



Legislation Text

File #: 23-382, **Version:** 1

Resolution making findings and approving the entitlements request for the 120 East Grand R&D Project, Project P22-0039, including Design Review (DR22-0015), Vesting Tentative Map (PM23-0002), and Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDM22-0003), subject to the draft Conditions of Approval.

WHEREAS, the applicant has proposed construction of two office and R&D buildings and an amenity building consisting of approximately 501,700 sq. ft., a parking structure containing 756 spaces, open spaces, landscaping, and circulation improvements ("Project") on the property located at 120 East Grand Avenue, 130 East Grand Avenue, 129 Sylvester Road, 145 Sylvester Road, 160 Sylvester Road, and 180 Sylvester Road (APNs 015- 031-170, 015-031-180, 015-031-060, 015-031-070, 015-031-140, 015-031-150) of approximately 4.6 acres (referred to as "Project Site") in the City; and

WHEREAS, the applicant seeks the following entitlements for Project P22-0039, to be considered by the Planning Commission: Design Review (DR22-0015), Vesting Tentative Map (PM23-0002), and Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDM22-0003); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Project is located within the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan ("DSASP") area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Project is located within the East of 101 Transit Core (ETC) Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, approval of the applicant's proposal is considered a "Project" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act, Pub. Resources Code §21000, et seq. ("CEQA"); and

WHEREAS, the City Council certified an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") on January 28, 2015 (State Clearinghouse number 2013102001) in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, which analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the development of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (DSASP); and

WHEREAS, the City Council also adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations ("SOC") on January 28, 2015 in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, which carefully considered each significant and unavoidable impact identified in the EIR and found that the significant environmental impacts are acceptable in light of the project's economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21155.4

as it is a qualified employment project; and

WHEREAS, the Project is subject to CEQA streamlining pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, as it is consistent with the General Plan, DSASP, and zoning, and would have no environmental impacts that would be peculiar to the Project or Project Site; and

WHEREAS, the Project is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, as it is a qualified infill project; and

WHEREAS, environmental analysis for the proposed project was conducted, which concluded that the environmental effects associated with implementation of the project are fully within the scope of the environmental analysis conducted in the 2015 Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”), such that the project does not meet the criteria under California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines Sections 15164 or 15162 justifying preparation of a subsequent EIR and thus, an addendum is the appropriate environmental document for the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Design Review Board reviewed the Project on June 21, 2022 and August 16, 2022, and recommended approval of the Project with the incorporation of recommended landscape changes,

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2023, the Planning Commission for the City of South San Francisco held a lawfully noticed public hearing to solicit public comment and consider the proposed entitlements and environmental effects of the Project and take public testimony; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission reviewed and carefully considered the information in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (DSASP) Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and 120 E. Grand Project Addendum pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15168 and by separate resolution, finds that Project Addendum is the appropriate environmental document for the Project, that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 and Public Resources Code Section 21155.4, and that the Project qualifies for CEQA streamlining pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission exercised its independent judgment and analysis, and considered all reports, recommendations, and testimony before making a determination on the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that based on the entirety of the record before it, which includes without limitation, the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§21000, et seq.) (“CEQA”) and the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations §§15000, et seq.); the South San Francisco General Plan and General Plan EIR; the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Program EIR and Statement of Overriding Considerations; 120 E. Grand Project CEQA Addendum, including all appendices thereto; Plan set prepared by Flad Architects, Vesting Tentative Parcel Map prepared by BKF Engineers, Draft TDM Program prepared by TDM Specialists, Inc., and all reports, minutes, and public testimony submitted as

part of the Planning Commission's duly noticed May 18, 2023 meeting; and any other evidence (within the meaning of Public Resources Code Sections 21080(e) and 21082.2), the Planning Commission of the City of South San Francisco hereby finds as follows:

SECTION 1 **FINDINGS**

General Findings

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and made a part of this Resolution.
2. The Exhibits attached to this Resolution, including the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit A), the Plan Set (Exhibit B), the Draft Transportation Demand Management Program (Exhibit C) and the Vesting Tentative Map (Exhibit D) each incorporated by reference and made a part of this Resolution, as if set forth fully herein.
3. The documents and other material constituting the record for these proceedings are located at the Planning Division for the City of South San Francisco, 315 Maple Avenue, South San Francisco, CA 94080, and in the custody of the Chief Planner, Tony Rozzi.

Design Review Findings

1. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with Title 20 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code because the Project has been designed as a high-intensity employment project which will provide a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, transit-oriented environment with sustainability elements incorporated.
2. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with the General Plan and the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan because the proposed high-intensity development is consistent with the policies and design direction provided in the South San Francisco General Plan for the East of 101 Transit Core (ETC) land use designation by developing new employment uses within close proximity to the Caltrain Station and within the East of 101 area, and by activating the streetscapes on East Grand Avenue and Sylvester Road.
3. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the City Council in that the proposed Project is consistent with the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Design Guidelines, the ETC Zoning District development standards, and the Citywide development standards, as evaluated in the Zoning Ordinance Compliance analysis for the Project.

4. The Project is consistent with the applicable design review criteria because the Project has been evaluated by the Design Review Board on June 21, 2022 and August 16, 2022 and found to be consistent with each of the eight criteria set forth in South San Francisco Municipal Code Section 20.480.006 (Design Review Criteria).

Transportation Demand Management Plan Findings

1. The 120 E. Grand project's proposed TDM program is feasible and appropriate for the project, considering the proposed use or mix of uses and the project's location proximate to the South San Francisco Caltrain station and multiple SamTrans bus lines and commuter shuttles, and adjacency to residential and retail/service uses, and reduced on-site parking that will encourage alternative transportation modes and reduce single occupant vehicle use.
2. The proposed TDM program meets the points requirements for a Tier 4 office / R&D project (50 points)
3. The proposed performance measures will ensure that the target 50% alternative mode use established for the project will be achieved and maintained. Conditions of approval have been included to require that the Final TDM Plan, which must be submitted for review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit, shall outline the required process for on-going monitoring including annual surveys and trip cap reporting.

Vesting Tentative Map Findings

1. The proposed vesting tentative map, prepared by BKF Engineers including the proposed designs and improvements, is consistent with the City's General Plan and Downtown Station Area Specific Plan area because the tentative map would facilitate the development of a transit-oriented high-intensity office/R&D project which would implement the goals of the area.
2. The proposed vesting tentative parcel map is consistent with the standards and requirements of the City's Zoning Ordinance.
3. The vesting tentative parcel map complies and meets all the requirements of Title 19 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code ("Subdivisions") and with the requirements of the State Subdivision Map Act.
4. The Project site is physically suitable for the type of development and density proposed, as the employment will be located on underutilized parcels on E Grand Ave. which calls for high intensity

office/R&D uses in immediate proximity to the Caltrain Station.

5. The vesting tentative parcel map is consistent with the analysis included in the DSASP EIR and 120 E. Grand Project Addendum, and the approval of this vesting tentative map would not result in any new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified effects, nor does the vesting tentative parcel map constitute a change in the Project or change in circumstances that would require additional environmental review.
6. The design and improvements of the vesting tentative parcel map are not in conflict with any existing public easements.
7. The property is located in a developed, urban setting, and is not subject to a Williamson Act contract, on open space easement, a conservation easement, or an agricultural conservation easement. The surrounding land uses and resulting parcels would not support agricultural uses; the resulting parcels would result in commercial development not incidental to commercial agricultural use of the land.

SECTION 2 **DETERMINATION**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning of the City of South San Francisco hereby makes the findings contained in this Resolution and approves the entitlements request for the 120 E. Grand R&D project (P22-0039, Design Review DR22-0015, Vesting Tentative Map PM23-0002, and Transportation Demand Management Plan TDM22-0003) subject to Conditions of Approval attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

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