

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: September 4, 2024

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Case No. LDC25-00002 (Viewpoint Apartments Second Emergency Access Road MSPR) – A request has been made for a major site plan review to allow for grading resulting in fills greater than ten feet to allow for the development of an emergency access road for a previously approved 432-unit apartment complex (LDC22-00084). The ±0.57 acre project area is proposed on the southeast portion of a ±54.37 acre parcel generally located southwest of the intersection of Summit Ridge Drive and Summit Ridge Court. The site is located within the Multi-Family Residential – 14 units per acre (MF-14) zoning district and has Master Plan land use designations of Mixed Neighborhood (MX) and Parks, Greenways, and Open Space (PGOS).

From: Leah Brock, Associate Planner

Ward #: 1

Case No.: LDC25-00002 (Viewpoint Apartments Second Emergency Access Road MSPR)

Applicant: Montebello II LP

APN: 039-170-36

Request: Major Site Plan Review: To allow for grading resulting in fills greater than ten feet in height for the development of a second emergency access road

Location: See Case Maps (**Exhibit A**)

Proposed Motion: Based upon compliance with the applicable findings, I move to approve the major site plan review, subject to conditions listed in the staff report.

Summary: The applicant has requested a major site plan review to allow for grading resulting in fills greater than ten feet in height for the development of a gated emergency access road for the previously approved Viewpoint Apartments, a 432-unit multi-family residential development with associated amenities. Key issues related to this request include: 1) overall site design; and 2)

compatibility with surrounding development. With the recommended conditions of approval, the proposed emergency access road appears to meet code standards and addresses the applicable findings. Staff recommends approval, subject to all conditions listed in this staff report.

Background: In 1995, an 864-unit apartment complex known as Oasis/The Bluffs was approved for development. The first phase of that project, now known as Montebello Apartments, was constructed in 1997 on the eastern portion of the site with 450 units and amenities including a clubhouse, recreation building, and a pool. The second phase of the project was approved in 2022 (LDC22-00084) allowing for an additional 432 units on the western portion of the site. An emergency access route is required as a condition of approval.

In 2023, a Major Site Plan Review (LDC23-00062) was approved for grading associated with the main access road for the apartments and an emergency access road (**Exhibit B**). The separation between the main access and the emergency access did not meet the distance requirements per International Fire Code (IFC). At that time, the applicant was attempting to gain access to an easement north of the apartment parcels, through the Home Depot property, that would act as the main emergency access. Condition No. 8 required that the applicant demonstrate an approved emergency access prior to issuance of any building permit. Ultimately, the applicant was unable to access that easement. Since that time, the applicant has been working with City Staff on an alternative emergency access road. It has been determined that the proposed location would be a suitable distance from the primary access. The combination of the first emergency access road approved under LDC23-00062 and the addition of this second emergency access road will meet the intent of IFC.

Analysis:

Overall Site Design: The proposed twenty-foot-wide gated emergency access road will provide a second access route for emergency egress and emergency vehicles. The access road will be privately maintained and is proposed to run approximately ± 280 lineal feet from Summit Ridge Drive to the main access road approved under LDC23-00062 (**Exhibit C**). The total proposed development area for the second emergency access road is ± 0.57 acres of the overall ± 53.47 -acre parcel. The proposed secondary access road will have emergency access gates and signage installed at both ends. The existing sidewalk along the south side of Summit Ridge Drive will be modified adding curb cuts for the driveway. The creation of this access road will provide the Reno Fire Department with three (3) access points into the overall site. Service to the site will be improved as the second emergency access will serve the existing Montebello Apartments and the proposed Viewpoint Apartments.

Grading: Per RMC 18.04.302(d) a major site plan review is required when grading resulting in cuts deeper than twenty feet and/or fills greater than ten feet in height is proposed. Grading for the

proposed second emergency access road will include a maximum fill depth of ± 16.56 feet. The total area where fills exceed ten feet in height is $\pm 5,436$ square feet of the ± 0.57 -acre ($\pm 24,829$ square feet) project area (**Exhibit D**). Two to one (2:1) grading is necessary to minimize environmental damage associated with grading, limit visual scarring, and limit unnecessary site disturbance in the provision of this required access road.

Landscaping: It is proposed that the slopes be mechanically treated with riprap, geotextile fabric, or other similar acceptable treatment and revegetation be applied to the graded slope areas. No trees or shrubs are proposed as this is intended only to be a required additional emergency access route and it is not the desire to call significant daily attention to it. The access road shall be revegetated such that it reestablishes a natural appearance, limiting the visibility from McCarran Boulevard.

Connectivity: No sidewalks are proposed along the access road since the road will be gated and only used in an emergency. Pedestrians can utilize the access road and will have the entire twenty feet on which to walk. The west end of the access road connects to the sidewalk along the main access road where a crosswalk shall be installed providing connectivity to the existing pedestrian path.

Land Use Compatibility: To minimize the disturbance to the residents the hours of construction shall be restricted to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. There shall be no construction on Sundays (**Condition No. 5**).

Public Improvements: No public improvements are proposed or required with the project (i.e. sewer, storm drain, sidewalk, curb and gutter, ramps, etc.).

Hydrology: The project area lies entirely within a FEMA unshaded flood zone X designation area indicating the site is outside of the 500-year flood zone. Drainage from the area will discharge to the Truckee River via natural drainage patterns. Any excess stormwater flows resulting from this project and discharging into the Highland Ditch shall be reviewed and approved by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA).

Traffic, Access, and Circulation: There is no traffic associated with this request. The purpose of this access is for emergency access only which is required as a condition of approval per LDC23-00062 (Viewpoint Apartments Access Road). The access will provide a connection between the Viewpoint Apartments Access Road to McCarran Boulevard via Summit Ridge Drive. The access, as proposed, meets the City of Reno access management standards and is in conformance with the Public Works Design Manual (PWDM).

Public Services: No noted concerns were received from Reno Police Department regarding this request. The applicant worked closely with the Reno Fire Department to determine the appropriate location for the second emergency access road. The closest fire station is Station 11 located at 7105 Mae Anne Avenue. The current response time from Station 11 is six minutes.

Master Plan Conformance: The project site has Master Plan land use designations of Mixed Neighborhood (MX) and Parks, Greenways, and Open Space (PGOS), and is within the Foothill Neighborhoods per the Structure Plan Framework of the Master Plan. The proposed second emergency access road is located entirely within the PGOS designation of the parcel. The remainder of the PGOS designation will remain as undisturbed open space. As proposed, and with the recommended conditions, the project is in substantial conformance with the Master Plan land use designations and the following applicable Master Plan goals and policies:

- Guiding Principle 6.1A: Fire and Medical Emergency Response
- Policy N-FN.2: Grading
- Policy N-FN.3: Cut and Fill Slopes
- Policy N-FN.16: Emergency Secondary Access

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: The project was reviewed by various City divisions and partner agencies. Courtesy notices and hearing notices were sent out to surrounding property owners and no public comments were received. The applicant attended the Ward 1 Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB) meeting on August 12, 2024. No comments have been received from the public or the NAB. Any future comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: All conditions shall be met to the satisfaction of Development Services staff, unless otherwise noted.

1. The project shall comply with all applicable City codes, plans, reports, materials, etc., as submitted. In the event of a conflict between said plans, reports, materials and City codes, City codes in effect at the time the application is submitted, shall prevail.
2. The owner or developer shall apply for a building permit for the entire project within 18 months of the date of approval of the major site plan review application and maintain the validity of that permit, or the major site plan review approval shall be null and void.
3. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall attach a copy of the final approval letter. The approval letter shall accompany a narrative that describes how the requested permit addresses each of the approved conditions of approval.

4. The applicant, developer, builder, property owner, or business proprietor, as applicable, shall continuously maintain a copy of this approval letter on the project site during the construction and operation of the project/business. The project approval letter shall be posted or made readily available upon demand by City staff.
5. Hours of construction, including grading, shall be limited to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. There shall be no construction on Sundays. This condition shall not apply to dust control or storm water management operations. A note to this effect shall be placed on the title sheet of all building permit plan sets. A sign with the approved construction hours shall be posted on site for the full duration of construction activity. If the construction hours need to be varied for the pouring of concrete slabs, interior construction hours or other modifications, a plan detailing the construction operations and provisions to minimize impacts on nearby residential areas shall be submitted and approved to the satisfaction of Administrator.

Findings:

General Review Criteria: The decision-making body shall review all development applications for compliance with the applicable general review criteria stated below.

- 1) Consistency with the Reno Master Plan: The proposed development shall be consistent with the Reno Master Plan. The decision-making authority:
 - a. Shall weigh competing plan goals, policies, and strategies; and
 - b. May approve and application that provides a public benefit even if the development is contrary to some of the foals, policies, or strategies in the Reno Master Plan.
- 2) Compliance with Title 18: The proposed development shall comply with all applicable standards in this Title, unless the standard is lawfully modified or varied. Compliance with these standards is applied at the level of detail required for the subject submittal.
- 3) Mitigates Traffic Impacts: The project mitigates traffic impacts based on applicable standards of the City of Reno and the Regional Transportation Commission.
- 4) Provides Safe Environment: The project provides a safe environment for pedestrians and people on bicycles.
- 5) Rational Phasing Plan. If the application involves phases, each phase of the proposed development contains all of the required streets, utilities, landscaping, open space, and other improvements that are required to serve or otherwise accompany the completed phases of the project, and shall not depend on subsequent phases for those improvements.

Major Site Plan Review: In addition to meeting the criteria in Section 18.08.304(e), *Approval Criteria Applicable to all Applications*, the following findings shall be made prior to granting a major site plan review permit:

- a. The proposed design is compatible with surrounding development;
- b. The proposed design is consistent with applicable development standards;
- c. Public services and facilities are available to serve the project, or will be provided with development;
- d. The characteristics of the project as proposed and as may be conditioned are reasonably compatible with the types of development permitted in the surrounding area; and
- e. The approval will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare. The factors to be considered in evaluating this application shall include:
 1. Property damage or nuisance resulting from noise, smoke, odor, dust, vibration, or illumination; and
 2. Any hazard to persons and property.

Attachments:

Exhibit A – Case Maps

Exhibit B – Main Access Road & First Emergency Access Road

Exhibit B – Site Plan

Exhibit C – Grading Plan & Slope Analysis