

Details

File #:	URAP250002	Version:	1
Type:	Planning Case		
Title:	Moreno and Cascade Urban Renewal Plan. (Legislative) Located in Council District 3 Presenter: Ryan Tefertiller, Urban Planning Manager, City Planning Department Kevin Walker, Planning Director, City Planning Department		
Mover:	Jen Cecil	Seconder:	Nadine Hensler
Result:	Pass		
Agenda note:			
Minutes note:	Commissioner Cecil disclosed she is member and treasurer of the neighborhood association where this item is taking place, however, she has not been part of any negotiation related to affordable housing within the neighborhood and she has no financial interest in this matter.		

Ryan Tefertiller, Urban Planning Manager, presented the proposal to create an urban renewal plan covering approximately 1.7 acres on the southwest edge of downtown, between Cascade Avenue and Sahlwatch Street. The district includes one large parcel on the north side and five smaller parcels on the south, along with significant public rights-of-way, including Moreno, part of Cascade, and alleys. He said the purpose of creating the district is to document blight and enable the use of tax increment financing (TIF) for future redevelopment. Mr. Tefertiller said public notice was handled by the Urban Renewal Authority per state statute, and planning staff also informed the Mill Street Neighborhood Association president about the hearing. He said the Planning Commission's task is to determine whether the proposal aligns with PlanCOS, particularly chapters on unique places and vibrant neighborhoods, and how it complies with their strategies and goals.

Commissioners' Questions

Commissioner Cecil asked about the negotiations for affordability. Jeriah Walker, Executive Director, Urban Renewal Authority, said Phase 2 of the plan includes an attainable housing component, projected at 77 to 115 units, which are planned for the four contiguous properties south of Marino. He said the hotel is the driver of the TIF for that component and the development agreement will include an allocated portion of TIF to support the attainability aspect of the plan. Mr. Walker said Mill Street presented this proposal during the URA hearing, where it ultimately received approval.

Commissioner Cecil asked if it will be attainable or affordable, and if it will be below 80% AMI. Mr. Walker said it will be attainable, between 80 - 100% AMI.

Chair Casey asked Mr. Walker to elaborate on parcels two through six. Mr. Walker said attainable housing component was a later addition to the plan but strongly supported by his board to extend the project beyond the hotel phase. He said all taxing entities have approved the pledge, ensuring the 77 to 115 units will be attainable rather than market rate, with a possibility of a for-sale component through partnerships with organizations like Habitat for Humanity to promote affordable homeownership. Mr. Walker said the neighborhood has expressed strong support for this density and affordability approach. He said restricting TIF funds exclusively to attainable housing provides long-term protection for the area, which gave stakeholders confidence in approving the plan.

Chair Casey asked if parcels two through five already have a residential or office space on them. Mr. Walker said that is correct.

Chair Casey asked what the status on the parcel between parcels five and six is. Mr. Walker said that parcel is not owned by the developer.

Chair Casey asked if parcels two through six would be attainable. Jeffrey Finn, Senior Vice President, Norwood Development Group, said the team is exploring various formats for attainable housing, including medium to higher-density solutions for the contiguous parcels, such as two- to three-unit configurations. He said one option could involve a Habitat for Humanity model, which sometimes includes attached units for sale; however, they do not currently own the adjacent properties and have no plans to acquire them at this time.

Commissioner Cecil said the project has a high potential to create a walkable, vibrant area like what initially attracted her to Colorado Springs. Commissioner Cecil said the hotel could serve not only tourism but also extended stays and business visitors. Commissioner Cecil thanked the developer's engagement with the neighborhood, noting the community's commitment to affordability and collaborative dialogue. Commissioner Cecil said the board's role is advisory and the current application only addresses the Urban Renewal Area designation, however, she would like to see that future TIF and development agreements include clear affordability requirements. Commissioner Cecil said maintaining public engagement and ensuring that residents' voices continue to be heard as the project advances is important.

Vice Chair Hensler said she appreciates the attention given to the area, which she is very familiar with from years of working nearby. Vice Chair Hensler said she is concerned about the potential loss of existing affordable homes if they are replaced with less affordable options, which could be an issue that may arise later. Vice Chair Hensler said the neighborhood is well-suited for urban renewal, including the hotel project and the Urban Renewal Area designation. Vice Chair Hensler said the proposal represents a positive step and she will be in support.

Action:

recommended for approval

Action text:

Motion by Commissioner Cecil, seconded by Vice Chair Hensler, to recommend to City Council the approval of the Moreno and Cascade Urban Renewal Plan based on the finding that the Plan is consistent with PlanCOS, the City's Comprehensive Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Votes (8:0)

8 records	Group	Export	
Person Name			
			Vote
Nadine Hensler			Aye
Jen Cecil			Aye
Andrea Slattery			Aye
David Robbins			Aye
Kenneth Casey			Aye
Brian Clements			Aye
Amanda Gijjano			Aye
Sheva Willoughby			Aye