

# PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



September 14, 2022

## ITEM TITLE

Design Review Permit and Conditional Use Permit for Life Time Fitness, an 85,000 square foot athletic resort, associated amenities, and parking on a 7.5-acre site.

**Location:** South of Main Street West, east of La Media North in Otay Ranch Village Eight (8) West (Lots 4-7 of Map 16428).

**Environmental Notice:** The Project was adequately covered in previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR 10-03/SCH# 2010062093) prepared for the Otay Ranch Sectional Planning Area Plan – Village 8 West and certified by the City Council on December 17, 2013.

**Recommended Action:** Conduct a public hearing and adopt resolutions approving Design Review Permit (DR) DR22-0001 and Conditional Use Permit (CUP) CUP22-0002 for the project, based on findings and subject to conditions contained herein.

## SUMMARY

LTF Real Estate Company, Inc. (the “Applicant”) requests approval of plans for an 85,000 square foot athletic resort, associated amenities, and parking (Project). The Project, referred to as Life Time Fitness, is located on an existing, rough-graded, vacant, 7.5-acre site consisting of four parcels (APNs 644-071-0400 to 0700), within the Otay Ranch Village 8 West Town Center (Project Site). The property is owned by HomeFed Village 8, LLC (Property Owner). Zoning for the Project Site is Town Center (TC), per the Otay Ranch Village 8 West Sectional Planning Area (the “Village 8 West SPA”) Plan, with a General Plan designation of Town Center (TC).

## HOUSING IMPACT STATEMENT

The Village 8 West SPA Plan has allocated a range of 84,000 to 106,000 square feet of commercial use for the Project Site. There are no residential units allocated to this parcel. The proposed project will not provide any additional housing units within the Otay Ranch community.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed project for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the Project was adequately covered in the previous Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR 10-03/SCH# 2010062093) for the Otay Ranch Sectional Planning Area Plan – Village 8 West certified by the City Council on December 17, 2013. Therefore, no additional environmental review is required.

## DISCUSSION

### Background

Life Time Fitness was founded in 1992 and has over 150 athletic club locations nationwide. The company promotes health and well-being for its members with its fitness, swim and basketball programs. Community health is supported by partnering with local schools to offer kids activities, programs and camps as well as parties and fundraisers. Life Time Fitness also offers family-friendly 5K's and half marathons, bicycle, and triathlon events.

### Project Site Characteristics

The 7.5-acre Project Site is made up of four parcels located on the eastern edge of the Main Street and La Media Parkway couplet (Lots 4-7 of Map 16428), within the Otay Ranch Village 8 West Town Center (Attachment 1 – Location Map). The site slopes and drains from the northeast corner down to the southwest corner. The property has been rough-graded and is currently vacant. To the north of the site are Cota Vera Apartments and Cota Vera Townhomes (future multi-family residential); to the south is Parcel L (future mixed-use); Parcel H-2 (future commercial) is located to the east, and to the west is Central Square Park.

Table 1 summarizes the surrounding land uses:

<b>Table 1 – Project Site and Adjacent Zoning/Land Uses</b>			
<b>Location</b>	<b>General Plan</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Current Land Use</b>
North	TC and Residential Medium High (RMH)	TC and Neighborhood Center (NC)	Vacant
South	TC	TC	Vacant
East	TC	TC	Vacant
West	TC	TC	Park - currently under construction

### Project Description

The proposed project is an 85,000 square foot private health and wellness center in Otay Ranch Village 8 West, that will employ approximately 250 people in full- and part-time positions. The Project components include workout facilities, an outdoor pool, pickleball and basketball courts, a café, and a children's club. A café, spa and beauty salon are also available to the public and are accessed through the main entrance. The Applicant has proposed that the Project operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

### *Site Plan*

The primary vehicular entry into the site is from Main Street West, with a secondary entrance located on Main Street East. The vehicular entries are defined by landscaping, lighting, and signage, and a pedestrian path connects the surrounding public sidewalks to the front door of the building (on the northern elevation). The Town Square Edge along La Media Parkway has been landscaped with shade trees, a large curved staircase, an art feature at the northwest corner and benches and shade at the southwest corner. Due to the site's topography, large slopes (approximately 10 feet high) separate

the building and parking lot from the sidewalk and public street along the northeastern and southwestern edges of the Project. Stairs located mid-block along both La Media Parkway and Avenida Caprise enhance pedestrian connectivity into the site.

The parking requirements for the Project are satisfied on-site with standard/surface parking for cars and motorcycles. The site provides 443 parking spaces for customers and employees. Bicycle parking is provided in accordance with CalGreen requirements.

The building has been sited along the western edge of the property, to help create an urban edge and engage with the Central Square Park located to the west of the Project, in accordance with the Village 8 West SPA Plan.

The Life Time Fitness site plan shows a 'Love Your Life' sculpture and landscaped plaza on the northwest corner of the site, a unique and innovative design feature that establishes character and is appropriate to the demographic of the community and the features of the site. This space offers shade, seating, and lighting and provides a focal point for the Town Center. The plaza will also connect pedestrians with future public transit (as reflected in the Village 8 West SPA, Exhibit 5.2).

#### *Building Design*

The 45-foot high, two-story Life Time Fitness building follows the commercial block building configuration and delivers simple, bold and repeating forms with minimal plaster articulation, inspired by Village 8 West's contemporary European architecture. The main entry is a vertical element that provides definition to the front façade of the building. Building enhancements include decorative stacked brick and high-quality limestone accents. Building materials have been selected in light earth tone colors to help ground the building in nature and create a calm, healthy space for members. The maximum building height is 41'-4" to the roof deck and 50'-0" to the parapet.

The café is at the northwest corner of the building, with its outdoor dining patio overlooking the Central Square Park across La Media Parkway.

Adjacent to the central reception area, the café and lounge create a gathering and social space at the entrance of the athletic resort. The first floor will offer a salon & spa with manicure, pedicure and hair dressing stations, as well as private massage rooms. Separate men's and women's locker room suites each include lockers; showers and vanities; hot and cold whirlpools; and a sauna and steam room. A separate family locker room with individual changing rooms accommodates families with young children.

The Life Time Fitness 'Kid's Academy' is located on the first floor and offers a space dedicated to kids (ages toddler through grade-school), including a kid's gym, multi-purpose room, art and tutoring classrooms, and a designated toddler area. All childcare areas are supervised so parents can make the best of their workout and use of the facility.

The second floor provides group fitness classrooms, a yoga studio, a cycling studio and a Pilates studio. This floor also offers access to a regulation-sized basketball court and features America's largest recreational basketball league, 'Ultimate Hoops.' This floor includes access to certified personal trainers, stretching, strength and functional training areas as well as a full suite of cardio

and strength equipment. A boot camp/functional training/team workout zone, and ‘Alpha Strength,’ a blend of Olympic weightlifting, strength training and athletic movement round out the second floor.

The outdoor resort-style pool offers a separate lap pool, a leisure pool with waterslides, a warm spa, cabanas, and the Poolside Bistro. Adjacent to the outdoor pool are four pickleball courts that surround a central lounge area.

#### *Circulation and Site Access*

Access is provided from the north side of the site via Main Street West and from the south via Main Street East. Extensive landscaping and an on-site pedestrian network connect the surrounding public sidewalks. An enhanced mid-block connection, in the form of a 10-foot-wide curved staircase, provides pedestrian access from La Media Parkway. Continuing across the front of the club, the walkway ties into the North/South sidewalk that connects the two project entries. The closest transit stop, planned on La Media Parkway North at Main Street West, is adjacent to the Project and across from the Central Square Park in the heart of the Town Center.

#### *Landscaping/Screening*

The landscape design and plant palette conform to the City’s Landscape Water Conservation Ordinance, promoting water conservation through the use of moderate and low-water plant species, grouping of plant materials with similar water requirements and implementing a low-volume and efficient automatic irrigation system.

Due to the grades of the surrounding road network, the parking lot sits below the street (up to 15’ in some areas) along the northeast lot lines. This grade change will function as a screen, preventing vehicular lighting from shining onto adjacent roadways. In addition, the Applicant intends to adequately screen the perimeter of the site with a combination of trees and shrubs.

#### *Lighting*

Exterior lighting, as detailed on the Lighting Concept Plan, will be provided on the building and throughout the site to illuminate the parking area, building entrance, amenities, and other pedestrian areas. Site lighting will use LED technology for energy efficiency and be directed downward to minimize the spread of the beam and be consistent with the City’s lighting policies.

#### Project Analysis

The Project has been analyzed for compliance with the Village 8 West SPA Plan, the Master Precise Plan (MPP), and the Landscape Master Plan.

<b>Table 2: Project Data Table</b>	
Assessor’s Parcel Numbers:	644-071-0400 to 0700
Current Zoning:	TC
General Plan Designation:	TC
Lot Area:	7.5 acres
Residential Development:	Not Applicable
Commercial Development:	84,000-106,000 SF
<b><u>PARKING REQUIRED:</u></b>	<b><u>PROPOSED PARKING:</u></b>

Determined by Parking Study and approved by Planning Commission	Surface Parking Spaces:	
	Standard	400
	Accessible	9
	Motorcycle	8
	EV Charging (Future)	26
	<b>TOTAL VEHICLE SPACES PROVIDED: 443</b>	
	Bicycle Parking 22	

### Design Review Permit

In accordance with the Village 8 West SPA Plan, Major Design Review is required for all projects proposing over 20,000 square feet of commercial space. Major Design Review requires Planning Commission approval. The Design Review shall comply with the procedures and requirements set forth in Chula Vista Municipal Code (CVMC) Section 19.14.582 through 19.14.600, except that the findings and actions of the Planning Commission shall be based upon the provisions of the Village 8 West SPA Plan and its associated documents. The Village 8 West SPA's Design Review process requires a determination that a project complies with the defined standards and guidelines of the Village 8 West SPA Plan, the MPP, and the Landscape Master Plan.

### *Village 8 West SPA Plan*

The purpose of the SPA Plan is to define the development parameters for each parcel, including the land use, design criteria, circulation pattern, open space and recreation concept, and infrastructure requirements to support the community. The Village 8 West SPA Plan promotes pedestrian-oriented development, reducing reliance on the automobile. The overall concept of the village is to provide for essential facilities and services: schools, shops, civic facilities, and local parks in the Town Center.

The SPA's zoning regulations implement the goals and policies of the Chula Vista General Plan and Otay Ranch General Development Plan by establishing land use districts and standards to classify, regulate, restrict and separate the uses of land, buildings and structures, and regulate and limit the type, height and bulk of buildings and structures in each land use district. The Village 8 West SPA was adopted by Ordinance pursuant to Title 19 of the Chula Vista Zoning Code.

The Project Site is zoned TC, which typically permits a mix of commercial, office and residential land uses. The Project Site is allocated for a range of 84,000 to 106,000 square feet of commercial space and no residential units. With a maximum building height of 60 feet, or four stories, buildings are to be located close to the street and provide partial screening of parking lots. The reduction in building setback helps define the project edge.

The Project site plan shows a two-story (50-foot maximum height) project which has one pedestrian entrance on the north side of the building and pedestrian paths connecting to the surrounding streets and sidewalks. The building edge along La Media Parkway is activated with a café and patio with open fencing. Landscape and retaining walls help create a level site. Due to slopes, the parking area is partially screened from view from the surrounding roadways.

The CVMC does not address parking requirements for a health club, so Life Time Fitness prepared a parking study based on their business operations and experience. The Project will offer 443 on-site parking stalls, at a ratio of approximately 1:200 square feet. The Applicant will comply with all CalGreen electric vehicle and bicycle parking requirements. An alternate conceptual site plan has been prepared for the site, to allow for the addition of commercial development or a parking garage on the site, should the parking prove to be excessive or fall short in the future, respectively.

Further design guidelines and details are provided in the MPP.

#### *Master Precise Plan*

The MPP was prepared for the Town Center and approved by the City Council in 2020. The MPP serves as the framework for evaluating individual projects based on site planning, access, architecture, landscape architecture, signage and lighting within the Town Center. The Town Center is the commercial and social activity center of the village, with residential, retail, park, and public uses all within a short walk of each other.

In addition to the pedestrian-oriented site planning guides in the Village 8 West SPA Plan, the MPP requires certain mandatory elements. Accordingly, the development provides well-articulated, identifiable pedestrian entries on Main Street West and Main Street East; landscape accents; enhanced elevations on four sides; a landscaped buffer (slope) along Main Street West and pedestrian links to the adjacent public sidewalks; and front door access with articulated architectural details facing Main Street West. These architectural and landscape elements link the site with the surrounding Town Center.

#### *Landscape Master Plan*

Consistent with the Landscape Master Plan, a Contemporary European-inspired landscape theme is established in the features of the Project Site with elements such as drought tolerant planting, energy efficient light standards, convenient shaded benches, and paving that are consistent with the architecture. The plant schedule includes low-water trees and shrubs, such as the Marina Strawberry Tree, the Golden Rain Tree, and the Weeping Bottlebrush. Landscaping creates a focus on site entrances and building entrances. Trees, shrubs and lighting line the internal and adjacent sidewalks and the parking lot. Tree planting complies with the City's Shade Tree Policy (576-19).

#### Conditional Use Permit

Health clubs over 2,000 square feet in size or uses proposing alcohol sales in the Town Center require a Conditional Use Permit. The Project proposes an 85,000 square foot health club and the sale of alcohol. Health Clubs, Massage Therapy, Restaurants, and Beauty Salons are permitted uses within the TC zone. Life Time Fitness will operate 24 hours a day and seven days a week; however, alcohol sales will only be allowed between the hours of 11am and 11pm. The health club and the proposed alcohol sales are in compliance with the conditions for such uses.

#### Public Facilities

Public facilities are required to be consistent with the General Plan and Growth Management Program and Ordinance – the facilities must be constructed concurrent with demand so the development of the Project will not adversely impact the City's Quality of Life standards. The Public Facilities Financing Plan for the

Village 8 West SPA analyzed infrastructure such as drainage, traffic, water, sewer, fire protection, emergency services, law enforcement, libraries, schools, and parks. The availability and capacity of these components were reviewed for this Project and determined to be compliant.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed project is consistent with the Otay Ranch Village 8 West SPA Plan, MPP, and the Landscape Master Plan. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the proposed project subject to the conditions contained in the resolutions.

## **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the Planning Commission members and has found no property holdings within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action. Consequently, this item does not present a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(7) or (8), for purposes of the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code §87100, *et seq.*).

Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any Planning Commission member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund or Development Services Fund as a result of this action. The application fees and processing costs are paid for by the Applicant.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1 – Location Map
- 2 – Project Plans
- 3 – CUP Resolution
- 4 – DR Resolution

*Staff Contact: Janice Kluth, AICP, Senior Project Coordinator, Development Services*  
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