



Memorandum

Development Services Department

DATE: April 10, 2014

TO: Chula Vista Mayor and City Council

FROM: Kelly Broughton AICP, Director of Development Services

SUBJECT: California Environmental Quality Act Exemption for the Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center parking garage and loop road project, located at 750 Medical Center Court

Development Services Department staff has reviewed the proposed Sharp parking garage and loop road project, located at the Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center. The project consists of a six story, 718 space parking structure with associated loop road, located at the northern portion of the existing medical center. The project includes the request for a precise plan, as allowed pursuant to Chula Vista Municipal Code (CVMC) Sections 19.14.570 through 19.14.576, and the Administrative and Professional Office Zone (CO Zone, with a "P" precise plan modifier), to allow a height that exceeds the maximum permissible height of 45 feet. Staff has determined that the project qualifies for a California Code of Regulations Article 19, Section 15332, Class 32 (in-fill) exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has prepared an analysis of project compliance with the provisions (a-e) of the Class 32 Categorical Exemption. That analysis along with the actual Class 32 provisions is provided below.

CEQA Categorical Exemption 15332 - IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS states the following:

Class 32 consists of projects characterized as in-fill development meeting the conditions described in this section.

- (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.*
- (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.*
- (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.*
- (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.*
- (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services*

Analysis

(a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

The Chula Vista General Plan designation for the site is Public and Quasi-Public (PQ). According to General Plan Chapter 5, Section 4.9.6 (Page LUT-54), the PQ designation depicts existing areas used by schools, churches, and hospitals. Because the site has a General Plan

designation of PQ, the existing medical facility is acknowledged and expressly allowed in the General Plan. The CO zone allows medical offices and clinics. Hospitals are allowed on the site, and elsewhere within the City, as an Unclassified Use (CVMC 19.54). The project is allowed as an ancillary use for the medical center, since it will provide parking and improved vehicular access serving the allowed medical center use. As stated in the project staff report, the project is consistent with all applicable requirements of the CO Zone.

As stated above, the project includes the request for a precise plan to allow a height that is in excess of the maximum allowed height of 45 feet for the CO Zone. Because the zone in which the project is located is COP, a precise plan may be applied to the site with City Council approval. According to CVMC Section 19.56.040, the requirements specified in the precise plan shall take precedence over the otherwise applicable regulations of the underlying zone. In this particular case, the applicant is asking to maintain a height of 120 feet, where 45 feet is otherwise allowed. The intent of the precise plan, as described in CVMC Section 19.56.041, is to allow regulatory flexibility in instances where the site has unique attributes and requires special handling. The site has been utilized as a medical center since the 1970's. The COP zoning designation was applied to the site in 1990, when the zoning was changed from residential (RH). Because the uses allowed in the CO zone were compatible with the existing use of the site, the CO zone was chosen as the most appropriate zoning designation for the site at the time that it was rezoned. Because the CO zone has a height requirement of 45 feet maximum, flexibility in zoning was needed at the time that the site was rezoned in 1990, since the site maintained structures (hospital towers) in excess of 45 feet. The "P" modifier was applied to the site resulting in a COP Zone, acknowledging the special characteristics of the site and the need for flexibility beyond the requirements of the CO zone. Consistent with this intent, the applicant is requesting a precise plan to allow a type of facility (parking structure) that is normally associated with a medical center.

(b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.

The site is located within the Chula Vista city limits. The project site, which consists of a parking structure and loop road, is less than 5 acres in size. The total project site is approximately 1.5 acres. The project is surrounded by urban uses on all sides. Surrounding uses consist of medical uses, a veteran's home, and residential development.

(c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.

The project site consists of a graded and developed pad, which includes commercial landscaping that does not include floral nor fauna habitat. Therefore, the site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.

(d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

The parking garage does not generate additional traffic on the site. All on site traffic can be attributed to existing traffic generating uses on the site, such as the hospital and medical offices. As such, the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic. Because there would not be any increase in traffic due to the project, there would also not be any significant adverse air quality or noise effects due to the parking garage and loop road. The parking garage and loop road will arguably improve any existing air quality or noise effects attributable to the medical facility, since on-site circulation will be improved resulting in less on-site traffic congestion. A technical letter prepared by LLG Engineers, dated April 10, 2014 states that there are no traffic impacts associated with the project, and that the loop road provides good access to the parking structure. A technical letter dated April 10, 2014 prepared by Atkins, states that there would be no adverse noise impacts associated with the project. The project is required to comply with all City of Chula Vista water quality requirements, and a Water Quality Technical Report has been prepared for the project. The Water Quality Technical Report, and requirements outlined therein, is in conformance with all standards required by the City's Land Development Section. The project will be required to comply with all water quality requirements outlined in the Water Quality Technical Report, as well as the City of Chula Vista's Municipal Storm Water Permit, and as such, the project will not result in any significant effects to water quality.

(e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The existing medical center site is currently served by all required public utilities and services. The parking structure would result in no additional demand for additional public utilities/services, and will be served with existing utilities and services such as electricity, water, and public safety.