

Planning Commission 101:

The Nuts and Bolts of Planning



Presented by
Marc Roberts, Livermore City Manager

Cal Cities 2022: Planning Commissioners Academy | March 16, 2022

Inception of Downtown Revitalization

- Visioning 2001 - 2002
 - The City conducted a City-wide visioning effort
 - Downtown was in decline and was a focus of concern
 - Visioning call for a revitalization plan and led to a Specific Plan process
- 2003 Specific Plan Workshops
 - Community discussion on important issues for Downtown:
 - ✓ Where to concentrate growth
 - ✓ Density and height
 - ✓ Transit
 - ✓ Traffic impacts and pedestrian orientation
- 2017 Specific Plan Workshops
 - Design of 8.2 Acre Catalyst Site



Community Workshops

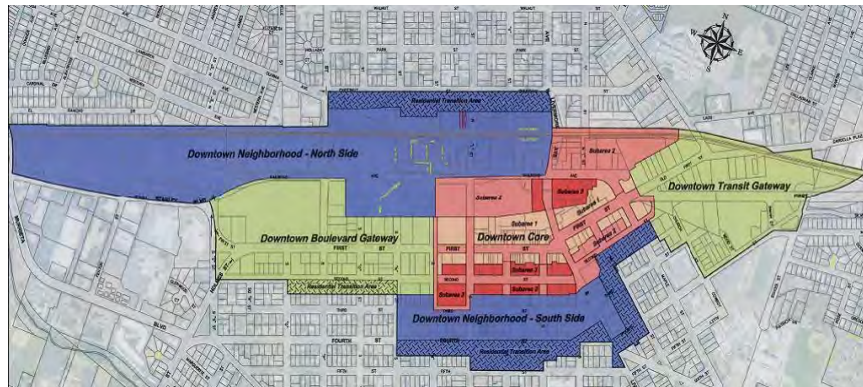


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Specific Plan Area



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Downtown Specific Plan Components

Existing Conditions:

Documents the land use pattern that existed in 2003/2004

Revitalization Strategy:

Provides a coordinated direction for all plan elements to achieve specific community objectives.

Land Use and Development Policies

Provides the regulatory framework governing development.

Development Standards:

Provides detailed regulations for site development.

Design Standards and Guidelines:

Provides specific direction on appropriate building types and principles of urban design to simplify the review process and provide greater certainty for developers.



Downtown Specific Plan Components

Circulation and Transportation:

Contains specific recommendations for First Street, new mid-block streets and alleys and other roadway improvements.

Parking:

Identifies specific parking standards for new development and provides a parking strategy to meet the overall parking demand as the Downtown redevelops.

Public Utilities and Infrastructure :

Identifies major capital improvements needed to support Downtown revitalization.

Implementation :

Lists priorities for revitalization and identifies specific areas where focused investment will provide the most benefit in achieving community objectives. It also includes specific recommendations for Catalyst Projects that are designed to “jump-start” revitalization.



Revitalization Strategy

1. Promote the concentration of activity-generating uses in a compact cluster in the center of Downtown.
2. Maximize investment in new housing construction throughout the Specific Plan Area.
3. Dramatically transform the character of the Downtown's primary pedestrian space, First Street.
4. Focus immediate attention on opportunity sites capable of delivering dramatic short-term beneficial change.
5. Maximize transit opportunities.



Role of the Planning Commission

» Approval/Amendment Process

- Review General Plan, Housing Element, and Zoning Code
- Conduct a public hearing
- Make a recommendation to the Board/City Council
- Board/City Council Adoption (Legislative Action)



First Street Before



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First Street After



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First Street Before



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First Street After



Outdoor Dining: Flex Zone

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Blacksmith Square Before



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Blacksmith Square After



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Blacksmith Square After



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LVC Site: Mixed Use



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Role of the Planning Commission

» Implementation Process

- Individual development project review
 - Site and Architectural Permits
 - Conditional Use Permits
 - Other
- Consistency with the General Plan and Specific Plan
- Public hearing



» Project approval (Quasi-Judicial Action)

Design Standards

BUILDING MASS AND INCREMENT		
SITING AND ORIENTATION Buildings shall be sited to reinforce the public street network of Downtown, aligning with primary street frontage and public pathway spaces.	Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main facades with entrance doors and windows shall front upon the primary street. Buildings shall not orient to parking lots at the expense of street and pathway frontages. Downtown buildings shall be "linear-sided" buildings, and maintain quality architectural articulation and finishes around all visible sides of the building, not just the front. All building walls that face streets shall incorporate active facades, with windows, doors and other architectural elements giving interest to the building. Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All building walls that face sidewalks or pathways should incorporate active facades with windows, doors and other architectural elements giving interest to the building wall along the sidewalk. 	<p>Primary facades facing the street and enlivening the sidewalk.</p> <p>All building facades should create interest along streets or pathways.</p>
OVERALL BUILDING MASSING Building scale shall be compatible with the existing fine-grained, pedestrian friendly, small-scale fabric of the Downtown Core.	Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial buildings shall be simple in form and massing, with a primary building mass accentuated by a few important features, such as a major entrance and a top treatment (i.e., a roof cornice or parapet). Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessory elements shall be used to add interest to simple facades (such as building volumes, cantilevered balconies, window bays and decorative detailing). 	<p>Simple massing, with a major entrance and roof/cornice.</p>

Staff Report



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

TO: Chairperson Bjorklund and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Benjamin Murray, Senior Planner
Tricia Portas, Assistant Planner

REVIEWED BY: Steve Stewart, Planning Manager
Scott Lee, Principal Planner

DATE: March 6, 2018

SUBJECT: Legacy Livermore – Downtown Design Review (DDR 17-012); Tentative Parcel Map 10757 (SUB 17-006); Certificate of Appropriateness (COA 17-019); and Tree Removal (TREE 17-006)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt a resolution certifying a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approving Downtown Design Review (DDR 17-012), Tentative Parcel Map 10757 (SUB 17-006), and Tree Removal (TREE 17-006), authorizing the development of a mixed-use residential and retail development known as Legacy Livermore.

The Historic Preservation Commission and staff recommend the Planning Commission adopt the resolution approving Certificate of Appropriateness (COA 17-019) for the demolition of buildings over 50 years old on the site.

The Planning Commission's action is subject to a 15-day appeal period.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Legacy Partners proposes to develop a mixed-use commercial and residential development, consisting of two buildings that, together, contain 222 apartments and approximately 14,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space. The proposal includes one three-story building that fronts onto First Street and contains approximately 14,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space with 34 apartments in two floors above. A surface parking lot behind the building with 49 spaces serves the retail space. A second proposed building, located on the northern half of the site ranges from three to four



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	General Plan Designation	Current Zoning Classification	Existing Land Use
Subject Site	Downtown Area	Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Core Subareas 1 and 2	Vacant Commercial
North	Downtown Area	Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Neighborhood North Side	Residential and Office
South	Downtown Area	Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Core Subarea 3	Commercial and Office
East	Downtown Area	Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Core Subareas 1 and 2	Commercial and Vacant Commercial
West	Downtown Area	Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Neighborhood – North Side and Downtown Boulevard Gateway	Residential and Commercial

STAFF ANALYSIS

General Plan

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Downtown Area. The Downtown Area seeks to provide a unique, pedestrian-friendly shopping environment supported by higher-intensity residential development. [Livermore General Plan Land Use Element, p. 3-22]. The proposal to redevelop the project site with commercial and residential uses is consistent with the land use designation and General Plan goals for the Downtown area.

The project supports policies established in the 2015-2022 Housing Element. The Housing Element calls for a diversity of housing choices to serve all economic segments of the community. The development will be the first market-rate apartment development in over 20 years, thus contributing to a market segment that has seen little recent development in Livermore.

The project implements policies in the Climate Change Element. For example, the project involves infill redevelopment that will add 222 residential units located within walking distance of high frequency transit service, including Livermore Antioch Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) bus routes and the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) train station at the LAVTA Transit Center. The project also complies with City requirements for water conservation and energy efficiency.

Zoning

The project site is located in Subareas 1 and 2 of the Downtown Core of the Downtown Specific Plan. The purpose of the Downtown Core is to revitalize the City's historic core area as the center of the City of Livermore. [Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Core p. 1] The intent of this Plan Area is to, "promote the continued development and revitalization of



Staff Report

groundborne vibrations resulting from railroad operations to negligible levels [Infill Checklist, p. 4.0-47]. Therefore, the project is not expected to generate nor expose residents to excessive groundborne vibration.

Affordable Housing

The proposed development is exempt from the City's inclusionary housing requirement and residential In-Lieu Low Income Housing Fee. Per Development Code Section 10.06.050 A, subdivision applications for the development of rental units outside Neighborhood Plan areas (Brisa Neighborhood Plan and Arroyo Vista/Pell Neighborhood Plan) are exempt from the City's inclusionary housing requirement. This exemption relieves the project of the 10 percent inclusionary build requirement that applies to ownership housing in the Downtown Specific Plan area (per Development Code Section 10.06.050 A.1.b).

Per Livermore Municipal Code section 3.26.040 B.1.f, residential rental development outside of Neighborhood Plan areas is exempt from the in-lieu affordable housing fee. However, the retail component of the development will be subject to the retail commercial Low Income Housing Impact Fee (currently \$1,343 per 1,000 square feet) in effect at the time of Building Permit.

Growth Management

The proposed development is consistent with the City's growth management policies. Projects in the Downtown Specific Plan area receive automatic allocation of units through the Housing Implementation Program. Of the 2,000 DSP available allocations, the City has allocated 434, leaving 1,566 DSP available allocations. Therefore, the proposed 222 units are within the remaining number of units allocated for the DSP.

Downtown Design Review

The Downtown Specific Plan establishes residential density limits, development standards, and design standards and guidelines. The proposed development meets all applicable development standards. As outlined in this report section, staff recommends the Planning Commission find the project consistent with the applicable development standards and applicable design standards and guidelines.

The following table summarizes the applicable development standards.

Development Criteria DSP Ch. 4 Downtown Core	DSP Standard	Proposed	Analysis
Density			
Minimum	30 du/ac	55 du/ac based on net area	Complies
Maximum	55 du/ac	48 du/ac based on gross site area	



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Development Criteria DSP Ch. 4 Downtown Core	DSP Standard	Proposed	Analysis
Open Space			
Public and Private Open Space for residential units in mixed-use projects (§6.3.8)	150 square feet of publicly accessible open space and 60 square feet of private open space per unit. Public open space can be provided through payment of an in-lieu fee or off-site if within 500 feet of the project. Per Specific Plan §6.3.A.1, the ground floor retail space fronting First Street is exempt from the open space requirement. Usable public open space must be publicly accessible during daylight hours (Specific Plan §6.3.17) and shall be designed to connect with public rights-of-way and adjacent public open spaces.	The project requires 33,000 square feet of public open space and 13,320 square feet of private open space (see Open Space Exhibit, Sheet A2.00, Attachment 9). The project provides 39,305 square feet of publicly accessible open space. This includes two large courtyards that front South L Street, a linear plaza to the south of the residential building, and a 30-foot wide landscaped corridor with a pedestrian path along the western edge of the property (see Sheet L-2, Attachment 9). The L Street courtyards and pedestrian path are gated for nighttime security but will remain open during daylight hours. The project provides 23,740 square feet of private open space consisting of 12,990 square feet of private balconies and decks and a 10,750 square foot rooftop deck with pool, spa, and seating.	The project exceeds the minimum required public and private open space. Nearly all apartments will have private balconies or decks. All units have access to the private rooftop deck. Staff recommends a condition of approval to ensure gates to publicly accessible open space remain unlocked during daylight hours (see Conditions of Approval Attachment 2).



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CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Downtown Design Review (DDR) 17-012, Tentative Parcel Map 10757 (SUB 17-008), Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) 17-019, and Tree Removal (TREE) 17-008

A request to redevelop the former Groh Brothers Chevrolet site, which occupies the block bounded by First Street, South L Street, South M Street, and Railroad Avenue, with a mixed-use development consisting of two buildings that, together, contain 222 apartments and 14,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space, with landscaping and amenities.

Location: 1934-1962 First Street and 57-59 South L Street

Approved by Planning Commission
May 15, 2018

A. PROJECT AUTHORIZATION

1. The project shall be in conformance with all City Ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies. The conditions listed below are particularly pertinent to this permit and shall not be construed to permit violation of other laws and policies not so listed.
2. Downtown Design Review, Tentative Parcel Map, Certificate of Appropriateness, and Tree Removal permits shall expire unless all building permits are issued by May 15, 2020, or a request for extension is received and approved by the City.

B. PROJECT SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

The applicant shall respond in writing to all conditions contained in this document and its attachments. Responses shall describe how the condition has been met and shall, where applicable, direct the plan checker to the page and/or drawing detail that demonstrates compliance with the condition. A copy of these responses shall be provided with each set of improvement plans.

1. The applicant shall distribute the 10 required bicycle parking spaces between one rack in front of the mixed-use building and one rack behind the mixed-use building.
2. The applicant shall modify the project to add two single-post trellises to the First Street frontage. The project shall alternate between trees and single-post trellises every two parking spaces.



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19. The applicant shall work with staff and the Historic Preservation Commission to incorporate bronze or metal plaques into the sidewalks of the project to commemorate the Reimers stable at 59 South L Street and the Baughman building at 1934 First Street. [Condition added by Planning Commission on March 6, 2018]

20. The applicant shall revise the design of the main arched entrance on First Street to match the design in the applicant's March 6, 2018, presentation on the sheet designated as First Street Colonnade (shown in Figure 1 below). [Condition added by Planning Commission on March 6, 2018]



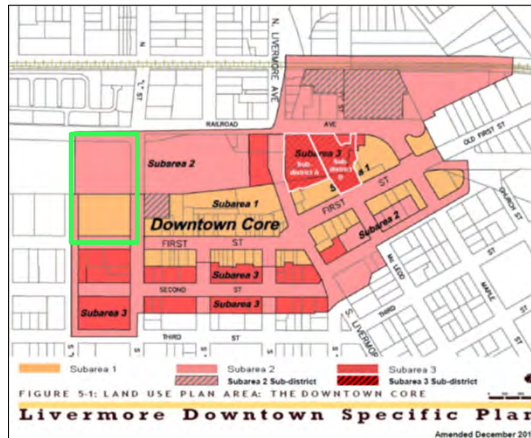
Figure 1

C. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Development shall conform to the map designated by the City as Exhibit B-1. Exhibit B-1 plans shall include but are not limited to subdivision, landscape, and architectural plans reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and City Council and amended by the applicant to reflect any changes indicated above in the Project Specific Conditions or required by the City in the approval process.
2. For all proposed projects, Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD; "Air District") recommends requiring the implementation of all Basic Construction Mitigation Measures, listed in Table 8-1 of the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, whether or not construction-related emissions exceed applicable Thresholds of Significance. These basic construction stage recommendations are incorporated below into these Conditions of Approval as project requirements.



Downtown Specific Plan



Downtown Core

Subarea 1

- Mixed-Use Required
- Three floors, 45-foot maximum height

Subarea 2

- Multi-Family Residential
- Four floors, 55-foot maximum height

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Proposed Project



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Architecture



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