

PROPOSED LIDO HOUSE HOTEL

3300 NEWPORT BOULEVARD & 475 32ND STREET



As we approach the public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the redevelopment of the old City Hall property located at 3300 Newport Boulevard and 475 32nd Street, the community has raised several questions regarding the land use entitlement process. This information sheet is intended to answer the most frequently asked questions.

What is the Purpose of the Proposed Mixed-Use Land Use and Zoning Designations?

The City Hall site is presently designated as **Public Facilities**, which allows governmental offices and other type of civic functions. This designation does not allow any commercial and/or residential development, so the redevelopment of the old City Hall property necessarily requires the City to consider a new land use designation for the property.

City staff first outlined the Mixed-Use land use categories and zoning designation to the City Council on April 24, 2012, when the City Council initiated the amendment process. At that time, the proposed Mixed-Use designations were considered unique to the City Hall property and necessary to provide for the operation of the Lido Fire Station in conjunction with the future development of the City Hall property. The proposed Mixed-Use designations provide flexibility to consider a wide range of development options. This is especially important when there is a non-residential component to the development.

The proposed Lido House Hotel project illustrates this point, in that the proposed hotel project in conjunction with the retention of the Lido Fire Station in its current location are consistent with the proposed Mixed-Use designations. Both the Planning Commission and City Council may consider a refinement to the proposed land uses within the Mixed-Use designations as part of their deliberations on the project.

Why has both a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Draft Environmental Impact Report Been Prepared?

Following City Council's initiation of the amendments to the General Plan, Coastal Land Use Plan and Zoning Code to facilitate redevelopment of the old City Hall site, in June 2012, Staff began undertaking environmental review of the Mixed-Use land use amendments although at that time, a precise development plan had not been suggested or approved by City Council. Therefore, City staff prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration with an analysis that was limited to the potential impacts of the land use plan and zoning amendments (i.e. Mixed-Use land use designation changes) and no analysis of a specific development project was included.

The draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and proposed Mixed-Use amendments were considered by the Planning Commission on January 17, 2013. After the public hearing, the Commission recommended to City Council approval of the land use plan and zoning amendments and adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Around this same time, the City Council narrowed its consideration of development proposals and issued a Request for Proposals to pre-qualified developers on February 5, 2013. Given the forthcoming responses to the RFP, on March 26, 2013, the City Council continued indefinitely the consideration of the proposed mixed-use amendments and did not take any action to approve or modify the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration Mixed-Use amendments, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Instead, following its selection of the RD Olson team and its proposal for a the development of a, 130-room hotel in July 2013, the City Council executed an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with RD Olson and established an ad-hoc negotiating committee to guide the preparation of a long-term ground lease for the site. Because the hotel development proposal had been selected, specific development plans were contemplated and foreseeable. As such, a comprehensive evaluation of both the proposed hotel development and proposed mixed-use land use designation amendments should be completed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines prior to City Council approval. Given the development proposal, City staff determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be the appropriate document for this comprehensive evaluation. The EIR will be considered in place of the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration that was recommended by the Planning Commission. At the upcoming Planning Commission and City Council public hearings, City staff will be requesting action on the Environmental Impact Report.

Has the Decision to Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report Slowed Down the Project?

Staff does not believe the preparation of a Draft EIR has slowed the Project down.

The decision to postpone consideration of the proposed amendments to evaluate the amendments together with the proposed Lido House Hotel in the Draft EIR is consistent with CEQA. The proposed hotel project is now beyond being conceptual, and is far enough in the planning process for it to be appropriately evaluated as part of the legislative approvals that serve to facilitate the redevelopment. Rather than slow down the process, the Draft EIR provides for a thorough evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of the project as well as consider project alternatives.

Why Does the Environmental Impact Report Include Alternatives that the Community Does Not Support?

CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines require an Environmental Impact Report to analyze a reasonable range of alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.

The 4 alternatives included in the EIR are:

- 1) No Project/No Build
- 2) No Project/Existing General Plan
- 3) Reduced Density (a 3-story hotel)
- 4) Mixed Use project composed of 99 residential units and 15,000 square feet of commercial.

The discussion of alternatives provides for an informed public discussion of the effects of the proposed project and alternatives, however, the only site development proposal is for a 130-room hotel.

The Draft EIR concludes that the proposed project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts and all potential impacts were reduced to a less than significant level.

What is the Proposed Project Schedule?

July 17, 2013	Planning Commission Public Hearing
August 12, 2013	City Council Public Hearing
August 2014	Submit Coastal Land Use Plan Amendment to Coastal Commission
April 2015	Coastal Commission Action on Coastal Land Use Plan Amendment
April 2015	Submit Coastal Development Permit Application for Hotel Construction
October 2015	Coastal Commission Approval of Coastal Development Permit
June 2016	Initiate Construction
August 2017	Project Completion

This Project includes a General Plan Amendment. Does this Project Require a Vote?

Pursuant to City Charter Section 423, a General Plan Amendment may require the vote of the electorate if it is considered to be a “major amendment”, as that is defined by Section 423. The proposed General Plan Amendment as recommended by City staff is not considered to be a “major amendment” as it is within the thresholds established by City Charter Section 423. Therefore, it does not require a vote by the City of Newport Beach electorate in order to be effective.

We hope this information answers frequently asked questions about the process. If there are additional questions or you need further information, please contact James Campbell, Principal Planner, at 949-644-3210 or jcampbell@newportbeachca.gov.