

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



December 14, 2022

ITEM TITLE

Design Review to construct 267 market-rate, multi-family residential units on a vacant 8.6 acres within the Otay Ranch Village Eight West Sectional Planning Area.

Location: The northeast corner of the La Media Parkway and Main Street couplet in the Otay Ranch Village Eight West Town Center.

Environmental Notice: The Project was adequately covered in previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR 10-03) (SCH #2010062093) for the Otay Ranch Village Eight West Sectional Planning Area Plan, certified on December 17, 2013.

Recommended Action:

Conduct a public hearing and adopt a Resolution for the development of 267 market-rate, multi-family residential units, based on the findings and subject to the conditions contained therein.

SUMMARY

In accordance with the Village Eight West ("Village 8 West") Sectional Planning Area ("SPA") Plan, and Town Center Master Precise Plan ("MPP"), a Design Review application was submitted by Cota Vera Apartments II, LLC ("Applicant") for Luminary at Cota Vera, to construct 267 market-rate, multi-family residential units and associated parking and open space (the "Project") that includes the following:

Project Summary		
Land Use	Required	Provided
Multi-family	267 Units	267 Units
Parking	401 Parking Spaces	429 Spaces
Open Space	53,400 Square Feet	65,445 Square Feet

HOUSING IMPACT STATEMENT

The Town Center zone allows high-density residential development at 18-45 units per acre. The Village 8 West Tentative Map (CVT 19-03) allocated 267 residential units to the Project Site. The proposed Project will increase housing supply within Otay Ranch by adding 267 market-rate residential rental units.

Under the City's Balanced Communities Policy, Village 8 West shall be required to provide 10% of the total number of dwelling units as affordable to low- and moderate-income households. The Village 8 West Balanced Communities Affordable Housing Agreement addresses the affordable unit obligation and the transfer of affordable units to and from other HomeFed-owned properties in Otay Ranch. The Agreement was approved by City Council on September 9, 2020, and recorded December 4, 2020, as Document No. 2020-0776213.

The Balanced Communities Affordable Housing Agreement requires 181 low-income units and 150 moderate income units, including the affordable housing obligation transferred from Village 3, be built within Village 8 West or transferred to other HomeFed-owned properties.

The Meta Housing Project, currently under construction in the Village 8 West Town Center, will provide 122 low-income units and 53 very low-income units, partially satisfying the affordable housing obligation for Village 8 West. An Affordable Housing Transfer Agreement is required for the anticipated transfer of the remaining 68 Moderate Income housing unit obligation to Village 8 East prior to or concurrently with the approval of the first final subdivision map in Village 8 East. No affordable housing units are proposed within this Project.

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 previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR 10-03) (SCH #2010062093), dated December 17, 2013, for the Otay Ranch Village 8 West SPA Plan; thus, no further environmental review or documentation is required.

DISCUSSION

Project Site Characteristics:

The Project Site is a vacant, previously graded, 8.6-acre parcel. The General Plan land use designation is Town Center, and the site is zoned TC, allowing high-density residential with a density range of 18-45 units per acre. The Project is bordered on the north and east by a future development of residential townhomes; on the west by La Media Parkway North and a convenience store/carwash/gas station, currently under construction; and on the south by Main Street West and a future Life Time Fitness facility. (Locator Map, Attachment 1).

The following table identifies the General Plan, Land Use Designation and Existing Land Use for the adjacent properties:

Land Use Designations and Existing Land Uses			
	General Plan	PC District/Form-Based Code Zoning Designation	Existing Land Use
North	Residential Medium-High	Neighborhood Center	Vacant
South	Town Center	Town Center	Future Fitness Center
East	Residential Medium-High	Neighborhood Center	Vacant
West	Town Center	Town Center	Convenience Store/Carwash/Gas Station currently under construction

Project Description:

The Applicant proposes a multi-family development made up of six (6) multi-family residential buildings, along with a club house/leasing office, pool, parking and open space. Located within the Village 8 West Town Center, the Project provides 267 market-rate, rental apartment units within walking distance of future commercial, parks, and transit.

Site Design

The Project helps anchor the Central Square Park located in the heart of the Village 8 West Town Center. Buildings fronting Main Street and La Media Parkway are grade-separated from the adjacent streets but set close to the property line to enhance the urban form and character, encouraging interaction between building activities and pedestrians.

At the southwest corner of the site (La Media Parkway and Main Street), an urban “landmark” helps orient people within the Town Center and provides a respite along the Village Pathway. The corner features terraced seating and sculptural boulder seating, and a future local bus stop is planned along La Media Parkway adjacent to the Project.

Site Plan Elements

Pedestrians can access Building 4 from the pedestrian plaza along the 10-foot Village Pathway on Main Street West. The primary vehicular entry is at Via Cítrico on La Media Parkway North. A second entrance is located on Main Street West. Meandering paths accented with benches, lighting and landscaping are provided between buildings and throughout the Project. These walkways allow residents to pass through the Project to the future Town Center shopping/dining/transit/recreation areas.

Open space is provided in the form of Common Useable and Private Useable open space. Shared active recreation and other passive and active outdoor amenities are listed below. In addition, all units have private balconies.

A variety of amenities are located throughout the site (see Attachment 2 – Site Plan for building locations). Amenities include:

- Clubhouse/Leasing Office featuring a bar, entertainment/game areas, and lounge areas
- Fitness Center with Showers and Restrooms (Building 5)
- Co-working area and meeting rooms (Building 5)
- Yoga/Dance Studio (Building 5)
- Mail Room (Building 5)
- Swimming pool with terrace sun deck and palm grotto
- California Room - which may include amenities such as indoor/outdoor kitchen, game tables and fire pits (Building 6)
- Sky Deck (Building 4)
- Pedestrian plaza (Building 4)
- Urban Corner landmark
- Tot lot
- Dog park
- Internal walking path
- Bicycle storage

Four hundred twenty-nine (429) parking spaces are provided in the Project. An additional 30 tandem spaces are not counted in the total number of parking spaces provided. On-site Parking is provided in garages, carports, and surface parking spaces. Accessible parking spaces are provided proportionately throughout the Project. Bicycle parking is not required for the development; however, the Project includes a large indoor bicycle storage room in Building 4. Additionally, there is an outdoor bike rack proposed in the pedestrian plaza at Building 4, close to the Village Pathway. The 2019 California Green Building Standards Code (“CALGreen”, Title 24, Part 11) requires that ten percent of the total number of parking spaces on a new multi-family building site be capable of supporting future electric vehicle supply equipment (“EVSE”). Forty-three (43) Electric Vehicle (“EV”) capable spaces are provided throughout the site.

Solar panels are proposed to be located on carport roofs and will provide electricity for common space amenities and potentially other on-site uses.

Architecture

Located close to the Central Square Park, flexible community spaces, small retail uses and other recreational and social amenities, the Project’s architecture is simple, allowing buildings to serve as a backdrop to well-designed public spaces.

The historical agrarian use of the land within Otay Ranch is the inspiration for the theme and character of Village 8 West. The Project’s architectural style is Contemporary European with “abstract and irregular gable forms interspersed with modulating flat roofs,” and a fresh color palette of white plaster with accents of blue

and lime green or marigold. The Project interprets the Farmhouse and Ranch styles using board-and-batten accents, standing seam metal roof details, and metal railings and awnings.

A variety of unit floor plans and building configurations provide a diverse range of rental housing options. The high-density three and four-story buildings offer garages and elevator access (4-story buildings only). Housing options include one and two-bedroom models, with floor plans ranging in size from 734 to 1,267 square feet. Energy Star appliances and upgraded window and wall insulation contribute to the energy efficiency of the Project.

Landscape Architecture

The landscape palette includes London Plane Trees, Crape Myrtles, Southern Magnolias, Date Palms, as well as Birds of Paradise, Bottlebrush, and Day Lilies, linking the Project visually with the surrounding Town Center. Wall materials and site furnishings will also tie into the adjacent development. The landscape design theme complements the Contemporary Farmhouse Architecture as well as the hillsides and open space surrounding the site. Effort was made to provide outward views and internal passive/active gathering spaces.

Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation

A lot line adjustment with lot consolidation (LA21-0009) is currently in review by the City. The Project Site will ultimately be consolidated into one parcel (Parcel C), but it is currently a combination of portions of Parcels A and B reflected in Certificate of Compliance 2022-0201879. The lot line between the Project and the adjacent development to the north is being shifted to reflect the site planning for future Parcels C and D. Approval of the lot line adjustment/consolidation is a condition of the Project’s Design Review Permit and is required prior to building permit issuance (Attachment 4).

Project Analysis:

The following Project Data Table shows the development regulations along with the Applicant’s proposal to meet the requirements:

Assessor’s Parcel Number:	644-071-0100 & 0200
Current Zoning:	T-4: TC
General Plan Designation:	TC
Lot Area:	8.6 acres

PARKING REQUIRED: 1 Bedroom (134) x 1.5 = 201 2 Bedroom (133) x 1.5 = 200 Accessible Parking: Garage/Assigned 2% Carport/Assigned 2% Standard/Guest 5% Total required: 401 parking spaces Motorcycle 1 per 100 EV-capable Spaces (10% per CalGreen) Bicycle Parking (None required per CalGreen)	PARKING PROVIDED: Garage/Assigned: Standard 112 (4 are Accessible) Carport/Assigned: Standard 150 (3 are Accessible) Compact 5 Surface/Guest: Standard 151 (8 are Accessible) Compact 11 Total provided: 429 parking spaces Motorcycle 4 Surface spaces EV-capable 43 Carport and surface spaces Bicycle Indoor and Outdoor spaces
OPEN SPACE REQUIRED: Private/Common Open Space (@ density > 30 units/acre) 200 SF per unit x 267 units = 53,400 SF Total required: 53,400 SF	OPEN SPACE PROVIDED: Private Open Space 16,432 SF Common Useable Open Space 49,013 SF Total provided: 65,445 SF

Site Design Elements

The Town Center concept is the most critical component in implementing Village 8 West's identity. The building form is required to be pedestrian-scale and visually interesting. In a pedestrian scaled urban environment, buildings play the primary role in defining pedestrian spaces including sidewalks, plazas, and courtyards. Fostering pedestrian activity along interior circulation corridors is critical to the interactive, urban nature of the Town Center. Interior circulation corridors, including major commercial streets and pedestrian pathways are a major setting for daily living within the community. These outdoor mixed-use settings shall provide a comfortable, pedestrian atmosphere and activate the overall street scene for aesthetic, pedestrian, and commercial interest.

Prominent Edges

Enhanced elevations are provided along the surrounding streets and parking is screened by the perimeter buildings. The Project has 'Prominent Edges' along westbound Main Street, where four-story buildings frame the street edges. The primary entry to the Project is from La Media Parkway North at Via Cítrico, identified by an entry monument, enhanced paving, and landscaping. A well-articulated, identifiable pedestrian access point is also located at the driveway entrance on Main Street West, along with enhanced paving and lighting.

Pedestrian Focus

Within the Project, pavers, lighting, and landscaping are used to promote pedestrian movement and to alert drivers to shared access points, especially at the entrances and at key pedestrian-crossing

locations, in compliance with the MPP, Parcel C Design Review Checklist. A pedestrian-only entrance is located at Building 4, with a paseo connecting through the building to the Village Pathway on Main Street West.

Parking

All required parking for the Project is provided on-site within garages, carports, and surface-parking spaces and complies with Village Eight West SPA Plan requirements. The total parking provided is 429 spaces. Accessible parking is provided in garages, carports, and surface parking spaces, proportionately. Forty-three (43) EV-capable parking spaces are provided throughout the site. Bicycle parking is not required for residential buildings; however, a large bicycle storage room is provided as an amenity to residents (Building 4).

Open Space

The MPP calls for spaces within the site to be programmed with amenities and activities that support health and wellness, sustainability, and social connectivity. The Project meets that requirement for functional outdoor spaces with a combination of quality amenities.

With a density of 31 units per acre, the SPA requirement for a combination of Private and Common Usable Open Space is 200 square feet per unit. The Project exceeds the requirement for Private and Common Useable open space on-site, by providing 16,432 square feet of private usable open space and 49,013 square feet of common usable space.

Architecture

The historical agrarian use of the land within Otay Ranch is the inspiration for the Contemporary European architectural theme and character for the community. The Project offers a fresh color scheme and a mix of materials to create visual diversity and interest. Varied building setbacks, articulation, and undulation of the wall planes and roof lines all contribute to reducing building massing and creating a warmer pedestrian experience. The combination of cement siding and board and batten siding with neutral plaster tones creates a sophisticated urban feel with simple forms, clean lines, and authentic modern materials. Metal balcony, awning, and roof details help further articulate the contemporary European style.

The buildings define the street edge, public plazas, and pedestrian spaces to create quality pedestrian environments and opportunities for social gathering. Building entries and common areas remain the primary emphasis of the public street elevation while parking is located to the rear of buildings to minimize the visual impact of parking lots on the public streetscape. Building mass and differentiation of roof forms, materials, color, and apparent floor heights reduce building bulk and create variety within the building façade.

The Project follows the SPA Plan's guidelines for Building Form and Relief, providing massing elements at major corners and project entries. The Sky Deck on the roof of Building 4 provides a striking architectural element and offers expansive views to the south and west. The sidewalk-level plaza below supports pedestrian connectivity in the Town Center. The following elements are also included in the Project and provide architectural relief at the street level: planter walls, outdoor seating, and accent/festive lighting.

In accordance with the MPP, the buildings within the multi-family project are multiple stories (three and four stories, with taller architectural elements) and are oriented toward the surrounding streets and sidewalks.

Landscape Architecture

The proposed planting palette is consistent with the landscape guidelines for the Village 8 West Town Center and enhances the Project's Contemporary European-themed architecture. The Project meets current-water efficient guidelines and will comply with the City's Landscape Water Conservation Ordinance.

CONCLUSION

The proposed market-rate, for rent, multi-family project is a permitted land use, pursuant to the Village 8 West SPA Plan. The Project complies with the policies, guidelines and design standards for the Village 8 West SPA Plan, , the MPP, and related documents; therefore, staff recommends the Planning Commission approve Design Review Permit DR22-0006, subject to the conditions listed in the Project Resolution.

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 the Development Services Fund as a result of this action. All processing costs are paid for by the Applicant.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 – Locator Map
- 2 – Site Plan
- 3 – Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation Exhibit
- 4 – Draft Planning Commission Resolution
- 5 – Approved Plans

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