



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

ITEM NO. 5.1

DATE: December 16, 2025

TO: Chairperson and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Steve Riley, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Hearing to consider a request for Vesting Tentative Tract Map, Site Plan Design Review, and certification of an Environmental Impact Report for the Pacific and Livermore Avenue Townhomes Project, a for-sale 115-unit residential condominium project located at the northeast corner of South Livermore Avenue and Pacific Avenue.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt Resolutions:

1. Certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and directing the Planning Manager to file a Notice of Determination with the Alameda County Clerk;
2. Approving Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 8701 - Subdivision (SUB) 23-004; and
3. Approving Site Plan Design Review (SPDR) 23-006.

DECISION TYPE

Quasi-judicial

SUMMARY

Swenson Builders submitted a preliminary application to the City of Livermore for the Pacific and Livermore Avenue Townhomes Project (Project) in March of, 2023. The Project consists of the redevelopment of four parcels commonly known as the Livermore Town Center located at the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and South Livermore Avenue (see location map, Attachment 1). The Project includes the demolition of the two existing commercial buildings and associated landscaping and parking lot. The site would be redeveloped with 115 three- and four-bedroom townhomes spread across 15 two- and three-story buildings, a clubhouse, pool area, and landscaped open space that includes an approximately 8,870 square foot interior park. Seventeen (15%) of the townhomes will be low- and moderate-income units. The proposed project would also include new pedestrian and vehicle access via existing streets, new internal roads, off-street parking spaces including guest, Americans with Disabilities Act, and electric vehicle spaces, a new flashing beacon at the northern crosswalk at Palm Avenue and South Livermore Avenues, improved bicycle lane on South Livermore Avenue, striped parallel public parking to facilitate efficient off-site parking, and a new bus shelter at the existing bus stop on Pacific

Avenue.

The Project requires approval of a Vesting Tentative Tract Map - Subdivision (SUB) 23-004, and a Site Plan Design Review (SPDR) 23-006, and certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report. The site is currently zoned as Neighborhood Mixed Use. The applicant is utilizing the Builder's Remedy provision under the Housing Accountability Act (Government Code Section 65589.5) to waive certain land use requirements and development standards (see further discussion below).

The project does not include a commercial component, which would otherwise be required under the current zoning designation. In addition, the Project will deviate from the height, side street setback, and density requirements. These deviations are allowed by state law under the Builder's Remedy provisions. The Project is subject to the Conditions of Approval (Attachment 13), which addresses infrastructure, design standards, and mitigation measures identified in the FEIR.

DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND

The Project site at the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and South Livermore Avenue was once a successful shopping center with a Nob Hill grocery store as the anchor tenant. Some tenants remain today, but the center is largely underutilized. The shopping center, known as Vineyard Shopping Center, was built in 1959 with a 17,000 square foot Lucky grocery store as the anchor. The Lucky store closed in 1980 when their new store opened in the downtown between First Street and Railroad Avenue. In 1983, the property owner, Carl N. Swenson, Inc., completely remodeled the center and added 10,000 square feet to accommodate a Nob Hill Grocery store. Nob Hill subsequently added approximately 3,000 square feet to reach the current size of approximately 30,000 square feet. In 2002, Nob Hill moved to its current location at 919 East Stanley Boulevard, and the anchor tenant space has been vacant since. Several of the fifteen smaller tenant spaces adjacent to the former grocery store still have active businesses. On the eastern edge of the existing shopping center is the Bingo Ranch, and on the southeastern corner of the center is the Oak Door lounge and the former Emil Villa's restaurant. The remainder of the site consists of a parking lot with trees in landscaped islands. The westernmost parcel at 900 S. Livermore Avenue was once a Union Service Station that was constructed in 1959. It was demolished in approximately 1988. Three underground storage tanks (USTs) (two 10,000-gallon gasoline tanks and one 500-gallon waste oil tank) were removed from the project site by the early 1990s.

The site was re-designated as Neighborhood Mixed Use in 2003 as part of the adoption of the current 2003-2025 General Plan (this 2003 designation encouraged but did not require mixed use - neighborhood commercial combined with residential - on the site). The site was re-zoned in 2010 to a new version of Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) (Attachment 3), which requires that once the site is redeveloped, it is required to have a mix of residential and commercial uses. The details of these zones will be explained in the zoning section.

Initial Project Proposal

Swenson Builders, the owner of the four parcels that comprise the entire 6.54-acre site, applied for a mixed-use project in October of 2021. The proposal was for 92 townhomes and flats, and approximately 18,000 square feet of commercial space split between two buildings that would face South Livermore Avenue. The proposed commercial space was less than required of the Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU)

zone, with the applicant citing that market forces couldn't support more commercial space than the proposed 18,000 square feet. In the fall of 2022, Planning and Economic Development Staff held a meeting with Swenson's team and shared a vision for a wine country gateway commercial theme that featured a small market where residents and visitors could purchase fresh and prepared foods. City Staff expressed the importance that this location was a critical area to provide commercial space for the availability of food due to the existing surrounding neighborhoods. A commercial site anywhere adjacent to the proposed development is currently infeasible as adjacent parcels are not zoned for commercial spaces.

The former proposal had fewer units, commercial space, and no pool. The applicant withdrew their incomplete mixed-use proposal and submitted a new application under the Builder's Remedy section of the Housing Accountability Act in March of 2023. The revised proposal has 23 more units, includes a pool and clubhouse, and no commercial space.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would result in the demolition of the existing commercial buildings on the project site, and the construction of 15 residential buildings totaling 115 units, pool area and associated pool equipment enclosure, and clubhouse buildings totaling approximately 1,577 square feet, landscaping, paseos, guest parking, and an interior park. The proposed project would also include new frontage improvements such as curb, sidewalk, gutter, and streetlights.

The proposed pool equipment and clubhouse buildings would be located in the center of the project site, directly north of the entrance driveway on Pacific Avenue. Buildings 1 through 15 would consist of 98 townhouses in three-story buildings and 17 townhouses in two-story buildings. The two-story buildings would generally be located along the northern boundary of the project site, and the three-story buildings would be intermixed in the center and along the southern boundary. The proposed two-story townhouse units would include three bedrooms and would be an average of approximately 2,038 square feet in size. Meanwhile, the proposed three-story townhouse units would include four bedrooms and a balcony and would be an average of approximately 2,169 square feet in size. The two-story townhouses would be a maximum of approximately 29 feet 8 inches in height to the top of the roof, and the three-story townhouses would be approximately 36 feet 8 inches in height to the top of the roof.

STAFF ANALYSIS

For a complete Staff Analysis, please review the attached Staff Analysis memo (Attachment 2). In the attached analysis, staff concludes by recommending the Planning Commission adopt the resolutions to certify the FEIR and approve the project entitlements.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

A Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (available online at <https://www.livermoreca.gov/departments/community-development/planning/environmental-documents>); see Notice of Availability of a Final Environmental Impact Report for the Pacific and Livermore Avenue Townhomes Project. The attached Staff Analysis discusses the contents and mitigation measures contained in the FEIR. Staff recommends the Planning Commission certify the FEIR and direct the Planning Manager to file a Notice of Determination with the Alameda County Clerk.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map
2. Staff Analysis
3. Neighborhood Mixed Use Zone
4. Proposed Plan Set
5. Transportation Analysis
6. T4N Zone
7. Letter to Existing Commercial Tenants
8. Resolution - CEQA
9. Exhibit A - Final EIR
10. Exhibit B Pacific and Livermore CEQA Findings
11. Exhibit C - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan
12. Resolution - Project
13. Exhibit A - Conditions of Approval

Prepared by: Jennifer Ackerman
Associate Planner