



City Council Report

Subject: Lonetree Apartments
Design Review, DR2021-0016
Tentative Parcel Map, DL2021-0002

Date: June 14, 2022

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Department: Community Development Department

Recommendation

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the following:

Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Rocklin Approving A Mitigated Negative Declaration Of Environmental Impacts (LONETREE APARTMENTS / (DL2021-0002 and DR2021-0016))

Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Rocklin Approving A Tentative Parcel Map (LONETREE APARTMENTS / DL2021-0002)

Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Rocklin Approving A Design Review (LONETREE APARTMENTS / DR2021-0016)

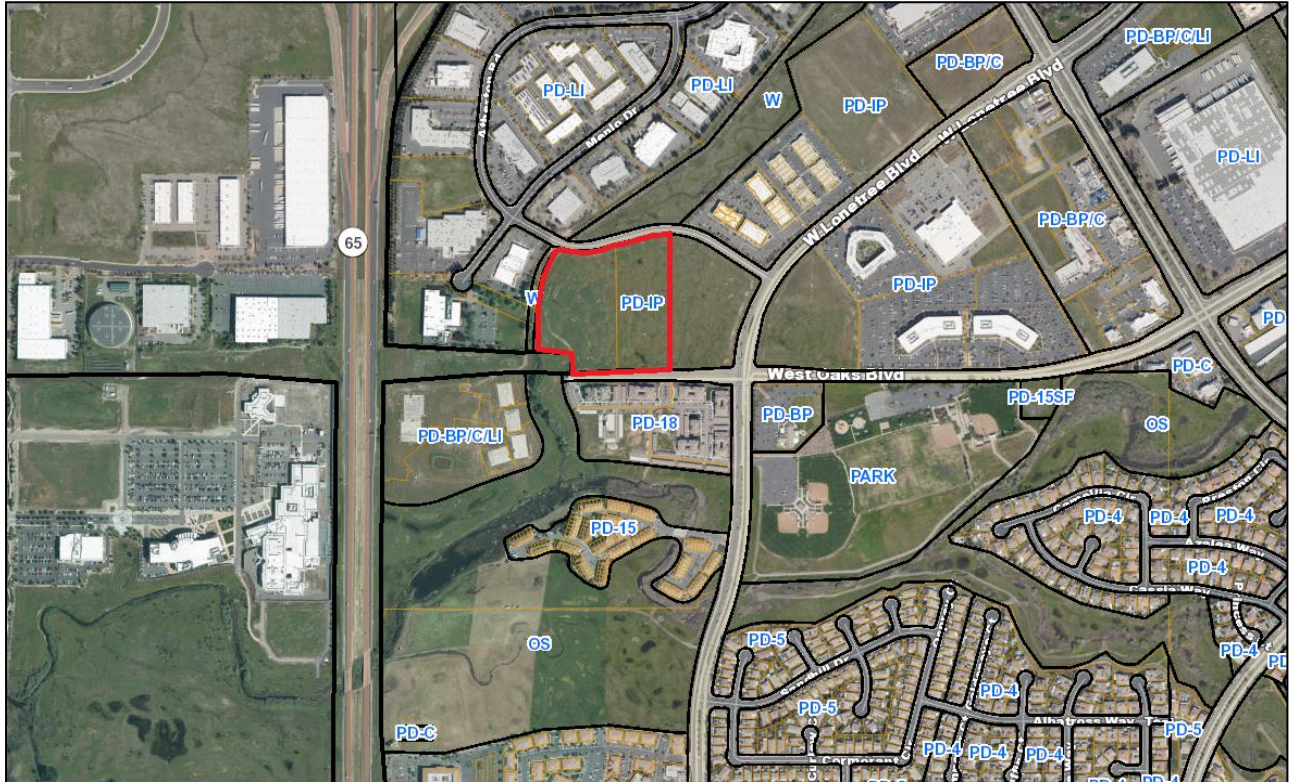
Proposal/Application Request

The project is a request for approval of a Design Review to construct a 237-unit multifamily residential community on approximately 11.6 acres and a Tentative Parcel Map to merge two parcels into a single parcel and remove a “No Vehicular Access” easement along the site’s West Oaks Boulevard frontage. The Project would include parking and landscaping, as well as indoor and outdoor amenities such as a clubhouse, children’s play area, and swimming pool.

Project Location

The project site is comprised of two undeveloped parcels located northwest of the intersection of West Oaks Boulevard and Lonetree Boulevard and south of Atherton Road within the City of Rocklin. The Assessor’s Parcel Numbers are 017-281-014 and 017-281-015 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Project Location



Project Applicant and Ownership

The property owner is GTA Lonetree, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company. The applicant is Mark Tekin.

Site Background

The project site is within the boundaries of the Stanford Ranch General Development Plan, which was approved by the City Council in 1987. In 2003, the City Council approved the Rocklin Corporate Center project, which rezoned approximately 79 acres of land designated for business professional use to Planned Development – Industrial Park (PD-IP) and approximately 10 acres of land from Business Professional to Retail Commercial. The subject site is within the area that was originally redesignated to PD-IP and had a general plan designation of Light Industrial (LI).

In January 2021, as part of the Rocklin Corporate Center General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Rezone project, the site was redesignated from LI to High Density Residential (HDR) and was rezoned from PD-IP to Planned Development Residential, 24 Units Per Acre Minimum (PD-24+) in order to be consistent with State housing requirements, including Senate Bill 330.

Site Characteristics

The project site is vacant and is covered with grasslands and other native vegetation and is also interspersed with vernal pools, as well as some other wetland areas associated with the creek corridor located on APN 017-280-014 (the westernmost parcel). The project is located south of Atherton Road, north of West Oaks Boulevard, west of Lonetree Boulevard, and east of State Route 65 (SR-65). To the north of the project site is Atherton Road with a creek drainage area beyond designated as Recreation/Conservation and then further north are existing businesses within the Atherton Tech Center Business Park. The Atherton Tech Center Business Park is also located directly to the west, with State Route 65 located beyond. To the east of the project site is a vacant parcel currently designated for Light Industrial land uses, although, on April 26th, the City Council approved the first of two steps to approve a General Plan Amendment and Rezone to make this site Mixed Use. To the south of the project site is West Oaks Boulevard, with High Density Residential land uses beyond developed with the James Apartment and the Arroyo Vista communities. See **Table 1** and **Figure 2** for surrounding land uses. In addition, an area that was formerly part of the SR-65 right-of-way (ROW) intrudes into the southwesterly corner of the project site. Caltrans recently declared this property surplus and sold it; the new owner has filed an application to annex that parcel into the City and incorporate it with the vacant parcels they own to the south.

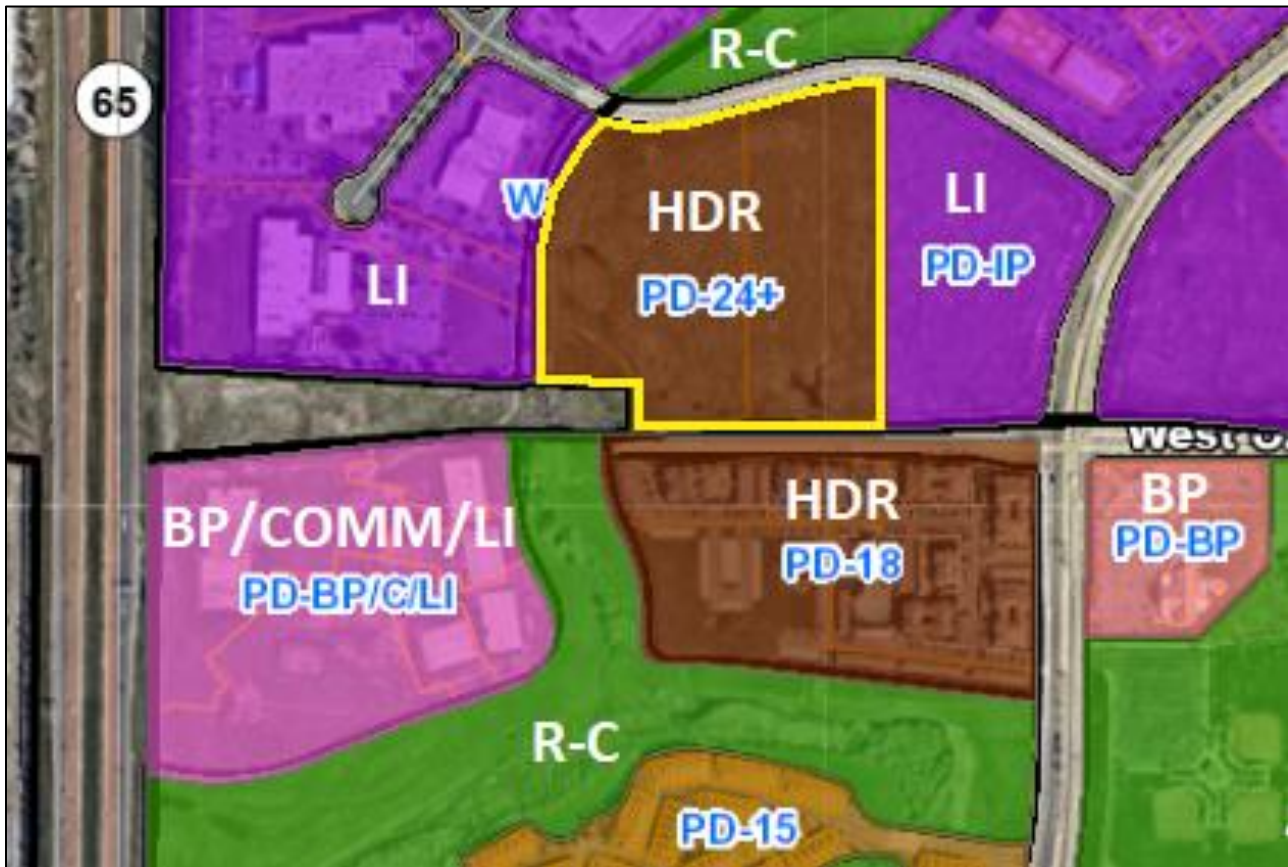
The project site does not contain any oak trees, but based upon biological surveys, there is a perennial drainage located along the western boundary of the property, and a series of seasonal wetlands and vernal pools scattered across the property.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) asserts jurisdiction over riparian habitat under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. The boundary of the creek and associated riparian area have been verified by the City and by a biologist from Olberding Environmental, Inc. The riparian area and/or the area within a 50-foot setback from the top of creek back, whichever is greater, will be set aside as open space (consistent with City policy), with no construction or development to be allowed within the boundary of this area. Therefore, no impacts to the creek area are anticipated. For further information on potential biological impacts and mitigation measures, please consult the associated Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Table 1. Surrounding Uses

	Current Use	Current General Plan / Zoning
Project Site	Vacant	High Density Residential (HDR) / Planned Development Residential, 24 Units Per Acre Minimum (PD-24+)
North	Office Buildings / Open Space	Light Industrial (LI) and Recreation-Conservation (R-C) / Planned Development Light Industrial (PD-LI) and Wetlands (W)
South	Apartments	HDR / Planned Development Residential, 18 dwellings per acre (PD-18)
East	Church / Park	Business Park (BP) and R-C / Planned Development Business Park (PD-BP) and Park
West	Office Buildings	LI / PD-LI

Figure 2. Current General Plan/Zoning



Summary of Planning Commission Hearing and Action

On May 17, 2021, the Planning Commission considered the proposed Lonetree Apartments project. Staff presented the Project, as well as a Blue Memo which included a letter from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. A copy of that letter, and the response from the City's Environmental Coordinator, is included as **Attachment 1**.

Following staff's presentation, the Planning Commission asked about the timing for the extension of West Oaks Boulevard to the west. Staff stated that the timing is not certain as it is tied to the development of the undeveloped properties on the west side of the creek, but that any future project to the west of the creek would be ultimately responsible for the extension of the roadway and construction of the bridge. The Commission also asked staff about project affordability and why there was no requirement for a portion of this project to be designated as affordable to assist the City in meeting its Housing requirements. Staff stated that, because the site is already designated and zoned for high density residential development, there is no mechanism to require the applicant to designate affordable units. Staff indicated that affordability had been recommended, but that the applicant was reluctant to do this.

The applicant, Mark Tekin, then addressed the Commission, stating that the project team was excited to bring this project to Rocklin. The Commission asked Mr. Tekin about the lack of affordable units. Mr. Tekin stated that the apartments were designed to be affordable, as compared to other units in the surrounding area, but that they do not meet the required level of affordability mandated by the State. He said that this level of affordability was not economically feasible for these units and that all of them are proposed to be market rate.

During deliberation, the Planning Commission expressed support for the project. While some of the members voiced disappointment that no affordable units were being provided, they reiterated that it was a well-designed project in a good location for high density development.

The Commission voted 5-0 to recommend approval of the project to the City Council.

General Plan and Zoning Compliance

As previously discussed, the project site was redesignated and rezoned in 2021 as part of the Rocklin Corporate Center GPA and Rezone project. The site's current General Plan designation is High-Density Residential (HDR), with a density range of 15.5 units and greater per acre. The site is zoned Planned Development Residential, 24 Units Per Acre Minimum (PD-24+). Apartments are consistent with the HDR General Plan designation and permitted in the PD-24+ zone. Due to the required setback from the perennial drainage along the western boundary of the property, the site's developable acreage is 9.7 net acres. Based on this number, the project density is 24.4 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with the zoning for the site.

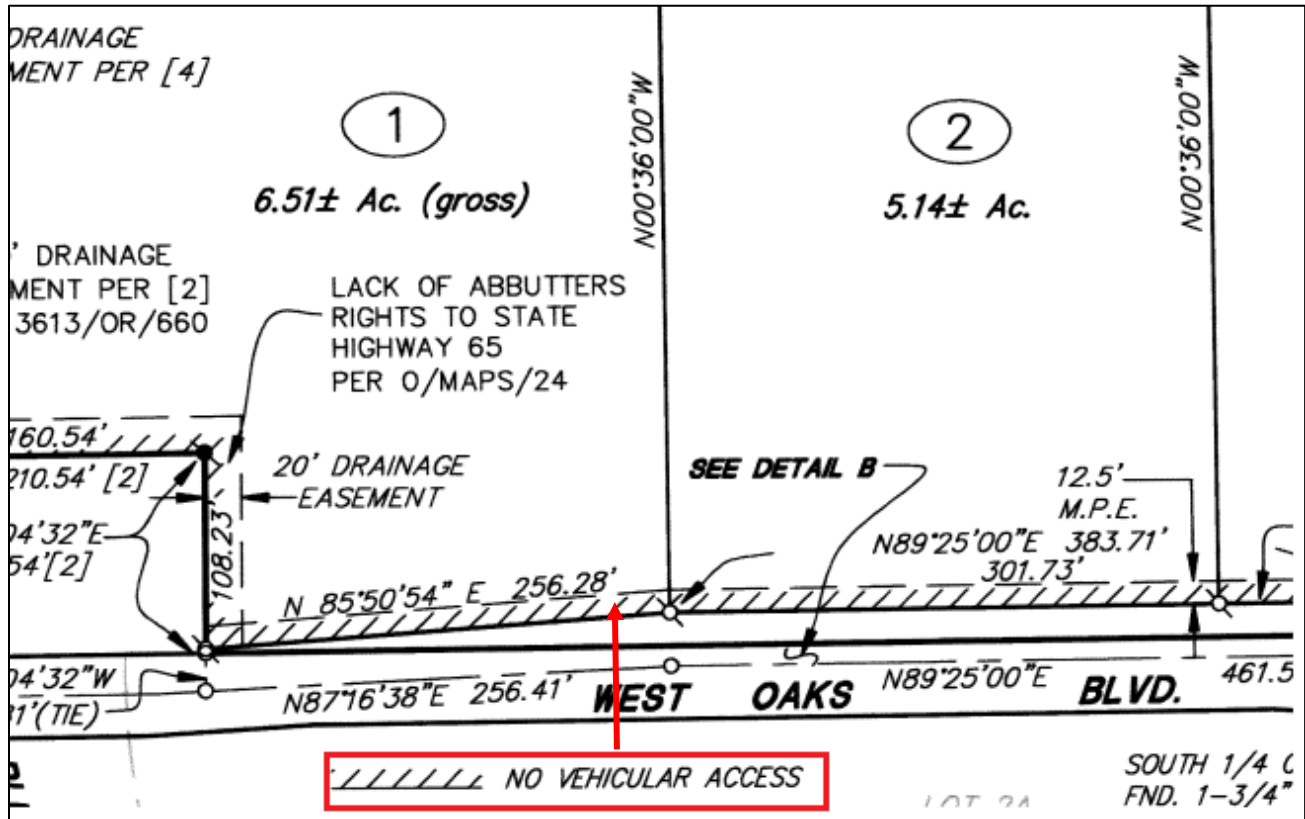
Circulation Element Requirements

The General Plan Circulation Element requires that the City maintain a minimum traffic Level of Service (LOS) “C” for all signalized intersections during the PM peak hour on an average weekday. Pursuant to the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) prepared for the project, the “cumulative no project conditions” at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard / Lonetree Boulevard / W. Stanford Ranch Road is projected to be LOS “D”. Therefore, in the cumulative scenario (i.e., 2040) this intersection falls below the level required by the Circulation Element, regardless of construction of the project. However, the TIS states that operational enhancements at this intersection anticipated as a part of the City’s Capital Improvement Program would reduce this delay under cumulative no project and cumulative plus project conditions and improve operations to LOS “C” during the PM peak hour. The project is required to pay Traffic Impact Fees that would help fund Citywide improvements. Therefore, based on these anticipated operational enhancements, the project would comply with the required LOS discussed within the Circulation Element.

Tentative Parcel Map

A “No Vehicular Access” easement (**Figure 3**) along the project site’s West Oaks Boulevard frontage, was recorded with the original Tentative Subdivision Map (SD-2002-01) that created the parcels. Based on staff’s research, it appears that this easement was established on behest of the high density residential property directly to the south, as the owner at that time expressed concerns during the public hearing process that the ultimate development of the northern properties as Light Industrial could create incompatibilities with development of a residential project on the south side of West Oaks Boulevard, now the site of the James Apartments. In order to eliminate these perceived incompatibilities, the “No Vehicular Access” easement was put in place to requiring industrial vehicles and trucks to access the site from Atherton Road.

Figure 3. Current General Plan/Zoning



As stated previously, the subject parcels were redesignated and rezoned in 2021 to allow for high density residential development, consistent with the development to the south. Because the project site will no longer be utilized for industrial purposes as originally zoned, the concerns related to traffic incompatibility between the two sides of West Oaks Boulevard have been resolved. Therefore, staff has no objections abandoning the existing “No Vehicular Access” easement, as part of the parcel map to merge the two subject properties into a single 11.65-acre lot. As such, staff recommends approval of the proposed Tentative Parcel Map.

Design Review

Project Description

The proposed project is an apartment community with 237 total units, indoor and outdoor amenities, parking, and landscaping. A clubhouse, pool, and other outdoor amenities are interior to the site and screened from adjacent roadways by apartment buildings located on the site’s perimeter.

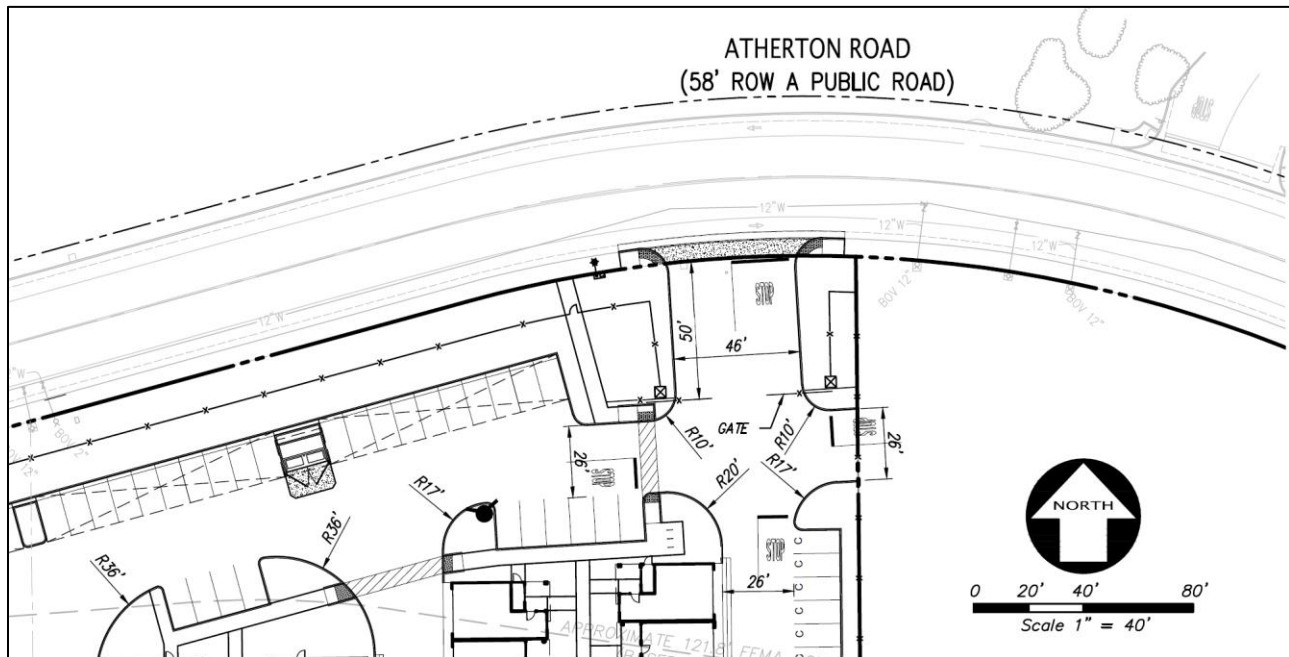
Access and Circulation

The project would be fenced and gated. The primary vehicular access to the project would be constructed on West Oaks Boulevard at the southeast corner of the project site, approximately 375 feet west of Lonetree Boulevard. This driveway would include gated access and would be located opposite the existing driveway to the James Apartment complex on the south side of West Oaks Boulevard.

A secondary gated driveway is provided via a driveway entrance on Atherton Road at the northeast corner of the project site, approximately 675 feet west of Lonetree Boulevard and 825 feet east of Menlo Drive. It should be noted that this secondary driveway was originally proposed to be used as a vehicular exit only. However, based on conversations with the traffic engineer who prepared the project's TIS, as well as the City's Engineering Department, the applicant agreed to modify the project to provide full ingress/egress at this driveway. Having two full access points would not only be more convenient to residents, it would also distribute vehicular trips between the two roads, rather than having incoming vehicles focused exclusively onto West Oaks Boulevard.

At this time, the project applicant has not updated all plan sheets to show this modified access. However, the applicant has provided **Figure 5**, which has been reviewed by the City's Engineering Department, as well as the traffic engineer who prepared the project's TIS. Neither expressed significant concerns with the design of the modified access at the Atherton Road driveway. The project has been conditioned that, prior to approval of improvement plans, all applicable sheets shall be updated to show the modified access at the Atherton Road driveway, to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director and City Engineer.

Figure 5 – Atherton Road Modified Driveway



Minimum 25-foot wide drive aisles would provide internal access throughout the site. Accessible pedestrian paths are planned around the buildings to provide a walking route for residents. Public sidewalks would be installed along the project frontage on West Oaks Boulevard, consistent with City standards, connecting the project to Lonetree Boulevard. The existing class II bike lanes on both roadways would be maintained.

Based on direction from the Traffic Impact Study, the project would extend the eastbound left-turn pocket on West Oaks Boulevard at Lonetree Boulevard to provide approximately 150 feet of storage. The project would also extend the eastbound right-turn lane to have approximately 120 feet of storage.

Building Architecture

The project design is consistent with the University Architectural District Guidelines. The proposed project's design concept consists of a contemporary architecture of horizontal rectilinear forms projecting in multiple planes. The building materials include stucco, fiber-cement lapped siding, stone veneer, painted steel railings, and fabricated metal awnings. Lapped siding is used in conjunction with taller building elements to call attention to corners and entries to the building. Stone veneer is used to provide a visual "weight" to anchor the base of the buildings.

The main body of the buildings will feature a stucco finish with scored construction joints that create an irregular grid along with the pattern of window grids and horizontal siding. The color scheme features warm neutral tones with pops of vibrant color in building accents and shade awnings. Color

accents and varying roof parapet heights are used to create interest in the massing and form of the three-story buildings.

See **Figures 6** through **9**.

As previously stated, the Project would also include a leasing and amenity building in the central portion of the site. This building has been designed to complement the apartment buildings. See **Figures 10** and **11**.

Building Height

Pursuant to the Stanford Ranch General Development Plan, the PD-24+ zoning district allows for a maximum building height of 50 feet.

The proposed apartment buildings are all three stories, with a maximum building height of 36' 11" to the top of the highest parapet. Parapets will screen roof mounted mechanical equipment from ground view.

Pursuant to Section 17.72.070 of the RMC, residential buildings with a height of greater than 30 feet, or more than two stories, are subject to the approving authority of the City Council. Therefore, the Planning Commission is a recommending body and the City Council is required to take final action on this project.

Figure 6. Aerial Rendering



Figure 7. 38 Plex Apartment Elevation



Figure 8. Alley View



Figure 9. Paseo Walkway



Figure 10. Clubhouse Entry



Figure 11. Clubhouse Amenity Space



Architectural Review Committee

Meeting #1

Architectural Review Committee

On December 2, 2021, the Architectural Review Committee (“ARC”) considered the architecture for the Lonetree Apartments project. The ARC was supportive of the Project’s architecture and determined that it generally complied with the University Architectural District requirements.

The ARC recommended approval of the Project architecture to the Planning Commission 4-0 (one committee member vacancy).

Meeting #2

On February 17, 2022, at the applicant’s request, the ARC reviewed the project again to consider revisions to colors and materials. According to the applicant, these modifications were to provide more differentiation between buildings. The ARC was supportive of the revisions and recommended approval of the revised architecture to the Planning Commission 5-0.

Parking

Section 17.66.020 of the RMC states that apartments shall provide one and one-half paved parking spaces for each one-bedroom unit, and two paved parking spaces for each unit with two or more bedrooms, plus 25 percent paved visitor parking spaces, further stipulating that at least one parking space per unit shall be covered.

The project parking requirements are as follows:

Table 3 – Project Parking Requirements

	Project Units	Rocklin Zoning Code Req.	Rocklin Zoning Code Spaces Req.
1 bedroom	66	1.5 spaces / unit	99 spaces
2+ bedroom	171	2 spaces / unit	342 spaces
Guest	--	.25 spaces / unit	60 spaces
Total	237	--	501

The project proposes 503 total parking spaces, which is 2 spaces more than required by the RMC. Of these, 264 spaces would be covered, which exceeds the covered parking requirement by 27 spaces. Therefore, the project is consistent with the requirements of Section 17.66.020 of the Rocklin Municipal Code.

Landscaping

The overall landscape concept for Lonetree Apartments is to create a consistent treatment of all landscaped areas with high quality outdoor environments and amenity areas. The Project would install landscaping throughout the site, adjacent to West Oaks Boulevard and Atherton Road frontages (**Figure 12**). The landscape concept is water-efficient, low maintenance, will complement the buildings and make a positive contribution to the site's overall aesthetics. Low-profile shrubs, including screening shrubs, are planned along with shade and canopy trees. Between the proposed covered parking spaces and parking lot landscaping, the Project exceeds the 50% shade requirement.

Figure 12. Landscaping Plan



To reinforce the proposed multifamily community with a distinct identity, a single species of street tree (Red Maple) is proposed to be used along West Oaks Boulevard and a separate species (Chinese Pistache) is proposed along Atherton Road. According to the project description, the landscaping has been designed to reinforce the distinct character of the multi-family site, using a uniform palette of accent, shade, subordinate and screen trees, each with a distinct function and contrasting form with a deliberate use of limited long-lived plant species. Landscape treatment of all areas shall emphasize the planting of tree-shaded open space. Landscape improvements shall require minimal maintenance and irrigation, and the use of drought tolerant plant materials shall be maximized. Adjacent to the Clubhouse is a pool and spa, outdoor kitchen with shade structure, fire pit area, and landscaped seating areas.

The internal paseos between the buildings have been designed with individual gated patios for each residence. Accent trees have been included in the front yard with a tree focal point breaking up the interior walk in each paseo.

Signage

Freestanding signage is proposed at the project entrance on West Oaks Boulevard. This sign would be approximately 6 feet in height and has been designed to utilize the colors and materials used within the complex. Signage is consistent with the requirements of the Rocklin Municipal Code. No signage has been proposed at the Atherton Road entrance to the project. If future signage is proposed at this location, it would be reviewed for substantial compliance subject to the requirements of the Rocklin Municipal Code and with the approved project signage on West Oaks Boulevard.

Fencing

An open wrought iron fence is planned for the perimeter of the entire complex. The pool fencing will complement the perimeter fence. Both project driveways on West Oaks Boulevard and Atherton Road would be gated.

Grading

Site grading will occur in one phase and approximately 5,000 cubic yards of material will be cut, and 5,000 cubic yards of material will be used for fill.

Phasing and Construction.

The project will be graded and constructed in a single phase and take approximately twenty months to complete, according to the project applicant.

FEMA Flood Plain

According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps (Map Panels 06061C0941H and 06061C0963H, effective date November 2, 2018) the majority of the project site is located in flood zone X, which indicates that the project is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area and outside of the 500-year flood hazard area. However, the westernmost portion of the western parcel is considered to be Regulatory Floodway (Zone AE). As proposed, two small portions of the developed area along the western boundary of the project site would encroach into Zone AE.

In accordance with City Engineering requirements, the applicant has prepared and submitted a Flood Zone Development Permit for the project. This permit states that the project would adjust the floodway boundary while providing the same, or slightly greater, storage volume so there is no negative impact to the FEMA floodway. This revised boundary would be in the same general location as the current boundary. The boundary and model of the floodway would then be modified and documented as required by FEMA, which will include a required Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR).

Engineering has reviewed the submittal and has prepared a condition of approval which would require the project to comply with all applicable local and FEMA requirements with regard to development.

Project Affordability

General Plan Housing Element Policy 3.4 states that the City should work with developers requesting General Plan Amendments converting a higher density residential category to a lower density residential category to incorporate affordable housing as a component of the overall development. Staff has encouraged this project to provide a minimum of 10% of the project as affordable units in order to help the City to meet its requirements. The applicant has provided the following response:

The project will be providing financially attainable housing at an affordable price to families in Rocklin. Unfortunately, given the price of land, construction costs and the cost of development impact fees, the developer is not able to offer 10% of the projects units at HUD's definition of affordability as it makes the project financially unfeasible for market rate development.

As described in the "Planning Commission" discussion above, because the site is already designated and zoned to allow for multifamily residential development as is being proposed, the City has no mechanism to require the developer to provide any affordable units to assist in achieving the City's goals.

Senate Bill 166 (No Net Loss Law)

SB 166, now codified as Government Code Section 65863 (No Net Loss Law), was adopted to ensure development opportunities remain available throughout the 8-year Housing Element planning period to accommodate a jurisdiction's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), especially for lower- and moderate- income households. When the 2021-2029 Housing Element was adopted, the City had a minimal surplus in its Available Sites Inventory to accommodate the Lower Category RHNA. Staff continually monitors the status of the inventory compared to the remaining RHNA as affordable units are built and projects come forward on sites listed in the current inventory. It has been determined that there will be a modest shortfall within the Lower Category when entitlements for the Lonetree Apartments project are approved. The City cannot deny a project because it involves a shortfall and the City cannot require a developer to provide a replacement site if they are not requesting a General Plan Amendment or Rezone that would create the shortfall. The City will need to identify another site as a replacement for the shortfall and/or redesignate and rezone another site (not already listed on the inventory) to make up for the shortfall within 180 days of taking final action on the development project.

Environmental Determination

Consistent with the requirements of CEQA, an Initial Study was prepared to determine the Lonetree Apartments project's potential impacts on the environment. The study found that the project could have significant impacts with regard to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Noise,

Transportation, and Tribal Resources; however, it was also able to identify mitigation measures that would reduce each of these potential impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) of environmental impacts was prepared for the project.

Recommendation

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the Lonetree Apartments project to the City Council, as proposed and conditioned.