



## Legislation Text

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### PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: 1/21/2020

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Community Development Department

#### APPLICATION REQUEST:

**PP2019-0005:** Precise Plan application for the review of the site plan, architecture, landscaping, and fencing/walls associated with the development of 23 single-family detached homes on 5.92 acres. The project is located at the southwest corner of East Cresta Drive and South Promenade Avenue, north of the 91 Freeway. The project site is designated as SFR-5 (single family, 5,000 square foot minimum lot size) by the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (Specific Plan 81-2). Applicant is Brad Porter for West Cal Property Group, 2711 N. Sepulveda Blvd, #530, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Planning and Housing Commission adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration (and Mitigation Monitoring Plan) and adopt Resolution No. 2546 **GRANTING PP2019-0005** based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

#### PROJECT SITE SUMMARY

**Area of Property:** 5.91 acres

**Existing Zoning:** SFR-5 district of the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP 81-2)

**Existing General Plan:** LDR (Low Density Residential)

**Existing Land Use:** Undeveloped

**Proposed Land Use:** Single family residential

**Surrounding Zoning/Land Uses:**

**N:** Cresta Road and Single family residences/SFR-5 (Single Family, 5,000 square foot minimum lot size)

**E:** Promenade Avenue and Single family residences/SFR-5 (Single Family, 5,000 square foot minimum lot size)

**S:** Interstate 15

**W:** Single family residences/SFR-6 (Single Family, 6,000 square foot minimum lot size)

#### BACKGROUND

The project is a single-family subdivision of 23 lots, which is proposed to be built by West Cal

Property Group. The project site is 5.91 acres in size, located north of the 91 Freeway at the southwest corner of East Cresta Drive and South Promenade Avenue. The project includes a tentative tract map, TTM 37719, which is for the subdivision of 5.91 acres into 23 numbered lots for single family residential purposes for the development. Both applications, TTM37719 and PP2019-0005 are being presented for concurrent approval.

The project is located in the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2), which designates the site for single family homes with a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet (SFR-5). The Northeast Corona SP was adopted in 1982 prior to the approval of Measure H in 1986. Measure H was a voter-approved measure that established 7,200 square feet as the smallest lot size requirement for newly created single family residential lots in the city. Since the specific plan predates Measure H, the project is allowed to maintain the zoning and minimum lot size prescribed by the SFR-5 designation of the specific plan.

The project was originally reviewed by city staff at the Development Plan Review meeting on May 16, 2019. The applicant submitted official applications for the tentative tract map and precise plan on July 25, 2019, which were reviewed by the Project and Environmental Review Committee on August 15, 2019 and determined to be incomplete. The applicant submitted the revised items to staff and the applications were considered complete on December 17, 2019 and cleared for public hearing before the Planning and Housing Commission on January 21, 2020.

The applicant was advised to do a community outreach, particularly with the adjacent residences to the west located on Wynola Court. On July 26, 2019, the applicant mailed letters to the 17 residential properties located adjacent to the project site, introducing the proposed project and inviting the residents to a community meeting. The letter included a site plan for the project and the applicant's contact information. A meeting was held on-site on Saturday, August 10, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Five households attended the meeting. On October 8, 2019, the applicant mailed letters to all properties within a 500-foot radius (96 households), introducing the project and inviting residents to a neighborhood meeting on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at Auburndale Recreation Center located at 1045 Auburndale Street in the City of Corona. Five households attended the meeting, of which four of them were from Wynola Court who attended the first meeting. The residents wanted to confirm that the project had not changed, had questions about grading, drainage, and the overall project. Additionally, the applicant or staff did not receive any phone calls or emails from the residents during this time. Copies of the letters and the meeting sign-in sheets are attached as Exhibits K1, K2, L1 and L2.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

PP2019-0005 is an application for the site plan, architecture, landscaping, and fence and walls associated with the development of 23 single family homes associated with a proposed new subdivision, Tentative Tract 37719.

### **Site Plan**

Exhibit A to this report shows the proposed subdivision, which proposes 23 residential lots on a cul-de-sac extending south from East Cresta Drive. The lots range in size from 5,050 SF to 14,266 SF; average lot size is 7,091 SF. As shown in Exhibit A, the proposed homes can be placed on the lots in compliance with the required setbacks for the SFR-5 district of the Northeast Corona Specific Plan, which include a 20-foot front yard setback (for homes with garages open onto the street), side yards

of five (5) feet, and rear yards of ten (10) feet. The two homes which have a side yard abutting East Cresta Drive both have side yards which meet or exceed the required 15-foot street side setback (required for homes abutting Major, Secondary, or Collector streets).

Due to the combination of the curve in the proposed roadway and the relatively deep lots, 14 of the 23 lots are 106 feet or more in depth, the homes are plotted in a way that creates a “staggered” appearance, consistent with the City’s Residential Development Design Guidelines. Of the 23 proposed homes, three are a one-story plan; the remaining 20 homes are based on three different two-story plans.

Plan 1:	3 homes
Plan 2:	7 homes
Plan 3:	5 homes
Plan 4:	8 homes

The Specific Plan allows up to 45% lot coverage. As proposed, the maximum lot coverage for any of the lots is 42.9%, which is proposed on only one lot. Lot coverage on 12 of the 23 lots will be 35% or less; average lot coverage for all 23 homes is 32.6%.

Each home is provided with a 6'x10' concrete pad in the side yard area for the storage of waste receptacles. Each home is also provided with a concrete pad for an air conditioning unit. Each air conditioning unit shall comply with Corona Municipal Code Chapter 17.84.040(D)(1), which prescribes air conditioning equipment be setback at least ten feet from an adjoining property line except where a five-foot block wall is maintained extending a distance of two feet on each side of the equipment. This requirement will be reviewed by the Community Development Department at time of plan check.

### **Grading/Drainage**

The project site in its existing condition is generally flat, sloping gradually from the south to the north (toward Cresta Road). The proposed grading plan mostly retains the existing topography of the site while creating pads for the proposed homes and the internal roadway. The only significant changes to the topography of the site are proposed at the southeast corner of the site adjacent to South Promenade Parkway (on lot 12 of the proposed subdivision) and on a portion of the western property boundary (on lots 16, 17, and 18 and on a portion of lot 19) where retaining walls are proposed to create buildable lots. At both of these locations, retaining walls of approximately 10 feet in height would be constructed. See the discussion of Fences and Walls in this report for additional information on these proposed walls.

In addition to these walls, the applicant proposes to create a slope at the back of lots 1-9 to slightly lower these lots relative to the adjacent roadways and create flatter, more usable lots for the ultimate homeowners.

Drainage from the proposed project will be directed to roadways and existing storm drainage facilities. Adjacent properties will not have additional storm water directed to them as a result of the project.

### **Floor Plans**

The applicant is proposing four different floor plans, in a variety of sizes, as summarized below.

Plan 1 (One Story, 2,430 SF, 3BD/2.5BA):	3 homes
Plan 2 (Two Story, 2,790 SF, 4BD/3BA):	7 homes
Plan 3 (Two Story, 2,930 SF, 4BD/3.5BA):	5 homes
Plan 4 (Two Story, 3,060 SF, 4BD/3.5BA):	8 homes

The Plan 1 homes include a covered outdoor “California Room” off the master bedroom. Two of the plans (2 and 4) include an option to create an additional bedroom by enclosing a loft area. All of the homes have an attached garage, as required by the Corona Municipal Code, which requires two spaces in a garage for each single family home. Plans 1, 2, and 3 have a two-car garage; Plan 4 has a three-car garage.

## Architecture

The Northeast Corona Specific Plan does not include design guidelines for single family homes; therefore, the project is governed by the City’s Residential Development Design Guidelines, which make these general statements about residential design:

*“An important goal of the single family site planning guidelines is to create functional and visual variety along local streets. It is the intent of the guidelines to discourage subdivisions that propose identical homes side by side, uninterrupted linear streets and similar front, side and rear yard setbacks.”*

*“There is no particular architectural “style” required for residential structures, but the focus should be on the development of a high quality residential environment. In general, the architecture should consider compatibility with surrounding character, including harmonious building style, form, size, color, material, and roofline. Individual dwelling units should be distinguishable from one another.”*

The applicant proposes three different architectural styles: Spanish, Traditional, and Cottage (see Exhibits D1-D11). Plan 1 proposes to use only the Spanish and Cottage styles; all of the other plans will use all of the styles. The homes are proposed to be constructed with stucco, highlighted with trim around windows, foam trim pieces (on some elevations), decorative window shutters, gable accents (on some elevations), and decorative garage doors. Roof material is concrete tile (Cottage and Traditional) and S-shaped concrete tile (Spanish).

The color palette includes a variety of earth tones and similar colors, as shown in Exhibit E. A total of nine different combinations of colors and roof materials are proposed, and the applicant’s intent is that any given combination of elevation, colors and materials will be used only once within the subdivision.

The homes range in height from 16’ 2” (the single-story Plan 1 Spanish) to 26’ 10” (the two-story Plan 2 Traditional). All of the two-story homes are approximately 25 to 26 feet in height. All of the homes are below the 40-foot maximum established in the Specific Plan for the SFR-5 land use designation. The proposed homes are generally similar in terms of size, height, and style to existing homes in the surrounding neighborhoods. The applicant’s designs are different from the adjacent areas in that they reflect a “cleaner” more modern aesthetic that is reflective of contemporary construction.

## Landscaping

Exhibit F1 shows the overall landscape concept for the project. Each home is proposed to be

provided with front yard landscaping including two trees per lot (planted at 24" box size). A variety of shrubs and groundcover will be provided in the front yards in lieu of turf. Front yard landscaping will also be installed in the parkway strip between the sidewalk and curb. In addition to front yard landscaping, the developer will install parkway landscaping along the East Cresta Road and South Promenade Avenue frontages. A variety of species, including London Plane, Silk Tree, Golen Rain Tree, and Mondell Pine, are proposed on these frontages. Queen Palms and Magnolia are proposed to be used to highlight the project entrance on East Cresta Drive. All plant materials are California-friendly and will be installed with water-efficient landscaping that complies with the City's landscape requirements (Chapter 17.70 of the Corona Municipal Code).

*Note: See the discussion of Fencing and Walls, below, for information on proposed landscaped "Verdura" walls.*

### HOA Maintained Areas

Exhibit G shows the areas proposed to be maintained by individual homeowners, a proposed homeowners association (HOA), and the City:

- **Homeowners** will be responsible for maintaining front and rear yard landscaping on their lot. Homeowners will also be responsible for maintaining the parkway landscaping between the sidewalk and curb in front of their homes.
- The **HOA** will maintain the landscaping at the project entry on East Cresta Road (not including private front and rear yards of the adjacent homes on lots 1 and 23).
- The **HOA** will maintain two areas of landscaped "Verdura" walls at the southeast corner of the site and along a portion of the western project boundary (see Exhibit A). The HOA will also maintain the easements provided for maintenance crews to reach these walls.
- The **City** will maintain the landscaped parkway along South Promenade Avenue.
- The **City** will maintain the parkway strip between the sidewalk and curb at the project entrance on Cresta Road.
- The **City** will maintain the public street and sidewalks within the subdivision.

### Fencing and Walls

The Northeast Corona Specific Plan makes these general statements about fences and walls:

*"All fences and walls shall be designed as an integrated part of the overall architectural and site design. All materials shall be durable and finished in textures and color complimentary with the development architecture."*

*"Fences and walls of adjoining properties shall complement each other."*

The applicant is proposing a variety of wall and fence types:

- A six-foot-tall slumpstone masonry wall is proposed at the perimeter of the project and between individual homes.

- A six-foot-high “wall” consisting of 4 feet of glass atop 2 feet of masonry is proposed on the southern boundary of the project, overlooking the 91 Freeway.
- An approximately 10-foot-tall “Verdura” wall is proposed to be used on two slope areas in the southeastern corner of the project and along a portion of the western project boundary.
- A combination of wooden and tubular steel fencing is proposed to be used for gates into individual back yards, to a City water line easement between lots 11 and 12, and an accessway between lots 15 and 16 to an HOA-maintained slope.

Along the western project boundary, the applicant is proposing to replace the existing wooden fence at the project boundary with a new slumpstone masonry wall. The proposed perimeter and side yard wall is consistent with other walls in the area, consisting of concrete “slumpstone” block with a flat, flush cap.

The “verdura” wall is constructed of interlocking concrete blocks that stack to create a retaining wall that slopes toward the area being retained. Each block incorporates a “pocket” which is filled with soil and then planted and irrigated with a drip system. This type of wall has been used successfully in several locations in Corona, including the Sierra Bella and Terrassa residential projects. An example of the verdura wall at Terrassa is shown in Exhibits N1-N3. Exhibits I1-I2 also show cross sections of the project’s perimeter conditions.

### **Parking**

Parking for single family homes in the Northeast Corona Specific Plan is required to be provided per the Corona Municipal Code. The Zoning Code requires a minimum of a two-car garage for each dwelling unit, with minimum interior unimpeded dimensions of 18 feet in width by 20 feet in depth. All of the proposed homes include either a two- or three-car garage which complies with the size requirements of the Corona Municipal Code.

### **ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING**

The project site is bordered by East Cresta Road and South Promenade Avenue. Cresta Road is designated as a collector street and Promenade Avenue is designated as a secondary 4-lane roadway on the city’s General Plan circulation map. Both roadways have been built to their full paved width, including roadway, curb and gutter, and sidewalk. The developer will install landscaping along both of these roadways.

The internal roadway within the project will consist of one cul-de-sac, shown as Lot A on the proposed Tentative Tract Map 37719. This roadway is proposed as a local street, with a paved width of 40 feet (curb to curb) and an overall right-of-way width of 60 feet. All 23 homes are proposed to take access from this street.

The project is consistent with the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2) and will generate traffic consistent with the projections that were used to design the local roadway system. Therefore, surrounding roadways will be capable of accommodating traffic from the proposed project. Also, discussion on project traffic is discussed in the initial study prepared for the project (Exhibit J).

## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Per Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Section 6.02 of the City's Local Guidelines, a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the project because the Initial Study identified that the project's potentially significant effects to the environment are capable of being mitigated to less than significant. Therefore, based on the project mitigation measures identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration, there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the City, that the project may have a significant or potentially significant effect on the environment. The Mitigation Negative Declaration is recommended for adoption (Exhibit J).

## FISCAL IMPACT

The applicant paid \$7,199 in application processing fees for the precise plan application.

## PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

A 20-day public notice was mailed to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project site, as well as being advertised in the *Sentinel Weekly News* and posted at the project site. As of the preparation of this report, the Community Development Department received a letter from the adjacent property owner located at 429 Wynola Court. The resident mentions concerns of the series of walls being constructed in the area of Lots 16, 17, and 18, views into their yard from the new two-story homes, additional traffic on Cresta Road, and the lack of security fencing in areas surrounding the Cresta Verde Golf Course. A copy of the letter is attached as Exhibit M.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

Precise Plan 2019-0005 establishes a residential development plan that is consistent with the City's adopted Residential Architectural Design Guidelines and the Northeast Corona Specific Plan.

The homes have varied elevation styles which are well suited for the lots proposed to be created by Tentative Tract Map 37719. The proposed homes are consistent with the existing single-family homes located adjacent to and near the project site. Furthermore, the project complies with the development standards prescribed by the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2) regarding setbacks, building height, and lot coverage. The architectural styles are consistent with the architectural styles of the surrounding homes. The proposed architectural style is consistent with a more modern interpretation of the same styles found in the neighborhoods near the project. The landscaping complies with the City's landscape design guidelines for residential projects and includes the use of water efficient irrigation and California-friendly plant materials. The perimeter and interior walls will be constructed of quality decorative materials, and construction of all public improvements adjacent to the site will be guaranteed with the development of the project.

In addition to adhering to the regulations of the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2), the project complies with General Plan Policy 1.8.7, which requires new single-family residential units that are constructed in existing neighborhoods be designed to complement the existing homes in terms of property setbacks, scale, building materials and color palette, and exhibit a high quality of architectural design.

The project also complies with General Plan Goal 1.9 which encourages the development of new residential neighborhoods that complement the existing neighborhoods and assure a high level of livability for their residents.

Finally, the project complies with General Plan Policy 1.9.9 which requires that residential neighborhoods be designed to ensure visual and physical compatibility among their uses, as well as adjoining neighborhoods, commercial and industrial districts and open spaces. Therefore, based on the recommended conditions for approval as shown in Exhibit B, PP2019-0005 is recommended by staff for approval.

## FINDINGS OF APPROVAL FOR PP2019-0005

1. An initial study (environmental assessment) has been conducted by the City of Corona so as to evaluate the potential for adverse environmental impacts. The initial study identifies potentially significant effects on the environment, but:
  - a. *The project applicant has agreed to revise the project to avoid these significant effects or to mitigate the effects to a point where it is clear that no significant effects would occur, as reflected in the Conditions of Approval attached as Exhibit B.*
  - b. *There is no substantial evidence before the City that the revised project may have a significant effect.*
2. All the conditions necessary to granting a Precise Plan as set forth in Section 17.91 of the Corona Municipal Code exist in reference to PP2019-0005 for the following reasons:
  - a. *The 23 single-family residential homes are consistent with the Low Density Residential land use designation of the General Plan because this designation is intended to accommodate this type of residential development.*
  - b. *The proposal complies with the SFR-5 designation of the Northeast Corona Specific Plan, which permits the development of single-family residential homes. The project complies with the development standards of the Specific Plan.*
  - c. *The proposal has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and all applicable requirements and procedures of the act have been followed. As justified in Finding #1, a Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended for adoption as the initial study identifies potentially significant effects on the environment, but project applicant has agreed to revise the project to avoid these significant effects or to mitigate the effects to a point where it is clear that no significant effects would occur.*
  - d. *The site is of a sufficient size and configuration to accommodate the design and scale of proposed development, including the proposed homes, landscaping, roadways, and other physical features of the proposal, as demonstrated in Exhibit A of this report.*
  - e. *The design, scale and layout of the proposed development will not unreasonably interfere with*



*the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments, will not create traffic or pedestrian hazards, and will not otherwise have a negative impact on the aesthetics, health, safety or welfare of neighboring uses because the proposal complies with the City's development standards of the Corona Municipal Code and the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2).*

- f. The architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, will enhance the visual character of the neighborhood by improving a vacant undeveloped property and replacing approximately 650 feet of existing of existing wood fencing with a new masonry wall, and will provide for the harmonious, orderly and attractive development of the site.*
- g. The design of the proposed development will provide a desirable environment for its occupants and visiting public as well as its neighbors through good use of materials, texture, and color that is aesthetically appealing and will retain a reasonably adequate level of maintenance as the project design in detail and as a whole is demonstrated to be of high quality meeting the standards established in the Municipal Code, the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2), and the Residential Architectural Design Guidelines.*

3. The proposal is consistent with the General Plan of the following reasons:

- a. Development of the project fulfills General Plan in 1.8.7 which requires that new single-family residential developments constructed in existing neighborhoods be designed to complement existing residential structures in their property setbacks, scale, building materials and color palette, and exhibit a high quality of architectural design.*
- b. The project is consistent with General Plan Goal 1.9 which encourages the development of new residential neighborhoods that complement existing neighborhoods and assure a high level of livability for their residents.*
- c. Development of the project fulfills General Plan Policy 1.9.9 which requires that residential neighborhoods be designed to ensure visual and physical compatibility among their uses, as well as adjoining neighborhoods, commercial and industrial districts and open spaces.*

4. The proposal is consistent with the SFR-5 designation of the Northeast Corona Specific Plan (SP81-2) for the following reasons:

- a. The project implements and is consistent with the Northeast Corona Specific Plan because single-family detached homes are permitted uses in the SFR-5 designation of the Specific Plan. Also, the project complies with the development standards of the Specific Plan in terms of building setbacks, building height, parking, architecture, fencing and walls, and landscaping.*

**PREPARED BY:** ERIC NORRIS, PLANNING CONSULTANT AND LUPITA GARCIA, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

**REVIEWED BY:** SANDRA YANG, SENIOR PLANNER

**SUBMITTED BY:** JOANNE COLETTA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**EXHIBITS**

1. Resolution No. 2546
2. Aerial and Zoning Map
3. Exhibit A - Site Plan
4. Exhibits B - Conditions of Approval
5. Exhibits C1-C4 - Floor Plans
6. Exhibits D1-D11 - Elevations
7. Exhibit E - Proposed Color Palette
8. Exhibits F1-F4 - Landscape Plans
9. Exhibit G - Overall HOA Maintenance Areas
11. Exhibit H - Fence and Wall Plan
12. Exhibit I1-I2 - Slope Exhibit
13. Exhibit J - Environmental Documentation
14. Exhibits K1-K2 - Letter dated July 26, 2019 sent to all 17 properties adjacent to the project site along Wynola Court and meeting sign-in sheet
15. Exhibits L1-L2 - Letter dated October 8, 2019 sent to all properties within 500 feet and meeting sign-in sheet
16. Exhibit M - Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Foate, dated January 14, 2020, regarding the project.
17. Exhibits N1-N3 - Pictures of verdura walls at Terrassa

Case Planner: Lupita Garcia (951) 736-2293