



CITY OF POMONA

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

DATE: March 8, 2017

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Brad Johnson, Development Services Manager

SUBJECT: **General Plan Conformity Assessment (GPC 6936-2017):**
Finding of General Plan Conformity Assessment for proposed Street and Alley Vacations located between South Main Street, South Park Avenue, West Second and West Third Streets, Downtown Pomona.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission Adopt the attached Resolution Approving the request to vacate the existing street and alley

PROJECT/APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Location: Existing North/South 70 foot wide public street (S. Gordon St.) between W. Second and W. Third Streets and an existing East/West 20 foot wide alley located between S. Main Street and S. Park Avenue, Downtown Pomona

Project Applicant: City of Pomona

Historic/CBD: Not Applicable

Specific Plan: Downtown Pomona Specific Plan (DPSP)

Land Use Information:

	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning
Site	City Public Street & Alley	Transit Oriented District Core	DPSP/MU CBD
North	Vacant & Surface Parking	Transit Oriented District Core	DPSP/MU CBD
South	Church & Surface Parking	Transit Oriented District Core	DPSP/MU CBD
East	Retail/Work Live Units	Transit Oriented District Core	DPSP/MU CBD
West	Vacant Structures, Restaurant, Recreation	Transit Oriented District Core	DPSP/MU CBD

*DPSP/MU CBD = Downtown Pomona Specific Plan/Mixed Use-Central Business District

APPLICABLE CODE SECTIONS

Pursuant to California Streets & Highways Code Section 8313, before City Council approval of a street, alley or public utility easement vacation, the Planning Commission must determine whether the vacation is consistent with the City's General Plan.

BACKGROUND

The application for this Street and Alley vacation is a City initiated application to assist with the development of a multi-screen, movie theater project which recently received approval from the City Council through an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA). The developer proposing the movie theater development will also be initiating a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application which will ultimately be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission for compliance with the Pomona Downtown Specific Plan. The City agreed to process the necessary vacations of one street and one alley bounded by South Main Street on the east, South Park Avenue on the west, West Second Street on the north and West Third Street on the south to allow for the theater development (see attachment E).

Gordon Street is currently a short cul-de-sac street that terminates south of the Millard Sheets designed fountain that was constructed with the creation of the Second Street improvements that are currently registered as a historic landmark. These improvements were built when Second Street was envisioned as a pedestrian shopping mall. Gordon Street currently serves no purpose for vehicular or pedestrian circulation and exists in the context of being surrounded by underutilized surface parking lots. The east/west alleyway was originally designed to provide access between Park Avenue and Main Street and provide easement areas for public utility uses. The alley is currently utilized as a vehicular aisleway system spanning the entirety of the striped public parking stalls available for public parking purposes.

After circulating a letter requesting comments from Police, Fire, public utility companies, etc. the City has received only two letters of correspondence expressing the need to retain easement rights if the vacation is approved by the City Council. Southern California Edison and the City of Pomona Water/Wastewater Operations Department are the two entities requiring that their easement rights be retained (see attachment F).

ANALYSIS

Issue 1. Infrastructure and Circulation

Table 1 briefly discusses the basic issues related to the proposed street and alley vacation on the existing infrastructure and circulation systems.

Issue	Discussion
Existing Utilities	Easements will be reserved for the existing public utility improvements located within the vacated portion of the alley. The utilities will be re-routed during project design and construction.
Maximum Block Lengths	General Plan policy is to use our Subdivision Ordinance Update currently underway to limit block lengths to a Maximum of 500 feet. Although the new block length created by vacating Gordon Street will be approximately 585 feet, a site design comment will be the creation of a narrow private pedestrian street along the west side of the Ghist Building to provide a new street to break up the overall block length.

Issue 2. General Plan Conformance

The request to vacate Gordon Street and the alley is consistent with the following policies found in the Mobility and Access Plan Component and Transit Oriented Districts Place Type of the General Plan:

Parking

Goal: Align the amount of parking available and the amount of parking provided by new development with the real pattern of anticipated parking demand.

Policy: Avoid the appearance of a “sea of asphalt” in surface parking lot design and maximize shading with large trees planted throughout parking areas.

**Transit Oriented Districts
Downtown**

Goal: Cultivate Downtown as the “Heart of the City” where residential, shopping, employment, entertainment, educational, art, cultural, and civic activities are supported by transit, parks, parking, and a walkable environment.

Policy: Consolidate parking in structures or off-street parking lots located behind buildings or away from the street edge.

Goal: Use the Downtown Pomona Specific Plan as the guide for development Downtown.

Policy: Provide additional entertainment and cultural venues within the Arts District

The proposed vacations will facilitate the development of movie theaters that will eliminate a large portion of surface parking lot area that creates a “sea of asphalt” in its current condition. The proposed vacations will allow for development of currently underutilized land into an active movie theater development that will attract additional art and cultural activities as envisioned for the City’s Arts District.

The proposed vacation of Gordon Street and the existing alley will not create a negative impact to vehicular, pedestrian or bicycle circulation within this portion of Downtown Pomona. Site plan and architectural review processes with the project developer will ensure that the goals, policies, standards and guidelines of the Downtown Pomona Specific Plan are met with the ultimate design of the theater project.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolution making findings that the Street and Alley Vacation are in conformity with the City of Pomona General Plan

Respectfully submitted,



Brad Johnson
Development Services Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

- A - PC Resolution Approving Alley Vacation
- B - Site Photos
- C - Legal Description
- D - Street Vacation Map
- E - Communication from S.C.E. & Pomona Water/Wastewater Operations Dept.