



CITY OF POMONA

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

DATE: June 14, 2017

TO: Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Planning Division

SUBJECT: **SIGN VARIANCE (SIGNVAR 6408-2016):**

A request for a Sign Variance to allow to allow a total of three (3) high rise building identification signs where two (2) are allowed; to allow a high rise building identification sign to have two (2) rather than one (1) lines of copy; to allow a wall sign to be installed above the second floor; to allow the monument sign to have four (4) lines of copy where three (3) are allowed; to allow a monument sign 11'8" tall rather than 10'0"; to allow a monument sign with an area of approximately one hundred (100) square feet rather than sixty-five (65) square feet; and to allow a monument sign on a property with less than 100 feet of street frontage, on the existing hotel located at 3101 W. Temple Avenue in the C-4 (Highway-Commercial) zone.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolutions (Attachment 1) approving the Sign Variance (SIGNVAR 6408-2016), subject to conditions.

PROJECT/APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Location:	3101 W. Temple Ave.
APN Information:	8719-002-016
Project Applicant:	Investel One, LLC
Property Owner:	Investel One, LLC
CC District:	District # 5
Historic/CBD:	Not Applicable
Specific Plan:	Not Applicable

BACKGROUND

On March 23, 2015 the Planning Commission approved major exterior alterations to occur for the change of façade treatments of the hotel to allow the transition from the prior Shilo Hilltop to a Doubletree Hotel banner. The sign modifications are to also accommodate the updating of this hotel to more modern standards.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed signs will be located on the existing hotel at 3101 W. Temple Avenue on the south side of Temple Avenue, between Pomona Boulevard and State Route 57 (see Attachment 2).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Investel One LLC, is proposing to add two high rise building identification signs; one wall sign; and a monument sign to the existing hotel (see plans in Attachment 3). Two signs were previously approved and allowed to be installed. Sign A is an existing high rise building identification sign above the main entrance. Sign E is an existing wall sign on the southwest wall of the hotel advertising the restaurant. Signs B and D are new high rise building identification signs on the northeast side of the hotel. Sign C is a new wall sign on the southeast wall of the hotel advertising the restaurant. Sign F is a new monument sign near Temple Avenue. The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance (SIGNVAR 6408-2016) to allow a total of three high rise building identification signs (Signs A, B and D); to allow Sign B to have more than one line of copy; to allow sign C to be installed above the second floor; to allow the monument sign (Sign F) to have four (4) lines of copy; to allow a monument sign 11'8" tall; to allow a monument sign with an area of approximately one hundred (100) square feet; and to allow a monument sign on a property with less than one hundred (100) feet of frontage.

This is a view looking at the southwest facing side of the hotel where Signs A and E are located. Sign A is above the entrance near the left center of the image. Sign E is on the wall near the lower right part of the image, facing the parking lot. Sign C is a new wall sign proposed on the east wall near the lower right part of the image.

The view below is of the northeast facing wall of the hotel, facing Temple Avenue and SR-57, prior to the remodeling that is currently underway. Sign B will be near the roof, but to the right, of the "Hilltop Suites Hotel" sign shown in the photograph. Sign D will be in the approximate location of the "Restaurant" sign. Note that the hotel is over 3 stories tall, meeting the definition of a high rise building for purposes of the sign regulations.

The applicant also wants to install a monument sign (Sign F) on the landscaped strip near Temple Avenue, between the existing driveway serving the property and the driveway serving the Unocal service station.

Applicable Code Sections

Pursuant to Section .560 of the Pomona Zoning Ordinance, approval by the Planning Commission is required for a Variance to deviate from Section .503.K (Signs).

Surrounding Land Use Information

To the north of the Project site, across Temple Avenue, properties are developed with offices, a hotel and an automobile service station. State Route 57 (SR-57) and two automobile service stations border the Project site to the east; a fast-food restaurant is to the southeast. Across SR-57 to the east are multi-family residential projects. The large Lanterman Developmental Center property is to the west. An office complex is to the north (Attachment 2).

The following table summarizes the surrounding land uses, zoning and general plan designations for Commission consideration.

Land Use Summary Table

	Existing Land Use	Zoning Designation	General Plan Designation
Project Site	Hotel	C-4	Transit Oriented District: Neighborhood
North	Hotel, Offices and Service Station	C-4	Transit Oriented District: Neighborhood
South	Former Lanterman Developmental Center	O	Transit Oriented District: Neighborhood
East	Service Stations, Fast Food Restaurant and SR-57	C-4	Transit Oriented District: Neighborhood
West	Former Lanterman Developmental Center	O	Transit Oriented District: Neighborhood

ZONING COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS

Site Development Standards

Since the project involves the installation of signs, the proposed project is subject to specific development standards for signs contained in Section .503-K of the Pomona Zoning Ordinance. Staff has evaluated the proposed project and determined that it is in compliance with the minimum development standards in some cases with the exceptions as identified in the following table.

Sign Inventory Summary Table

Development Standards	Required	Project	Compliance
Land Use:	High Rise Building Identification Sign		
Number	2 per building	3 (Signs B and D in addition to A)	NO*
Location	On the upper-most story of a building at least 3 stories tall	All at the top of the building	Yes
Size	One (1) square foot per lineal foot of building frontage where the sign is proposed	Sign B: 151.13 sq. ft. on over 200' of frontage Sign D: 119.76 sq. ft. on over 200' of frontage	Yes
Sign Type	Internally illuminated channel letter	Internally illuminated channel letter	Yes
Lines of Copy	1	2 (Sign B)	NO*

* Variance needed

Development Standards	Required	Project	Compliance
Land Use:	Wall Sign		
Number	1 building frontage= 1 sign 2 frontages= 2 signs 3 frontages= 3 signs	2 (Sign C in addition to E)	Yes
Primary Wall Sign Size	One and one-half (1½) square feet per lineal foot of primary building or business frontage	Sign E (existing): 119.76 sq. ft. on over 200' of frontage	Yes
Secondary Wall Sign Size	One (1) square foot per lineal foot of secondary building or business frontage	Sign C: 32.87 sq. ft. on over 200' of frontage	Yes
Height	Not mounted higher than the second story and shall not extend higher than the building wall	Sign C: Above the second story	NO*
Coverage	Max. seventy-five percent (75%) of the length of the business frontage	Signs B, C, D: <75% of wall length	Yes
Projection	12" max beyond the face of the	<12"	Yes

	wall		
Lines of Copy	2	2	Yes

***Variance needed**

Development Standards	Required	Project	Compliance
Land Use:	Monument Sign		
Number	1 per building frontage of 200 lineal feet or more	1 on property of less than 200 feet of frontage	NO*
Location	Not within 10' of a common property line. Not within 100' of another monument sign.	18' to closest common property line; 105' to closest off-site monument sign	Yes
Size	Max. 65 sq. ft.	Approx. 100 sq. ft.	NO*
Height	Max. 10'	11'8"	NO*
No. of Faces	2	2	Yes
Max. Area for Copy	60%	<60%	Yes
Lines of Copy	3	4	NO*

*** Variance needed**

ISSUES ANALYSIS

Issue 1: Land Use Compatibility/Neighborhood Context

The applicant is proposing to add two new high rise building identification signs and one new wall sign to the hotel building, and a monument sign near Temple Avenue. The proposed high rise building identification and wall signs essentially replace signs removed during the hotel remodeling. The signs are consistent with the size, shape and location of signs previously allowed on the project site and are compatible with the surrounding uses. The proposed monument sign is proposed to replace a small driveway identification sign that contains the word "Hotel" to instruct the driving public that the driveway west of the Wendy's restaurant is the driveway that is utilized to gain vehicular access to the Hotel.

The project site is located in a commercial corridor of the City that is characterized by adjacent or nearby hotel, offices, service stations, and a fast food restaurant that have various forms of wall, monument and pole signs. The proposed high rise building identification, wall and monument signs for the project site will be complimentary and compatible with the commercial character of the neighborhood and adjacent land uses subject to the conditions of approval proposed (attached to the Resolution).

Issue 2: General Plan Conformity

The proposed signs, and the requested sign variance, are compatible with and will help promote the following policies of the Economic Development Element of the General Plan:

“It is the policy of the City of Pomona to encourage, with all means possible, the economic development and redevelopment of Pomona by the private sector.”

“It is the policy of the City of Pomona to promote increased job opportunities within the community.”

The proposed signs will improve the viability and success of the hotel currently being remodeled. Therefore, approval of the proposed sign variance is consistent with the City policy of encouraging private development.

Issue 3: Zoning Ordinance Compliance

Staff has evaluated the proposed sign variance and has determined that the proposed project complies with the development standards of the C-4 (Highway Commercial) zone and Section .503-K (Signs), with the exception of the requested Variances (see Issue 4: Variance Request). In addition, the proposed Variance request is consistent with the City of Pomona Zoning Ordinance, which allows such Variances provided that the appropriate findings are made by the Planning Commission. With the appropriate findings, granting this Sign Variance will not adversely affect the General Plan or the Zoning Ordinance.

Issue 4: Variance Request

Staff has evaluated the proposed signs and has determined that the proposed signage complies with the C-4 (Highway Commercial) zone and Section .503-K (Signs), with the exception of the Variance requests for three rather than two high rise building identification signs; two rather than one line of copy for high rise building identification sign B; the height above ground of wall sign C; monument sign height; monument sign area; number of lines of copy on the monument sign; and having a monument sign on a property with less than 200 feet of frontage as indicated in the Sign Inventory Summary Table.

In order to approve the Variance, certain findings must be made to justify its approval. Per Pomona Zoning Ordinance, Section .560.A, such justification includes that the property has unique characteristics related to its size, shape, topography or location that would otherwise deprive the property of rights and privileges enjoyed by other properties in the same vicinity and zoning classification.

Staff believes that justification exists on the subject site for the requested Variances to exceed the maximum allowable height above ground and the number of wall signs. Signs B, C and D replace signs removed during the remodeling that were substantially the same size and in the same locations. The signs face streets, SR-57 and parking lots just as the previous signs did. Judging from the

photographs included in this report, the old signs may have been even larger than the new ones. The structure is large but much of the wall area is taken up with guest room windows and balconies, limiting the available locations for signs. The size and width, and the height on the building, of the wall signs appear reasonable in the context of the building design.

The monument sign is in a similar location to other monument signs nearby. The shape is generally conventional. Although the site does not have 200 feet of frontage, this is due to the fact that the property is a flag lot with only a narrow neck of land extending to the street. Visually the property is prominent with large building frontages, giving the appearance of a much larger property frontage. Given these characteristics, a monument sign near the street appears reasonable despite the fact that the property has only 38 feet of frontage on Temple Avenue.

The number of lines of copy on the monument sign exceeds what is allowed by Code. There appears to be no reason why the copy cannot be confined to three lines. Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the copy be altered so that “Doubletree” appears beside “By Hilton” as in Sign B.

The size and height of the monument sign both exceed what are allowed by Code. It would not unduly compromise the visibility of the sign if it were reduced to match Code standards. Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the sign be reduced proportionally in all dimensions so that the maximum height is 10’0” and the area of the sign face is a maximum of 65 square feet.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS/DETERMINATION

The proposed project was reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. The proposed project meets the criteria for a Categorical Exemption under Section 15303 (Class 3 – New construction or conversion of small structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. The proposed project is consistent with the categorical exemption; therefore, no further environmental review is required.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

A copy of the public hearing notice was published on June 1, 2017 in the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin and was sent to the owners and occupants of properties within a 400-foot radius of the subject site on May 30, 2017 (Attachment 4). As of the date of this staff report, staff has not received any correspondence either for or against the proposed project.

CONCLUSION

The Sign Variance allows for Signs B, C and F, and the number of high rise building identification signs, to deviate from certain standards of the Zoning Ordinance as detailed previously in order to install high rise building identification signs and wall signs similar in size and location to previous signs on the building, and to install a new monument sign on the property. The high rise building identification signs and wall signs are compatible with the design of the building. The installation of the signs will promote the continued operation of the hotel. Based on staff’s analysis of the issues and recommended conditions of approval, the

proposed project will be compatible with adjacent land uses and will not result in any negative impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. Further, the project has been designed in a manner that will enhance the aesthetics of the site and complement the existing commercial character of the surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolution (Attachments 1) approving the Sign Variance Program (SIGNVAR 6408-2016), subject to conditions.

Respectfully Submitted:

Prepared by:

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Contract Planner

PC ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Draft PC Resolution for SIGNVAR 6408-2016
- 2) Project Vicinity Map and Aerial Photo
- 3) Project Plan Reductions
- 4) 400' Radius Map and Public Hearing Notice
- 5) Site Photographs
- 6) Full Size Plans (Separate Cover)