



## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** January 5, 2022

**TO:** Hearing Officer

**SUBJECT:** Minor Conditional Use Permit #6913

**LOCATION:** 250 N. Altadena Drive

**APPLICANT:** Betty Siwy

**ZONING DESIGNATION:** EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan subarea d1 general commercial)

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** Low Commercial

**CASE PLANNER:** Emma Carrico

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt the Environmental Determination and the Specific Findings in Attachment A to **approve** Minor Conditional Use Permit #6913 with the conditions in Attachment B.

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**PROJECT PROPOSAL:** Minor Conditional Use Permit: To allow tandem parking in conjunction with a new 7,750 square-foot two-story medical office building. Of the total 31 commercial parking spaces included in the proposed project, 12 spaces are proposed as tandem spaces.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** This project has been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15303, Class 3, (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures); and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. Section 15303 exempts, in urbanized areas, the

construction of up to four commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area on sites zoned for such use if not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive. The proposed medical office is a permitted use on the subject site, would consist of less than 10,000 square feet of floor area, and would not involve the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances. All public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is a developed urban area that is not environmentally sensitive.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Site characteristics:** The project site is 15,281 square foot rectangular-shaped corner lot, located at the southeast corner of the intersection of North Altadena Drive and North Sierra Madre Boulevard. The site is a vacant unpaved flat lot that had previously been developed with two commercial structures. There are vehicle access drives on each street frontage.

**Adjacent Uses:** North – Commercial  
South – Commercial  
East – Commercial Parking and Single Family Residential  
West – Commercial

**Adjacent Zoning:** North – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan subarea d1 general commercial)  
South – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan subarea d1 general commercial)  
East – RS-6 (Single-Family Residential)  
West – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan subarea d1 general commercial)

**Previous zoning cases on this property:** Sign Exception #17 – Remove existing Signal Oil Sign and replace with ENCO (Humble Oil Co) Signs. Approved May 2, 1967.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The applicant, Betty Siwy, has submitted a Minor Conditional Use Permit application to allow tandem parking in conjunction with a new 7,750 square-foot two-story medical office building. Of the total 31 commercial parking spaces provided for the proposed project, 12 spaces, or 39 percent, are configured as tandem parking. The 12 tandem spaces would be reserved for employee use only, and would be managed by an onsite office attendant. The Zoning Code allows up to 75 percent of required parking spaces for nonresidential uses to be configured as tandem parking with the approval of a Minor Conditional Use Permit.

**ANALYSIS:**

The subject site is zoned EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan subarea d1 general commercial). The proposed medical office use is permitted by right within the zone. Development of the site is subject to development standards in Zoning Code Section 17.32.070 (EPSP Development Standards) and parking requirements in Chapter 17.46 (Parking and Loading). The proposed medical office building would consist of two stories, surface parking, and landscaping. The improvements are designed to comply with applicable development standards as outlined in the table below. Additional review of the project design would occur through the required Design Review process, and through the Building Permit plan check process.

| Development Feature   |                 | Requirement                        | Proposed Project | Analysis |
|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| <b><i>EPSP-d1-CG Development Standards; Primary Structure</i></b>   |                 |                                    |                  |          |
| Minimum Setbacks  | Front (N)       | 5 feet                             | 5 feet           | Complies |
|   | Rear (S)        | None required                      | ~87 feet         | Complies |
|   | Corner Side (W) | 5 feet                             | 9 feet           | Complies |
|   | Side (E)        | None required                      | ~24 feet         | Complies |
| Height  |                 | 45 feet                            | 31 feet          | Complies |
| Floor Area Ratio (FAR)  |                 | No maximum                         | 0.51             | Complies |
| <b><i>EPSP-d1-CG Development Standards; Parking and Loading</i></b> |                 |                                    |                  |          |
| Parking Spaces  |                 | 4 spaces per 1000sf =<br>31 spaces | 31 spaces        | Complies |
| Maximum Tandem Spaces   |                 | 75% (23 spaces)                    | 39% (12 spaces)  | Complies |

Minor Conditional Use Permit: To allow nonresidential parking in tandem configuration

Pursuant to Section 17.46.080.A.3 (Tandem Parking), up to 75 percent of the total off-street parking spaces provided for a nonresidential use may incorporate tandem parking, but only with the approval of a Minor Conditional Use Permit (MCUP). Tandem parking is a configuration where two spaces are lined up behind each other. The Zoning Code also requires a full-time parking attendant to be on duty at all times while the parking facility is available for use. The Hearing Officer may approve a Minor Conditional Use Permit only after making six findings identified in the Zoning Code. The general purpose is to evaluate compliance with the Zoning Code and General Plan, whether the use would be detrimental or injurious to the neighborhood, and compatibility of the operation with existing and future uses.

Of the total 31 commercial parking spaces provided for the proposed medical office building, 12 spaces are proposed in tandem configuration. The proposed 12 tandem spaces represent 39 percent of the total 31 nonresidential spaces provided, therefore not exceeding the maximum allowable 75 percent. Spaces configured as tandem are primarily located on the south side of the proposed building. In reviewing the tandem configuration, staff anticipates that the arrangements would not impact those working on the property, or the surrounding properties. All parking spaces

are required to comply with applicable provisions of the Zoning Code. This includes, but is not limited to, standards for parking space dimensions, aisle widths, vertical clearances, access, and the requirement for a full-time attendant to be on duty at all times while the parking facility is available for use. An onsite office employee of the building would serve as the required parking attendant with responsibility for overseeing the tandem parking. To reduce any concern regarding circulation, a condition of approval also recommends that the tandem parking spaces be restricted to employee parking only. Medical office uses typically generate fewer vehicle trips throughout the day relative to other uses, because peak periods are generally limited to mornings and evenings when employees arrive to begin the work day and leave the building at the end of the day. As a result, by limiting the tandem spaces to employee use only, high parking turnover and vehicle congestion are not anticipated.

Staff anticipates that, with the recommended conditions of approval, the tandem parking would not be a detriment to those working on the property or working and residing on the surrounding properties.

#### **GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:**

The subject site is designated Low Commercial in the Land Use Element of the General Plan. This designation is characterized by a limited range of retail and service uses. These uses are located and designed to foster pedestrian use, primarily serve the needs of adjacent neighborhoods and maintain compatibility with residential uses in the immediate area. The proposed medical office building is consistent with the land use designation because it will provide services to residents and employees of the area. Additionally, the proposed request to allow for tandem parking is consistent with General Plan Land Use Element Policy 19.3 – Parking Management, which encourages the use of parking management tools to reduce the amount of land devoted to frequently vacant parking lots. Tandem parking is a tool that allows the amount of land dedicated to parking to be reduced by more efficiently utilizing parking areas.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

This project has been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15303, Class 3, (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures); and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. Section 15303 exempts, in urbanized areas, the construction of up to four commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area on sites zoned for such use if not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive. The proposed medical office is a permitted use on the subject site, would consist of less than 10,000 square feet of floor area, and would not involve the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances. All public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is a developed urban area that is not environmentally sensitive.

#### **COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS:**

The project was reviewed by the Fire Department, Public Works Department, Department of Transportation, Building and Safety Division, and Design and Historic Preservation Section. The Public Works Department, Department of Transportation, and Building and Safety Division provided recommended conditions of approval, which have been incorporated in Attachment B.

## **CONCLUSION:**

It is Staff's assessment that the required findings for approval of the MCUP to allow tandem parking can be made. The project as proposed complies with the applicable requirements of the Zoning Code and General Plan. The proposed tandem spaces will not create a detriment to employees working on the site or citizens working or residing in the broader vicinity. Staff recommends approval of the Minor Conditional Use Permit, subject to the findings in Attachment A and recommended conditions of approval in Attachment B.

### Attachments:

Attachment A: Minor Conditional Use Permit Findings

Attachment B: Recommended Conditions of Approval

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**SPECIFIC FINDINGS FOR MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT #6913**

Minor Conditional Use Permit – To allow nonresidential parking in tandem configuration

1. *The proposed use is allowed with a Conditional Use Permit within the applicable zoning district and complies with all applicable provisions of this Zoning Code.* Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.46.080.A.3, up to 75 percent of the total off-street parking spaces provided for a nonresidential use may incorporate tandem parking, but only upon approval of a Minor Conditional Use Permit. Of the total 31 nonresidential parking spaces provided, 12 spaces, or 31 percent, are proposed in tandem configuration. All tandem spaces will be restricted to employee use only, and an office attendant will be on duty and available at all times the parking facility is available for use. The proposed medical office use is permitted by-right in the EPSP-d1-CG zone, and the proposed project will comply with all development standards of the Zoning Code and Specific Plan. Specific to tandem parking, this includes compliance with standards for parking space dimensions, aisle widths, and vertical clearances.
2. *The location of the proposed use complies with the special purposes of this Zoning Code and the purposes of the applicable zoning district.* The subject site is located within the EPSP-d1-CG zone. The purpose of the East Pasadena Specific Plan is to ensure that the future development of East Pasadena balances the community needs of residents with the needs of businesses and commercial property owners, and preserves the quality of life in the area in terms of existing air quality, traffic, safety, and sense of community. The specific purpose of the d1 Subarea is to encourage the subarea's continued use as an industrial district with moderate amounts of additional office and commercial development. The proposed medical office use is a commercial use that is consistent with the purpose of the applicable zoning district. It further aligns with the goals of the applicable zoning district as an office use that will provide services to East Pasadena residents, and a new customer base for the surrounding existing businesses in the office employees. Tandem parking will allow the medical office use to use the property more efficiently for the parking of vehicles while providing the area with new commercial development on an underutilized site.
3. *The proposed use is in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan and the purpose and intent of any applicable specific plan.* The subject site is designated Low Commercial in the Land Use Element of the General Plan. This designation is characterized by a limited range of retail and service uses. These uses are located and designed to foster pedestrian use, primarily serve the needs of adjacent neighborhoods and maintain compatibility with residential uses in the immediate area. The proposed medical office building is consistent with the land use designation because it will provide services to residents and employees of the area. The proposed project is also compliant with General Plan Land Use Element Policy 19.3 – Parking Management, which encourages the use of parking management tools to reduce the amount of land devoted to frequently vacant parking lots. Tandem parking is a tool that allows the amount of land dedicated to parking to be reduced by more efficiently utilizing parking areas.
4. *The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use would not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, or general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed use.* The entirety of the proposed parking lot, including all proposed tandem spaces, will be located on the subject site. All spaces will be designed to comply with minimum standards for dimensions, aisle widths, vertical clearances, and access, which should prevent any detrimental impact. The tandem

spaces will be restricted to employee use only and will be managed by an onsite attendant. Additionally, employees of the medical office will typically arrive and park in the morning and depart at the end of the work day. This means that frequent parking turnover is not expected and peak usage periods are generally limited to those two times of day. Therefore, tandem parking is not anticipated to result in detriment to the health, safety, or general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood.

5. *The use, as described and conditionally approved, would not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City.* The proposed medical office use is permitted by right in the subject zone. Medical office uses typically operate within standard business hours, do not involve hazardous chemicals or materials, and do not create significant disruption such as noise or traffic. The project is consistent with other commercial uses in the immediate vicinity. The proposed tandem parking will be restricted to employee use only and will be appropriately managed by an onsite office attendant. Additionally, the location of tandem parking on the site is primarily limited to an area that would be easily accessible for vehicles entering and existing the site. With compliance to the recommended conditions of approval the use will not be detrimental or injurious to surrounding property.
  
6. *The design, location, operating characteristics, and size of the proposed use would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity, in terms of aesthetic values, character, scale, and view protection.* All tandem parking will be designed to comply with applicable requirements of the Zoning Code, including standards for parking space dimensions, aisle widths, vertical clearances, and access. In addition, all tandem parking spaces will be limited to employee use only. Medical office employees generate fewer vehicle trips throughout the day relative to other uses, because the peak periods are generally limited to mornings and evenings when employees arrive to begin the work day and leave the building at the end of the day. As a result, a high turnover of parking is not anticipated, and the tandem parking will be compatible with the proposed use of the site. Finally, the project requires Design Review approval prior to construction to ensure compatibility with the City's design guidelines.

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FOR MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT #6913**

The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the following conditions:

General

1. The site plan and elevations submitted for building permits shall substantially conform to plans submitted with this application and stamped "Approved at Hearing, January 5, 2022" except as modified herein.
2. This approval authorizes 12 parking spaces of the total 31 nonresidential parking spaces to be provided in tandem configuration.
3. In accordance with Section 17.64.040 of the Pasadena Municipal Code the right granted under this application must be enacted within 36 months from the effective date of approval. It shall expire and become void, unless an extension of time is approved in compliance with Section 17.64.040.C of the Zoning Code.
4. The Zoning Administrator, at any time, can call for a review of the approved conditions at a duly noticed public hearing. These conditions may be modified or new conditions added to reduce any impacts of the use. The Hearing Officer may revoke the Minor Conditional Use Permit if sufficient cause is given.
5. Any change to these conditions of approval, expansion of the use, or increase in the number of tandem configurations may require a modification of this Minor Conditional Use Permit or a new Minor Conditional Use Permit.
6. The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the applicable code requirements of all City Departments.
7. The final decision letter and conditions of approval shall be incorporated in the submitted building plans as part of the building plan check process.
8. The proposed project, Activity Number **ZENT2021-00099** is subject to a Final Zoning Inspection prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or approval of the Final Building Inspection. Contact Emma Carrico, Zoning Section, at 626-744-7361 to schedule an inspection appointment time.

Planning

9. A maximum of 12 spaces shall be provided in a two-space tandem configuration.
10. All parking spaces and aisle widths shall comply with Chapter 17.46 (Parking and Loading) of the City's Zoning Code.
11. The tandem parking spaces shall be limited to employee parking only.

12. An on-site full-time office parking attendant shall be on duty at all times the parking facility is available for use. The owner-operator shall designate an employee of the building to serve as attendant with responsibility of overseeing the tandem parking while available for use.

#### Building and Safety Division

13. Accessible parking shall be provided in conformance with chapter 11b of the building code.

#### Public Works

14. In order to accommodate an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant curb ramp, the applicant shall verify, and reconstruct if necessary, a standard curb ramp, directional if possible, at the southeast corner of Altadena Drive and Sierra Madre Boulevard per Caltrans Standard A88A or City of Pasadena Standard S-414. The curb ramp construction shall be completed prior to the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy. A separate permit from the Department of Public Works is required for all construction in the public right-of-way. Please contact 626-744-4195 for the general process.

The applicant may submit to the City for review any proposed designs that will comply with the ADA requirements. The applicant is responsible for the design, preparation of plans and specifications, and construction of the new curb ramp. Plans for the curb return improvements shall be prepared by a civil engineer, registered in the State of California. Upon submittal of improvement plans to the Departments of Public Works for review, the applicant will be required to place a deposit with the Department of Public Works to cover the cost of plan checking. The amount of deposit will be based on the current City's General Fee Schedule. Note that the building plans approved by the City's Planning (Building) Department do not constitute approvals for work in the public right-of-way. Separate plans shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works – Engineering Division – at 175 North Garfield Avenue Window 6. The applicant shall submit the curb return improvement plans and the plan check deposit at least two months prior to the issuance of any building or demolition permits.

Upon review of the curb ramp improvement plans, the applicant may need to dedicate to the City for street purposes the land necessary at the property line corner rounding (per Standard Plan S-423) to provide for the minimum clearance required by the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. If so, the applicant shall remove and reconstruct the sidewalk for the dedicated area, per Standard Plan No. S-421. The applicant shall be responsible for all the cost required to complete the dedication, if it is required. The dedication document and processing fee shall be submitted to this office, at least three to four (3-4) months, prior to issuance of any permits. The dedication document shall be executed and recorded prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

15. The proposed development shall connect to the public sewer with one new six-inch diameter house sewers laid at a minimum slope of two percent. In accordance with PMC Chapter 13.24.010, house sewer "means that part of the horizontal piping beginning 24 inches from the exterior wall of the building or structure and extending to its connection with the public sewer." The section of house sewers within the public right-of-way - from the property line to the public sewer, or within easement, shall be vitrified clay or cast iron pipe. The house sewer shall meet City Standards as determined by the Department of Public Works, and a permit issued by the Department of Public Works is required for work within the public right-of-way. The construction of all new house sewers shall be completed prior to the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy.

16. All of the on-site drainages, such as roof drain, and area drain, shall be gravity-flowed out to the public right of way at an approved angle in a cast iron curb drain or an approved curb outlet. All drains shall discharge to Altadena Drive and Sierra Madre Boulevard at an approved angle in a cast iron curb drain or an approved curb outlet. No drainage runoff shall be allowed onto Wenger Alley. The construction of the drain shall be completed prior to the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy.
17. The applicant is responsible for the design, preparation of plans and specifications, and construction of all required public improvements. Plans for the above improvements shall be prepared by a civil engineer, registered in the State of California. Upon submittal of improvement plans to the Departments of Public Works for review, the applicant will be required to place a deposit with the department to cover the cost of plan checking. The amount of deposit will be based on the current City's General Fee Schedule. Note that building plans approved by the City's Planning (Building) Department do not constitute approvals for work in the public right-of-way. Separate plans shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works – Engineering Division – at 175 North Garfield Avenue Window 6. The applicant shall submit public improvements plans and the plan check deposit at least two (2) months prior to the issuance of any building or demolition permits.
18. In order to ensure that the job site is kept safe and clean and all existing public facilities are protect in place, the applicant shall place a \$5,000 deposit with the Department of Public Works prior to the issuance of any permit. This deposit is subject to refund or additional billing, and is a guarantee that the applicant will keep the site clean and safe, and will make permanent repairs to the abutting street improvements that are damaged, including striping, slurry seal/resurfacing, curb, gutter, and sidewalk, either directly or indirectly, by the construction on this site. The deposit may be used for any charges resulting from damage to street trees and for City personnel to review traffic control plans and maintain traffic control. A processing fee will be charged against the deposit.
19. Prior to the start of construction or the issuance of any permits, the applicant shall submit a Construction Staging and Traffic Management Plan to the Department of Public Works for review and approval. The template for the Construction Staging and Traffic Management Plan can be obtained from the Department of Public Works webpage at: <https://ww5.cityofpasadena.net/public-works/engineering-and-construction/engineering/forms-and-applications/> A non-refundable flat fee, based on the current General Fee Schedule, is required for plan review and on-going monitoring during construction. This plan shall show the impact of the various construction stages on the public right-of-way (and the private street) including all street occupations, lane closures, detours, staging areas, and routes of construction vehicles entering and exiting the construction site. An occupancy permit shall be obtained from the department for the occupation of any traffic lane, parking lane, parkway, or any other public right-of-way. All lane closures shall be done in accordance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and California Supplement. If the public right-of-way occupation requires a diagram that is not a part of the MUTCD or California Supplement, a separate traffic control plan must be submitted as part of the Construction Staging and Traffic Management Plan to the department for review and approval. No construction truck idling or staging, material storage, or construction trailer are allowed in the public right-of-way.

In addition, prior to the start of construction or issuance of any permits, the applicant shall conduct a field meeting with an inspector from the Department of Public Works for review and

approval of construction staging, parking, delivery and storage of materials, final sign-off procedure, and any of the specifics that will affect the public right-of-way. An appointment can be arranged by calling 626-744-4195.

Department of Transportation

20. Any project loading/unloading spaces shall be on-site. DOT will not install a loading zone for project use along the project frontage.
21. Prior to the start of construction or the issuance of any permits, the applicant shall submit a Construction Staging & Traffic Management Plan to the Department of Public Works for review and approval. This plan shall show the impact of the various construction stages on the public right-of-way including street occupations, parking space relocation agreements, closures, detours, staging areas, and routes of construction vehicles entering and exiting the construction site. Permitted hours for construction vehicles (delivery, haul) may be limited to the hours between 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM.
22. Views adjoining both sides of the driveway at the property line shall not be obstructed with landscaping, block wall, or non-porous fencing greater than 2.5 feet in height.
23. Maintain a 5-foot minimum clear walk zone free of any obstructions along the project's frontages on Sierra Madre Boulevard and Altadena Drive.
24. Driveways shall be located a minimum distance of 50 feet from any intersection and shall be approved by the Department of Transportation prior to the issuance of the first permit for construction (demolition, grading, or building).
25. The Traffic Reduction and Transportation Improvement Fee (Ordinance No. 7076) will apply to all net new residential, retail, industrial, and office developments and is based on the Fee Schedule at the time of building permit issuance.