, use and maintenance of the proposed hotel project, which is consistent with the General Plan and serves the public necessity, convenience and general welfare and good zoning practice. The requested Height District Change

would allow for consistent scale of development throughout the Project Site. The proposed FAR would be equivalent in Floor Area Ratio allowed within the surrounding parcels with zoning designations of R3 and R4. The concurrent Height District Change to Height District No. 2D will limit development of the proposed hotel to a maximum FAR of 3:1, ensuring that bulk and scale are compatible with existing zoning and future development in the neighborhood.

3. Vesting Conditional Use Findings.

- a. That the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.**

The Applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") to allow the construction, use and maintenance of a 6-story, 100-room hotel with two levels of basement parking which is located within 500 feet of an "R" Zone. The proposed hotel would replace the current underutilized 8,228 square-foot shopping center and associated surface parking lot.

Approval of the CUP will provide a service that is essential and beneficial to the community and region. There is currently a hotel shortage in the Downtown area-particularly around the convention center. Much of the existing supply in Downtown Los Angeles is characterized by two types of hotels: very high-end and expensive or low-end. Current real estate values can make it difficult to build moderately priced hotels Downtown. Communities outside of Downtown Los Angeles that are just a short distance away, offer an alternative.

On-site amenities include a swimming pool and 250 square-foot gym on the second floor, and a 1,033 square-foot meeting room and 2,693 square-foot restaurant on the ground floor.

The use of the hotel and ground floor restaurant is compatible with the surrounding development and will serve as a source for increased employment. The hotel and restaurant will provide an additional amenity and service for those who are visiting the area and local residents. As conditioned herein, the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood and will provide an amenity and service that will be beneficial to the community.

- b. That the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety.**

Within 500 feet of the Project Site are parcels with land use designations of Medium Residential and High Medium Residential (R3 and R4 Zones) with an accompanying footnote on the Westlake Community Plan Land Use Map limiting height and FAR to Height District No.1. The surrounding parcels with zoning designations of R3 and R4 are permitted a maximum FAR of 3:1. The concurrent request for a Height District Change to Height District No. 2 will limit development of the proposed hotel to a maximum FAR of 3:1, ensuring that bulk and scale are compatible with existing and future development in the neighborhood.

Furthermore, the Project Site is located on James M. Wood Boulevard, a commercial corridor characterized at this location by a church to the east, a restaurant and hotel

to the south, and retail to the west. The 9-foot setback along the northern boundary of the Project Site and the "U"-shaped orientation of the hotel provides a buffer and reduces massing between the hotel and the existing apartment complex north of the Project Site.

- c. That the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.**

The Project Site's proposed zoning is C2-2D, which is consistent with the proposed land use designation of Community Commercial. The proposed Project substantially conforms with the general purpose and intent of the Westlake Community Plan, including;

Commercial, Objective No.1: *To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development in the community and to provide additional opportunities for new commercial development and services.*

Approval of the requested CUP will allow demolition of the existing 8,228 square-foot underutilized shopping center and allow the development of a hotel, a much-needed service that will foster tourism and create jobs for the Westlake community.

Commercial, Objective No.3: *To improve the compatibility between commercial and residential uses.*

Defined as a residential use, hotels represent a "hybrid" of residential and commercial uses, ensuring compatibility between the commercial uses surrounding its three sides and the multifamily development to the north.

Commercial, Policy No.7: *That new commercial development be oriented so as to facilitate pedestrian access by locating parking to the rear of structures.*

Except for a few parking spaces on the ground floor to facilitate loading and un-loading, the majority of the Project's parking is located in two basement levels. Vehicular access to the Project Site is limited to a single driveway located on the abutting alley. Access to the basement levels is through a two-way ramp at the rear of the property, ensuring that James M. Wood Boulevard and Westlake Avenue remain pedestrian-friendly.

Commercial, Policy No.8: *That adequate parking be provided for all types of retail and office commercial development, and that all parking areas adjacent to residential lands be appropriately buffered by a wall and/or landscaped setback.*

The proposed Project provides the Code-required vehicle parking spaces. That the majority of the Project's parking is located below ground level certainly ensures that the parking area is appropriately buffered from residential uses.

- 4. Site Plan Review Findings.** In order for the site plan review to be granted, all three of the legally mandated findings delineated in Section 16.05 F of the Los Angeles Municipal Code must be made in the affirmative:

- a. The project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.**

The proposed Project involves the demolition of an existing shopping center and associated surface parking lot and the construction of a six-story, 100-room hotel with two levels of basement parking. The building will include ancillary uses such as meeting room, office, maintenance, swimming pool, fitness center and restaurant for the hotel's guests.

The Project Site is within the Westlake Community Plan and contains dual zoning designations of R4-1 and C2-1 and a single General Plan Land Use Designation of Highway Oriented Commercial. The proposed GPA would designate the Project Site with the Community Commercial Land Use Designation with a corresponding zone of C2-2D in order to allow construction of the proposed hotel. The requested Zone and Height District Change from R4-1 and C2-1 to C2-2D is compatible with the existing development of the neighborhood, consistent with the general intent and provisions of Westlake Community Plan. The proposed 6-story building would be compatible with the surrounding 2 and 4 story buildings because proposed Project is on a corner, in node of urban activity.

Framework Element

Land Use (Framework Chapter 3)

Goal 3A (Distribution of Land Use): *A physically balanced distribution of land uses that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a health of living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more livable city.*

Objective 3.1: *Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City's existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.*

Objective 3.2: *Provide for the spatial distribution of development that promotes an improved quality of life by facilitating a reduction of vehicular trips, vehicle miles traveled, and air pollution.*

Objective 3.3: *Accommodate projected population and employment growth within the City and each community plan area and plan for the provision of adequate supporting transportation and utility infrastructure and public services.*

Objective 3.4: *Encourage new multi-family residential, retail commercial, and office development in the City's neighborhood districts, community, regional, and downtown centers as well as along primary transit corridors/boulevards, while at the same time conserving existing neighborhoods and related districts.*

Economic Development (Framework Chapter 7)

Goal 7D: *A City able to attract and maintain new land uses and businesses.*

Conformance with the Westlake Recovery Redevelopment Project Plan

The Project is consistent with the following Redevelopment Plan goals:

Goal No.1: *To promote the economic well-being of Westlake through the encouragement of the revitalization of viable commercial areas.*

Goal No.4: To enhance the safety of residents, business owners, employees and visitors and their property.

Goal No. 21: To reduce crime, the fear of crime, graffiti and vandalism in the community to enhance livability for residents and businesses and to encourage visitors.

Goal No. 26: To enhance and promote the Westlake community as a place to live, shop and work, and to create a safe 24-hour viable community.

The Project meets several objectives and goals, including promoting the economic well-being of Westlake by contributing to the revitalization of a commercial area, and locating new development near public transit, and shopping, services, and employment. The Project represents the re-development of an existing underutilized site, in an urbanized location, near a major transit corridor. A hotel at this location helps to revitalize a neighborhood, accommodate tourism, enhance business development, and promote efficient use of the land.

Commercial Citywide Design Guidelines

The City of Los Angeles' General Plan Framework Element and each of the City's 35 Community Plans promote architectural and design excellence in buildings, landscape, open space, and public space. They also stipulate that preservation of the City's character and scale, including its traditional urban design form, shall be emphasized in consideration of future development. The Citywide Design Guidelines serve to implement the Urban Design Principles, a part of the Framework Element. These principles are a statement of the City's vision for the future of Los Angeles, providing guidance for new development and encouraging projects to complement existing urban form in order to enhance the built environment. The proposed development is consistent with the following goals, objectives and policies of the Residential Citywide Design Guidelines:

Objective No. 1: Consider Neighborhood Context & Linkages in Building & Site Design

Site Planning:

Creates a strong street wall by locating building frontages at the front property line where no setback requirement exists, or at the required setback.

Provide direct paths of travel for pedestrian destinations within large developments. Especially near transit lines, create primary entrances for pedestrians that are safe, easily accessible, and a short distance from transit stops.

The project meets this guideline by bringing the building close to the property line and incorporating landscaping within the transition between the sidewalk and the private property. The main entrance is located in the middle of James M. Wood Boulevard, and a secondary entrance is located at the corner of James M. Wood Boulevard and Westlake Avenue.

Entrances

Ensure that the main entrance and entry approach can accommodate persons of all mobility levels.

The building was designed to provide multiple entry points that are accessible to persons of all mobility levels. A main entrance is located on James M. Wood Boulevard and at corner, both of which are at existing grade. The vehicular parking area also includes an entryway directly into the lobby area. The short-term bicycle parking is located on the ground level away from vehicles, with easy access to the lobby area.

Relationship to Adjacent Buildings

Ensure that new buildings are compatible in scale, massing, style, and/or architectural materials with existing structures in the surrounding neighborhood. In older neighborhoods, new developments should likewise respect the character of existing buildings with regards to height, scale, style, and architectural materials.

The new building is built to the property line at the street level, which is in keeping with most of the adjacent development. The building is 6 stories tall, whereas the tallest buildings within the vicinity is 5 stories tall. The C-zoned properties within the vicinity have no height limit. In addition, the less intense development is located between the corridors, and the proposed project is appropriate for the site as it fronts a commercial corridor.

Plant trees, shrubs, and vines to screen walls between property lines. Use decorative walls that include a change in color, material, and texture.

The project includes landscaping in the areas between the property and building lines. The project features horizontal and vertical contrasts at the base and the upper stories and utilizes a variety of materials including stucco, aluminum textured wall panels, and wood siding to create visual interest.

Objective No. 2: Employ High Quality Architecture to Define the Character of Commercial Districts

Pedestrian Scale

Differentiate the ground floor from upper floors. Changes in massing and architectural relief add visual interest and help to diminish the perceived height of buildings.

The project features a strong base that is differentiated from the upper stories. The base incorporates horizontal accents, while the upper stories include articulated masses and window fins to create verticality.

Objective 4: Minimize the Appearance of Driveways and Parking Areas

Off-Street Parking and Driveways

Place on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings so that parking does not dominate the streetscape.

Maintain continuity of the sidewalk by minimizing the number of curb cuts for driveways and utilizing alleys for access and egress. Where alleys do not exist, concentrate curb cuts at side streets or mid-block.

The project was designed to have vehicular access to the project taken from the alley to the west of the project site. The sidewalk along the property lines do not have any curb cuts, which will create a seamless walking experience.

- b. **The project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties.**

The Project will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent and neighboring properties, as described below:

Arrangement of Buildings and Structures

Arrangement of the Project's building and site features, including bulk and massing, height and setbacks, will be compatible with surrounding development. The Project comprises a six-story building with 100 guest rooms, approximately 10,948 square feet of office, restaurant, meeting room and support space on the ground floor and mezzanine that is open only to hotel guests, and two levels of basement parking, with frontage along James M. Wood Boulevard and Westlake Avenue.

In terms of bulk and massing the Project will rise as a single "U" shaped building above two levels of basement parking. The "U" shape of the building "opens" along the northern boundary of the site, breaking up the mass of the Project's northern elevation and ensuring compatibility with the adjacent multi-family building north of the Project Site.

The Project's massing is further articulated by varied architectural treatments and materials. The combination of platinum, metal fringe and lace veil cement plaster and yellow teak wood veneer, dark bronze aluminum and boat anchor metal canopies accentuate the building form while windows and doors enliven the ground floor and encourage foot traffic. The variation in colors and wall planes provide additional articulation. The canopy and signage draw attention to the main entrance to the building at James M. Wood Boulevard, ensuring compatibility with the residential neighborhood along Westlake Avenue.

In terms of height, the new zone designation does not have a height limit. The six-story Project's stair cases and elevator shafts create a varied roofline that range between 73 and 82 feet which, together with other elements of the Project's design, is compatible with the height and scale of the surrounding urban neighborhood. The proposed six story height for the Project helps provide a visual transition from the two-to four-story multifamily residential buildings surrounding the Project Site, including along adjoining Westlake Avenue and along James M. Wood Boulevard past Alvarado Street and Bonne Brae Avenue.

The Project will meet or exceed all yard setback requirements which include 0-feet required at the front yard along Westlake Avenue, 0-feet at the side yard along James M. Wood Boulevard, 0-feet rear yard along the alley adjoining the Project Site to the west and, a 9-foot side yard along the northern boundary. The 9-foot side yard-including the landscaping on the ground floor along the northern boundary provides a buffer from the adjacent multi-family building. Together with the "U" shape of the building, the setback will further contribute to compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and enhance the urban experience for pedestrians and residents.

Off-Street Parking Facilities

The Project will provide all 100 automobile parking spaces on-site. Except for a few spaces on the ground floor to accommodate loading / un-loading and in compliance with ADA regulations, most of the Project's parking spaces are contained within two basement levels. Automobile access will be limited to one driveway off the alley to the west. The proposed automobile parking spaces and restriction of vehicular access to James M. Wood Boulevard will minimize potential traffic and parking impacts on adjacent streets.

Long-term bicycle parking spaces will be secured in the subterranean parking structure. Short-term bicycle parking spaces will be located along the James M. Wood Boulevard frontage, in proximity to the main pedestrian entrance to the hotel lobby, consistent with the LAMC's bicycle parking regulations.

Loading Areas

The Project will contain one loading space and trash area that will be located on-site and will be accessible from the abutting alley on the north side of the building. It is situated to minimize visibility from surrounding properties to the greatest extent feasible and, minimize disruptions to traffic flow.

Lighting

The Project's lighting program will be compatible with surrounding development. Exterior lighting will illuminate on-site facilities in order to provide sufficient lighting for circulation and security, while minimizing impacts on adjacent properties.

Landscaping

Landscaping is incorporated into portions of the project not covered by buildings or structures, including within the side yard along the northern boundary of the Project Site and along the James M. Wood Boulevard frontage.

Trash Collection

The Project will provide adequate, on-site space for trash receptacles in order to ensure safe and efficient handling of solid waste. Trash areas will be accessible from the Project's loading area and will not be visible from the street.

- c. **Any residential project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.**

The hotel use is defined as a residential use due to the habitable rooms; however, it is not required to provide open space pursuant to LAMC Section 12.21 G as there are no dwelling units proposed. Although recreational and service amenities are not required, the Project will provide a restaurant, meeting room, swimming pool and gym, allowing guests the option to enjoy the convenience of these amenities on-site. These amenities will be limited for use by hotel patrons only. As conditioned herein, impacts will be minimized on neighboring properties.

Environmental Findings

5. **Environmental Finding.** A Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2015-2031-MND) was prepared for the proposed project. On the basis of the whole of the record before the lead agency including any comments received, the lead agency finds that, with imposition of the mitigation measures described in the MND and the Revisions and Additional Analysis dated January 10, 2018, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. The attached Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects

the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the Department of City Planning on the 13th floor of 221 N. Figueroa Street.

6. **Flood Insurance.** The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone C, areas of minimal flooding.