

2. Project Description

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The term “project,” as defined by the State CEQA Guidelines, means “the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is any of the following: (1)...enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100–65700.” (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15378(a).) The State CEQA Guidelines further explain that a “project” refers to the activity that is being approved and that may be subject to several discretionary approvals by governmental agencies. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15378(c)).

2.1.1 Text of Ballot Initiative

On June 4, 2019, the City Council directed staff to draft and place on the next municipal ballot, an initiative that would remove application of the existing City of Redlands 1978 voter-approved initiative measure commonly known as Proposition “R,” as that proposition was amended by the City of Redlands 1987 voter-approved initiative measure commonly known as Measure “N”, and the 1997 voter-approved Measure “U”, from future development within the TVPA. The aforementioned voter-approved measures would continue to apply to the remainder of the City.

The proposed ballot initiative would result in the following changes to the following voter-approved initiatives (new text is shown in italic and underline font):

Section 1. Sub-section B2, entitled “Special Categories of Development,” of Section 4.2 of the 2035 Redlands General Plan (Measure U), entitled “Principles of Managed Development,” is hereby amended by the addition of subsection B2 G, which shall read as follows:

“2. Special Categories of Development. The provisions of this initiative shall not apply to the following:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.

G. *The geographical area of the City designated as the “Transit Villages Planning Area” as depicted in Exhibit “A,” which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference into this ordinance.*”

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Section 2. The 1987 voter-approved initiative ordinance commonly known as Measure N is hereby amended by the addition of a new Section 7 which shall read as follows:

“SECTION 7. EXEMPTION. The geographical area of the City designated as the “Transit Villages Planning Area” as depicted in Exhibit “A” is hereby deemed exempt from the provisions of this initiative ordinance and Measure R.”

Section 3. A new section 15 is hereby added to the 1978 voter-approved initiative ordinance commonly known as Proposition R, as amended by the 1987 voter-approved initiative commonly known as Measure N, to read as follows:

“Section 15. The geographical area of the City designated as the “Transit Villages Planning Area,” as depicted in Exhibit “A” which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference, is hereby deemed exempt from the provisions of this initiative ordinance.”

If the proposed ballot initiative is approved by the voters, it would allow the City Council to consider future projects within the TVPA without the burden of the annual residential dwelling unit limitation. New residential units, specifically residential units in multi-family projects, within the TVPA could be financed more efficiently and constructed faster than the current regulations would permit. Future City discretionary actions relating to proposed development within the TVPA would not be constrained by the General Plan limitations contained in Measure U and the zoning restrictions in Proposition R, as amended by Measure N. Specifically, the proposed ballot initiative would permit the following:

- The City’s 400 dwelling unit annual limitation on construction of residential dwelling units would not be applicable within the TVPA;
- Residential densities may be increased within the TVPA from 18 to 27 units/acre without the necessity of a super-majority vote of the members of the City Council and the necessity of making certain findings;
- The requirement for the maintenance of traffic levels of service “C” for all intersections would not apply within the TVPA;
- The prohibition against the creation of new land use designations would not apply within the TVPA;
- Socio-economic studies would not be required for development projects within the TVPA.

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The underlying purpose of the Project is to remove existing voter-approved development restrictions from within the TVPA, which development restrictions constrain transit-oriented development within the City. The following represent the key project objectives of the proposed Project:

1. Encourage higher density residential development in the TVPA, consistent with the Transit Villages concepts identified in the 2035 General Plan for areas within a one-half mile radius of each rail transit

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station, to promote compact neighborhoods where people can live in close proximity to transit, and retail, office and entertainment uses..

2. Promote sustainable urban growth by encouraging development within the core areas of the City, where infrastructure already exists, at increased densities that translate into more efficient provision of municipal services, and that, by the virtue of close proximity of housing to jobs and services, will reduce vehicle miles travelled.
3. Promote transit ridership by allowing more residential development to be located within walking and biking distances from transit facilities.
4. Promote enhanced sense of community by encouraging higher density development in core areas of the City that can provide and promote public spaces for residents to use and congregate.
5. Encourage housing near jobs and entertainment opportunities in walkable environments.

2.3 CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

The proposed Project is a planning level action and it does not approve any specific development project. Therefore, there is no construction associated with the proposed Project, and consequently no construction schedule. The proposed Project is anticipated to be considered by the City Council on November 5, 2019, and if the City Council decides to move forward with the Ballot Measure it would be placed on the ballot in March 2020.

2.4 INTENDED USES OF THE SEIR

State CEQA Guidelines, section 15124(d) requires the lead agency to include in the project description a statement briefly describing the intended uses of the EIR. This Draft SEIR examines the environmental impacts of the proposed Project and is intended to be used by the voters when they cast their ballots on the proposed initiative measures. (*Friends of Sierra Madre v. City of Sierra Madre* (2001) 25 Cal.4th 165, 233.) This Draft SEIR has been prepared to review the potential impacts of the proposed Project. Other than voter approval, no other approvals are anticipated to result from this action.

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