

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**REQUESTS FOR DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS**  
**Project Site Address: 7660-7702 & 7718-7728 N. Lankershim Blvd.,**  
**Los Angeles, CA 91605**  
**Applicant: Universal Villas, LLC**

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**REQUESTS FOR DISCRETIONARY APPROVAL:**

The Applicant, Universal Villas, LLC is seeking the following discretionary approvals:

1. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 11.5.6**, a **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT** to the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan to change the land use designation of the Small Lot homes portion of the Project Site from Low Residential to Low Medium II Residential.
2. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTIONS 12.32 F and 12.32 Q**, a **VESTING ZONE CHANGE FROM R1-1 to RD 1.5-1** to permit the construction of 99 small lot residential homes on approximately 3.9 acres.
3. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 16.05**, the Applicant requests that **SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS** be made as part of this discretionary approval.
4. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 17.15**, the Applicant requests approval of **VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT (VTT) MAP NO. 74107** for small lot subdivision purposes.
5. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 12.22 A.25**, for the proposed 64-unit apartment building, the Applicant proposes to set aside 8% of the base density units (i.e. 4 units) at the Very Low Income ("VLI") level, and requests a Density Bonus increase of 27.5%, or the equivalent of 14 units. Additionally, the Applicant requests the following "Off-Menu" Density Bonus Incentives pursuant to **LAMC Section 12.22 A.25(g)(3)**:
  - a. A decrease of the required Front Yard setback from 15 ft. to 5 ft.
  - b. A decrease of the required Rear Yard setback from 15 ft. to 10 ft.
  - c. An increase in the allowed maximum height from 45 ft. to 52 ft. (i.e. a 7 ft. increase) and within 50 ft. of an R1 zoned lot.

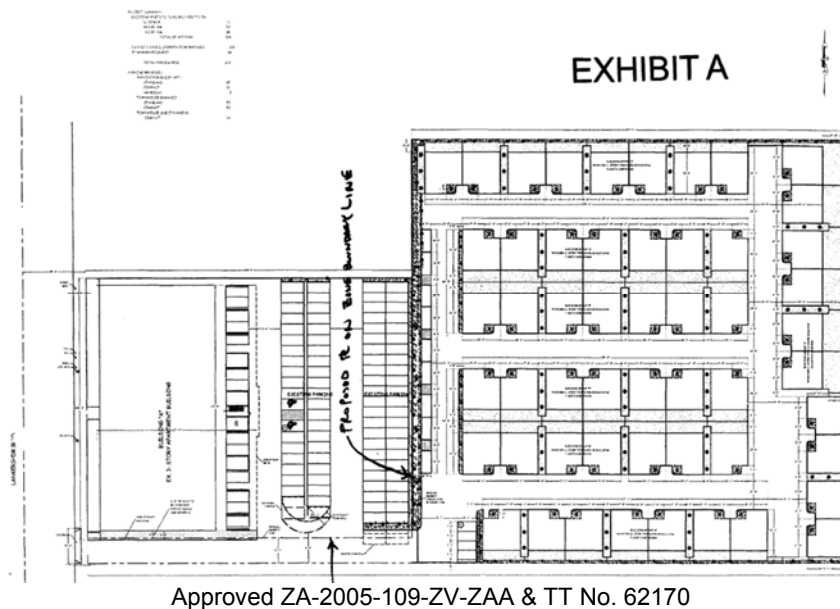
**Note:** Pursuant to various sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, the Applicant will request approvals and permits from the Department of Building and Safety (and other municipal agencies) for Project construction activities including, but not limited to, the following: excavation, shoring, grading, foundation, removal of existing street trees, haul route, building and tenant improvements.

**PROJECT LOCATION & PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The entire Project Site is approximately 5 acres in size and located on and off of Lankershim Blvd., north of Saticoy Street and south of Stagg Street, in the Sun Valley –

La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area of the City of Los Angeles. The Project Site is comprised of 5 lots, all except one which is dual-zoned R3-1-CUGU (Medium Residential) and R1-1-CUGU (Low Residential). The northerly R3-1 zoned and Lankershim Blvd-abutting portion of the Project Site is currently developed with several commercial/retail structures. The R1-1 zoned portion of the Site is largely vacant with the exception of two small single-family residences. In the vicinity of the Project Site along Lankershim Blvd. are several large apartment buildings as well as miscellaneous commercial and retail uses, along with various automobile repair shops. "Behind" the proposed apartment building and to the north, south, and east of the proposed small lot homes are single-family residential neighborhoods on R1-1 zoned lots; these single-family houses generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size.

In 2005, for the southerly R1 portion of the Project Site (APN 2316-002-037), the City of Los Angeles approved a Variance (ZA-2005-109-ZV-ZAA) and Tentative Tract Map (TT No. 62170) to permit a 53-unit residential condominium project (comprised of multiple, detached 2-story buildings – See graphic labeled "Exhibit A" below.). This entitlement approval is still valid with an expiration date of July 26, 2018.



The current project proposal includes the 2005 project site along with almost 3 acres of additional and contiguous land to the north. The Applicant proposes to demolish the northerly existing commercial/retail structures and the two single-family residences and to construct a 64-unit four-story multi-family residential building (with ground floor enclosed parking) on the northerly R3 portion and 99 three-story small lot homes on the R1 portions of the Site. The small lot homes will be 3-bedroom single-family houses, on average 1,670 s.f. in size. The apartment building will be comprised of a mix of studios, 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom units. Vehicular and pedestrian access for the entire Project is proposed off of Lankershim Blvd. through the northerly R3-zoned lot. The Project will provide an abundance of on-site automobile and bicycle parking for residents and guests, as well as ample open space areas in both the apartment building and the small lot homes community. The Project has been designed to comply with the currently in effect Small Lot Ordinance and Design Guidelines.

## **ZONING ISSUES AND CODE COMPLIANCE**

### Density

#### *Apartment Building Proposal:*

The R3-zoned lot upon which the 64-unit apartment building is proposed to be constructed is approximately 42,430 gross square feet. After dedications and yard setbacks are deducted, the net buildable area is 34,702 sq. ft. In the R3 zone, the base density requirement is 1 dwelling unit per 800 sq. ft., yielding a base density of 50 units. The proposed apartment building is seeking a 27.5% density bonus per the City's Density Bonus Ordinance. This density bonus allowance yields an additional 14 units. Therefore, with the 27.5% density bonus, 64 units are allowed on this portion of the project, and 64 apartments are proposed.

#### *Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

The portion of the Project Site upon which the 99 small lot single-family homes is approximately 171,179 gross square feet. After yard setbacks are deducted, the net buildable area is 162,721 sq. ft. The small lots portion of the Project Site is proposed to be re-zoned to RD1.5, which density is calculated at a ratio of 1 dwelling unit per 1,500 sq. ft. This would yield 108 dwelling units. The Applicant proposes to develop the Site with 99 small lot homes.

### Floor Area

#### *Apartment Building Proposal:*

The R3-zoned lot upon which the 64-unit apartment building is proposed to be constructed is approximately 42,430 gross square feet. After dedications and yard setbacks are deducted, the net buildable area is 34,702 sq. ft. In the R3 zone, the allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 3 to 1. Therefore, the allowed maximum floor area for this portion of the Project Site is 104,106 sq. ft. The proposed 64-unit apartment building is 61,188 sq. ft., or an FAR of 1.76 to 1, well below the maximum allowed on this site.

#### *Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

The portion of the Project Site upon which the 99 small lot single-family homes is approximately 171,179 gross square feet. After yard setbacks are deducted, the net buildable area is 162,721 sq. ft. The small lots portion of the Project Site is proposed to be re-zoned to RD1.5, which allows an FAR of 3 to 1. The proposed 99 small lot homes would comprise a total floor area of 165,910 sq. ft., or an FAR of 1.02 to 1, which is well below the maximum allowed on this site.

### Height

#### *Apartment Building Proposal:*

The 64-unit apartment building is proposed to be developed on the R3-1-CUGU zoned portion of the Project Site. The maximum permissible height in the R3-1 zone is 45 ft., with no limit on the number of stories. The proposed apartment building is four stories and a maximum height of 52 ft. The additional height is being requested as a Density Bonus off-menu incentive pursuant to LAMC Sec. 12.22 A.25.

#### *Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

The 99 small lot homes are proposed to be developed on the currently R1-1-CUGU zoned portion of the Project Site which with the approved Vesting Zone Change request, will be rezoned to RD1.5-1-CUGU which permits a maximum height of 45 ft. with no limit on the number of stories. The proposed small lot homes are each designed to be a 3-story (including ground floor enclosed 2-car garage) and 36 ft. in height.

### Yard Setbacks

#### *Apartment Building Proposal:*

The 64-unit rectangular apartment building fronts and takes access off of Lankershim Blvd. Located on the R3-1-CUGU zoned portion of the Project Site, the building's required and proposed yard setbacks are as follows:

| <b>Yard</b> | <b>Required</b> | <b>Proposed</b> |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Front       | 15 ft.          | 5 ft.           |
| Side        | 7 ft.           | 7 ft.           |
| Rear        | 15 ft.          | 10 ft.          |

The yard setback reductions required for the front and rear yards are requested as a Density Bonus off-menu incentive pursuant to LAMC Sec. 12.22 A.25.

#### *Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

Pursuant to LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27(e), no front, side or rear yard setbacks are required between lots within a small lot subdivision. However, a 5 ft. setback shall be provided where a lot abuts a lot that is not created pursuant to this subdivision. The proposed yard setbacks for the perimeter of the small lots community are as follows:

- Northerly setbacks: 12 ft. to 15 ft.
- Southerly setbacks: 15 ft.
- Easterly setbacks: 15 ft.
- Westerly setbacks: 5.2 ft. to 31 ft.

### Open Space

#### *Apartment Building Proposal:*

LAMC Sec. 12.21 G.2 requires open space be provided based on the habitable rooms for each dwelling unit. The following is the required open space for the 64-unit proposed apartment building:

#### **Required:**

| <b>Unit Type</b>   | <b># of Units</b> | <b>Ratio</b>  | <b>Required (s.f.)</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <3 habitable rooms | 48                | 100 s.f./unit | 4,800                  |
| 3 habitable rooms  | 16                | 125 s.f./unit | 2,000                  |
|                    |                   |               | 6,800                  |

The apartment building will include **7,950 sq. ft. of open space**, which is well in excess of that required by Code. Of the total open space provided, only 1,600 sq. ft. is provided

as private open space. The balance (6,350 sq. ft.) is provided as common open space in the form of two recreation rooms and a podium level courtyard/amenity deck.

In accordance with LAMC Sec. 12.21 G.2, on-site trees for the apartment building are provided at the required ratio of 1 tree per dwelling unit, for a total of 16 trees.

*Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27 details the development standards applicable to small lot subdivision projects. Specifically, LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27(d) requires that “All structures on a lot which includes one or more dwelling units, may, taken together, occupy no more than 80% of the lot area, unless the tract or parcel map provides common open space equivalent to 20% of the lot area of each lot not meeting this provision.” As indicated in Table 1 of Sheet A0.2 of the Project Plans prepared by VTBS, the lot coverage of each of the small lots range from 16.6% to 68.9%. Therefore, the small lot project provides an abundance of open space on individual small lots as well as cumulatively for the entire small lots community as illustrated in the below landscape plan image.



Automobile Parking

*Apartment Building Proposal:*

The proposed 64-unit apartment building includes a request for Density Bonus. Pursuant to LAMC Sec. 12.21 A.4, the Applicant can select from two options to provide parking for this project component. The Applicant is providing on-site automobile parking per “Parking Option 1” as follows:

| Unit Type | # of Units | Ratio | Required |
|-----------|------------|-------|----------|
|-----------|------------|-------|----------|

|              |    |                                    |    |
|--------------|----|------------------------------------|----|
| 0-1 Bedrooms | 48 | 1 space/unit                       | 48 |
| 2-3 Bedrooms | 16 | 2 spaces/unit                      | 32 |
|              |    | SUBTOTAL:                          | 80 |
|              |    | Bicycle Parking Replacement (10%): | -8 |
|              |    | TOTAL:                             | 72 |

*Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

For small lot subdivisions that meet the requirements of Section 12.22.C.27, the required parking spaces are not required to be located on the same lot with each dwelling unit, but shall be provided within the boundaries of the parcel or tract map. The ratio of parking spaces required for all other dwelling units shall be at least one parking space for each dwelling unit of less than three habitable rooms, one and one-half parking spaces for each dwelling unit of three habitable rooms, and two parking spaces for each dwelling unit of more than three habitable rooms.

Each of the 99 small lot homes proposed are designed to have 2-car garages. Therefore, there are a total of 198 parking spaces for the residents of the small lot homes. Additionally, 25 guest stalls (which is a ratio of 0.25 guest stalls per small lot unit) are provided on-site. Thus, the total number of automobile parking spaces provided for the small lot homes is 223 stalls.

Bicycle Parking

*Apartment Building Proposal:*

LAMC Sec. 12.21 A.16 requires that short and long-term bicycle parking stalls be provided for multi-family residential uses at the ratio of 1 short-term stall for every 10 dwelling units, and 1 long-term stall for every dwelling unit. For the proposed 64-unit apartment building, 6 short-term stalls are required and provided, and 64 long-term stalls are required and provided. The covered short-term bike stalls are proposed to be located immediately adjacent to the lobby entrance off of Lankershim Blvd. The long-term bicycle storage room is also located on the ground floor near the main lobby, behind the leasing office.

*Small Lot Homes Proposal:*

LAMC Sec. 12.21 A.16(a)(1) specifies that residential buildings containing more than three dwelling units must provide short and long-term bicycle parking. Additionally, LAMC Sec. 12.21 A.16(a)(1)(ii) provides that "Developments such as townhouses that include individually accessed private garages for each unit shall not be required to provide long-term bicycle parking." The proposed 99 homes are single-family homes which each have attached, individually access private garages which can accommodate residents' and guests' bicycles.

Small Lot Design Guidelines

The project architects at Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh, AIA (VTBS) have designed a small lot residential community which is sensitive to its surrounding uses and which complies with the City's 2014 Small Lot Design Guidelines. Homes have been configured

to front landscaped walkways and open space areas. Attractive paseos with pathways connect throughout the entire site and connect to Lankershim Blvd. Pedestrian access paths are separate from driveways to enhance walkability and safety. With respect to design and layout of the homes, the small lot homes have been placed in various orientations on the Site to increase the variation of facades. All homes include a covered porch at the entry with layered architectural features and varied roof modulations to add visual interest. Materials have been selected to be consistent with the Spanish Colonial style which is more in harmony with existing development in the area than traditional contemporary styles of many small lot homes in the City.

## **STREETS AND CIRCULATION**

The Project Site and surrounding uses are well-served by Major (Boulevard I & II) and Secondary Highways (Avenue I & II & III), including Lankershim Boulevard, Sherman Way, Laurel Canyon Boulevard, Strathern Street and Saticoy Street. In addition, surface street access to and from the Hollywood Freeway (SR-170) is provided approximately one mile west of the Project Site. Surface street access to and from the Golden State Freeway (I-5) is provided within one-and-a-half-mile north of the Project Site. These transportation facilities and other local roadways are described in more detail below.

### **Freeways**

The Hollywood Freeway (SR-170) is the primary north-south arterial in this portion of the San Fernando Valley. This facility, located approximately one mile west of the Project site, is the principal route over the Cahuenga Pass, the primary shortcut between the Los Angeles Basin and the San Fernando Valley. From its southern end at the East Los Angeles Interchange to its intersection with the Ventura Freeway in the southeastern San Fernando Valley (the Hollywood Split), it is signed as part of U.S. Route 101. It is then signed as State Route 170 north to its terminus at the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5). The entire route is part of the California Freeway and Expressway System. The Freeway provides four mainline travel lanes in each direction in the project vicinity, including one HOV lane in each direction of SR-170 between I-5 and the Hollywood Split interchange. Near the Project site, interchanges with surface street ramp access are provided at Roscoe Boulevard and Sherman Way. The Freeway also provides a partial interchange with the Golden State Freeway (I-5) approximately 2 miles to the northeast.

The Golden State Freeway (I-5) is the major transportation facility in the project area. In the vicinity of the project, this north/south-oriented facility typically provides four travel lanes in each direction. The Golden State Freeway serves the entire Southern California region, providing access through downtown Los Angeles to the south, the San Fernando Valley in the Project site vicinity, and Valencia to the north. The freeway also provides connections to the Ventura Freeway (SR- 134) and the Hollywood Freeway (SR-170) in the Project area. The Freeway provides four mainline travel lanes in each direction in the Project vicinity. Access to the Golden State Freeway in the project area are provided by on-ramps and off-ramps at the following streets; Webb Avenue, Lankershim Boulevard, Tuxford Street, Penrose Street and Sunland Boulevard. The Freeway also provides a partial interchange with the Hollywood Freeway (I-170) approximately 2 miles to the northeast.

### **Streets and Highways**

Laurel Canyon Boulevard, designated an Avenue I, provides north-south access through the San Fernando, Sun Valley, North Hollywood, Studio City and Hollywood communities between Polk Street north of the interchange of the Golden State Freeway (I-5) and the San Diego Freeway (I-405) and Sunset Boulevard. North of the Project site, access to the Golden State Freeway (I-5) is provided via an interchange with Laurel Canyon Boulevard. In the Project vicinity, this street has two travel lanes along with one bike lane in each direction with left-turn channelization at major intersections within an approximately 70-foot roadway width.

Lankershim Boulevard, a north-south roadway, forms western boundary of the Project site. Designated a Boulevard II, this roadway provides access through the Sun Valley, North Hollywood, Universal City communities, from San Fernando Boulevard to its southern terminus at Ventura Boulevard. North of the Project site, access to the Golden State Freeway (I-5) is provided via an interchange with Lankershim Boulevard. South of the Project site, access to the Ventura Freeway (SR-134) is provided by Lankershim Boulevard interchange. Lankershim Boulevard generally provides two travel lanes with one bike lane in each direction within an approximate 80-foot wide roadway. Left-turn channelization is provided at major intersections.

Tujunga Avenue, a north-south roadway, is designated Avenue II. This roadway provides access through the Sun Valley, North Hollywood, Valley Village and Studio City communities, from south of Golden State Freeway (I-5) to its southern terminus at Ventura Boulevard. South of the Project site, accesses to the Hollywood Freeway and Ventura Freeway (SR-134) are provided along Tujunga Boulevard.

Tujunga Boulevard generally provides one to two travel lanes in each direction within an approximate 50- to 60-foot wide roadway. Left-turn channelization is provided at major intersections.

Strathern Street, an east-west roadway, is designated Avenue II. This roadway provides access through the Sun Valley community, discontinuously from Ranchito Avenue to its eastern terminus at the Golden State Freeway (I-5). In the Project vicinity, Tujunga Boulevard generally provides one travel lane in each direction within an approximate 50- to 60-foot wide roadway. Left-turn channelization is provided at major intersections.

Stagg Street, an east-west roadway, is designated Collector Street. This roadway provides access through the Sun Valley community, from Babcock Avenue to its eastern terminus near Bob Hope Airport. In the Project vicinity, Stagg Street generally provides one travel lane in each direction within an approximate 40-foot wide roadway.

Saticoy Street, an east-west roadway, is designated Avenue II. This roadway provides access through the Canoga Park, Winnetka, Reseda, Van Nuys and Sun Valley communities, discontinuously from its western end at Ingomar Street to its eastern terminus near Bob Hope Airport. In the Project vicinity, Saticoy Street generally provides two travel lanes in each direction within an approximate 50- to 60-foot wide roadway. Left-turn channelization is provided at major intersections.

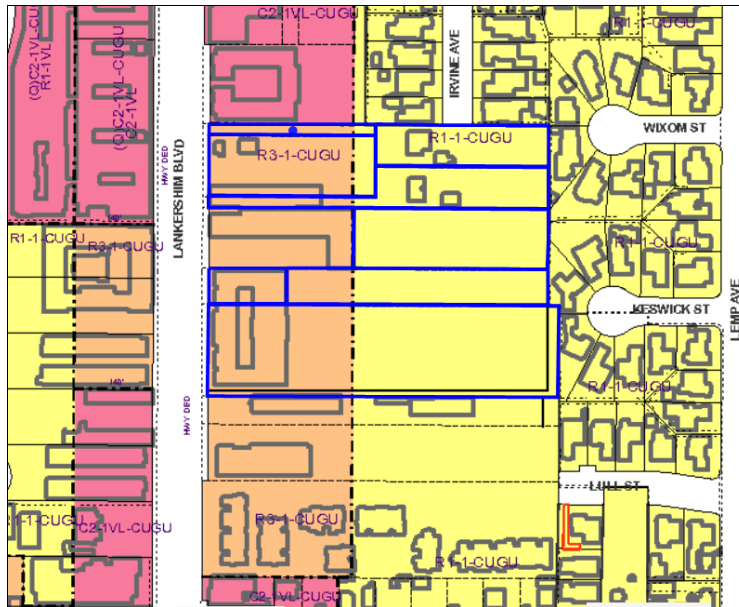
Irvine Avenue, located to the north of the of the Project Site, is designated a Local Street. The street currently has a 54 ft. right of way and terminates perpendicular to the Project Site's most northerly property line. As vehicular and pedestrian access for the Project's

residents is proposed off of Lankershim Blvd., only emergency vehicular access (EVA) is proposed onto Irvine Avenue to and from the Project Site.

Sherman Way, an east-west roadway, is designated Boulevard II, which provides continuous access between West Hills, Canoga Park, Winnetka, Reseda, Van Nuys and Sun Valley communities. West of the Project site, access to the Hollywood Freeway (SR-170) is provided along Sherman Way. In the Project vicinity, Sherman Way provides two travel lanes with one bike lane in each direction plus left-turn channelization within an approximately 80-foot roadway width.

## SURROUNDING PROPERTIES

As previously indicated, there is a diversity of land uses and building sizes in the vicinity of the Project Site. Near the Project Site along Lankershim Blvd. are several large apartment buildings (ranging from two to three stories each) as well as miscellaneous commercial and retail uses, along with various automobile repair shops. The zones along Lankershim Blvd. in this area range from C2-1VL to R3-1. “Behind” the proposed apartment building and to the north, south, and east of the proposed small lot homes are single-family residential neighborhoods on R1-1 zoned lots; these single-family houses generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size.



## PREVIOUS CASES

**ZA-2005-109-ZAA:** On July 27, 2005, the City Planning Commission **approved** a variance on Lot No. 2 for a 53-unit condominium in lieu of a permitted single-family dwelling unit. The CPC also **approved** an adjustment to permit the continued use and maintenance of the existing apartment building at 7660 Lankershim Blvd, to allow the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> units with a zero-square foot lot area and to allow the 68<sup>th</sup> unit to have a reduced lot area of 187 square feet in lieu of the required 800 square feet per unit in the R3-1 Zone, in addition to **approving** an adjustment to permit a front yard setback of eight-feet in lieu of the required 15-feet along the west property line, as well as an adjustment to permit a side yard setback

of five-feet eight-inches in lieu of the required six-feet along the north property line required in the R3-1 Zone. (*Related Case: TT-62170*)

**TT-62170:** On July 27, 2005, the Advisory Agency **approved** Tentative Tract No. 62170 composed of two lots, located at 7660 Lankershim Boulevard, for a maximum of 70 apartments in Lot 1 (R3-1 zone) and 53 condominium units in Lot 2 (R1-1 Zone). No final map was recorded and this approval has since expired. (*Related Case: ZA-2005-109-ZAA-ZV*)

**ZA-2002-4975-ZV-ZAA:** On December 17, 2003, the Zoning Administrator **approved** a variance to allow 192 dwelling units in lieu of the maximum permitted 92 dwellings on a 179,677 square-foot parcel, located at 7660 Lankershim Boulevard, in addition to a variance to permit the transition from a less to a more restrictive zone, specifically between the R1 and R3 zones, regarding parking, driveway, landscaping and other issues associated with the proposed development. The ZA also **approved** an adjustment to waive any front or rear yard setback requirements between the R1-1 and R3-1 zone lines. On December 26, 2003, a Letter of Correction was issued, stating that the grant clause should read **146** dwelling units instead of 192 dwelling units. (*Related Cases: ENV-2002-4976-MND*)

**ENV-2002-4976-MND:** On June 13, 2003, the Zoning Administrator filed a Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the associated case ZA-2002-4975-ZV-ZAA, which permitted a total of 192 units in lieu of 92 units permitted in the R3-1 and R1-1 zones, and to permit the transition from R1 to R3 for parking, driveway, and landscaping. The subject site is at 7660 Lankershim Boulevard. (*Related Cases: ZA-2002-4975-ZV-ZAA*)

**AA-1998-73-PMEX:** On October 23, 1998, the Advisory Agency found the adjustment of the common lot lines between two parcels (2316-001-043 and 2316-002-037) at 7660-710 Lankershim Boulevard, to be exempt from a parcel map, subject to a Conditional Certificate of Compliance requiring clearance from the Department of Building and Safety prior to obtaining building permits. This Conditional Certificate of Compliance for Lot-Line Adjustment was granted by the Advisory Agency on October 6, 1998.

**ZA-1994-0857-ZV:** On March 6, 1995, the Zoning Administrator **approved** a variance to permit the continued use and expansion of an automotive upholstery shop in the R3-1 Zone.

**ORD-165141-SA4000:** On October 10, 1989, the City Council **approved** an ordinance amending Section 12.04 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code by amending the zoning map. The subject site in subarea 4000 was rezoned from C2-1 to R3-1. (*Related Case: CPC-1986-822*)

**ORD-165141-SA4000:** On October 10, 1989, the City Council **approved** an ordinance amending Section 12.04 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code by amending the zoning map. The subject site in subarea 4000 was rezoned from C2-1 to R3-1. (*Related Case: CPC-1986-822*)

**CPC-1986-822:** See ORD-165141-SA4000 above.

**ZV-1981-138:** On August 14, 1981, the Zoning Administrator **denied** a variance to permit the use of the R1-1 zoned portion of an R1-1 and C2-1 zoned parcel, located at 7702-7760 Lankershim Boulevard, for the construction and maintenance of an apartment building complex containing 24 dwelling units and 52 off street parking spaces, with 22 of the parking spaces uncovered and in tandem.

**ND-78-267-SUB:** This case file was destroyed and no record of the case remains.

**TT-35330:** On December 13, 1978, the Advisory Agency **approved** Tentative Tract No. 35330, composed of 22 lots, located at 7660-7728 Lankershim Boulevard, for a combined single-family (18 lots) and 4 commercially zoned lots. On May 10, 1979, the Advisory Agency granted a modification request concerning the conditions of approval and revised map of TT-35330. On May 20, 1980, the Advisory Agency granted a two-year time extension for the recording of a final map for TT-35330. This time extension has expired.

## **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT and VESTING ZONE CHANGE FINDINGS**

The Applicant, Universal Villas, LLC is seeking the following:

6. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 11.5.6, a GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT** to the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan designation of the subject parcels from Low Residential to Low Medium II Residential.
7. **PURSUANT TO LAMC SECTION 12.32 F and 12.32 Q, a VESTING ZONE CHANGE FROM R1-1 to RD 1.5** to permit the construction of 99 small lot residential units on 3.615 acres.

1. **That the proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

The Project Site is within the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan. The North Hollywood area of the San Fernando Valley, including the Sun Valley portion of the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan, is predominantly built-out. The requested General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change are to develop a 99-homes small lot subdivision project on the R1-zoned rear portion (approximately 3.9 acres) of the 5-acre Project Site located off of Lankershim Blvd. north of Saticoy Street. For this discussion of the requested General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change only, "Project Site" hereinafter will refer just to the R1-zoned portion of the project upon which the proposed 99 small lot homes are proposed.

The Project Site is currently (and historically) vacant and undeveloped, with the exception of two small single-family homes (one 1,083 s.f. and the other 1,536 s.f.). Vehicular and pedestrian access to the small lot homes community is proposed off of Lankershim Blvd. through the northerly R3-zoned lot of the project Site. Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) for Fire Department personnel is proposed off of Irvine Avenue from the north.

Near the Project Site along Lankershim Blvd. are several large apartment buildings (ranging from two to three stories) as well as miscellaneous commercial and retail uses, along with various automobile repair shops. The zones along Lankershim Blvd. in this area range from C2-1VL to R3-1. "Behind" the proposed apartment building and to the north, south, and east of the proposed small lot homes are single-family residential neighborhoods on R1-1 zoned lots; these single-family houses generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size. The adjacent single-family homes to the east are located on local streets ending in cul-de-sacs with the rear yards of approximately five (5) homes immediately adjacent to the Project Site, thereby precluding extensions of these local streets for traffic flow from the Project Site into the existing residential neighborhood. Additionally, although Irvine Street to the north does connect to the Project Site's northerly property line, vehicular and pedestrian access is not proposed off of Irvine, thereby also precluding traffic flow from the proposed Project into the northerly single-family residential community. Several older single-story commercial buildings and surface parking lots are located adjacent to the south. Abutting the Project Site to the west and to the south are surface parking lots and a commercial/retail building.

Community serving uses such as mini-marts, local restaurants, nail and beauty salons, auto repair shops, store-front churches and ministries are within walking distance and serve the residents in this area. Two elementary schools are located a few blocks (one to the northeast and one to the southeast) of the Project Site.

The Project Site proposed for the small lot homes is comprised of a unique area of approximately 3.9 gross acres of largely vacant residentially zoned property. The site is made up of several contiguous legal parcels. All existing lots, except for one, are dual zoned, R1-1 and R3-1, and designated Low Residential and Medium Residential respectively in the Community Plan. Because of the unusual depth of the lots and the dual designations and zoning, the portions of the lots with R-3 zoning and fronting on Lankershim have been developed, leaving a large “donut hole” of undeveloped R1-1 property. It currently functions as an undeveloped ‘remainder portion’ of the unwieldy current lot configuration and zoning. Access to the small lot subdivision site is proposed from Lankershim Boulevard with a new private driveway located along the northerly R3-zoned portion of the Site. The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map would modify the lots containing dual zoning so that each resulting parcel would have a single zone. A private driveway system would provide circulation to the small lot homes community without impacting the existing local street circulation in the adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods.

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning (DCP) recognized the zoning difficulties on this site when a previous owner proposed a Tentative Tract map to separate the R-3 and R1-1 portions of 7660 Lankershim into two lots. That project proposed a 53-unit condominium on the R1-1 portion of 7660 Lankershim. The tract map created Lot 2, consisting of the R1-1 portion and a flag portion of the R3 zoning on the south side of the existing apartment building in order to provide street access to Lankershim Boulevard. This project was approved (ZA-2005-109 (ZV)(ZAA) and Tentative Tract No. 62170). Although the project has not been constructed, the entitlement approvals are valid until 2018. This prior approval demonstrates that the DCP recognized the unusual zoning and the difficulty of developing the Project Site with the existing restrictions. Variance findings were made by the City of Los Angeles in order to enable infill and high density residential development in this historically underutilized Site. Among these findings included the following determinations by the Zoning Administrator:

- “The property in question does not lend itself to any type of practical development consistent with the current zoning since the current rear portion of the lot is underutilized. The proposed use includes a 53-unit multi-family units, which would utilize the unused rear portion of the lot.”
- “The development of this vacant land will serve the community by providing needed housing, increasing the tax base, and eliminating potential problems associated with vacant land such as loitering, and possible nuisance...”

Although since expired, in 2003, the City of Los Angeles also reviewed and approved a project for an even more dense project located on the southerly portion of the Project Site. ZA-2002-4975 (ZV)(ZAA) was approved by the City for 146 dwelling units total on the lot known as 7660 Lankershim Blvd. The R1-zoned portion of this Site was proposed to be developed with rental townhouses to “provide a single-family environment, keep traffic well removed from the adjacent single-family units and provide needed housing.”

While these are previous approvals for a multi-family use on the R1-1 portion of the site (with the 2005 project approvals still valid until 2018), the current request for a General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change represents good zoning practice and are the appropriate processes to enable development of this Site. Good zoning practice in this instance would be to adopt a General Plan Amendment and a Vested Re-zone so that small lot residential development can proceed and that a 3.9 acre site can provide more attainable single-family home ownership choices than a traditional single-family home on a larger lot. Moreover, the proposed small lot homes community would be more respectful and compatible to the adjacent single-family residences than the condominiums approved in 2005.

Approval of this General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change to allow development of the 99 proposed Small Lot homes specifically advances the following City of Los Angeles General Plan policies. The proposed project is in conformity with the relevant General Plan goals, objectives and policies as stated in the Framework, and Housing Elements of the General Plan and the Sun Valley-La Tuna Community Plan, as referenced in these Findings.

The Framework Element of the General Plan, Overview, Issue Two: Uses, Density and Character states:

*Where single-family neighborhoods are significantly impacted by development of greater intensity, the Framework Element allows the consideration of increased development density by amendments to the community plan.*

Goal 3B, Objective 3.6 states:

*Allow for the intensification of selected single-family areas that directly abut high-density development as “transitions” between these uses.*

*Policy 3.6.1*

*Ensure that the new development of “duplex” or multi-family units maintains the visual and physical character of adjacent single-family neighborhoods, including the maintenance of front property setbacks, modulation of building volumes and articulation of façade to convey the sense of individual units, and use of building materials that characterize single-family housing.*

The proposed RD1.5 zone would function as a transition between the established R1-1 neighborhoods to the east and the R3 and C2 zones adjacent on Lankershim Boulevard. The small lot ordinance was added to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) in 2005 as an additional housing type to use in multi-family zones and to provide a bridge between traditional single-family homes and apartments or condominiums. Thus, it could not be specifically mentioned in the Framework Element (as the latter preceded the former), but clearly the proposed small lot subdivision project meets the intent stated here. The proposed homes would feature individual front entryways, articulation of units, building heights limited to 36 feet and exterior finishes and trims that are characteristic of more traditional single-family homes.

The Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the entire General Plan. More detailed direction is found in the General Plan’s other Elements. The

relevant Elements for these Findings are the Housing Element and the Land Use Element which is comprised of the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan.

### **Public Necessity**

The City of Los Angeles Housing Element of the General Plan, Chapter 6, was adopted in 2013 and establishes housing policy and programs for the next eight years, to 2021.

The opening statement of the Housing Element Executive Summary is:

*The City of Los Angeles continues to grow, and with that growth comes the need for more housing-not only more units, but a broader array of housing types to meet evolving household types and sizes, and a greater variety of housing price points that people of all income levels can afford.*

The first heading of the Executive Summary is titled, "Housing Crisis in Los Angeles".

The Plan identifies a need for 82,002 new housing units by 2021. Under current assumptions for new construction, it is projected that the City will be 22,443 units short of the projected need. The Executive Summary also states that the City needs about 10,250 units per year to keep pace with the Residential Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Since 2006 the City has been producing an average of 6,000 units per year. The Housing Element estimates that the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area has the capacity to accommodate approximately 1,267 dwelling units of the approximately 82,002 units required by 2021 to meet the RHNA.

The Executive Summary also recognizes that the 37 percent homeownership rate in Los Angeles is well below the national rate of 65 percent and demonstrates the challenges but necessity for creating more homeownership opportunities in this City. Adding more attainable homes for purchase to the City's housing inventory, especially in the Sun Valley community, which has not seen much new housing activity over the recent years, would serve the public good and necessity.

As referenced above, the City of Los Angeles is facing a shortage of residential units, particularly of moderately priced for-sale residences. The Housing Element cites tightened credit standards, lack of for-sale supply and continued economic difficulties as reasons that home ownership is more difficult to attain in Los Angeles.

The Housing Element, Chapter 6, Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs describes several goals, objectives and programs relevant to this project request.

*GOAL 1: A City where housing production and preservation result in an adequate supply of ownership and rental housing that is safe, healthy and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.*

The first Policy is to expand affordable homeownership. In the Listing of Housing Programs, Objective 1.1 is:

*Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing to meet current and projected needs.*

This is further described below:

*Policy 1.1.3*

*Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the City's households.*

The 2013-2021 Listing of Housing Programs, continues to describe the programs recommended to produce an adequate supply of housing and to meet the current shortfall. Program 3 states:

*Facilitate the development of small lot subdivision (Zoning Code section 12.22C27), which permit detached fee simple home ownership on lots as small as 600 square feet, thus providing more affordable alternative for-sale housing types within commercial and multi-family residential zones. Identify obstacles in the development standards code requirements, and procedures to developing Small Lot Subdivisions and propose revisions to the Small Lot Subdivision Guidelines, clarification memos, Code Amendments or other measure to eliminate impediments.*

The Housing Element suggests that 1,400 market rate small lot units should be built. The proposed project would implement this policy and program by providing 99 for sale new small lot residential units. This housing type would be more affordable than single-family housing built under the existing R1 zone on traditional lots. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size

The General Plan's Housing Element affirms that the City is facing a housing crisis. The approval of this General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change request would advance the City towards this goal by permitting the construction of the proposed 99 small lot residential units project in an area located within a built-out community, which is well-served by neighborhood-serving retail and commercial uses, schools, public transit lines and has the added value of being located near two major transportation corridors, Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy Street with transfers to the North Hollywood Metrolink station, connecting to the Red Line train and the Orange Line Rapid Busway. Accordingly, the project is an infill development project providing much-needed new housing located near transit-rich and job-rich centers.

Public necessity requires additional housing and particularly lower priced ownership-opportunity units. There are limited opportunities to provide close to 100 units in a developed area, well served by existing commercial/retail uses, transit options and close to areas of employment. Additionally, the price point for these homes will be targeted towards first-time homebuyers.

This General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change request to allow the proposed 99 small lot homes specifically advances the following City of Los Angeles' General Plan Housing Element 2013 – 2021 policies. Chapter 6, Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs states:

*The City of Los Angeles is committed to providing affordable housing and amenity-rich, sustainable neighborhoods for its residents, answering the variety of housing needs of its growing population. Toward this end:*

*The City of Los Angeles will achieve this goal amidst a variety of governmental, infrastructure, and market constraints to residential development through aligning its actions in accordance with four detailed goals, each of which contain objectives, policies, and implementing programs. These goals embody the City's commitment to meeting housing needs.*

The goals relevant to this project are:

*GOAL 1: A City where housing production and preservation result in an adequate supply of ownership and rental housing that is safe, healthy and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.*

*GOAL 2: A City in which housing helps to create safe, livable and sustainable neighborhoods.*

The goals are further refined in objectives and policies to create sustainable, mixed use, mixed income neighborhoods strategically located across the City.

*Objective 1.1*

*Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing in order to meet current and projected needs.*

*Policy 1.1.1*

*Expand affordable home ownership opportunities and support current homeowners in retaining their homeowner status.*

The development of 99 new for-sale small lot homes in the Sun Valley community will significantly expand the opportunities for home ownership in this neighborhood. The Housing Element Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) lists Sun Valley with a potential for 1,267 units by 2021. However, there are limited areas in this community feasible for the development of new single family homes without removing a significant number of existing housing units. Moreover, traditional single-family homes on R1-zoned lots would need to be priced much higher than small lot homes, given the minimum of 5,000 square foot of land required.

*Policy 1.1.3*

*Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the City's households.*

Approval of the requested General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change would facilitate new construction of a hybrid type of housing that has the advantages of fee simple ownership, with greater affordability than a conventional single-family home. The Small Lot Ordinance was not in place when the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan was written but was added by the City subsequently to provide an additional tool for the development of more housing units.

*Policy 1.1.4*

*Expand opportunities for residential development, particularly in designated Centers, Transit Oriented Districts and along Mixed-Use Boulevards.*

Lankershim Boulevard where the project is located serves as a Mixed Use Boulevard. It has not been the site of individual mixed use redevelopment projects but is zoned in the older more traditional manner of separate commercial and multi-family designations and corresponding zoning. In today's planning lexicon, it would be an ideal candidate for a designation as a Mixed Use Boulevard. It is developed with small outdated, mostly single-story commercial and retail uses along with multi-story apartment buildings.

**Policy 1.1.6**

*Facilitate innovative models that reduce the costs of housing production.*

Small lot homes are an innovative model that decrease the cost of new single-family homes and increase the opportunities for homeownership. The use of minimal yard setbacks, townhome type designs and other features reduce housing construction costs while still allowing individual homeownership. The value of small lot subdivisions is directly addressed in the Housing Element 2013-2021 Listing of Housing Programs which calls for facilitation of Small Lot developments and recommends 1,400 such units should be built.

**Convenience**

The General Plan Framework Element, Chapter 5, Urban Form and Neighborhood Design, policy objective 5.2 states:

*5.2 Encourage future development in centers and in nodes along corridors that are served by transit and are already functioning as centers for the surrounding neighborhoods, the community or the region.*

*5.2.1 Designate centers and districts in locations where activity is already concentrated and/or where good transit service is, or will be provided.*

*5.2.3 Encourage the development of housing surrounding or adjacent to centers and along designated corridors, at sufficient densities to support the centers, corridors, and the transit system. While densities and distances will vary based on local conditions, the following residential density standards, which are based on the City's adopted Land Use/Transportation Policy, should be used as a general guide when updating community plans through a public participation process*

*c. Two-stories over parking (RD1.5) within 750 feet of major bus corridor intersections.*

*d. Where appropriate, two units per lot (R2) may be considered within 750 feet of major bus corridors.*

The proposed density of RD1.5 is consistent with these policies as the proposed project is within 750 feet of major bus corridors. Residents of this proposed project would have the opportunity to access industrial and commercial hubs without driving personal vehicles, as they would have the realistic options of walking, biking or utilizing the area's rich public transit options. The Project Site is located on Lankershim Blvd. just north of Saticoy Street. Lankershim Blvd. is a designated Boulevard II (formerly known as a "Major

Highway Class II”) and Saticoy Street is a designated Avenue II (formerly known as a “Secondary Highway”) per Mobility Plan 2035. As such, the intersection of Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy Street is well served by numerous transit lines with 10 to 30 minute headways and excellent connections to rail and rapid busways throughout the City and County of Los Angeles. Specifically, Lankershim Blvd. is a major north/south route in the San Fernando Valley with connections to the North Hollywood and Universal rail stations. There are convenient connections to Downtown, Hollywood, North Hollywood, other areas of the San Fernando Valley, and most of the job-rich areas of the City. The Project Site is also located less than a mile and a half from Bob Hope Airport in Burbank and less than two miles from the Burbank rail station.

The Applicant proposes to utilize the Small Lot regulations to provide an ownership option to the traditional single-family home. This type of housing was introduced to provide greater housing ownership options and increase the number of Angelenos who could afford to buy homes. The project would generate new for-sale housing desired by the City as described in the Housing Element and would provide such housing in proximity to existing public transit options and employment opportunities, thereby diminishing the broader traffic impacts that otherwise would result from satisfying this housing demand through multiple dispersed locations. The Project Site is also well-served by numerous existing neighborhood-serving commercial and retail uses and is proximate to two elementary schools.

The Mobility Element recognizes the contribution of a proper juxtaposition of land uses to the reduction of vehicle trips. Locating uses that better serve the needs of the population by allowing where they work and live to be closer reduces the number and distance of vehicle trips and decreases the amount of pollution from mobile sources.

The Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area lies in the northeast region of the City of Los Angeles. Nineteen percent of the total plan area is industrial use, including the highest concentration of mineral processing facilities in the Los Angeles area. These uses provide additional job opportunities in the area but less land suitable for residential development.

The site is surrounded by single-family and multi-family residential developments, community serving uses such as restaurants, mini-marts, small businesses and churches as well as an abundance of industrial and commercial centers within a few short blocks. However, this portion of the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area is largely built out, with little opportunity for new, high quality housing stock. The Project Site is one of the only remaining vacant and larger sites in this Community Plan area for which new housing opportunities can be developed.

### **General Welfare**

The current zoning of R1-1 requires a minimum 5,000 square foot lot. Retaining this zoning would result in only a few new larger homes that would not be priced comparably to the older existing housing stock. This is one of the probable reasons that this land has remained vacant, as new single-family housing at this location is not economically feasible. Since land cost is a major portion of the price of a single-family home, reducing the lot size is one way to provide more affordable for-sale housing units. Given the severe current shortage of housing in the City, the general welfare is improved with more housing at more affordable levels. Development of a traditional single-family residential project

would require extensions of local streets and would possibly put traffic in existing residential neighborhoods.

With the exception of two small residences located on the northerly portion of the Site, the remainder of the almost 4-acre Project Site has been historically undeveloped. The R1-1 portion of the site is physically landlocked and enclosed on the south by an unattractive combination of chain link and barbed wire fence. On the west it is enclosed by a block wall separating it from the multi-family apartment parking lot, and on the east, by a combination of block and wood fences that enclose the backyards of individual single-family homes. The site is partially paved, partially dry brush, dirt and weeds. The proposed project will promote the general welfare by meeting area needs for housing, enhancing the sense of community in the area by providing a well-designed, attractive residential development and increasing property and sales tax revenue for the City. The project will enhance the overall quality, character and aesthetics of the site.

### **Good Zoning Practices**

The requested General Plan Amendment from Low Residential to Low Medium II Residential, and Vesting Zone Change from R1-1 to RD1.5 would advance good zoning practice as it would eliminate the dual zoning on individual lots and allow more appropriate zoning of a large “remainder” site.

The Project Site is comprised of a unique area of approximately 3.9 gross acres of flat, largely undeveloped/historically vacant and residentially zoned property. The Site contains four contiguous legal parcels. According to the County Assessor maps, the R1-1 areas of the Site are currently part of three parcels with dual R3 zoning. Access to the R1-1 portion is only through the Lankershim Blvd.-abutting R3 parcels. The proposed project would merge the lower density residentially designated and zoned parcels into one developable site. The current arrangement has walled off the undeveloped 3.9 acres. The proposed development would be accessed from the northerly R3-zoned portion of the Project Site.

The Project Site is “sandwiched” in between R1-zoned, “Low Residential” designated lots and R3-zoned, “Medium Residential” designated lots. The re-designation from Low Residential to Low Medium II Residential and Vested Re-zone from R1-1 to RD1.5-1 is well-suited as a transition between the Low Residential R1-1 existing development to the east and the Medium Residential, R3 zoned development fronting on Lankershim Blvd.

The requested General Plan Amendment to Low Medium II Residential and Vesting Zone Change to RD1.5 are an intermediate designation and zone that is economically feasible and will bring new for-sale single-family homes to this older and built-out area. It is a buffer between the higher density multi-family and commercial development fronting on Lankershim Blvd. and the Low Residential on properties adjacent to the site on the east.

The existing older single-family housing stock in the adjacent neighborhood to the project site is priced below the average price of single-family homes in Los Angeles. According to the LA County Assessor’s Office, recent sales (2015) in the immediately adjacent single-family neighborhood to the east were between \$350,000 and \$437,000, depending on lot size. According to Data Quick, home sales in April 2016 for Sun Valley as a whole were among the six most affordable areas in Los Angeles. Condominiums averaged \$319,000 and single-family homes averaged \$421,000. New traditional single-family

homes on larger lots would result in higher prices as compared to the adjacent area and would be on less desirable sites as they would be adjacent to more intense apartment and commercial uses. Therefore, development at the current R1 zoning on the current lot configurations is not a viable economic option. By developing small lot homes as a more affordable for sale option, new housing that is attractive, compatible and well-built would be added to the neighborhood.

Additionally, the subject site is adequate to accommodate the development features of the proposed project as it is located in a built-out community, comprised of single and multi-family residences, with existing utilities and infrastructure, proximate to employment centers, numerous transit options, schools and other neighborhood-serving uses.

As previously indicated, in 2005 the City of Los Angeles approved a Variance and a Tract Map for development of the R1 portion of the Site with 53 new condos and said approval is still valid until 2018. The ZA concluded that “the development of this vacant land will serve the community by providing needed housing, increasing the tax base, and eliminating potential problems associated with vacant land such as loitering, and possible nuisance...” On the same portion of the Project Site upon which these 53 new condos were proposed, 49 small lot single-family homes are proposed. These homes are arguably more compatible with the vicinity single-family homes than the previously approved higher-density condominium project.

### **Consistency with the Community Plan**

The Land Use Element of the General Plan is contained in the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan. This Community Plan further refines the policies of the Framework Elements, including the previously cited Housing Element. The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Community Plan as described below.

The Community Plan, Chapter III identifies key residential land use issues and opportunities including:

#### **Issues**

- Need to preserve single-family neighborhoods.
- Need to limit encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Need for affordable housing.
- Need for housing, jobs and services in mutual proximity.

#### **Opportunities**

- Access and proximity to employment.
- Potential for residential and mixed use development along commercial corridors.
- Undeveloped or underdeveloped land allowing opportunities for clustered development.
- Potential for establishing design guidelines for new residential development.

#### ***Objective 1-1***

*To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.*

#### ***Policies***

1. 1-1.1 *Designate land for single and multi-family residential development.*

*Program: The Plan Map identifies specific areas where single family and multi-family residential development is permitted.*

2. 1-1.2 *Protect existing single family residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses.*

*Program: The Plan Map identifies areas where only single-family residential development is permitted; it protects these areas from encroachment by designating, where appropriate, transitional residential densities which serve as buffers.*

The proposed General Plan Amendment and Vested re-zone from Low Residential and R1 to Low Medium II Residential and RD1.5 would preserve the integrity of the existing single-family homes to the east and north. The RD1.5 zone is a transitional zone that is intermediate in intensity between the R1-zoned existing single-family neighborhood and the R-3 and C2 zones that are fronting on Lankershim Boulevard. The Small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the existing commercial and multi-family residential uses along Lankershim Blvd. The small lot residential project provides a more affordable home ownership choice to traditional single-family homes and is targeted to first-time homebuyers, which opportunities are greatly needed in the City of Los Angeles. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering residential development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownerships that characterize the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood. The proposed new homes have been designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have designed many high quality projects throughout Los Angeles. Conceptual architectural plans call for three different models of homes and a design and layout that complies with the City's Small Lot Ordinance and 2014 Small Lot Design Guidelines.

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized largely vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial and commercial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Community Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as it is located one block from intensive commercial development on designated "Boulevard II" (formerly "Major Highway Class II") Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the current Plan forecasts is 2010. The Small Lot Ordinance was adopted in 2005, after the adoption of the current Sun Valley Community Plan; therefore, this housing development tool could not be specifically recommended in the Community Plan which preceded its creation. However, additional housing is still needed, as affirmed in the City's Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021. As previously cited, the Housing Element specifically calls for new small lot homes as part of the City's efforts to increase overall housing stock. This site is suitable for this type of development as it is adjacent to commercial, retail, and multi-family uses; utilities and public services are available; it is already in a highly urbanized location and is a flat lot which would require little grading.

The Community Plan, Chapter III, Land Use Policies and Programs, Residential Objective 1-2 encourages locating new housing where it will reduce vehicular trips.

*Objective 1-2*

*To locate new housing in a manner which reduces vehicular trips and which increases accessibility to services and facilities.*

*Policies*

*1-2.1 Locate higher residential densities near commercial centers, and major bus routes where public service facilities, utilities, and topography will accommodate this development.*

*Program: The Plan designates lands for higher residential densities within and adjacent to transit convenient locations*

According to the *Traffic Impact Report For Proposed Lankershim (7660) Residential Project* prepared by Crain & Associates, April 2016, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has an extensive system of bus lines in the Sun Valley area. The public transit routes within reasonable walking distance (one-quarter mile) include both east-west and north/south routes with headways ranging from 10 to 40 minutes. The Metro Red Line and Rapid Busway Orange Lines are easily accessible at the North Hollywood station located at Lankershim Boulevard and Chandler. These lines serve the San Fernando Valley and Union Station with multiple locations along the route. The Project Site is also located less than a mile and a half from Bob Hope Airport in Burbank and less than two miles from the Burbank rail station. The project is consistent with the Community Plan policies regarding availability of major bus and rail routes.

The proposed small lot homes project and associated General Plan Amendment and Vested Re-zone would provide a buffer between the existing residential neighborhood and the high density residential and commercial uses on Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy street. The current R-1 zoning of the project site does not provide adequate buffering from the existing commercial and multi-family developments along Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy Street. At the time the current Community Plan was enacted, the Small Lot Ordinance had not been yet conceived or adopted, so it could not be referenced in the Plan's objectives and policies. However, the intent with the creation of such zones as those found in Low Medium I and Low Medium II Residential zones was to provide an intermediate zone between Low Residential and Medium/High Medium Residential areas as well as commercial uses.

*Objective 1-3*

*To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.*

*Policy*

*1. 1-3.1 Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impacts on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, impacts on traffic levels, and environmental impacts when changes in residential densities are proposed.*

*Program: The decision-maker should adopt a finding which addresses these factors as part of any decision relating to changes in planned residential densities.*

As per the factor of neighborhood character and identity, the proposed General Plan Amendment to Low Medium II Residential and Rezone to RD1.5 would enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of the adjacent existing single and multi-family neighborhoods. Approval of the small lot homes development would not disturb the integrity of the existing single-family homes to the east and north. The RD zone is a transitional zone that is intermediate in intensity between the R-1 existing neighborhood and the R3 and C2 Zones fronting on Lankershim Boulevard. The Small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the commercial uses, many of which are unsightly and the surface parking lots that are currently adjacent to the single-family neighborhood. The small lot homes project provides a mix of development types, adding a more affordable home ownership choice. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownership that characterizes the neighborhood.

The Housing Element suggests that 1,400 market rate small lot units should be built. The proposed project would implement this policy and program by providing 99 for sale new small lot residential units. This housing type would be more affordable than traditional single-family housing built under the existing R1 zone on standard lots. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized large vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as it is located one block from intensive commercial development on Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the plan forecasts is 2010. Additional housing is still needed, as shown in the Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021.

2. *1-3.2 Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.*

*Program: The Plan includes Design Guidelines which establish design standards for residential development to implement this policy.*

The proposed project would be separated from the existing residential neighborhood and would increase the integrity of those homes. The new small lot homes would remove the existing adjacent unsightly uses such as unpaved parking lots, razor wire topped fences, brush, weeds and lack of security. The new homes would increase safety, aesthetics and provide an attractive landscaped buffer and transition between the surrounding existing

single-family neighborhoods and the higher density apartments and commercial uses along Lankershim Blvd.

The small lot homes are architecturally most similar to single-family homes in character and scale. The heights are limited to 36 feet and the site will be screened with approximately 300 trees to add shade, provide privacy and improve aesthetics. Building materials will be the type used in single-family construction. Access will be from Lankershim Blvd. via a private driveway interior configuration, thus minimizing the width of paved area. Traffic patterns in the adjacent neighborhoods will not be affected as the small lot homes will not have vehicular access from adjacent local streets. Abundant open space is provided throughout the small lot homes community. The new housing will be designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have designed many beautiful and high quality projects through Los Angeles.

The proposed project would complement the surrounding uses as the scale and character are compatible with the adjacent single-family neighborhood. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size. The Small Lot homes will be maximum of 36 feet in height, have stucco finishes, attached two-car garages and pedestrian front entrances. The arrangement and design of the homes will complement the adjacent single-family neighborhood and will significantly improve the disjointed character caused by existing commercial and automotive uses. The addition of 99 for-sale single-family homes will bring new potential customers/patrons to the area and could serve as a catalyst for new, more neighborhood-serving commercial uses on Lankershim and Satcoy.

#### *Objective 1.5*

##### *Policies*

1. 1-5.1 *Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, and location of housing.*

*Program: Establishment of residential design standards, allocation of lands for a variety of residential densities, and the promotion of housing in mixed-use projects.*

*Program: Develop incentives for the construction of residential projects in conjunction with new commercial projects to encourage mixed-use development.*

The proposed project provides a greater variety of residential densities and is a more recent hybrid residential design option which was not codified until after the Sun Valley-La Tuna Community Plan was adopted. The intent of the Small Lot regulations is consistent with the Community Plan as it provides greater choices in type, quality and location of housing. Using the Small Lot regulations allows this underutilized, unsightly, resource to be put to productive use as new, single-family housing units.

In addition to the General Plan Findings, the Sun Valley-La Tuna Community Plan requires decision makers to make a Finding of Consistency with the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan.

*1-1.3 Require that new single and multi-family residential development be designed in accordance with the Urban Design Chapter*

*Chapter 5 Urban Design*

*The purpose of the document is to provide standards, designs, and guidelines to carry out the policies of this chapter for individual projects. It is intended for use by City staff in reviewing plans for development prior to the issuance of building permits.*

*Goals and Purposes*

*These design policies and standards are to ensure that residential, commercial and industrial projects and public spaces and rights-of-way incorporate specific elements of good design.*

The goals and purpose of Chapter 5, Urban Design are to ensure that residential commercial and industrial projects incorporate elements of good design. However, while the text of the Community Plan quoted above, includes single-family residential projects, Chapter 5 standards, designs and guidelines are only for multi-family residential development. Clearly the intent is that all new development should provide high quality design, reduce impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and improve the community character and aesthetics. By changing the designation from Low Residential to Low Medium II Residential and the zone to a multi-family zone, the Urban Design Chapter would become applicable to the development. It does not contain design policies for single-family development.

Multiple Residential design criteria are:

*The design of all buildings shall be of a quality and character that improves community appearances by avoiding excessive variety and monotonous repetition. Achievement of this can be accomplished through:*

- 1. Requiring the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations and/or porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.*
- 2. Utilizing complementary building materials on building facades.*
- 3. Incorporating varying design to provide definition for each floor.*
- 4. Integrating building fixtures, awnings, security gates, into design of building(s).*
- 5. Screening of all roof top equipment and building appurtenances from adjacent properties.*
- 6. Requiring decorative, masonry walls to enclose trash.*

The proposed project is consistent with the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan as the Project utilizes the recommended design features. The Small Lots prevent long flat building units by separating the individual units into five or six clusters of units with landscaped walkways between. All units will have individual front entryways and enclosed two car garages, eliminating the unsightly surface parking lots found on the surrounding properties, thereby improving the quality and character of the neighborhood. Guest parking will be provided. The conceptual landscape plan shows planting of approximately 300 trees on the property. These will provide screening from the adjoining commercial, multi-family and single-family adjacent developments. The trees will also reduce heat, and improve air quality. A complete landscape plan will be prepared prior to development. The current site is a combination of asphalt, dirt and brush. By developing a well-designed and landscaped project, community character will be significantly improved.

*Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan, Land Use Goal 13, Objective 13-2*

*To ensure that the location, intensity and timing of development is consistent with the provision of adequate transportation infrastructure utilizing the City's streets and highways standards.*

*Policy 13-2.1 No increase in density and intensity shall be effectuated by zone change, variance, conditional use, parcel map or subdivision unless it is determined that the transportation system can accommodate the increased traffic generated by the project.*

*Program: the decision-maker should adopt a finding which addresses this factor as part of any decision*

The proposed General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change are consistent with this policy. A Traffic Impact Report for the proposed project has been prepared by Crain & Associates dated, April 2016. A traffic analysis of existing weekday AM and PM peak-hour traffic conditions was performed at six study intersections that would be most affected by the project. The conclusions are that there would be no significant traffic impacts to these intersections as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project has been designed with ingress and egress from Lankershim Boulevard. This further complies with not impacting the established single-family neighborhoods to the north and east. Therefore, the transportation system can accommodate the project.

## **SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS**

- 1. That the Project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan and any applicable specific plan.**

There are no specific plans in the subject area that would affect the Project.

The Project will be compatible with the character of development in the immediate area and will be in conformance with the applicable elements of the General Plan and with the proposed General Plan amendment to a land use designation of Low Medium II Residential. The Applicant is committed to creating a compatible, dynamic and visually appealing residential project that improves the conditions of the underutilized infill site and the surrounding community by adding 99 new small lot single-family homes and a new 64-unit apartment building (the latter which will include four (4) affordable units), attractive landscaping/open spaces and well-maintained sidewalks, and more than the required off-street vehicle parking that will improve the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

### **General Plan Housing Element**

The project is consistent with the following stated objectives of the 2013-2021 Housing Element:

***Goal 1: A City where housing production and preservation result in an adequate supply of ownership and rental housing that is safe, health, sanitary and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.***

***Objective 1.1: Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing in order to meet current and projected needs.***

***Policy 1.13: Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the city's households.***

***Policy 1.14: Expand opportunities for residential development particularly in designated Centers, Transit Oriented Districts and along Mixed-Use Boulevards.***

***Goal 2: A City in which housing helps to create safe, livable and sustainable neighborhoods.***

***Objective 2.2: Promote sustainable neighborhoods that have mixed-income housing, jobs, amenities, services and transit.***

***Policy 2.2.3: Promote and facilitate a jobs/housing balance at a citywide level.***

***Objective 2.4: Promote livable neighborhoods with mix of housing types, quality design and a scale and character that respects unique residential neighborhoods in the City.***

***Policy 2.4.2: Develop and implement design standards that promote quality development.***

The proposed residential project is consistent with the goals and policies of the City's General Plan Housing Element (2013-2021). The General Plan identifies a need for 82,002 new housing units by 2021. The Housing Element specifically estimates that the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area has the capacity to accommodate approximately 1,267 dwelling units. The Project Site is one of the few large tracts of vacant land available in this Community Plan area for the production of additional, much-needed housing units to help the City achieve these specified goals. The project would convert an unattractive, historically undeveloped and underutilized large tract of land into attractive, new rental and for-sale housing units adjacent to numerous public transit options, employment centers, neighborhood-serving uses, and municipal services. As the proposed project will take access off of designated "Boulevard II" Lankershim Blvd. and as ample on-site vehicular parking and open space will be provided, the project as designed respects the adjacent single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods by not introducing traffic and parking impacts into these existing communities.

The proposed infill project includes two components - a 64-unit apartment building and 99 small lot homes - thereby providing range of housing types for a mix of income levels. The apartment building will include four (4) affordable housing units restricted for Very Low Income tenants. The 99 small lot homes for sale will be targeted to first-time homebuyers, which opportunities are greatly needed in the City of Los Angeles. Therefore, the project will provide new ownership and rental housing that is safe and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.

#### Small Lot Design Guidelines

The project architects at Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh, AIA (VTBS) have designed a small lot residential community which is sensitive to its surrounding uses and which complies with the City's 2014 Small Lot Design Guidelines. Homes have been configured to front landscaped walkways and open space areas. Attractive paseos with pathways connect throughout the entire site and connect to Lankershim Blvd. Pedestrian access paths are separate from driveways to enhance walkability and safety. With respect to design and layout of the homes, the small lot homes have been placed in various orientations on the Site to increase the variation of facades. All homes include a covered porch at the entry with layered architectural features and varied roof modulations to add visual interest. Materials have been selected to be consistent with the Spanish Colonial style which is more in harmony with existing development in the area than traditional contemporary styles of many small lot homes in the City.

#### Mobility Plan 2035

Approval of the Project in proximity to mass transit options would be consistent and harmonious with the purposes of the Mobility Plan 2035. Various modes of travel are encouraged by the Mobility Plan 2035, including walking, biking and using public transit. The following policies of the Mobility Plan apply to the proposed project:

***Policy 2.3: Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high-quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.***

***Policy 3.1: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular modes – including goods movement – as integral components of the City’s transportation system.***

***Policy 3.3: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.***

***Policy 3.8: Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.***

***Policy 4.13: Balance on-street and off-street parking supply with other transportation and land use objectives.***

***Policy 5.2: Support ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.***

The Project Site is located off of Lankershim Blvd, a designed “Boulevard II” (previously designated a “Major Highway Class II”) in the vicinity of a mix of uses, including multi-family and single-family residential, commercial, retail, restaurants, churches and schools. According to the *Traffic Impact Report for Proposed Lankershim Residential Project* prepared by Crain & Associates, April 2016, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has an extensive system of bus lines in the Sun Valley area. The public transit routes within reasonable walking distance (one-quarter mile) include both east-west and north/south routes. The Metro Red Line and Rapid Busway Orange Lines are easily accessible at the North Hollywood station located at Lankershim Blvd. and Chandler. These lines serve the San Fernando Valley and Union Station with multiple station stops along the routes.

For the 64-unit apartment building, ample on-site vehicular and bicycle parking stalls are proposed. The small lot homes community which also takes access off of Lankershim Blvd. has been designed to include wide internal streets and pedestrian friendly landscaped walking paths and open space. All homes include 2-car garages to accommodate both vehicles and bicycles.

Accordingly, the Project introduces much-needed new housing stock proximate to transit options, neighborhood-serving uses and employment centers, thereby reducing overall vehicle trips, while concurrently promoting and accommodating all modes of travel to and from the Project Site.

### Community Plan

The Land Use Element of the General Plan is contained in the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan. This Community Plan further refines the policies of the Framework Elements, including the previously cited Housing Element. The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Community Plan as described below.

The Community Plan, Chapter III identifies key residential land use issues and opportunities including:

#### Issues

- Need to preserve single-family neighborhoods.

- Need to limit encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Need for affordable housing.
- Need for housing, jobs and services in mutual proximity.

#### Opportunities

- Access and proximity to employment.
- Potential for residential and mixed use development along commercial corridors.
- Undeveloped or underdeveloped land allowing opportunities for clustered development.
- Potential for establishing design guidelines for new residential development.

#### Objective 1-1

*To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.*

#### Policies

3. 1-1.1 Designate land for single and multi-family residential development.

*Program: The Plan Map identifies specific areas where single family and multi-family residential development is permitted.*

4. 1-1.2 Protect existing single family residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses.

*Program: The Plan Map identifies areas where only single-family residential development is permitted; it protects these areas from encroachment by designating, where appropriate, transitional residential densities which serve as buffers.*

The proposed residential community would preserve the integrity of the existing single-family homes to the east and north. The Small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the existing commercial and multi-family residential uses along Lankershim Blvd. and these single-family neighborhoods. The small lot residential project provides a more affordable home ownership choice to traditional single-family homes and is targeted to first-time homebuyers, which opportunities are greatly needed in the City of Los Angeles. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering residential development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownerships that characterize the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood. The proposed new homes have been designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have designed many high quality projects throughout Los Angeles. Conceptual architectural plans call for three different models of homes and a design and layout that complies with the City's Small Lot Ordinance and 2014 Small Lot Design Guidelines.

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized largely vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial and commercial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Community Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as

it is located one block from intensive commercial development on designated “Boulevard II” (formerly “Major Highway Class II”) Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the current Plan forecasts is 2010. The Small Lot Ordinance was adopted in 2005, after the adoption of the current Sun Valley Community Plan; therefore, this housing development tool could not be specifically recommended in the Community Plan which preceded its creation. However, additional housing is still needed, as affirmed in the City’s Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021. As previously cited, the Housing Element specifically calls for new small lot homes as part of the City’s efforts to increase overall housing stock. This site is suitable for this type of development as it is adjacent to commercial, retail, and multi-family uses; utilities and public services are available; it is already in a highly urbanized location and is a flat lot which would require little grading.

The Community Plan, Chapter III, Land Use Policies and Programs, Residential Objective 1-2 encourages locating new housing where it will reduce vehicular trips.

### *Objective 1-3*

*To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.*

#### *Policy*

3. 1-3.1 *Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impacts on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, impacts on traffic levels, and environmental impacts when changes in residential densities are proposed.*

*Program: The decision-maker should adopt a finding which addresses these factors as part of any decision relating to changes in planned residential densities.*

As per the factor of neighborhood character and identity, the proposed General Plan Amendment to Low Medium II Residential and Rezone to RD1.5 would enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of the adjacent existing single and multi-family neighborhoods. Approval of the small lot homes development would not disturb the integrity of the existing single-family homes to the east and north. The RD zone is a transitional zone that is intermediate in intensity between the R-1 existing neighborhood and the R3 and C2 Zones fronting on Lankershim Boulevard. The Small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the commercial uses, many of which are unsightly and the surface parking lots that are currently adjacent to the single-family neighborhood. The small lot homes project provides a mix of development types, adding a more affordable home ownership choice. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownership that characterizes the neighborhood.

The Housing Element suggests that 1,400 market rate small lot units should be built. The proposed project would implement this policy and program by providing 99 for sale new small lot residential units. This housing type would be more affordable than traditional single-family housing built under the existing R1 zone on standard lots. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the

minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized large vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as it is located one block from intensive commercial development on Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the plan forecasts is 2010. Additional housing is still needed, as shown in the Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021.

4. 1-3.2 *Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.*

*Program: The Plan includes Design Guidelines which establish design standards for residential development to implement this policy.*

The proposed project would be separated from the existing residential neighborhood and would increase the integrity of those homes. The new small lot homes would remove the existing adjacent unsightly uses such as unpaved parking lots, razor wire topped fences, brush, weeds and lack of security. The new homes would increase safety, aesthetics and provide an attractive landscaped buffer and transition between the surrounding neighborhood and the higher density apartments and commercial uses.

The small lot homes are architecturally most similar to single-family homes in character and scale. The heights are limited to 36 feet and the site will be screened with approximately 300 trees to add shade, provide privacy and improve aesthetics. Building materials will be the type used in single-family construction. Access will be from Lankershim Blvd. via a private driveway interior configuration, thus minimizing the width of paved area. Traffic patterns in the adjacent neighborhoods will not be affected as the small lot homes will not have vehicular access from adjacent local streets. Abundant open space is provided throughout the small lot homes community. The new housing will be designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have designed many beautiful and high quality projects through Los Angeles.

The proposed project would complement the surrounding uses as the scale and character are compatible with the adjacent single-family neighborhood. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size. The Small Lot homes will be maximum of 36 feet in height, have stucco finishes, attached two-

car garages and pedestrian front entrances. The arrangement and design of the homes will complement the adjacent single-family neighborhood and will significantly improve the disjointed character caused by existing commercial and automotive uses. The addition of 99 for-sale single-family homes will bring new potential customers/patrons to the area and could serve as a catalyst for new, more neighborhood-serving commercial uses on Lankershim and Saticoy.

#### *Objective 1.5*

##### *Policies*

#### *2. 1-5.1 Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, and location of housing.*

*Program: Establishment of residential design standards, allocation of lands for a variety of residential densities, and the promotion of housing in mixed-use projects.*

*Program: Develop incentives for the construction of residential projects in conjunction with new commercial projects to encourage mixed-use development.*

The proposed project provides a greater variety of residential densities and is a more recent hybrid residential design option which was not codified until after the Sun Valley-La Tuna Community Plan was adopted. The intent of the Small Lot regulations is consistent with the Community Plan as it provides greater choices in type, quality and location of housing. Using the Small Lot regulations allows this underutilized, unsightly, resource to be put to productive use as new, single-family housing units.

#### **2. That the Project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, load areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collections, and other such pertinent improvements, which is or will be compatible with existing and future developments on the neighboring properties.**

The proposed project would complement the surrounding uses as the scale and character are compatible with the adjacent multi-family and single-family structures and uses. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The proposed four-story, 64-unit apartment building is sited along Lankershim Blvd. which is already developed with numerous 4-story multi-family residential buildings along with a variety of commercial and light industrial uses. The landscaped private driveway and walkway accessing the apartment building provides pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle access. The enclosed ground floor parking garage provides more than the Code-required on-site vehicular and bicycle parking stalls as well as loading space to ensure that there are no traffic and parking impacts to the vicinity existing uses.

The average lot size proposed for the small lots development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum allowed by Code and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size. The Small Lot homes will be maximum of 36 feet in height, have stucco finishes, attached two-car garages and pedestrian front entrances. The arrangement and design of the homes will complement the adjacent single-family neighborhood and will significantly improve the disjointed character caused by existing commercial and automotive uses. The provision of an abundance of on-site vehicular parking stalls and landscaped open space areas will

ensure that the project is further compatible with surrounding low density residential uses and will not impact said neighbors' parking and traffic flows. The addition of 99 for-sale single-family homes will bring new potential customers/patrons to the area and could serve as a catalyst for new, more neighborhood-serving commercial uses on Lankershim and Saticoy.

**3. That any residential Project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.**

The 64-unit apartment building is required to provide 6,800 sq. ft. of open space per LAMC Sec. 12.21 G.2. The apartment building will include **7,950 sq. ft. of open space**, which is well in excess of that required by Code. Of the total open space provided, only 1,600 sq. ft. is provided as private open space. The balance (6,350 sq. ft.) is provided as common open space in the form of two recreation rooms and a podium level courtyard/amenity deck. Moreover, in accordance with LAMC Sec. 12.21 G.2, on-site trees for the apartment building are provided at the required ratio of 1 tree per dwelling unit, for a total of 16 trees.



LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27 details the development standards applicable to small lot subdivision projects, including the lot coverage limits. Specifically, LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27(d) requires that "All structures on a lot which includes one or more dwelling units, may, taken together, occupy no more than 80% of the lot area, unless the tract or parcel map provides common open space equivalent to 20% of the lot area of each lot not meeting this provision." As indicated in Table 1 of Sheet A0.2 of the Project Plans prepared by VTBS, the lot coverage of each of the small lots range from 16.6% to 68.9%. Therefore, the small lot project provides an abundance of open space on individual small

lots as well as cumulatively for the entire small lots community as illustrated in the below landscape plan image. As illustrated in the landscape plan above, the orientation of clusters of small homes is such that broad widths of landscaped green space exist throughout the small lots community to provide residents with an abundance of connected recreational spaces. Moreover, although not specifically a Code requirement, the small lot community will provide approximately 300 on-site trees to add shade, provide privacy and improve aesthetics.

## **VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP FINDINGS**

Pursuant to **L.A.M.C. Section 17.01**, the Applicant requests approval of a Vesting Tentative Tract Map (Vesting Tract No. 74107).

### **a) The proposed map will be/is consistent with applicable General and Specific Plans.**

The proposed map calls for the merger and re-subdivision to enable the development of a proposed 64-unit apartment building on one lot and 99 new residential small lots per the City's Small Lot Ordinance (LAMC Sec. 12.22 C.27). The project as designed is consistent with various elements and objectives of the General Plan. The site is not governed by a Specific Plan. The following will discuss the project's consistency with various elements of the City's General Plan, including the Sun Valley – La Tuna Canyon Community Plan, the Housing Element and the Mobility Element.

#### **General Plan Housing Element**

The purpose of the proposed subdivision is to take one of the few remaining large and mostly vacant sites in the Sun Valley – La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area and subdivide it to enable new and more moderately priced housing units can be constructed such that the City's Housing goals can be advanced. The City of Los Angeles Housing Element of the General Plan, Chapter 6, was adopted in 2013 and establishes housing policy and programs for the next eight years, to 2021.

The opening statement of the Housing Element Executive Summary is:

*The City of Los Angeles continues to grow, and with that growth comes the need for more housing-not only more units, but a broader array of housing types to meet evolving household types and sizes, and a greater variety of housing price points that people of all income levels can afford.*

The first heading of the Executive Summary is titled, "Housing Crisis in Los Angeles".

The Plan identifies a need for 82,002 new housing units by 2021. Under current assumptions for new construction, it is projected that the City will be 22,443 units short of the projected need. The Executive Summary also states that the City needs about 10,250 units per year to keep pace with the Residential Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Since 2006 the City has been producing an average of 6,000 units per year. The Housing Element estimates that the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area has the capacity to accommodate approximately 1,267 dwelling units of the approximately 82,002 units required by 2021 to meet the RHNA.

The Executive Summary also recognizes that the 37 percent homeownership rate in Los Angeles is well below the national rate of 65 percent and demonstrates the challenges but necessity for creating more homeownership opportunities in this City. Adding more attainable homes for purchase to the City's housing inventory, especially in the Sun Valley community, which has not seen much new housing activity over the recent years, would serve the public good and necessity.

As referenced above, the City of Los Angeles is facing a shortage of residential units, particularly of moderately priced for-sale residences. The Housing Element cites tightened credit standards, lack of for-sale supply and continued economic difficulties as reasons that home ownership is more difficult to attain in Los Angeles.

The Housing Element, Chapter 6, Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs describes several goals, objectives and programs relevant to this project request.

*GOAL 1: A City where housing production and preservation result in an adequate supply of ownership and rental housing that is safe, healthy and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.*

The first Policy is to expand affordable homeownership. In the Listing of Housing Programs, Objective 1.1 is:

*Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing to meet current and projected needs.*

This is further described below:

*Policy 1.1.3*

*Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the City's households.*

The 2013-2021 Listing of Housing Programs, continues to describe the programs recommended to produce an adequate supply of housing and to meet the current shortfall. Program 3 states:

*Facilitate the development of small lot subdivision (Zoning Code section 12.22C27), which permit detached fee simple home ownership on lots as small as 600 square feet, thus providing more affordable alternative for-sale housing types within commercial and multi-family residential zones. Identify obstacles in the development standards code requirements, and procedures to developing Small Lot Subdivisions and propose revisions to the Small Lot Subdivision Guidelines, clarification memos, Code Amendments or other measure to eliminate impediments.*

The Housing Element suggests that 1,400 market rate small lot units should be built. The proposed project would implement this policy and program by providing 64 new apartment units (ranging from studios to two-bedroom units) and 99 for sale new small lot single-family homes. The apartment buildings would be compatible with the existing multi-family apartment buildings along Lankershim Blvd., while the small lot homes would provide homeownership opportunities at a more affordable level than traditional single-family housing built under the existing R1 zone on large lots.

The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent, existing single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size

The General Plan's Housing Element affirms that the City is facing a housing crisis. The approval of this subdivision request would advance the City towards this goal by permitting the construction of the proposed 64 new apartments and 99 small lot residential units project in an area located within a built-out community, which is well-served by neighborhood-serving retail and commercial uses, schools, public transit lines and has the added value of being located near two major transportation corridors, Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy Street with transfers to the North Hollywood Metrolink station, connecting to the Red Line train and the Orange Line Rapid Busway. Accordingly, the project is an infill development project providing much-needed new housing located near transit-rich and job-rich centers.

There are limited opportunities to provide 163 new housing units in a range of housing types in a developed area, well served by existing commercial/retail uses, transit options and close to areas of employment. In addition to the apartment building including affordable units for Very Low Income renters, the price point for the small lot homes will be targeted towards first-time homebuyers.

*Objective 1.1*

*Produce an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing in order to meet current and projected needs.*

*Policy 1.1.1*

*Expand affordable home ownership opportunities and support current homeowners in retaining their homeowner status.*

The proposed project truly furthers the aforementioned objective and policy. The development of 64 new rental units and 99 new for-sale small lot homes in the Sun Valley community will significantly expand the opportunities for home ownership in this neighborhood. The Housing Element Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) lists Sun Valley with a potential for 1,267 units by 2021. However, there are limited areas in this community for the development of new single family homes without removing a significant number of existing housing units. Moreover, traditional single-family homes on R1-zoned lots would need to be priced much higher than small lot homes such as those proposed here, given the minimum of 5,000 square foot of land required.

*Policy 1.1.3*

*Facilitate new construction and preservation of a range of different housing types that address the particular needs of the City's households.*

Approval of the requested Vesting Tentative Tract Map would facilitate new construction of new rental units (including affordable housing units), as well as a hybrid type of for-sale housing that has the advantages of fee simple ownership, with greater affordability than a conventional single-family home.

*Policy 1.1.4*

*Expand opportunities for residential development, particularly in designated Centers, Transit Oriented Districts and along Mixed-Use Boulevards.*

Lankershim Boulevard where the project is located serves as a Mixed-Use Boulevard. It has not been the site of individual mixed-use redevelopment projects but is zoned in the older more traditional manner of separate commercial and multi-family designations and

corresponding zoning. In today's planning lexicon, it would be an ideal candidate for a designation as a Mixed Use Boulevard. It is developed with small outdated, mostly single-story commercial and retail uses along with multi-story apartment buildings.

**Policy 1.1.6**

*Facilitate innovative models that reduce the costs of housing production.*

Small lot homes are an innovative model that decrease the cost of new single-family homes and increase the opportunities for homeownership. The use of minimal yard setbacks, townhome type designs and other features reduce housing construction costs while still allowing individual homeownership. The value of small lot subdivisions is directly addressed in the Housing Element 2013-2021 Listing of Housing Programs which calls for facilitation of Small Lot developments and recommends 1,400 such units should be built.

**Mobility Plan 2035**

Approval of the Project in proximity to mass transit options would be consistent and harmonious with the purposes of the Mobility Plan 2035. Various modes of travel are encouraged by the Mobility Plan 2035, including walking, biking and using public transit. The following policies of the Mobility Plan apply to the proposed project:

***Policy 2.3: Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high-quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.***

***Policy 3.1: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular modes – including goods movement – as integral components of the City's transportation system.***

***Policy 3.3: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.***

***Policy 3.8: Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.***

***Policy 4.13: Balance on-street and off-street parking supply with other transportation and land use objectives.***

***Policy 5.2: Support ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.***

The Project Site is located off of Lankershim Blvd, a designed "Boulevard II" (previously designated a "Major Highway Class II") in the vicinity of a mix of uses, including multi-family and single-family residential, commercial, retail, restaurants, churches and schools. According to the *Traffic Impact Report for Proposed Lankershim Residential Project* prepared by Crain & Associates, April 2016, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has an extensive system of bus lines in the Sun Valley area. The public transit routes within reasonable walking distance (one-quarter mile) include both east-west and north/south routes. The Metro Red Line and Rapid Busway Orange Lines are easily accessible at the North Hollywood station located at Lankershim

Blvd. and Chandler. These lines serve the San Fernando Valley and Union Station with multiple station stops along the routes.

For the 64-unit apartment building, ample on-site vehicular and bicycle parking stalls are proposed. The small lot homes community which also takes access off of Lankershim Blvd. has been designed to include wide internal streets and pedestrian friendly landscaped walking paths and open space. All homes include 2-car garages to accommodate both vehicles and bicycles.

Accordingly, the Project introduces much-needed new housing stock proximate to transit options, neighborhood-serving uses and employment centers, thereby reducing overall vehicle trips, while concurrently promoting and accommodating all modes of travel to and from the Project Site.

### Community Plan

The Land Use Element of the General Plan is contained in the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan. This Community Plan further refines the policies of the Framework Elements, including the previously cited Housing Element. The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Community Plan as described below.

The Community Plan, Chapter III identifies key residential land use issues and opportunities including:

#### Issues

- Need to preserve single-family neighborhoods.
- Need to limit encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Need for affordable housing.
- Need for housing, jobs and services in mutual proximity.

#### Opportunities

- Access and proximity to employment.
- Potential for residential and mixed use development along commercial corridors.
- Undeveloped or underdeveloped land allowing opportunities for clustered development.
- Potential for establishing design guidelines for new residential development.

#### *Objective 1-1*

*To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.*

#### *Policies*

5. 1-1.1 *Designate land for single and multi-family residential development.*

*Program: The Plan Map identifies specific areas where single family and multi-family residential development is permitted.*

6. 1-1.2 *Protect existing single family residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses.*

*Program: The Plan Map identifies areas where only single-family residential development is permitted; it protects these areas from encroachment by designating, where appropriate, transitional residential densities which serve as buffers.*

The proposed residential subdivision project would preserve the integrity of the existing single-family homes to the east and north. The small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the existing commercial and multi-family residential uses along Lankershim Blvd. The small lot residential project provides a more affordable home ownership choice to traditional single-family homes and is targeted to first-time homebuyers, which opportunities are greatly needed in the City of Los Angeles. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering residential development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownerships that characterize the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood. The proposed new homes have been designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have designed many high quality projects throughout Los Angeles. Conceptual architectural plans call for three different models of homes and a design and layout that complies with the City's Small Lot Ordinance and 2014 Small Lot Design Guidelines.

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized largely vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial and commercial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Community Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as it is located along designated "Boulevard II" (formerly "Major Highway Class II") Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the current Plan forecasts is 2010. The Small Lot Ordinance was adopted in 2005, after the adoption of the current Sun Valley Community Plan; therefore, this housing development tool could not be specifically recommended in the Community Plan which preceded its creation. However, additional housing is still needed, as affirmed in the City's Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021. As previously cited, the Housing Element specifically calls for new small lot homes as part of the City's efforts to increase overall housing stock. This site is suitable for this type of development as it is adjacent to commercial, retail, and multi-family uses; utilities and public services are available; it is already in a highly urbanized location and is a flat lot which would require little grading.

The Community Plan, Chapter III, Land Use Policies and Programs, Residential Objective 1-2 encourages locating new housing where it will reduce vehicular trips.

#### *Objective 1-2*

*To locate new housing in a manner which reduces vehicular trips and which increases accessibility to services and facilities.*

#### *Policies*

*1-2.1 Locate higher residential densities near commercial centers, and major bus routes where public service facilities, utilities, and topography will accommodate this development.*

*Program: The Plan designates lands for higher residential densities within and adjacent to transit convenient locations*

According to the *Traffic Impact Report For Proposed Lankershim (7660) Residential Project* prepared by Crain & Associates, April 2016, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has an extensive system of bus lines in the Sun Valley area. The public transit routes within reasonable walking distance (one-quarter mile) include both east-west and north/south routes with headways ranging from 10 to 40 minutes. The Metro Red Line and Rapid Busway Orange Lines are easily accessible at the North Hollywood station located at Lankershim Boulevard and Chandler. These lines serve the San Fernando Valley and Union Station with multiple locations along the route. The Project Site is also located less than a mile and a half from Bob Hope Airport in Burbank and less than two miles from the Burbank rail station. The project is consistent with the Community Plan policies regarding availability of major bus and rail routes.

The proposed small lot homes project and associated General Plan Amendment and Vested Re-zone would provide a buffer between the existing residential neighborhood and the high density residential and commercial uses on Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy street. The current R-1 zoning of the project site does not provide adequate buffering from the existing commercial and multi-family developments along Lankershim Boulevard and Saticoy Street. At the time the current Community Plan was enacted, the Small Lot Ordinance had not been yet conceived or adopted, so it could not be referenced in the Plan's objectives and policies. However, the intent with the creation of such zones as those found in Low Medium I and Low Medium II Residential zones was to provide an intermediate zone between Low Residential and Medium/High Medium Residential areas as well as commercial uses.

### *Objective 1-3*

*To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.*

#### *Policy*

5. 1-3.1 *Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impacts on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, impacts on traffic levels, and environmental impacts when changes in residential densities are proposed.*

*Program: The decision-maker should adopt a finding which addresses these factors as part of any decision relating to changes in planned residential densities.*

The Project Site is dual-zoned: R3-1 along Lankershim Blvd. and R1-1 in the rear ("easterly") portion of the Site. The proposed 64-unit apartment building is proposed to be sited along Lankershim Blvd. on the R3-1 zoned portion and is compatible with existing multi-family residential structures along Lankershim Blvd. The 99 small lot homes are proposed to be located "behind" these Lankershim fronting, multi-family and commercial uses. The Small Lot development is more appropriate as a buffer between the Lankershim-abutting commercial uses, many of which are unsightly and the surface parking lots that are currently adjacent to the single-family neighborhood. The small lot homes project provides a mix of development types, adding a more affordable home ownership choice. The project utilizes the Opportunities identified in the Plan by clustering

development on the site, providing more units in close proximity to transit and jobs, but maintaining the individual ownership that characterizes the neighborhood.

The Housing Element suggests that 1,400 market rate small lot units should be built. The proposed project would implement this policy and program by providing 99 for sale new small lot residential units. This housing type would be more affordable than traditional single-family housing built under the existing R1 zone on standard lots. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size

The proposed project would be consistent with these objectives as it would develop an underutilized large vacant site at a location that is highly urbanized, adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhood services and with good transit. The community has a large industrial base and offers a variety of jobs in the Plan area.

According to the Plan, higher residential densities are suitable adjacent to transit convenient locations. The proposed project would be consistent with this policy as it is located one block from intensive commercial development on Lankershim Boulevard and where there are multiple transit options. The Community Plan identified the need for more housing units, but the end date of the plan forecasts is 2010. Additional housing is still needed, as shown in the Housing Element of the General Plan adopted in 2013 and projecting to 2021.

6. 1-3.2 *Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.*

*Program: The Plan includes Design Guidelines which establish design standards for residential development to implement this policy.*

The proposed project would be separated from the existing residential neighborhood and would increase the integrity of those homes. The new small lot homes would remove the existing adjacent unsightly uses such as unpaved parking lots, razor wire topped fences, brush, weeds and lack of security. The new homes would increase safety, aesthetics and provide an attractive landscaped buffer and transition between the surrounding existing single-family neighborhoods and the higher density apartments and commercial uses along Lankershim Blvd.

The small lot homes are architecturally most similar to single-family homes in character and scale. The heights are limited to 36 feet and the site will be screened with approximately 300 trees to add shade, provide privacy and improve aesthetics. Building materials will be the type used in single-family construction. Access will be from Lankershim Blvd. via a private driveway interior configuration, thus minimizing the width of paved area. Traffic patterns in the adjacent neighborhoods will not be affected as the small lot homes will not have vehicular access from adjacent local streets. Abundant open space is provided throughout the small lot homes community. The new housing will be designed by Van Tilberg, Banvard and Soderbergh (VTBS), AIA, architects who have

designed many beautiful and high quality projects through Los Angeles. Rather than the more typical contemporary design of many small lot homes throughout the City, VTBS has utilized a Spanish Colonial style which is more compatible with the existing surrounding styles of single-family and multi-family residential structures.

The proposed project would complement the surrounding uses as the scale and character are compatible with the adjacent single-family neighborhood. The small lot provisions of the LAMC allow a minimum lot size of 600 square feet. The average lot size proposed for this proposed development is 1,729 square feet, substantially larger than the minimum and more compatible with the adjacent single-family homes. Furthermore, the average size of the proposed small lot home is 1,670 sq. ft. which is also compatible with the vicinity single-family residences which generally range from 1,400 to 2,000 sq. ft. in size. The Small Lot homes will be maximum of 36 feet in height, have stucco finishes, attached two-car garages and pedestrian front entrances. The arrangement and design of the homes will complement the adjacent single-family neighborhood and will significantly improve the disjointed character caused by existing commercial and automotive uses. The addition of 99 for-sale single-family homes will bring new potential customers/patrons to the area and could serve as a catalyst for new, more neighborhood-serving commercial uses on Lankershim and Saticoy.

**b) The site is physically suitable for the proposed type of development.**

The Project Site is physically suitable for the proposed residential project. It is a flat, largely vacant, 5-acre site that is presently zoned for residential use, and is easily accessible and well served by existing infrastructure, as well as vicinity employment centers, public transit options and community-serving uses such as parks and public schools.

The Project Site is proposed to be developed with both a 64-unit apartment building along Lankershim Blvd. and 99 small lot single-family residential homes behind that. The size and height of the proposed apartment building is compatible in size, scale and design with existing multi-family residential structures along Lankershim Blvd. The proposed small lot homes are compatible with its Spanish Colonial design with single-family home features (such as covered entry porches, layered architectural features, attached two-car garages, and landscaped pathways and open space areas).

The Project site is not located in a hazardous zone (i.e. toxic waste, very high fire hazard severity zone, unsuitable soils, methane hazard site, etc.) and is not located in a hillside area, a fault-rupture study zone or Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone.<sup>1</sup> The project would not place any occupants or residents near a hazardous materials site or involve the use or transport of hazardous materials or substances. The proposed residential project is consistent with surrounding land uses and would therefore result in a development compatible with adjacent and nearby properties.

**c) The site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development.**

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<sup>1</sup> ZIMAS and GeoConcepts' Geotechnical Report for project site.

The site is physically suitable for the proposed density due to its size, topography, condition, and its surrounding environment/uses. As one of the largest mostly undeveloped sites in the Community Plan area it can easily accommodate the proposed density without adversely impacting the surrounding neighborhood. The Site is an infill site as it is surrounded on all sides by a variety of uses including multi-family and single-family residential structures, commercial, institutional and light industrial uses. The Site is well served by existing infrastructure, public transit options, and municipal services.

The Project site abuts and will take primary access from a single driveway from Lankershim Blvd. which is a designed Boulevard II (formerly a Major Highway – Class II). The Project's location in relationship to employment centers, neighborhood services (such as retailers, churches, schools, parks) and quality public transportation creates realistic opportunities for some residents to leave their automobiles at home, which in turn limits vehicle miles traveled, making the Site an ideal location for much needed new housing.

However, the current shortage of housing, high real estate prices, demand for energy efficient design and smaller lot sizes have become more appealing to the home buyer and now calls for consideration of different land use values that include a higher density on smaller lots. The current zoning was established at a time when demographics, housing trends/needs were different and these issues were not significant concerns for the City and Angelenos.

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning (DCP) recognized the zoning difficulties on this site when a previous owner proposed a Tentative Tract map to separate the R-3 and R1-1 portions of 7660 Lankershim into two lots. That project proposed a 53-unit condominium on the R1-1 portion of 7660 Lankershim. The tract map created Lot 2, consisting of the R1-1 portion and a flag portion of the R3 zoning on the south side of the existing apartment building in order to provide street access to Lankershim Boulevard. This project was approved by the City (ZA-2005-109 (ZV)(ZAA) and Tentative Tract No. 62170). Although the project has not been constructed, the entitlement approvals are valid until 2018. This prior approval demonstrates that the DCP recognized the unusual zoning and the difficulty of developing the Project Site with the existing restrictions. Variance findings were made by the City of Los Angeles in order to enable infill and high density residential development in this historically underutilized Site. Among these findings included the following determinations by the Zoning Administrator:

- “The property in question does not lend itself to any type of practical development consistent with the current zoning since the current rear portion of the lot is underutilized. The proposed use includes a 53-unit multi-family units, which would utilize the unused rear portion of the lot.”
- “The development of this vacant land will serve the community by providing needed housing, increasing the tax base, and eliminating potential problems associated with vacant land such as loitering, and possible nuisance...”

Among the findings made by the Advisory Agency in approving Tract Map No. 62170 to accommodate 53 new condos on the southerly R1 portion of the Project Site, included the following:

- “The site is one of the few under-improved properties in the vicinity. The development of this tract is an infill of an otherwise mix-density residential neighborhood.”

- “The site is level and is not located in a slope stability study area, high erosion hazard area, or a fault-rupture study zone.”

Although since expired, in 2003, the City of Los Angeles also reviewed and approved a project for an even more dense project located on the southerly portion of the Project Site. ZA-2002-4975 (ZV)(ZAA) was approved by the City for 146 dwelling units total on the lot known as 7660 Lankershim Blvd. The R1-zoned portion of this Site was proposed to be developed with rental townhouses to “provide a single-family environment, keep traffic well removed from the adjacent single-family units and provide needed housing.”

While these are previous approvals for a multi-family use on the R1-1 portion of the site (with the 2005 project approvals still valid until 2018), the current request for a General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change represents good zoning practice and are the appropriate processes to enable development of this Site. Good zoning practice in this instance would be to adopt the requested Vesting Tentative Tract Map, General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change so that small lot residential development can proceed and that a 3.9 acre site can provide more attainable single-family home ownership choices than a traditional single-family home on a larger lot. Moreover, the proposed small lot homes community would be more respectful and compatible to the adjacent single-family residences than the higher density, multi-family condominiums approved in 2005.

The Project design and density do take into consideration space needed for the access roadways and other features that result in a unique, well designed subdivision that is consistent with the visual and physical character of the surrounding single-family neighborhood subdivisions. Large lot subdivisions are becoming less desirable due to the ever increasing cost to maintain large expanses of turf grass and vegetation and the high cost of land. By providing 99 small lot homes on the majority of this infill Project Site, the uniqueness results in an attractive alternative for the housing market, while at the same time providing much-needed new homeownership opportunities, particularly for first-time homebuyers.

**d) The design of the subdivision and the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat.**

With the exception of a few small, one-story commercial structures and two small single-family residences located along the northerly portion of the Project Site, the remainder of the Project Site has been historically undeveloped. However, this infill site is “sandwiched” between older, existing single-family residential neighborhoods to the north and east, and existing commercial and multi-family residential neighborhoods along Lankershim Blvd. and to the south.

Please refer to the attached Tree Report prepared by Paul A. Lewis, Landscape Architect, dated December 18, 2015. The report documents 27 trees on the Project Site, with the majority clustered in the northerly portion of the Site and six located along the southerly property line. Of the 27 trees on-site, 22 have been identified as non-protected species. These are proposed to be removed and will be replaced at a 1:1 ratio with 24” box trees. Five (5) *Juglan Californica* trees were identified on site and as they are a native tree species are proposed to be replaced at a 4:1 ratio with 24” box trees.

The Project is undergoing an environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“**CEQA**”). As discussed in further detail in response to CEQA Checklist Question IV., Biological Resources, in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), the design of the subdivision would not cause substantial environmental damage or substantially injure fish or wildlife or their habitat.

**e) That design of the subdivision or type of improvements is not likely to cause serious public health problems.**

The design of the subdivision and construction of 64 new apartment units and 99 small lot homes will not cause public health problems. The Project Site is designed and will be constructed in accordance with all applicable health and safety regulations. The development of the Project is subject to the review and approval of several City Departments including the Department of Building and Safety, the Bureau of Engineering, Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, and the Fire Department. The Project Site Plan and construction drawings will be designed in accordance with all applicable development regulations to ensure the health and safety of future residents of and visitors to the Project Site. Thus, no public health or safety concerns would be caused by the Project.

Furthermore, the proposed project is not over a hazardous materials site, flood hazard area, nor will it be located on unsuitable soil conditions. The project would not place any occupants or residents near a hazardous materials site or involve the use or transport of hazardous materials or substances. The proposed residential land use is consistent with surrounding land uses and would therefore result in a development compatible with adjacent and nearby properties.

**f) That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will not likely conflict with easements acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of, property within the proposed subdivision.**

There are no public easements burdening the Project Site. The Project does not adjoin or provide access to a public resource, natural habitat, Public Park or any officially recognized public recreation area. Therefore, the design of the subdivision and the proposed residential development improvements would not conflict with any easements acquired by the public at large for access or use of property within the proposed subdivision.

**g) The design of a subdivision for which a tentative map is required pursuant to Section 66426 shall provide, to the extent feasible, for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities in the subdivision.**

Standard energy efficient appliances and fixtures will be utilized in the apartment units and small lot homes. Standard insulation, weather stripping and window glazing will be utilized in the residential structures as specified by current building codes. Low flow bathroom fixtures and modern irrigation systems will be installed to conserve water use throughout the development.

Other features proposed by the applicant that will assist with passive heating and cooling include:

- multiple operable windows on multiple wall planes create cross ventilation of natural air
- covered porches
- covered entries protect against the elements
- close coordination with the landscape architect to provide tree planting to shade windows in the summer and expose them in the winter, where feasible.

Accordingly, the design of the proposed subdivision will provide to the extent feasible for future passive or natural heating and cooling opportunities.

Please also see attached Solar Report prepared by EcoTierra.

## **DENSITY BONUS “OFF-MENU” INCENTIVES FINDINGS**

Pursuant to Section 12.22.A.25, a **DENSITY BONUS** with 8% very low residential units to allow Density Bonus increase of 27.5%, and three “off-menu” incentives:

- (i) **Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.22.A.25(g)(3)**, an “off-menu” incentive to allow a reduction of the required Front Yard setback to 5 feet in lieu of 15 feet.
- (ii) **Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.22.A.25(g)(3)**, an “off-menu” incentive to allow a reduction of the required Rear Yard setback to 10 feet in lieu of 15 feet.
- (iii) **Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.22.A.25(g)(3)**, an “off-menu” incentive to allow an increase in maximum height of 52 feet in lieu of 45 feet within 50 ft. of an R1-zoned property.

**A. The Incentives are required in order to provide for affordable housing costs as defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50052.5, or Section 50053 for rents for the affordable units.**

The requested incentives are not necessary to provide for affordable housing costs per State Law. The California Health & Safety Code Sections 50052.5 and 50053 define formulas for calculating affordable housing costs for very low, low, and moderate income households. Section 50052.5 addresses owner-occupied housing and Section 50053 addresses rental households. Affordable housing costs are a calculation of residential rent or ownership pricing not to exceed 25 percent gross income based on area median income thresholds dependent on affordability levels.

The requested Density Bonus off-menu incentives apply only to the proposed 64-unit apartment building located along Lankershim Blvd. Accordingly, in the below discussions pertaining to said incentives, “Project” refers only to the 64-unit apartment building. The Project substantially complies with the applicable regulations, standards and provisions of the State Density Bonus Program. The Applicant is proposing to provide 8% of the Project’s base density for Very Low Income restricted affordable units. According to Government Code Sections 65915-65918, a project must provide at least 8% of base density as Very Low Income restricted affordable housing to utilize a 27.5% density bonus.

| Table 1: DENSITY                 |                 |           |       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------|
| Lot Area (net)                   | 40,180          | SF        |       |
| R3 Density (LAMC 12.10.C.4)      | (1 unit/800 SF) | 50        | Units |
| Density Bonus                    | 27.5%           | <u>14</u> | Units |
| Total Units Proposed             |                 | 64        | Units |
| Restricted Very Low Income Units | 8%              | 4         | Units |

By setting aside 8% of the units for Very Low Income households, the Project requires relief from regulations set forth in the Code as permitted beyond the menu of incentives provided in LAMC 12.22.A.25(f) in order to construct the quantity of housing proposed. The requested waivers are not covered in the menu of incentives: setback and height requirements.

The requested incentives will permit the construction of 64 residential units and expand the Project's building envelope so that the units are designed to a livable size, configuration, and quality, and such that the requisite on-site vehicular and bicycle parking can be provided. Without the incentives, the building envelope could not fully accommodate the unit sizes and featured amenities available to all of the residents within the Project.

Moreover, as assessed and concluded by HR&A Advisors, Inc. in their pro forma report entitled *7720 Lankershim Boulevard Project Financial Feasibility Analysis* and dated July 6, 2016, a development scenario that did not include density bonus and a development scenario that only included on-menu incentives for height and yard setbacks would not be financially feasible. Please see attached HR&A pro forma analysis report.

#### Off-Menu Incentives

*Front Yard Reduction:* According to LAMC Section 12.10.C.1, the required front yard setback for the building is 15 feet. The Applicant proposes a 5-ft. front yard setback (in addition to a 5 ft. street dedication), or a 67% reduction, from the western property line, in lieu of the Code-required 15 ft. front yard setback.

Per the Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon Community Plan, the land use designations for lots abutting Lankershim Boulevard range from Neighborhood and Community Commercial to Medium Residential and Limited/Light Industrial. Corresponding zones for the Commercial and Industrial lots range from C2 to M1 and M2. For these zones, front and rear yards are not required for commercial and institutional uses respectively. Most existing commercial buildings located north and south of the proposed apartment building are developed to the property line with little to no front yard setbacks.



For example, the two existing commercial buildings closest to the Project Site (as shown in the graphic above) – 7744 N. Lankershim and 7714 N. Lankershim) do not provide front yard setbacks. Additionally, the design of the apartment building frontage along Lankershim will be layered and landscaped such that the pedestrian experience is still enhanced and vastly improved from what currently exists (i.e. currently no structures of architectural interest, no front yard setbacks and no landscaping along Lankershim). Moreover, the building frontage long Lankershim Blvd. will be tapered such that the northwest and southwest corners of the apartment building will be further setback from Lankershim and provide additional pockets of landscaped open space.

Accordingly, the front yard reduction will not adversely impact or change the physical character of the surrounding area.

**Rear Yard Reduction:** According to LAMC Section 12.10.C.3, the required rear yard setback for the building is 15 feet. The Applicant proposes a 10 ft. front yard setback, or a 33% reduction of the required rear yard setback, from the eastern property line proposed from Vesting Tentative Tract Map 74107. As discussed above, a large number of the lots abutting Lankershim Blvd. in this area are zoned C2 and M1 or M2 and have no rear yard setback requirements for commercial and industrial uses respectively.

The request to reduce the rear yard setback will not adversely impact the vicinity residents' access to light and air. The distance between the eastern side of the proposed apartment complex and the rear side of the nearest small lot building to the east is approximately 20 feet apart. The closest distance between the proposed apartment complex and the closest existing R1-zoned single-family residence to the northeast is approximately 60 feet. The rear yard of the apartment building also features landscaped areas including trees to provide additional privacy screening.

**Height Increase:** According to LAMC Section 12.21.1, maximum height in R3 zones with a "1" height district designation is 45 feet. The residential building will be 52 feet tall, a 7 ft. or 15.6% increase, and is necessary to accommodate the proposed 64

residential dwelling units. This height increase amount is within that allowed as an “on-menu incentive” per LAMC Sec. 12.22 A.25(f)(5); however, the northeast corner of the proposed apartment building is located within 50 ft. of an R1-zoned property. As such, this height increase is requested as an “off-menu incentive.”

Across the street from the Project Site is Villa California Apartments (7727 N. Lankershim Blvd.) which spans nearly half of the westerly side of Lankershim Blvd. on the same block. This complex of 210 apartment units is also three residential floors over ground floor/at-grade parking. North of the Project Site at 7744 N. Lankershim Blvd. is a commercial building of commensurate height as the Villa California Apartments. The Project will not adversely impact the residents’ access to light and air within the R1-zoned property. The closest distance between the existing (and remaining) R1-zoned property to the northeast and the northeast corner of the apartment building is approximately 60 feet. The rear yard of the apartment building also features landscaped areas including trees to provide additional privacy screening.

Without the height increase, to achieve the same number of dwelling units as proposed, the parking would have to be constructed as a subterranean garage. For a project with only 60 market-rate units on a narrow 40,180 s.f. net lot area, this would render the project financially infeasible. As discussed in other sections pertaining to the requested General Plan Amendment and Vesting Zone Change, the City’s Housing Element calls for 82,000 new housing units by 2021, with the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan area having the capacity to accommodate approximately 1,267 of these needed new dwelling units. Allowing the subject Project an additional 7 ft. in height on the subject R3-1 zoned lot will advance the City’s housing goals for this Community Plan area by enabling the construction of 64 new rental units, including 4 units for Very Low Income renters.

#### Parking Option

The Project will provide parking for the housing units in accordance with Parking Option 1 under LAMC Section 12.22.A.25(d)(1). Accordingly, housing units of 0-1 bedrooms will be parked at a ratio of 1 space per unit for a total of 48 spaces, and housing units of 2-3 bedrooms will be parked at a ratio of 2 spaces per unit for a total of 32 spaces. The Project will provide a total of 80 at-grade enclosed parking spaces. The reduced parking option will allow the Project’s parking to be consolidated to one at-grade parking structure located at the ground floor level of the residential building.

- B. The Incentives will not have a Specific Adverse Impact upon public health and safety or the physical environment or on any real property that is listed in the California Register of Historical Resources and for which there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the Specific Adverse Impact without rendering the development unaffordable to Very Low, Low and Moderate Income households. Inconsistency with the zoning ordinance or general plan land use designation shall not constitute a specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety.**

The proposed incentives will not have specific adverse impacts upon the public health and safety or the physical environment or on any real property that is listed in the California Register of Historical Resources. A “specific adverse impact” is defined in LAMC Section 12.22.A.25(b) as, “a significant, quantifiable, direct and unavoidable

impact, based on objective, identified written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions as they existed on the date the application was deemed complete".

The Project will be developed to the current Building Code standards that would result in a residential development that is safe and will not jeopardize the health of its residents. In addition, the proposed housing development will not adversely impact the public health of the surrounding area because the uses are consistent with the zoning and the surrounding uses, density and building heights in the area. There are no proposed uses on the Project Site that are inconsistent with the vicinity residential and commercial uses and zones in the immediate vicinity that would jeopardize the health, safety or physical environment by emitting smoke, noise, vibration, odors, use toxics materials, create excess traffic or other incompatible impacts.

The Project will not have specific adverse impacts on any real property that is listed on the California Register of Historic Resources. There are no historic properties in the immediate vicinity that would be negatively affected by the Project.

## **DENSITY BONUS LEGISLATION BACKGROUND**

The California State Legislature has declared that "[t]he availability of housing is of vital statewide importance," and has determined that state and local governments have a responsibility to "make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community." Cal. Gov't Code §§ 65580(a) and (d). Section 65915 of the California Government Code further provides that an applicant must agree to, and the municipality must ensure, the "continued affordability of all low and very low income units that qualified the applicant" for the density bonus.

California State Assembly Bill 2222 went into effect on January 1, 2015 (Chapter 682). The bill introduces rental dwelling unit replacement requirements, which pertain to applications filed as of January 1, 2015. The new state law also increases covenant restrictions from 30 to 55 years for determinations issued after January 1, 2015.

With Senate Bill 1818 (2004), state law created a requirement that local jurisdictions approve a density bonus and up to three "concessions or incentives" for projects that include defined levels of affordable housing in their projects. In response to this requirement, the City created an ordinance that includes a menu of incentives (referred to as "on-menu" incentives) comprised of eight zoning adjustments that meet the definition of concessions or incentives in Section 65915. The eight on-menu incentives allow for: (1) reducing setbacks; (2) reducing lot coverage; (3) reducing lot width, (4) increasing floor area ratio (FAR); (5) increasing height; (6) reducing required open space; (7) allowing for an alternative density calculation that includes streets/alley dedications; and (8) allowing for "averaging" of FAR, density, parking or open space. In order to grant approval of an on-menu incentive, the City utilizes the same findings contained in state law for the approval of incentives or concessions.

In accordance with Government Code Sections 65915(a), 65915(d)(2)(C) and 65915(d)(3), the City has complied with the State Density Bonus law by adopting density bonus regulations and procedures as codified in Section 12.22A.25 of the LAMC. LAMC Section 12.22A.25 creates a procedure to waive or modify zoning code standards which

may prevent, preclude or interfere with the effect of the density bonus by which the incentive or concession is granted, including legislative body review. The Ordinance must apply equally to all new residential development.

In exchange for setting aside a defined number of affordable dwelling units within a development, applicants may request up to three incentives in addition to the density bonus and parking relief which are permitted by right. The incentives are deviations from the City's development standards, thus providing greater relief from regulatory constraints. Utilization of the Density Bonus/Affordable Housing Incentives Program supersedes requirements of the LAMC and underlying ordinances relative to density, number of units, parking, and other requirements relative to incentives, if requested.

For the purpose of clarifying the Covenant Subordination Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) note that the covenant required in the Conditions of Approval herein shall prevail unless preempted by State or Federal law.