



CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT ADVISORY REVIEW BY THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

January 13, 2022 <i>Hearing Date</i>	620 N. Brand Boulevard & 625 N. Maryland <i>Address</i>
Design Review Board (DRB) <i>Review Type</i>	5643-018-031 and 5643-018-032 <i>APN</i>
PDR 2119308 <i>Case Number</i>	Rodney Khan, Khan Consulting <i>Applicant</i>
Vilia Zemaitaitis, AICP <i>Case Planner</i>	Adelfia Properties II, LLC <i>Owner</i>

Project Summary

The proposal consists of maintaining the six-story commercial bank/office building at 620 N. Brand Boulevard, demolishing the two-level parking garage and adjacent commercial building to the rear along Maryland Avenue (625 N. Maryland Avenue), and constructing a new 294-unit, 24-story multi-family residential building on the easterly half of the 63,760 SF (1.48 acre) project site zoned DSP Gateway District.

The Project includes:

- 247 1-bedroom units and 47 2-bedroom units;
- 373 subterranean parking spaces for the residential uses and 129 above-ground, replacement parking spaces for existing commercial bank building;
- A sizeable, publicly accessible open space courtyard/plaza fronting Brand Boulevard; and
- Residential amenity spaces and decks throughout the project.

The proposed FAR is 7.25 and the building height is 266 feet (7.25 FAR and 275 feet maximum by right). The project complies with all of the development standards and no variances are proposed. The office building at 620 N. Brand was identified as a potential historic resource in the 2019 South Glendale Historic Resources Survey and is therefore considered a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Environmental Review

The Community Development Department, after having conducted an Initial Study, is finalizing a Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA) for the project. The proposed SCEA and all documents referenced therein will be available for review on the Planning Division website at: <http://www.glendaleca.gov/environmental>. The proposed Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment Comment Period has tentatively

been scheduled for January 13, 2022 to February 14, 2022. Written comments may be submitted to the Community Development Department, Planning Division Office, during the 30-day review period.

The SCEA includes an assessment of the project's potential impact on the adjacent historic resources and finds that construction of the proposed building will not have an adverse impact and that the historic resource will remain eligible for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources. This assessment is based on the findings of a Historical Resource Technical Report, prepared by Teresa Grimes Historic Preservation and incorporated into the SCEA. Planning staff concurs with the findings of the report.

Existing Property/Background

The 1.48-acre project site consists of nine adjoining parcels - four fronting Brand Boulevard and five fronting Maryland Avenue. The site currently features a six-story commercial bank/office building facing Brand Boulevard (Chase Bank/Coldwell Banker, originally Home Savings & Loan), a two-story, 163-space parking structure facing Maryland Avenue, and a two-story, 12,156 square-foot commercial building that also fronts Maryland Avenue. The six-story bank/office building will be maintained, while the parking structure and smaller commercial building will be demolished. The parking spaces for the commercial bank/office building will be replaced within the project's new parking garage.

The project site is bordered by Brand Boulevard to the west, the 134 Freeway to the north, Maryland Avenue to the east, and a six-story commercial office building (600 N. Brand) and an adjacent surface parking lot to the south (north of Doran Street). Across Maryland Avenue to the east is a three-story parking structure and across Doran Street to the south is a 19-story office building and associated parking structure. 600 N. Brand, which adjoins the project site was identified in the 2019 South Glendale Historic Resources Survey as a potential historic resource. The surrounding properties fronting Brand Boulevard are zoned DSP Gateway and could be developed with buildings up to 275 feet high and with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 7.25 by right, and ultimately up to 380 feet and with an FAR of 7.5 through the DSP Community Benefit program. The block-face across Maryland Avenue (between Maryland Place and Doran Street) is also zoned DSP-Gateway, while the other side of the same block, facing Louise Street, is zoned R-1250 (High Density Residential).

A previous project consisting of an approximately 350-foot tall, 32-story, 348-unit multi-family residential development with a total of 621 parking spaces for both the commercial and residential uses in a subterranean and above-grade parking garage was reviewed by City Council as a Stage I Preliminary Review on January 21, 2020. The project had utilized the DSP's Tiered Community Benefit program to achieve additional height in the DSP Gateway District. The proposed design would have produced one of the most striking and tallest new buildings on the downtown skyline, with swooping curved elements and architectural features. Council voted to approve the preliminary design with the following comments:

1. That the applicant shall reduce the overall height of the building by relocating the above-grade residential parking below-grade (subterranean).
2. That the applicant shall provide information regarding the scaling, scoring, and application of the metal panel material to ensure that the project meets the intent of human scaled and high-quality materials as required per the DSP.
3. That the applicant shall consider revising the design of the Project to better reflect the Midcentury Modern aesthetic of the adjacent commercial building on-site.

The current proposal has been designed to address the above conditions; all of the residential parking has been relocated below grade, detailed information has been provided for the high-quality, human-scale materials, and the design has modified to focus more on rectilinear forms and building lines as seen on the adjacent bank building. See detailed analysis below.

Staff Recommendation

Provide comments and recommend that City Council approve the project.

Last Date Reviewed / Decision

First time submittal for advisory review by the Design Review Board to the City Council.

Zone: Downtown Specific Plan – Gateway District, which allows a maximum 275-foot height and 7.25 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) by right, and ultimately up to 380 feet and a 7.5 FAR through the DSP Community Benefit program (DSP Chapter 7).

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

In addition to a Design Review application, the applicant has filed a Development Agreement request. The Development Agreement is scheduled to be considered by the Planning Commission on January 19, 2022, for recommendation to City Council, as required by law; the matter will most likely be continued to February 2, 2022. The project will also be presented to the Historic Preservation Commission on January 20, 2022, for advisory comments. The Board's and Commissions' comments and recommendations, and the Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA - environmental review), will be presented to the City Council at the public hearing in March for the Stage II Final Design and the Development Agreement.

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 site plan is driven by the retention of the existing, six-story bank building on the north-west corner of the project site and the Project's compliance with the additional publicly accessible open space requirement for properties adjacent to Brand Boulevard. As a result, the proposed building occupies the remaining east half of the

site, with frontage on Maryland Avenue. The new structure is placed behind the main façade of the existing bank building, maintaining views of the iconic main façade along Brand Boulevard. The existing, landscaped open space around the bank building will also be maintained while the current surface parking lot south of the bank building will be converted to an approximately 88-ft. by 83-ft. publicly accessible open space plaza (6,994 SF total or 11% of the project site area) that, when the adjacent landscaped area in front of the bank building and the other perimeter areas is included, brings the open space total to 15,844 SF or 24.8% of the project site. The existing parking garage at the rear will be replaced by the new multi-story residential tower, with vehicular access from Maryland Avenue to the parking garage. Pedestrian access to the ground-floor residential lobby from Brand Boulevard will be through the publicly accessible open space on one side and with direct pedestrian access from Maryland on the other. Meanwhile, along the north side, the building will be set back four feet which allows a well-landscaped pedestrian walkway to run along the entire length, connecting Brand Boulevard to Maryland Avenue. The three-story podium of the new building will be set back approximately 30 feet from the rear façade of 625 N. Brand and the upper residential floors, beginning at the fourth floor, will be set back by approximately 47.5 feet. Meanwhile, the decorative screen of the Brand façade entry is approximately 20 feet and the podium approximately 34 feet from the rear façade of 600 N. Brand, and approximately 80 feet above the fourth floor. The site plans showing these dimensions can be found on sheets 35-40 of the plan packet.

The project site features a “Primary Frontage” designation along Brand Boulevard and a Mixed-Use Residential designation along Maryland Avenue. Projects in the DSP located along a “Primary Frontage” must comply with the Brand Boulevard Streetscape Plan, and those along “Mixed-Use Residential” streets are required to have a minimum 16-foot setback from the curb face (5-ft. parkway, 8-ft. sidewalk, 3-ft. average building adjacent zone). The project complies with the required streetscape standards on both frontages.

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 residential projects over 3.0 FAR to provide 10% of the site area as publicly accessible open space. The subject site is 63,760 square feet in area and, therefore, requires 6,376 square feet of open space. The project provides 6,994 square feet of the required publicly accessible open space (PAOS) within a large entry courtyard/plaza fronting Brand Boulevard (see Sheet 87). This area is surrounded by additional open space that includes the landscaped street front setback between the existing bank building, as well as the residential common open space (6,034 SF) at the ground floor adjacent to the front of the building facing Brand Boulevard; the cumulative effect of all of these areas (15,844 SF) results in a much larger publicly accessible open space fronting Brand Boulevard.

In compliance with the DSP standards, the publicly accessible open space is 100% open to the sky, oriented towards and accessed from a public street, and integrated within the site plan for the project. The programming of plaza includes outdoor seating, a gateway element and water feature that help camouflage an exit stair from the residential subterranean garage below, and a trellis structure that extends towards new building and around the back of the bank building, resulting in useable, shaded open space between the existing and new buildings. The area also includes decorative hardscape and drought tolerant landscaping (including required shade trees). The site planning includes a required fire lane for GFD access to the building from Brand Boulevard that is to be used only in emergency situations and will be closed at all other times; this area has been incorporated into the open space and can feature movable furniture and planters. The programming of ground floor open space can be seen in the submitted landscape plans on Sheets 82-83.

The project also complies with the DSP's residential development open space standards of 140 SF per unit in the form of common open spaces and private outdoor space. The project includes 41,625 SF of both private (in balconies) and common open space, such as open decks of various sizes located on levels 4, 5, 6, 7, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24. The two largest decks are on level 4 (pool deck of 11, 949 SF) and 23 (rooftop terrace of 9,118 SF). Amenities include an outdoor pool, dog park, tables and seating furniture, bar-b-ques, fire pits, landscape planters (some with shade trees) and other features for the residents.

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

Per the DSP standards, 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.

Pedestrian access to the building's main lobby is through the publicly accessible courtyard/plaza fronting Brand and another entry facing Maryland. Vehicular access is solely from Maryland Avenue.

The proposed project would provide a total of 129 spaces for commercial uses that would remain on site in the two above-ground levels and 373 parking spaces for the residential use proposed on the site within four subterranean levels. These levels are best seen in the cross-section plans featured on Sheets 53-55.

Access to the parking is provided from Maryland Avenue via two two-way driveways – one leading to the residential parking below grade and one leading to the commercial

parking above grade. Aside from the valet staging area on the ground floor accessed from the southerly driveway, there is no parking at-grade and no parking visible from the adjacent street frontages, in compliance with the DSP. The commercial parking on Levels 2 and 3 are wrapped with architectural screening featuring louvers, so as to not be visible from any of the adjacent public rights-of-way; the residential parking is fully subterranean, as conditioned by City Council as part of the Stage I design review.

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. Also, one 36-inch box tree needs to be provided for every 600 square feet of public open space.

Landscape areas are shown throughout the site (sheet 90) and within the open space decks above. Drought tolerant landscaping is proposed both at grade and within raised planter (not exceeding 25% of the planters within the publicly accessible open space per the DSP). The plant palette includes blue glow agave, fortnight lilies, festival grass, rosemary, and blue flax lilies, while the tree palette features tipu, date palms, dwarf Japanese maples, and marina strawberry. Seating has been incorporated into the landscape design for the publicly accessible courtyard/plaza at the front, as well as an architectural water feature. The hardscape plan within the open space features a combination of new concrete paving with brick bands to match the existing brickwork along Brand Boulevard, grey concrete paving offset with light grey concrete with silica carbide, and also precast concrete pavers. Meanwhile, the pedestrian walkways along Maryland Avenue feature grey concrete with white aggregate, the driveways are not identified as being decorative; there is opportunity to add decorative banding or material to tie the areas together. The upper level decks also feature drought tolerant landscaping, primarily in raised, angular planters, including larger trees and a variety of shrubs. Overall, the landscaping design is thoughtfully designed and complementary to the project (see Sheets 82-85).

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

No walls, fences or retaining walls are proposed at this time.

Screening

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Mechanical equipment appropriately screened
- ☐ Trash bins appropriately located and screened

The electrical substation transformer room and doorway to the utility room front Maryland Avenue, and are proposed to be screened with limestone and glazed paneling to match the rest of the easterly façade. The rooftop mechanical equipment and elevator overruns are appropriately screened by the trellis/loggia element.

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 site planning for the project is driven by the existing six-story bank building at the north-west corner of the site to be maintained and the proposed publicly accessible open space courtyard/plaza along Brand Boulevard that replaces the existing surface parking lot; the new high-rise project is located on the easterly half of the dual-frontage, project site, adjacent to Maryland Avenue.
- The placement of the new building to the rear of the two nearby historic buildings and the wide setbacks between them allow each to be viewed in the round even though the new building will block some visual access to the older buildings from vantage points to the east.
- Pedestrian access to the building and its ground floor lobby is provided from both streets, while the vehicular access to the project’s parking garage is only from Maryland Avenue; this creates a more pedestrian-oriented frontage along Brand, and relocates the project’s vehicular access to the secondary frontage along Maryland that faces a three-level parking garage.
- The proposed project complies with the Brand Boulevard Streetscape Plan, as well as the mixed-use residential frontage street requirements of the DSP along Maryland Avenue by providing a 5-foot parkway, 8-foot sidewalk and 3-foot building adjacent zone.
- The project provides a 6,994 SF, landscaped, publicly accessible open space courtyard/plaza fronting Brand Boulevard, and a total of 15,844 SF of general open space at grade (exceeding the DSP requirements of 6,376 SF (10%) and 12,752 SF (20%), respectively).
- The project includes 41,625 SF of residential open space in the form of private balconies and common decks on various levels throughout the project, featuring a pool deck, dog park, outdoor seating decks of various sizes and a substantial rooftop deck to take in the view.
- Fully developed landscape plans show a variety of drought-tolerant landscaping (tree and shrub palette), decorative hardscape, a water feature and seating in the open space area fronting Brand Boulevard. A condition is recommended to incorporate decorative paving for the driveways along Maryland.

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. Located in the northern portion of the DSP, this area is characterized by high-rise development that produces a skyline visible from miles away. The focus of the area is the continued promotion and location of corporate headquarters, hotels, mixed-use and residential buildings. The context of the surrounding built environment includes the 134 Freeway directly to the north, with mid- and high-rise development north of the freeway, including CitiBank, Monterey Towers condominium building, and California Credit Union buildings; the Bank of America high-rise building across Brand Boulevard to the west; the parking garage for the US Bank building and low-rise multi-family housing to the east, and mid/high-rise buildings, including 600 N. Brand (US Bank) and 550 N. Brand buildings directly to the south. The tallest building in the Gateway District is the Glendale Plaza (655 N. Central Avenue) at 353 feet in height, followed by the former Nestle Building (800 N. Brand Blvd.) at 292 feet, then the 550 N. Brand Boulevard building at 275 feet.

The Stage II proposal calls for a 24-story tower that is 262.5 feet high, in keeping with the surrounding context of high-rise buildings. It represents a significant change/reduction from the Stage I proposal, which rose to approximately 350 feet high. The tower element of the current proposal is set back about 140 feet from Brand Boulevard, to the rear of the two historic buildings that (approximately 140 feet) and also more than 20 feet from the podium edge along Maryland Avenue, thereby centering the tall massing away from the street edge and providing appropriate transition to the lower scale neighborhood to the east.

In terms of the relationship between the new building and the former Home Savings tower, several features help mitigate their obvious difference in height and overall size. First, the new building is located to the rear of the older one (as well as its neighbor to the south at 600 N. Brand, which is also identified as historic). This placement allows the new building to serve as a visual backdrop to the two buildings on Brand. This, when combined with the considerable setback of the new tower from their rear facades (e.g. 30 feet at the lower floors of the new building and 47 feet or greater at the residential levels), will help the older buildings retain their prominence as viewed from the street and allow for the expression of their building volumes in relation to their new neighbor. Though the height difference between the buildings is undeniable, such shifts in scale are found in downtown commercial districts throughout the country, adding to their dynamism and providing a visual timeline of their development. At a more finely-grained level, the three-story podium of the new building features vertical projecting fins that reflect the similarly-spaced fins of the older building. As seen from the ground, this will establish a visual dialogue between the buildings and provide an effective linkage

between the old and new at the project's grade-level open spaces. Ultimately, the architects have successfully knit the new building into the complex urban fabric that features contrasting building sizes, shapes, and eras of construction (see the renderings on Sheets 4-10).

Lastly, the DSP identifies the intersection of Brand Boulevard and the 134 Freeway on-ramp 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 retains the former Home Savings & Loan tower, which will continue to anchor its corner as it has since its completion in 1969, when it was the first tall building built at the northern edge of downtown Glendale and served as a marker of the city's growing downtown for drivers on the then-new Ventura Freeway. The Home Savings building set the stage for the vigorous high-rise development along this part of Brand Boulevard seen today that provides the developmental context for the current proposal.

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

The project site features a relatively flat topography (only a very slight grade change from the north-east corner to the south-west corner), so this is not applicable.

Consistent Architectural Concept

☒ yes ☐ n/a ☐ no

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Concept governs massing and height

The contemporary architectural style is consistent around all elevations, and the finishes and design treatments help to break down the massing of the project. The three-part breakdown of the building form – podium base, repetitive residential floors, and dramatic roof trellises signaling the building's termination – are reflective of how Classical forms influenced early high-rise construction with a base-shaft-capital configuration and adds to the visual character of the building.

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 design effectively breaks the building's volumes down into discrete, well-scaled components that creates a visual liveliness that successfully avoids any sense of

agitation or showiness. As noted above, the three-part design establishes an appropriate base, with closely spaced vertical fins, and termination at the roof, with more widely spaced vertical columns that support the high trellis structures. The subtle echo between these elements, which share similar heights but produce strikingly different effects, is a very interesting aspect of the design. The interplay of the “gridded” walls, with an interweaving of horizontal and vertical elements, with the sections with curtain-wall cladding, which are more monolithic in appearance, provides scalar shifts that ultimately produce a harmonious, yet complex, façade patterning that will distinguish this design from most of its North Brand neighbors.

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

The site is located in the Gateway District of the DSP and permits a maximum building height of 275 feet, and up to 380 feet in height with community benefits/incentives (DSP Chapter 7). The maximum FAR in the Gateway District is 7.25 by right and 7.50 with incentives.

Unlike the 350-foot tall, 348-unit multi-family, Stage I preliminary project which proposed to utilize the Tiered Community Benefits Program in exchange for the additional height beyond the 275 feet permitted by right, the current project complies with the by-right height and FAR standards in the Gateway District. The proposed multi-family residential project is 262.5 feet in height to the top of the photovoltaic arrays/metal trellis. The project proposes an FAR of 7.25 (new structure – 417,135 SF).

Façade modulation is an important component in the DSP that encourages proportions that relate to the human scale and create visual interest. 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. 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 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 19th floor (197 feet in height) the floorplan is constricted/narrowed on the north and south ends, thereby reducing the size of the floorplate by the required 15%. This narrowing of the building form as the structure rises helps to reduce the overall massing of the project. The approximately 250-foot long west and east elevations feature the required change in material and modulation, which is enhanced by the tower’s offset volumes that create a zigzagged floorplate between the north and south half of each floor, which connect at the vertical circulation core.

The massing of the building is divided into three basic volumes, both vertically and horizontally. Vertically, the project features a classic tripartite division: base, middle and top. Composed of the lobby and the two commercial parking levels, the three-story podium, which extends the entire length of the project site from north to south, is the rectangular base. Above this, Levels 4 – 22 act as the middle, while the tall, open-air rooftop terraces (“loggias”) and photovoltaic panels serve as the crowning top to the structure. The tripartite divisions are somewhat less pronounced horizontally: the west and east elevations feature two, expansive, grid-patterned sections, composed of vision glass and blue and white metal panels set within white frames, that are set off from a completely different central volume - a swath of vision glass and gray metal panels that are color-matched to read as one uniform center. This same gray-on-gray treatment is used at levels 4 and 5 to differentiate the base podium from the shaft of the main middle above.

Lastly, the DSP requires projects with more than 250 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 does not have a façade length of 250 feet, and, thus, does not need to comply with this requirement. Nevertheless, the project’s sense of mass is reduced by its offset building forms, the tapering-off of its height at the north and south, changes in planes and materials, and the significant setback from Brand Boulevard behind the publicly accessible open space courtyard/plaza.

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 24-story, 262.5-foot high project complies with the DSP’s by-right height standard, and is consistent with the surrounding development in the Gateway District, which includes high-rises interspersed with lower scale development in three directions (north, west and south). The project, with its three-story podium base 16 feet from the curb and the additional, minimum 20-foot setback above, also helps provide an appropriate transition to the lower scale neighborhood to the west.
- The tower element is set back about 140 feet from Brand Boulevard, to the rear of the two adjacent historic buildings with the considerable setback of the new tower from their rear facades, and also more than 20 feet from the podium edge along Maryland Avenue, thereby centering the tall massing away from the street edge. This placement allows the new building to serve as a visual backdrop to the two buildings on Brand, while also helping the older buildings retain their prominence as viewed from the street and allowing for the expression of their building volumes in relation to their new neighbor.
- The project effectively utilizes off-set building forms, step-backs, façade modulations and floorplate reductions to lessen the appearance of its mass. The end volumes also step down at their outside corners in order to break down their overall massing, similar to several taller commercial buildings just to the south on the same side of Brand Boulevard (400-550 N. Brand).
- The project has a strong sense of base, middle and top building components – podium base, repetitive residential floors, and dramatic roof trellises signaling the

building's termination, as required by the DSP, to further help reduce the scale of the tall building.

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 to be constructed in a manner to appear substantial and to use architectural solutions to avoid creation of impenetrable, unarticulated building façade.

Designed in a contemporary style, the project features streamlined cladding composed of metal panels in shades of blue, white and gray, limestone tiles at the ground level, metal louvers at the podium level that are intended to honor the design of the existing bank building. As described above in the Massing and Scale section, the building above the podium appears as two offset rectangular building volumes, whose longer west and east elevations feature a gridded window pattern that is contrasted at the central volume by more monolithic curtain wall cladding. The gridded façade sections feature white frames and horizontally and vertically-oriented rectangular blue panels around the window openings. The curtain-wall facades feature have a more uniform appearance, with gray-tinted windows and matching metal panels. The two highest roof levels are surmounted by tall metal trellis structures with a white finish that allows them to visually integrate with the white fin at the podium and the vertical portions of the white-gridded walls of the residential floors. These structures will also serve as the armature for photovoltaic panels. Meanwhile, the narrower north and south elevations feature the same patterning as on the elongated tower facades, allowing all the wall treatments to successfully wrap each building volume in a manner that provides a consist and unified overall design.

At the Stage I hearing, City Council directed the project team to redesign the building to make it more compatible with the design of the former Home Savings building. This has been accomplished in several ways. As noted above, the vertical fins used at the podium echo the masonry fins that are a key feature of the older building. This will be especially apparent to those using the Brand plaza and common space areas. While not mimicking the historic design, the proposed fins will allow for a visual dialogue between the buildings' eras while establishing a harmonious design for people using this space. The overall form of the building is also more rectilinear that was seen in the Stage I proposal, with all of the curved elements removed from the design. Instead, there is an emphasis on the interplay of horizontal and vertical elements that abstractly captures some of the older building's features. The vertical expression of the podium's fins is carried upward by the vertical portions of the window grids and the columns of the rooftop trellis structure, with the spacing (and therefore visual density) of the

verticals widening at each section. This references the use of evenly spaced verticals of the Home Savings building without mimicking them on the new building, which could be visually disastrous and historically inappropriate, according to the Urban Design staff. In addition, the curtain wall sections of the new building also harken the scale-less aspect of the older building's window bays, whereas the rooftop trellis structure can be seen as a "very abstracted take on the tall frieze band at the top of the former Home Savings". Staff believes the new design successfully meets Council's goal of making the proposal more compatible with the historic building than was the case at Stage I review.

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 (Section 4.2.10) 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 ground floor residential lobby is significantly setback from Brand Boulevard, and accessed from the publicly accessible open space plaza that is visible from and connected to the public street. The lobby is also readily accessible from Maryland Avenue, which is actually the primary façade for residents and users of the building given its street adjacency, its vehicular access to the parking garage, and its street addressing. Both lobby elevations feature architectural frames that distinctly mark and provide visual interest to the glazed lobbies' entrances; the Brand Boulevard lobby features a two-story architectural screen, composed of vertically oriented lights and wood-toned louvers, that highlight the building entrance. Furthermore, the two lobby walls feature a great deal of glass, allowing visibility through the lobby from the Brand plaza to Maryland Avenue.

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

The DSP (Section 4.2.9) has specific standards for commercial storefronts that do not apply to this multi-family residential project.

The DSP (Section 4.2.15) 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 window design of the project features a variety of window types and patterns. The lobby and lower levels of the “middle” portion of the building (versus the podium level and crowing loggias/trellises) features expansive glazing / vision glass. The middle portion above utilizes essentially two sizes of tripartite window systems that are juxtaposed within a grid pattern of colored metal panels. The slight offset of the window systems within the patterned, colored frames result in a more activated, playful expression than what a typical stacked window pattern would provide; this composition is one of the more striking features of the façade design and it is imperative that it not be lost due to any value engineering during the plan check process. Meanwhile, the colored, patterned grid design is counterbalanced by the darker, vertical curtain walls composed of stacked gray vision glass and matching metal panels Staff believes the desired uniformity of the curtain wall would be enhanced if spandrel glass to match the vision glass color were used in lieu of the metal panels; a consideration to this effect is included in the recommended staff conditions.

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 complimentary with the building aesthetic.

The design incorporates architectural marquees/canopies at the ground floor on the street-facing Maryland Avenue façade that complement the overall building aesthetic and material palette. Canopies are proposed along the majority of this façade, and are approximately 12 feet above grade.

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 shall be directed away from surrounding development and shielded to minimize spillover on adjacent properties. Significant architectural features such as corners or unique cornices should be illuminated and enhanced by a comprehensive lighting design.

Detailed lighting specifications and plans are included in the Stage II project packet (see sheets 85-88). Building and open-space design feature a diversity in lighting, including building uplighting, pathway lighting, and lighting that activates gathering areas. The comprehensive lighting palette includes pedestrian pole lighting, bollard lighting, tree uplights, sconces, step lights, in-grade uplights and small landscape bollards. The scale of the lighting has been designed to fit the context and project. The Stage II packet also includes lighting details for the interior lobby (sheet 89).

Given the signature treatment at the top of the building and its visibility from all directions, there is a prime opportunity to utilize lighting in such a way as to highlight the trellis/loggia's horizontal elements and not just the columns as shown in the nighttime rendering.

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 (Section 4.2.8) requires durable, human-scaled materials to be used on all street level facades, especially within the first 20 feet of the building base, and no more than 60% of the building elevation shall be clad with EIFS or stucco above street level (minimum 20 feet). Furthermore, building facades must use architectural solutions and contrasting colors to avoid creation of impenetrable, unarticulated building facades with monotone color palettes. Further, facades shall be constructed in a manner to appear substantial and avoid low-quality building materials and construction details.

Detailed information on construction material and details, including material junctions, are provided in the Stage II project packet (see Sheets 66 to 76). The base is primarily clad in glass and limestone panels, with colored metal fins screening the commercial parking levels above. These are the fins that echo the vertical fins on the former Home Savings building. Materials in the middle sections include vision glass and a combination of blue (light blue and dark blue) and white metal panels that are used to form a grid pattern, while the central volume consists of vision glass and gray panels colored to match the glass as much as possible. All balcony rails are to be tempered glass, while the white, rooftop trellis frame will be metal. The applicant asserts that the "materials have been selected for their quality, durability, and consistency". No EIFS or stucco appears to be proposed at the base or upper floors, conforming the DSP standards.

Beige limestone panels in a running bond pattern are proposed on the east and west ground-floor facades. Staff appreciates that the use of a durable, “softer” feeling material at the pedestrian-level interface may be appropriate, but believes the proposed cladding seems a bit random considering the rest of the material palette. This might be mitigated if the proposed running bond were replaced by a more contemporary feeling stacked bond. A condition is recommended to explore this change of pattern or perhaps the substitution of an alternative material.

Finally, staff is concerned that the spacing of the vertical fins at the podium will allow too much visibility of the cars parked at this level. A condition is recommended to provide an appropriate metal mesh behind the fins to provide additional screening. This may also provide another visual connection with the Home Savings building, which employs tall vertical bays of metal mesh at its south facade.

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 and new driveways. The hardscape plan within the open space features a combination of new concrete paving with brick bands to match the existing brickwork along Brand Boulevard, grey concrete paving offset with light grey concrete with silica carbide, and also precast concrete pavers. Meanwhile, the pedestrian walkways along Maryland Avenue feature grey concrete with white aggregate, the driveways are not identified as being decorative; there is opportunity to add decorative banding or material to tie the areas together.

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 project is capped by tall, rectangular trellis structures that create open, rooftop terraces, shaded by the proposed photovoltaic panels. These two tall, open loggias (one on each of the east and west building sides) not only provide an architectural top to the building, but also help screen the rooftop mechanical equipment and elevator overruns.

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 contemporary design of the 24-story, high-rise project fits within its urban context in the DSP's Gateway District of taller, streamlined developments and is appropriately articulated for its highly visible location adjacent to the 134 Freeway.
- The ground floor is primarily clad in glass and limestone for a more transparent, pedestrian-oriented feel, as recommended by the DSP. The podium levels above features louvers screening the two levels of commercial parking; these louvers are intended to harken the fins of the existing bank building (while not mimicking them) and to screen the cars. This podium base is also punctuated by three architectural elements: a two-story high frame facing Maryland with deep blue louvers that screens the 4th floor community room and 3rd floor commercial parking; a one-story high element that wraps the pool with deep, angled metal louvers; and an unframed screen of vertically-oriented lights and wood toned louvers facing the publicly accessible courtyard/plaza on Brand. The elements and materials help to differentiate the base from the tower above and provide visual interest at a more pedestrian level.
- The pedestrian lobby entry facing Brand is highlighted by the architectural, unframed screen element of lights and wooden louvers, while the lobby entry on the opposite side fronting Maryland is identifiable by the expansive glass opening below the two-story, framed, louvered element, and Lucia Park signage.
- The middle section is divided into three defined sections – two end sections, clad by vision glass framed by blue and white metal panels, with a central volume clad entirely in vision glass and matching gray metal panels. For the two end sections, the two sizes of tripartite windows systems and varying widths of the vertical panels help provide greater articulation and a sense of movement for these larger, grid-patterned expanses that would otherwise be monolithic and rigid/fixed; a condition is recommended to ensure that the proposed design is not lost when value engineered for construction.
- The trellis/loggia architectural elements rising from the end volumes on the north and south are the signifying feature of the building's top. The rectilinear forms play off the project's rectilinear grid patterns below, while the openness adds a sense of lightness to the top of the high-rise building.

Recommendation / Draft Record of Decision

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends that the Design Review Board provide comments and recommend City Council approve the project proposal. This determination is based on the implementation of the following recommended conditions:

Conditions

1. Provide a unique or enhanced paving pattern on the driveways, equal to the width of the garage entry to create visual separation. Garage doors or gates shall be set back from the face of building.

2. Incorporate lighting to highlight and illuminate the project's significant loggia framework at the top of the building, not just the columns, as shown in the nighttime rendering.
3. Provide an appropriate metal mesh behind the louvers on the second and third levels so as to better screen the commercial parking.
4. Consider employing either a stacked bond pattern for the limestone cladding at the base of the east and west facades or an alternative material more in keeping with the material palette at the rest of the building.
5. Consider using gray spandrel glass in lieu of the proposed gray-colored metal panels at the curtain-wall portions of the upper floors to enhance the desired uniformity of these surfaces.

Attachments

1. Stage II Final Design Review packet

Staff report and attachments for Stage I Preliminary Design Review at Special City Council Meeting – Item 3 with imbedded links in the January 21, 2020 Agenda:

<https://glendaleca.primegov.com/Public/CompiledDocument/22345>