CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL / MIXED USE

October 22, 2020 *Hearing Date*	**601-611 North Brand Boulevard** *Address*
Design Review Board (DRB) *Review Type*	**5643-002-049** *APN*
PDR 1916682 *Case Number*	**Mark Spector** *Applicant*
Roger Kiesel, AICP *Case Planner*	**ONNI Group** *Owner*

Project Summary

The proposal consists of a new hotel containing 852 guest rooms in two towers (one at 35 stories and the other at 34 stories) to be built on a surface parking lot at the north edge of a 5.2 acre (227,634 square feet) site bounded by the west side of Brand Boulevard, the south side of Sanchez Drive, and the north side of Doran Street. The existing 14-story office building and one-story gym building (which both also front Brand Blvd.), and the five-story parking garage (fronting Doran Street) will be retained. The hotel will consist of a four-story podium with two towers. The west tower will be 34 stories (including the podium) and approximately 370 feet in height. The east tower will be 35 stories (including the podium) and approximately 380 feet in height. The 852 rooms feature a high percentage of large suites and rooms (e.g. 8 at 2059 s.f.; 16 at 1334-1380 s.f.; 248 at 1005-1077 s.f.; with the balance ranging from about 500 to 800 s.f.).

Lobby and retail areas will be located at street level along Sanchez Drive and commercial areas located along Brand Boulevard. Landscape amenities along with a swimming pool and hot tub will be located on the roof of the podium in the eastern corner of the project. A landscaped roof deck is located between the two towers. A total of 1,949 parking spaces (existing and proposed) will be located on the site, which includes parking required for the existing office and gym uses in the existing parking garage as well as the proposed hotel. Publicly accessible open space is concentrated in the eastern portion of the site and includes an existing plaza and walkways in the southeastern portion of the site as well as plazas in the northeastern portion of the site proposed as part of the project.

Environmental Review

The project is being reviewed in an advisory role by the Design Review Board. The Board's recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for their Stage I review of

the project. Environmental review for the project will occur between the Stage I and Stage II review of the project by the City Council.

Existing Property/Background
The 5.2 acre site contains an existing 14-story office building and a one-story building currently used as a gym fronting Brand Boulevard, a five-story parking garage fronting Doran Street and a surface parking lot fronting Sanchez Drive. The office building, gym and parking garage will remain on the site. The surface parking lot will be demolished to make way for the proposed project.

The site is bordered by Brand Boulevard to the east, Sanchez Drive and the 134 Freeway to the north and Doran Street to the south. The recently constructed Modera, a mixed-use commercial/residential development is located immediately west of the project site. Across Brand Boulevard to the east are multi-story commercial buildings housing Chase Bank and U.S. Bank. Across Doran Street to the south is a multi-story commercial building housing Wells Fargo Bank and associated parking (both structure and surface) and the Altana (west of Orange Street), a recently developed commercial/residential development.

Staff Recommendation
Information provided as background for advisory decision.

Last Date Reviewed / Decision
First time submittal for advisory review by the Design Review Board to the City Council.

Zone: DSP - Gateway **Height District:** N/A

Although this design review does not convey final zoning approval, the project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable Codes and no inconsistencies have been identified.

Active/Pending Permits and Approvals
None.

Site Slope and Grading
None proposed.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Site Planning
Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Location
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
- ☐ Located at or near front property line
- ☐ Conforms to prevailing setbacks on the street
- ☐ Maintains appropriate sidewalk width

The DSP requires mixed-use commercial frontage streets (Sanchez Drive) to have an 18-foot total setback, taken from the curb. Depending on the existing curb to property line dimension, the setback may include both public right-of-way as well as private property. Within this area, the parkway shall be 8 feet wide and the sidewalk shall be 6 feet wide. The remainder of the setback area is considered the building adjacent zone and includes such things as landscaping and outdoor seating. Along Sanchez Drive, the project includes an 8-foot parkway, 6-foot sidewalk and a 4-foot building adjacent zone. This zone includes seating areas, landscaping and an extension of the sidewalk. Brand Boulevard is considered a Primary frontage street in the DSP and is required to comply with the Brand Boulevard Streetscape Plan, as implemented by the Public Works Department. Doran Street is considered a Mixed-Use Commercial Street in the DSP. There are no proposed changes to the one-story gym building or 5-story parking garage adjacent to this frontage. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Usable Open Space
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
- ☐ Incorporates outdoor pedestrian space
- ☐ Integrated with design and overall context
- ☐ Appropriate relationship with adjoining properties

The DSP requires entirely commercial projects over 3.0 FAR to provide 10% of the site area as publicly accessible open space. The subject site is 227,634 square feet in area and, therefore, requires 22,763 square feet of publicly accessible open space. The project provides 22,847 square feet. The open space includes areas within the existing development (landscape/pathway area between the commercial buildings and parking garage) as well as areas adjacent to the Brand/Sanchez intersection. All required publicly accessible open space need to be open to the sky, oriented to the street on at least one side and be on the same level as the sidewalk. The project complies with these requirements. *The project meets DSP requirements for commercial buildings.*

Access and Parking
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
- ☐ Parking location is appropriate to the site and its neighborhood context
- ☐ Appropriate pedestrian and vehicle access points
- ☐ Appropriate service and loading locations
- ☐ Landscape screening for street-facing parking
- ☐ Techniques employed to reduce stormwater runoff
- ☐ Decorative or colored paving to delineate pedestrian areas

In the DSP, with the exception of parking entries, no ground level parking shall be visible from any street frontage and any ground level parking shall have active retail or other habitable uses facing the sidewalk. There are three new proposed driveways leading to parking within the subject site. An entrance to the site is proposed from Brand Boulevard. Ingress and egress to/from the site is also proposed from two

driveways at Sanchez Drive. The project is designed such that only the driveways are visible from the adjacent right-of-way and ground level parking is hidden by retail and lobby areas. Existing driveways on Doran Street will not change as a result of the project. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Landscape Design
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Complementary to building design
☐ Appropriately sized and located

Planter regulations within the DSP include 18-in. maximum height requirements within 10 feet of the street facing property line, a minimum depth of 12 inches to encourage seating and a limitation that planters not exceed 25% of all project landscaping within the publicly accessible open space. One 36-in. box tree needs to be provided for every 600 square feet of public open space.

Landscape areas are shown throughout the site. Specific plant palettes, hardscape and seating designs will be provided to the City Council in their Stage II review of the project. *The project meets DSP requirements for commercial buildings.*

Walls, Fences, and Retaining Walls
☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Minimize use whenever possible
☐ Use decorative material to complement building and/or landscape design
☐ Provide landscaping to minimize visual impact

Screening
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Mechanical equipment appropriately screened
☐ Trash bins appropriately located and screened

Mechanical equipment is located on the roofs of the two towers. Glazed panelling will screen this equipment.

Determination of Compatibility: Site Planning

The proposed site planning is appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The proposed project complies with the mixed-use commercial frontage street requirements of the DSP by providing an 8-ft. parkway, 6-ft. sidewalk and 4-ft. building adjacent area as well as the Brand Boulevard Streetscape Plan.

- The project provides a total of 22,847 square feet of publicly accessible open space.
- As conditioned, fully developed landscape plans, including plant palettes, hardscape and seating designs will be provided at the City Council's Stage II review of the project.

Massing and Scale
Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Relates to its Surrounding Context
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Appropriate proportions and transitions
☐ Articulation, solid/void balance, and open space relate to predominant pattern

The project site is located in the Gateway District of the DSP. This District is located in the northern portion of the DSP and features the most visibly noted skyline of Downtown Glendale and is characterized by high-rise development. The focus of the area is the continued promotion and location of corporate headquarters, hotels, and mixed-use and residential buildings. The context of the surrounding built environment includes mid- and high-rise development to the north, including the New York Life, CitiBank, California Credit Union, Hilton Hotel and Embassy Suites Hotel buildings; mid-rise mixed-use development, including the Altana and Modera buildings and the Union high-rise building to the west; the high-rise Chase and US Bank buildings and low-rise multi-family housing to the east and high-rise buildings, including Wells Fargo to the south.

The DSP requires high-rise façades above 60 feet to be stepped back by a minimum of 20 feet. Buildings above 85 feet in height need to be tall and slender towers and floorplates above 200 feet in height shall be reduced in area by 15%. High-rise facades shall provide substantial modulation or change of material every 150 feet in length. The proposed project complies with these standards in that the podium level is 60 feet high, after which the towers step back 20 feet. After the 17th floor (200 feet in height) the floorplan is clipped at the corners, reducing the size of the floorplate. The high rise towers are 148 feet in width, below that width which a change in material is required.

The DSP identifies the intersection of Brand Boulevard and Sanchez Drive as an "entry location" appropriate for landmark architectural features. These features include towers, prominent building entries, specialized signage, public art, landscaped setbacks and public pocket parks. The project proposes a tower-like element at the podium level to highlight the Brand/Sanchez intersection. This feature is composed of glazed paneling and projects a minimum of 10 feet from the primary building massing (as required by the DSP) and a maximum of 16 feet. Signage is currently proposed on this feature. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Building Relates to Existing Topography
☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

☐ Form and profile follow topography
☐ Alteration of existing land form minimized
☐ Retaining walls terrace with slope to minimize height

Consistent Architectural Concept
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

☐ Concept governs massing and height

Scale and Proportion
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

☐ Articulation avoids overbearing forms
☐ Appropriate solid/void relationships
☐ Entry and major features well located

The DSP emphasizes modulation of rooflines as a tool for reducing the scale of large building masses. As such, the DSP requires incorporation of at least one of the following into the design of the project:

- Roofline height modulations of at least 10 feet for every 150 linear feet;
- 15-foot minimum upper level stepback of all upper floors above 40 feet in height;
- Prominent corner feature differentiated by height and design features from primary massing by at least 10 feet;
- Height averaging, where portions of massing exceed maximum height, provided entire massing height average does not exceed maximum allowed building height.

A corner feature with an angular top is incorporated into the design of the project at the Brand/Sanchez intersection. This feature is located at the podium level adjacent to the swimming pool amenity area. The corner element distinguishes itself from the remainder of the project as it projects between 10 ft. and 16 ft. above the podium level of the building on which it is located. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Massing
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

☐ Larger masses broken into separate volumes
☐ Long, unbroken street walls avoided
☐ Visual impact of larger building minimized

Projects in the DSP Gateway district may utilize any combination of incentives to increase the permitted height from 275' to 380' and FAR from 7.25 to 7.50. Hotels are one of the priority uses in the DSP determined to provide a community benefit, and as such, are currently eligible for the maximum height and FAR under the incentive

program. The Project is utilizing the hotel community benefit incentive to allow for additional building height and FAR, per DSP Chapter 7.2.3:

	DSP Standards Gateway District	Project Design
Height	275 ft	--
Height (w/ incentives)	380 ft	380 ft
Density	7.25 FAR	--
Density (w/ incentives)	7.50 FAR	7.50 FAR

Façade modulation is an important component in the DSP to encourage proportions that relate to the human scale, relieve building mass, and create visual interest. Major façade modulation needs to occur every 150 linear feet and minor façade modulation needs to occur every 50 linear feet. Additionally, the DSP requires a clearly delineated base, middle and top of building. The project contains a base, the podium level which extends horizontally the entire width of the project site, the two towers, making up the middle of the building, and the equipment screening at the top of the building, which is a different form than the towers and is composed of a different material. The horizontally-oriented podium contains an undulating façade, which recesses roughly at the mid-point of the building where the main pedestrian entrance to the hotel is located. The podium again recesses near the intersection of Sanchez and Brand. The tower elements are less than 150 linear feet wide and, therefore, are not required to provide major modulations. Minor modulations are accomplished through the use of undulating balconies (or lack thereof) as well as the corner void located at the 18th floor and above.

The DSP requires projects with more than 200 feet of façade length to provide building separation to reduce the scale of the project, provide opportunities for open space areas, reinforce a pedestrian scale and provide visual reference to building entrances. The proposed project has a façade length of 572 feet, and, thus, must comply with building separation requirements. The project accomplishes this at the main pedestrian entrance to the project, which is set back (recessed) 20 feet from the required setback zone and is given a different architectural treatment from the abutting podium area. Further, the east and west towers are separated from each other by almost 100 feet above the podium level. *The project meets DSP requirements as a priority use per the DSP Chapter 7 – Community Benefit .*

Determination of Compatibility: Mass and Scale

The proposed massing and scale are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The mass of the proposed project is consistent with the surrounding development, which includes high-rises interspersed with lower scale development in all four directions.
- The project effectively utilizes step-backs, façade modulation and floorplate reductions to lessen the appearance of mass.
- The project has a strong sense of base, middle and top building components.

Design and Detailing
Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Overall Design and Detailing
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Consistent architectural concept
☐ Proportions appropriate to project and surrounding neighborhood
☐ Appropriate solid/void relationships

The DSP requires that building façades be constructed in a manner that appears substantial and use architectural solutions to avoid creation of impenetrable, unarticulated building façade. The project accomplishes this by providing a significant amount of fenestration at the pedestrian level and, where glazing is not proposed, the building will be faced with stone tile, metal cladding and architecturally-finished concrete. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Entryway
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Well integrated into design
☐ Location promotes pedestrian activity
☐ Design provides appropriate focal point

The DSP requires building lobbies to provide the following features:
- Design features to provide weather protection and create visual prominence such as canopies or marquees.
- Material application that creates continuity with building design but also creates a distinct and identifiable aesthetic quality.
- A recess or projection to delineate this feature from the remainder of the building.
- Differential paving materials, distinct and unique from adjacent paving material.

The lobby entrance of the project is recessed from the remainder of the building façade at its midpoint location along Sanchez Drive. A canopy is proposed above the main building entrance. The lobby façade is composed of a curtain wall glazing system, a material which provides a distinct change from the façade of the remainder of the building. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Storefronts and Windows
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Maximize transparency at ground floor

☐ 12-15’ floor-to-floor height at ground-floor is encouraged
☐ Coordinate design with overall style of building
☐ Use durable materials for windows, such as aluminum or steel
☐ Locate security gates/grilles inside commercial spaces, preferably set back from storefront

The DSP requires that a minimum of 75% of the storefront be transparent. The project provides significant transparency with approximately 82% of the storefront transparent. Canopies and marquees are required on a minimum of 50% of the façade. The design of the project includes canopies over 62% of the facade.

The DSP requires a variety of window sizes to create visual complexity and reflect different internal uses. Unarticulated glass curtain walls should be avoided and instead windows should be divided into individual storefronts and glazing subdivided into smaller units with differentiation provided at the base and top of windows. *The project meets DSP requirements.*

Awnings and Canopies
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:
☐ Integrate awnings and canopies into overall building design
☐ Avoid long treatments spanning multiple openings
☐ Back-lit awnings are not allowed

The DSP requires a minimum of 50% of the street facade of a project include canopies or marquees. Canopies shall be installed between 9 ft. and 14 ft. above grade and the materials and colors used shall be complementary to the building aesthetic. As mentioned previously, approximately 82% of the street façade includes proposed canopies. The canopies will be installed approximately 12 ft. to 13 ft. above grade. Canopies will be composed of metal, which will re-inforce the contemporary architectural style of the project.

Lighting
☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:
☐ Light fixtures are appropriate to the building design
☐ Avoid over-lit facades; consider ambient light conditions when developing lighting scheme
☐ Utilize shielded fixtures to avoid light spillover onto adjacent properties

Pedestrian-scaled lighting is required on all storefronts. Lighting specifications will be shown at the Stage II City Council review of the project.

Finish Materials and Color
☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:
☐ Textures and colors reinforce design

☐ High-quality, durable materials used, especially facing the street
☐ Materials appropriately enhance articulation and façade hierarchies
☐ Wrap corners and terminate cladding appropriately
☐ Cladding is well detailed, especially at junctions between materials
☐ Foam trim, finished on site, is prohibited

The DSP requires building facades to use architectural solutions to avoid creation of impenetrable, unarticulated building facades. Further, facades shall be constructed in a manner to appear substantial and avoid low-quality building materials and construction details. While information on construction material and details will be provided in the Stage II review of the project, material such as visual and spandrel glass, stone tile, metal cladding and architecturally-finished concrete are proposed.

Paving Materials
☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Decorative material at entries/driveways
☐ Permeable paving when possible
☐ Material and color related to design

Decorative paving needs to be provided at the entrance to the lobby, new driveways and at the corner feature of the project. Additional information regarding this paving material will be provided during the City Council Stage II review of the project.

Roof Forms
☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:
☐ Configure roofline to provide visual interest and deemphasize mass
☐ Roof forms are consistent with overall design
☐ Continue roofs and parapets around building or terminate in logical manner

Rooftop design shall prevent unsightly rooftops as viewed from above, either by screening mechanical systems from view, creating a significant top or landmark or designing the roof for use. The mechanical equipment screening on the project will be composed of glass paneling, the shape of which will re-inforce the undulating balconies found on the two towers.

Determination of Compatibility: Design and Detailing

The proposed design and detailing are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The Board is performing an advisory review for the City Council Stage I review. Stage I review concentrates on site planning and mass and scale of the project. Stage II review concentrates more on the design and detailing of the project. The Board can suggest design and detailing concerns to the Council for their Stage II review.

- The main pedestrian entrance to the project is recessed within the façade of the building and composed of a curtain wall glazing system, which differentiates it from the remainder of the Sanchez façade.
- Significant fenestration is proposed along the street front elevations of the project, which will re-inforce pedestrian activity in this area.

Attachments

1. Reduced Plans/Photos of property and surrounding neighborhood
2. Location Map