

December 26, 2024

Planning Department

City of Costa
Mesa 77 Fair
Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Subject: Request for Approval and Justification of Deviation for Master-Planned Residential Community on Victoria Place

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of WMC, LLC Partners, we respectfully submit this detailed application for the approval of a transformative development project located on approximately 1.78 acres of land along Victoria Place, within the City of Costa Mesa. The purpose of this application is to seek approval not only for the proposed Master-Planned Residential Community but also for specific deviations from the Residential Incentive Overlay District (RIOD) standards, which, if granted, will facilitate a project that more fully realizes the City's goals as outlined in the General Plan.

This new Residential Common Interest Development project represents a high-caliber residential community, designed to replace a blighted and underutilized commercial site with a sustainable, upscale, and cohesive neighborhood that integrates seamlessly with Costa Mesa's forward-thinking housing policies. Our proposed development aligns with the City's broader housing objectives by contributing much-needed residential units, providing energy-efficient, contemporary living spaces, and enhancing neighborhood aesthetics and quality of life.

Project Overview and Vision:

The proposed community comprises 40 three-story, single-family residences, each incorporating ground-floor office spaces to meet the modern demand for flexible, remote work environments. The homes are designed to provide 2,200 to 2,300 square feet of living space, merging form and function with thoughtfully appointed interiors, state-of-the-art appliances, and smart-home technologies. The community's layout includes 18 duplex units situated within the development's interior and four individual units facing Victoria Place. Each residence will feature ground-level fenced yards, multiple balconies, and spacious rooftop decks, ensuring a balance of privacy and outdoor space while enhancing the community's overall appeal.

Site Conditions and Transformation Plan:

The site currently includes deteriorated retail structures and storage yards, which detract from the neighborhood's potential. By developing this blighted property into a secure, gated residential community, we are committed to improving both the visual and practical aspects of the neighborhood. This development is designed with an emphasis on sustainability, employing materials and energy systems intended to reduce environmental impact, which will contribute to both the residents' quality of life and the City's long-term environmental goals.

The proposed community will also support the City's urban development plan by fostering a

safe, modern, and family-friendly neighborhood. The project's contemporary design, coupled with elements of timeless architectural elegance, will ensure the community remains an attractive residential choice for future generations, enhancing Costa Mesa's residential profile.

Strategic Location and Accessibility:

Strategically located near major shopping centers, the Back Bay, the Costa Mesa Fairgrounds, Orange County Airport, and multiple freeway connections, this community provides residents with convenient access to a range of urban and recreational amenities. The project's unique combination of accessibility and high-quality design positions it as a distinguished development that enhances connectivity to Costa Mesa and the broader region while offering a premium living experience.

Zoning Compliance and Deviation Requests:

To achieve the City's residential growth targets, this project includes deviations from certain RIOD requirements, detailed below. These deviations are essential to maximize the development's potential and to create a residential space that aligns with Costa Mesa's housing, density, and community goals as outlined in the General Plan.

See Exhibit A for additional information on proposed deviations.

Parking:

RIOD Standard:

	Required	Provided
Covered Parking	40 spaces	80 garage spaces
Open Parking	90 spaces	23 spaces
Guest Parking	20 spaces	18 spaces
Total:	150 spaces	103 spaces

Parking Deficit: 47 spaces

While the proposal includes a parking shortfall, we anticipate that our two-car garages, combined with strategically distributed guest parking, will adequately address the parking needs of residents and their visitors. The provision of ground-floor office spaces within each unit further suggests a reduced reliance on off-street parking, as residents will have dedicated workspaces at home.

The project also is within one-half mile of a High-Quality Transit Corridor as defined by the city, and therefore has a reduced parking demand due to easy access to public transit.

Open Space:

Type of Open Space RIOD Requirement - Proposed Solution:

	Required	Provided
Total Lot Area:		77,101 sq. ft. (1.77 acres)
Minimum Open Space:	30,840 sq. ft. (40% of total site)	32,437 sq. ft.
Common Use Open Space:	15,420 sq. ft. (50% of min.)	9,817 sq. ft.
Private Use Open Space:	Not specified	22,620 sq. ft.

The proposed development provides a total of 32,437 square feet of open space, exceeding the minimum requirement of 30,840 square feet. This open space includes thoughtfully designed communal amenities such as a barbecue area, a children’s play area, a Flexible-Use Space, and an off-site park, all of which enhance the quality and appeal of the project. Additionally, the private open spaces—including individual yards, balconies, and roof decks—offer a total of 22,620 square feet, significantly surpassing common space requirements and ensuring ample opportunities for private enjoyment by residents.

The Flexible-Use Space is designed to serve as a large communal area for a variety of gatherings, including barbecues, mixers, holiday events, and other community-building activities, providing an enjoyable space for residents of all ages. Additionally, the new public off-site landscaped area on Victoria Place will feature over 5,500 square feet of landscaped area, benefiting not only the residents of this community but also those in the surrounding neighborhood. The park has been thoughtfully designed with seating areas, shade trees, lush landscaping, a bioswale, and other amenities, creating an inviting and functional addition to the streetscape along Victoria Street.

Building Setbacks Compliance and Proposed Deviations:

Based on the site’s commercial zoning designation and the existing conditions along Victoria Street, the proposed setback deficiencies align with the established character of the surrounding area. Several nearby residential properties have setbacks closer to the street and side property lines than those proposed for this project. Therefore, the proposed setback is consistent with the development pattern in the City of Costa Mesa, particularly along Victoria Street, and is not expected to result in any adverse impacts on the neighborhood.

Justification for Requested Deviations

The strict application of RIOD standards would hinder this project’s ability to achieve the intended number of units, which is a fundamental objective of Costa Mesa’s General Plan. The City’s General Plan specifically advocates for increased housing to address local demand, and adhering rigidly to the RIOD standards would result in a reduction of units, thereby undermining this goal.

The deviations requested in this application represent measured and necessary adjustments that enhance the community’s design and functionality. Approving these adjustments will not only support the General Plan’s intent to increase residential capacity but will also replace an area of urban blight with a thoughtfully planned residential environment. This development will revitalize the area along Victoria Place,

encouraging further redevelopment and economic growth in this underutilized corridor.

Community and Municipal Benefits:

Approving the requested deviations will enable a project that exemplifies excellence in site planning, architectural design, and community integration. This development prioritizes livability, security, and sustainability, aligning with Costa Mesa's commitment to public health, welfare, and environmental responsibility. The proposal upholds compatibility standards for residential developments, providing a model for future projects that seek to contribute positively to the City's urban landscape.

Conclusion:

We respectfully request that the City of Costa Mesa approve the proposed zoning adjustments and deviation requests, allowing us to proceed with a project that enhances the City's housing stock, addresses its General Plan objectives, and contributes to the economic and aesthetic revitalization of Victoria Place. We are committed to collaborating with the Planning Department and the City Council and Planning Commission to ensure this project fully aligns with Costa Mesa's vision for sustainable, high-quality urban growth.

We look forward to discussing this application in further detail at the Planning Commission hearing and to working in close coordination with City Staff to bring this transformative development to fruition. Please do not hesitate to reach out for further clarification on any aspect of this proposal.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Tony Weeda
WMC, LLC
Partners

<u>DEVELOPMENT STANDARD</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>REQUIRED</u>	<u>PROVIDED</u>	<u>MEETS CODE</u>
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:				
MINIMUM LOT SIZE	RIOD	0.5 ACRES	1.77 AC.	YES
	RCID	N/A	N/A	N/A
MAXIMUM DENSITY	RIOD	30 UNITS PER ACRE	22.6 UNITS PER ACRE	YES
	RCID	N/A	N/A	N/A
F.A.R.	RIOD	N/A	N/A	N/A
	RCID	0.75	1.43	NO ¹
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT	RIOD	3 STORIES	3 STORIES / 39 FT 6 IN	YES
	RCID	2 STORIES / 27 FT.	3 STORIES / 39 FT 6 IN	NO ¹
OPEN SPACE:				
MINIMUM OPEN SPACE	RIOD	40% SITE AREA = 30,840 S.F.	34,578 S.F. (42%)	YES
	RCID	40% SITE AREA = 30,840 S.F.	34,578 S.F. (42%)	YES
	RIOD	40% SITE AREA = 30,840 S.F.	34,578 S.F. (42%)	YES
COMMON USE OPEN SPACE	RCID	COMMON OPEN SPACE AREAS SHALL BE DESIGNED AND LOCATED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOW MAXIMUM USE BY ALL RESIDENTS	BBQ/PLAY AREA CENTRALLY LOCATED AND FLEX SPACE	YES
	RIOD	PRIVATE DECKS OR PATIOS - MIN. 100 S.F. WITH NO DIMENSION LESS THAN 5 FT. (4,000 S.F.)	ROOF DECKS (9,175 SF)	YES
PRIVATE OPEN SPACE	RCID	AN ADJOINING PATIO REQUIRED WITH NO DIMENSION LESS THAN 10 FT.	ROOF DECKS (9,175 SF)	NO ¹
	RIOD			
SETBACKS:				
FRONT (VICTORIA PLACE)	RIOD	20 FT.	20 FT.	YES
	RCID	20 FT.	20 FT.	YES
SIDE (EAST/WEST)	RIOD	20 FT.	7 FT. 6 IN.	NO ¹
	RCID	5 FT.	7 FT. 6 IN.	YES
	RIOD	20 FT.	11 FT. 3 IN.	NO ¹
REAR (NORTH)	RCID	20 FT. FOR 2-STORY STRUCTURES IN R2-MD AND R2-HD ZONES; 15 FT. FOR 2-STORY STRUCTURES IN R-3 ZONE; 10 FT. FOR ONE-STORY STRUCTURES	11 FT. 3 IN.	NA ³
	RIOD			
LANDSCAPE PARKWAY (INTERIOR PRIVATE STREETS OR COMMON DRIVEWAYS)	RIOD	COMBINED 10 FT. WIDE; NO LESS THAN 3 FT. ON ONE SIDE	NONE	NO ¹
LANDSCAPE PARKWAY (INTERIOR PRIVATE STREETS OR COMMON DRIVEWAYS)	RCID	COMBINED 10 FT. WIDE, NO LESS THAN 3 FT. ON ONE SIDE. PARKWAY ON HOUSE SIDE OF PRIVATE STREET OR COMMON DRIVEWAY SHALL BE A MIN. OF 5 FT. WIDE	NONE	NO ¹

<u>DEVELOPMENT STANDARD</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>REQUIRED</u>	<u>PROVIDED</u>	<u>MEETS CODE</u>
PARKING:				
	RESIDENTIAL TENANT COVERED PARKING (3 BEDROOMS)	1 SPACE x 40 UNITS = 40 SPACES		
PARKING:	RESIDENTIAL TENANT COVERED PARKING (2 BEDROOMS)	2.25 SPACES x 40 UNITS = 90 SPACES		
	RESIDENTIAL GUEST PARKING	0.5 SPACES x 40 UNITS = 20 SPACES		
	TOTAL:	150 SPACES ³	103 SPACES	NO ¹
	RIOD	N/A		N/A
STORAGE	RCID	EACH UNIT PROVIDES 200 CU.FT OF SECURABLE STORAGE EXTERIOR TO UNIT OR WITHIN GARAGE/CARPORT	390 CU. FT.	YES

1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEVIATIONS ARE ALLOWED THROUGH A MASTER PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

2 THE DEVELOPMENT IS COMPRISED OF 3-STORY RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN THE R2-MD, R2-HD, OR R-3 ZONE, THEREFORE, HAS NO REAR SETBACK

3 TENANT OPEN PARKING CAN BE REDUCED BY 0.25 SPACE FOR 1-BEDROOM AND LARGER UNITS IF THE COVERED PARKING IS PROVIDED WITHIN EITHER A CARPORT OR PARKING STRUCTURE; THEREFORE, CALCULATION INCLUDES A 0.25 REDUCTION

SUMMARY OF DEVIATIONS:

1. FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR): THE RCID ALLOWS A MAXIMUM FAR OF 0.75, HOWEVER, THE PROJECT EXCEEDS THIS AT 1.43. THE PROJECT COMPLES WITH THE RIOD DENSITY STANDARD OF 30 DU/ACRE, PROPOSING 22.6 DU/ACRE.

2. COMMON USE OPEN SPACE: THE PROJECT PROPOSES 32% OPEN SPACE INSTEAD OF THE REQUIRED 50% UNDER RIOD STANDARDS, THEREBY NECESSITATING A DEVIATION.

3. BUILDING HEIGHT THE RCID LIMITS BUILDING HEIGHT TO TWO STORIES, HOWEVER, THE PROJECT COMPLIES WITH THE RIOD'S ALLOWANCE OF THREE STORIES.

4. SIDE SETBACK: THE PROJECT MEETS THE RCID SIDE SETBACK OF 5 FT., HOWEVER, DEVIATES FROM RIOD REQUIREMENT OF 20 FT.

5. REAR SETBACK: THE PROJECT DOES NOT COMPLY WITH RCID REAR SETBACK STANDARDS AND DEVIATES FROM THE RIOD 20 FT. STANDARD AS THE DEVELOPMENT CONSISTS OF THREE-STORY RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND IS OUTSIDE THE RS-MD, RS-HD AND R-3 ZONES.

6. LANDSCAPE PARKWAY: A DEVIATION IS REQUIRED AS THE LANDSCAPE PARKWAY ON COMMON DRIVEWAYS IS OMITTED TO PRESERVE UNIT COUNT AND OPTIMIZE DRIVE-AILSE FUNCTIONALITY. THE PROJECT MAINTAINS DESIGN EXCELLENCE WITH AMPLE LANDSCAPE AND INTEGRATED AMENITIES.

8. MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS: A DEVIATION FROM THE REQUIRED PARKING STANDARDS IS PROPOSED TO ALIGN WITH THE PROJECT DESIGN AND UNIT NEEDS.

9. PARKING STALLS BETWEEN BUILDINGS: A DEVIATION IS NEEDED FOR THE 10 FT. 6 IN. SPACE REQUIREMENT BETWEEN BUILDINGS AS SOME STALLS (OPEN OR CARPORT) DO NOT MEET THIS STANDARD.