



# City of Chula Vista

## Staff Report

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**File#:** 16-0479, **Item#:** 1.

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ORDINANCE NO. 3378 OF THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA APPROVING A PRECISE PLAN (MPA 15-0021) TO ALLOW A HEIGHT OF 120 FEET TO ACCOMMODATE A PROPOSED HOSPITAL TOWER TO BE LOCATED AT THE NORTHERN EDGE OF THE HOSPITAL CAMPUS LOCATED AT 751 MEDICAL CENTER COURT (SECOND READING AND ADOPTION)

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Council adopt the ordinance.

### **SUMMARY**

Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center (the "Applicant") is requesting a Precise Plan (MPA) in order to increase the allowable building height from 45 feet to 120 feet within the existing hospital campus. This increase in height would allow for the construction of a new seven-story hospital tower on the existing hospital campus (the "Project"). The project site is located at 751 Medical Center Court (see Attachment 7- Locator Map).

In addition to a Precise Plan, a Design Review Permit (DR) is required for the new hospital tower, and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required to allow for the expansion of the existing hospital use (see Attachment 9-Proposed Site Plan). The Project is subject to the consolidated permit processing provisions pursuant to Chula Vista Municipal Code (CVMC) Section 19.14.050 (C). Under the consolidated review process, the City Council will be reviewing and acting on the EIR, MPA, DR and CUP.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

#### **Environmental Notice**

The proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Report has been prepared.

#### **Environmental Determination**

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed Project for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and has determined that there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the City Council, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, the Development Services Director has initiated the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR 15-0002).

**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**  
**Not Applicable**

**DISCUSSION**

Existing Site Characteristics

The project site is located south of Telegraph Canyon Road, east of Medical Center Drive and north of Medical Center Court. The site is atop a knoll above surrounding residential development to the south and east. To the north is the Veterans Home, and to the east are additional medical offices. The existing campus is developed with hospital towers, convalescent care, medical offices and parking.

**Existing General Plan, SPA Plan Land Use Designations and Existing land uses**

	<b>General Plan</b>	<b>CV Municipal Code Zoning</b>	<b>PC District Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Existing Land Use</b>
Site	Public/ Quasi-Public	COP(Administrative and Professional Office/Precise Plan overlay)	N/A	Existing Hospital Campus
North	Public/ Quasi-Public	R1H (Residential)	N/A	Veterans Home
South	Med-high Residential	Planned Community (PC)	RC(Residential Condominium)	condominiums/apartments
West	Public/ Quasi-Public/ Medium Density Residential	COP(Office Commercial/Precise Plan Overlay)	RC (Residential Condominium)	Medical Offices
East	Public/Quasi-Public/Medium High Residential	COP/Planned Community (PC)	None/Medium High Residential	Medical Offices/Residential Condominiums

Background

The original acute care campus was developed in 1973 with the donation of the land to start the community hospital of Chula Vista. Over the years, additional campus facilities have been added to keep pace with the health service and emergency care needs of Chula Vista and South Bay residents. The East Tower was the first major medical facility built on the campus in 1979. In 1989

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the Birch Patrick Skilled Nursing Facility was built, followed by the expansion of the main hospital (West Tower) in 1991. Each of the two existing 5-story towers have a height of approximately 68 feet. In 2015 a new six story/seven level parking structure, approximately 96 feet in height, was constructed to provide an additional 718 parking spaces.

The site is zoned C-O-P (Administrative and Professional Office) with a Precise Plan (P) modifying district. This (P) modifying district was established in 1990 (PCZ 90-E) in order to allow flexibility in the application of development standards through the establishment of a Precise Plan, which is now being requested.

### Public Comment

A community meeting was held on March 10, 2016 with an additional meeting held on March 26, 2016 (please see Attachment 8 - Community Meeting comments). Concern was expressed by some of the neighbors with regard to potential visual impacts created by the height and bulk of the proposed hospital tower. Concern was also expressed about lighting/glare into the adjacent residential areas. These concerns were generated by the resident's experience with light spillage into their neighborhoods from the elevator tower located above the recently constructed parking structure. (Staff responses to these concerns are discussed in the Analysis section below and in Attachment 8).

### Project Description

The Project proposes a Precise Plan to increase the allowable building height from 45 feet to 120 feet for a seven story hospital tower. The new tower would be constructed in the northerly portion of the campus, within an area bounded by the recently completed Loop Road, and immediately adjacent to the existing Sharp Chula Vista Hospital. The proposed tower would be adjacent to the existing hospital, with the first two floors interfacing with the East Tower. A Design Review permit and Conditional Use Permit are also required for the hospital tower.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Section 21002 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an environmental impact report identify the significant effects of a project on the environment and provide measures or alternatives that can mitigate or avoid those significant effects. This project EIR contains an environmental analysis of the potential impacts associated with implementing the proposed Ocean View Tower Project.

The subject EIR has been prepared as a Project EIR, as defined in Section 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines. As defined in CEQA, a project EIR examines the impacts of a specific development project. This type of EIR should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project. The major issues that are addressed in the Project EIR were

determined based on review by the City of Chula Vista Development Services Department, and public comment received on the Notice of Preparation (distributed on January 27, 2016). The issues analyzed in the EIR include land use, aesthetics, geology and soils, paleontological resources, hydrology and water quality, transportation and circulation, noise, air quality, public services, public utilities, and greenhouse gas.

The Draft EIR was distributed for a 45-day public review period on June 20, 2016. One public comment letter was received. The Final EIR includes comments received, and responses to them. The Draft and Final EIRs identify that the proposed Project would not result in any significant unmitigated impacts. All impacts would be mitigated to a level of less than significant. All feasible mitigation measures with respect to Project impacts have been included in the Final EIR. Findings of Fact have been prepared for the City Council's approval in certifying the EIR. For those impacts with associated mitigation, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been provided with the EIR.

The City has examined a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed Project, other than the proposed Project described in the Final EIR. Based on this examination, the City has determined that the alternatives do not meet the project objectives, nor are they environmentally superior to the Project.

## **ANALYSIS:**

### **Precise Plan**

The current zoning (C-O-P) for the property (approved in January 1990) establishes a Precise Plan (P) Modifying District for the site. This P modifier provides a process to allow (through the application of a Precise Plan) future deviations from the prescribed development standards of the CO zone. Said deviations provide flexibility in the application of development standards, which become necessary due to the nature of development on the site. For example, hospitals usually contain tall structures such as towers, which often exceed 45 ft. At this time, building height is the only requested deviation as shown in the Precise Plan (please see Attachment 10, Figures and Exhibits). Pursuant to the provisions of the existing zone, a Precise Plan is required to allow a deviation in building height. The applicant has complied with the requirements of CVMC Section 19.56.042 (Required maps and information) by providing an application submittal package, which includes site plans and elevations for the Project. Section 19.14.576 of the CVMC outlines the required findings that must be established for granting approval of a Precise Plan. Said findings are provided in the attached Ordinance pertaining to the requested increase in allowable building height for the proposed hospital tower.

### **Conditional Use Permit**

CVMC Section 19.54.020(H) classifies hospitals as an unclassified use that would be allowed in the COP zone subject to a CUP. The site already accommodates the Sharp Chula Vista hospital campus, permitted by previous CUP's. This new CUP is to allow for the expansion of the hospital use with the construction of a new seven story hospital tower. Required findings for the granting of the CUP are made in the CUP City Council Resolution.

#### **Site Plan/Layout**

The location of the new hospital tower was chosen because it had the best proximity to the new parking structure and provides an opportunity to interface with and expand the existing surgical department located on the first two floors of the existing hospital into the new building.

#### **Development Standards**

The hospital tower is considered an expansion of the existing hospital use. The height and parking standards for the C-O zone are as follows:

<u>C-O Development Standards:</u>	<u>PROPOSED for Project</u>
Building Height: 45 feet	120 feet
Parking: Existing	Proposed
<u>Hospital-</u> 1.5 spaces per bed Hospital 243 beds=365 spaces Skilled Nursing 100 beds=150 spaces Subtotal (hospital) 343 beds= 515 spaces	<u>Hospital-</u> 1.5 spaces per bed Hospital 243 beds=365 spaces Skilled Nursing 100 beds=150 spaces Ocean View Tower 136 beds=207 spaces Subtotal (hospital) 722 spaces
<u>Medical Offices-</u> 1 space per 200 square-feet  176,588 square-feet= 883 spaces	<u>Medical Offices-</u> 1 space per 200 square-feet  176,588 square-feet= 883 spaces
Existing Parking 2,300 spaces	Existing Parking 2,268 spaces
Total Required 1,398 spaces	Total Required 1,605 spaces
Additional Spaces 902 spaces	Additional Spaces 663 spaces

- As a result of 2,268 parking spaces existing on-site, which exceeds the parking requirement even when considering the new proposed Ocean View Tower, no additional parking is required or provided.

## Building

### Height

As discussed previously, the proposed Precise Plan is to provide for an increase in the allowable building height limit of 45 feet. The request is to accommodate a proposed seven story hospital tower including elevator unit. Six of the levels will be above grade and one mostly subsurface. The total height would be 110 feet 9 inches from the seven-story tower itself (to the top of the parapet), reaching a maximum height of 120 feet to the top of the elevator enclosure.

### Parking

As shown in the preceding table, existing parking for the campus exceeds the amount required by the CVMC. The parking garage was constructed to respond to what the applicant perceived as a current shortage of staff, patient and public parking available to the hospital.

The new parking structure was constructed in 2015 and provided an additional 718 parking spaces that resulted in a total of 2,300 spaces for the campus. Based upon the current parking requirement of 1,398 spaces, an excess of 902 parking spaces are currently available. The proposed project would require 207 parking spaces and would also involve the loss of 31 existing spaces. The net

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result is that a total of 2,268 spaces would be available, which still provides an excess of 663 spaces beyond what is required. According to the applicant, construction activities will only be allowed to consume 300 parking spaces (temporary during the week). At all times during construction, there will be over 300 parking spaces beyond the amount required for public and staff use. As a result, it is anticipated that parking will not be an issue for the public or affect the neighboring residential community.

#### Lighting/Noise

Light sources for the Ocean View Tower include indoor lighting, outdoor lighting, and vehicle headlights. The lighting would be reduced in the evening associated with normal nighttime activities. The western end of the proposed building primarily faces the direction of the existing hospital and on-site medical building, as well as the California Veterans Home at a slightly lower elevation. No light spillage is anticipated beyond the boundaries of the site. CVMC Section 17.28.020 indicates no light source shall be directed to and unshielded from adjacent residential properties. A photometric study will be required for review and approval by the City prior to issuance of building permits to ensure compliance with the CVMC (Condition No 7 of DR Resolution). In addition, in response to concerns expressed by residents at the community meetings, the Applicant has already added light shields to the existing Loop Road street lights, as well as to the top floor of the elevator tower to dramatically reduce the amount of spilled light to the community. The applicant has also planted approximately 50 trees on the northern hillside of the hospital campus that will provide additional shielding of lights.

In regard to construction noise, CVMC Section 19.68.030 specifies that noise levels for receiving land use categories are limited to 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays, and from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends.

#### Traffic/Circulation

Based upon SANDAG trip generation rates, the proposed 138 bed hospital tower would generate 2,760 average daily trips (ADT). However, while an increase in trip generation would result from an increase in patient capacity provided by the new hospital tower, it would be a smaller increase in trip generation than projected based upon SANDAG trip generation calculations. This is due to the fact that, the number of vehicle trips to the medical center has been increasing even without the hospital expansion due to growth in the surrounding community. As a result, the Project would accommodate existing and future demand for hospital services by providing improved facilities that can better handle patient volumes.

As mentioned, two community forum events were conducted to gather input from surrounding residents. One of the areas of concern expressed by surrounding residents regarded the traffic on Medical Center Court.

Traffic Mitigation Measures include measures to 1) mitigate the construction related impacts to Medical Center Court/Main Hospital Driveway; 2) mitigate direct operational impacts to Medical

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Center Court East of Medical Center Drive; and 3) mitigate the Projects cumulative traffic impacts.

The Applicant is currently finishing their plans to re-stripe Medical Center Court to add left turn lanes as a response to required mitigation measures. The Applicant also plans to improve the existing bus stop and cross walk as part of the improvement plans.

### **Design Review**

#### Chula Vista Design Manual

Chapter 3 of the Chula Vista Design Manual stipulates design parameters that pertain to site planning, landscape architecture, architecture and signage for the project site. The Design Guidelines contain illustrations and written requirements to implement the design guidance presented therein. Some of the design guidelines also emphasize quality design, site development character and conceptual building/parking/open space relationships within the site.

#### Site Layout/Parking

Compatibility: (Page III-31)

*The arrangement of structures, parking and circulation areas, and open spaces should recognize the particular characteristics of the site and should relate to the surrounding built environment in pattern, function, scale, character and materials. In developed areas, new projects should meet or exceed the standards of quality which have been set by surrounding development.*

The new tower would be strategically located in the northerly portion of the hospital campus, within an area bounded by the recently completed Loop Road that provides enhanced circulation through the campus. The new tower would also be adjacent to the existing hospital and recently constructed parking structure. The new Loop Road is now the primary entrance into the hospital campus.

Building Placement: (Page III-31)

*Structures should be sited in a manner that will complement adjacent structures. Sites should be developed in a coordinated manner to provide ordered diversity and to avoid jumbled confusion.*

As mentioned above, the new hospital tower is strategically located in the northern portion of the site to provide additional hospital beds and surgical facilities to the overall campus to support the acute care functions. The orientation of the new hospital tower itself is placed to align with the existing hospital building with the first two floors interfacing directly with the East Tower.

### **Architecture/Design**



Compatibility (Page II-37):

*High quality, innovative and imaginative architecture is encouraged....The designer is expected to employ variations in form, building details and siting in order to create visual interest. In all cases, the chosen architectural style should be employed on all building elevations.*

The textured panels proposed for the hospital tower contain a new high-tech material that provides richness and character to the building cladding. The large amount of glazing that will be utilized will consist of "Low E" glass. This will be both pleasing to view, as well as provide good insulation qualities. (see Attachment 10, Figures and Exhibits)

Scale/Building façade and roof articulation (Page III-38):

*At a minimum, the height of new development should "transition" from the height of adjacent development. Also, varying the height of a building so that it appears to be divided into distinct massing elements, and/or articulating the building façade by horizontal and vertical offsets in wall planes can reduce building bulk and is strongly encouraged.*

The building massing is composed of varying volumes of height and scale. The varied height and mass, transitions from the lower adjacent parking structure and existing hospital tower. The massing at the new hospital tower is further broken down by utilizing continuous, horizontal windows, window shade trellises and panelized façade on the two longest elevations. At the sidewalk and street levels, trellises along the main walkways, east façade and entry help to reduce the bulk and scale for pedestrians. Finally, by utilizing subtle color and material variations similar to adjacent structures, the new hospital tower integrates itself into the overall hospital campus.

Materials and Colors (Page III-39):

*Colors and materials should be consistent with the chosen architectural style and compatible with the character of surrounding development.*

*The color palette should be selected carefully. Subdued color combinations constituting of a limited number of colors are encouraged. Large areas of intense white color and vibrant compositions should be avoided. Variations in shade or tone can be used to enhance form and heighten interest. Colors should be used to articulate entries or other architectural features.*

The lighter color of the building is meant to compliment the lighter color of the parking structure, as well as the exiting hospital building. The color tones are intended to join together the new tower with the existing hospital building and parking structure.

## **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the City Council members and has found no property holdings within 500 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)(11), for purposes of the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code §87100, *et seq.*).

In addition, staff has conducted a decision maker conflict of interest review concerning Councilmember Miesen and has determined that a potential conflict of interest may exist because it may be reasonably foreseeable that a financial effect on a business entity in which Councilmember Miesen has a financial interest may be material.

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

## **LINK TO STRATEGIC GOALS**

The City's Strategic Plan has five major goals: Operational Excellence, Economic Vitality, Healthy Community, Strong and Secure Neighborhoods and a Connected Community. The Project implements the City's Strategy 2.2, which is to promote an environment for residents and businesses to prosper. Furthermore, it implements the City Initiative 2.2.2 to expand the goods and services available to residents. The new hospital tower will help meet the medical needs of a growing community.

## **CURRENT YEAR FISCAL IMPACT**

The application fees and processing costs are paid for by the Applicant. The Project will not be fully constructed until beyond the current fiscal year.

## **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

There will be no on-going fiscal impact associated with this action since the action does not commit the City of Chula Vista to the expenditure of any City funds.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Ordinance

*Staff Contact: Jeff Steichen, Associate Planner*