

**AGENDA MEMO****PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2008****DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT****ITEM DESCRIPTION: SUP-25262 - APPLICANT/OWNER: SAHARA INVESTMENTS, LLC**

**** CONDITIONS ******STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL**, subject to:**Planning and Development**

1. Conformance to all minimum requirements under Title 19.06.080 for a project in the A-O (Airport Overlay) District.
2. Approval of and conformance to the Conditions of Approval for Rezoning (ZON-25295), Special Use Permits (SUP-25263 and SUP-25264) and Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) shall be required.
3. This approval shall be void two years from the date of final approval, unless a building permit has been issued for the principal building on the site. An Extension of Time may be filed for consideration by the City of Las Vegas.
4. Written approval by the Clark County Department of Aviation with no change in flight patterns shall be submitted to the City of Las Vegas prior to the issuance of building permits.
5. All City Code requirements and design standards of all City departments must be satisfied, except as modified herein.

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**** STAFF REPORT ****

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a request for a Special Use Permit for a proposed 795-foot high mixed-use development in the A-O (Airport Overlay) District on 2.39 acres adjacent to the north side of Sahara Avenue, approximately 375 feet west of Fairfield Avenue. The overlay district limits height for the subject parcels to a maximum of 175 feet.

The subject proposal meets the provisions of Title 19.06.080 for the approval of a building height in excess of the 175-foot height limitation established for this area. The proposed development is compatible with the surrounding area and is in keeping with the objectives and goals of the Downtown Centennial Plan; therefore, approval of this request is recommended.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by P&D, Fire, Bldg., etc.</i>	
03/22/61	The City Council approved a Rezoning (Z-0013-61) on a portion of the subject site from R-3 to C-1.
07/26/61	The City Council approved a Rezoning (Z-0026-61) on a portion of the subject property from R-3 to C-1.
06/24/76	The Board of Zoning Adjustment approved a Variance (V-0037-76) in order to permit a Wedding Chapel in a district where the use is not allowed.
01/07/87	The City Council approved a Rezoning (Z-0099-86) on a portion of the subject property in order to allow a Wedding Chapel use.
02/18/87	The City Council approved a Rezoning (Z-0107-86) on the subject property from R-3 and C-1 to C-1 and C-2 in order to permit the development of retail shops, gas sales and a convenience store, and a restaurant.
06/25/87	The Board of Zoning Adjustment approved a Variance (V-0066-87) from parking requirements for a shopping center on the subject property.
03/08/99	The City Council approved a Rezoning (Z-0002-99) to C-2 (General Commercial) on a portion of the subject property in order to permit the development of 54,580 square-foot shopping center. A Variance (V-0001-99) for relief from side, rear, and corner side yard setbacks and a Vacation (VAC-0001-99) to vacate an alleyway were also approved in conjunction with the Rezoning request. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
06/05/02	The City Council approved a Site Development Plan Review [Z-0002-99(1)] for the development of a 200-room hotel and casino on the site. Special Use Permits for a Hotel Lounge Bar (U-0042-02) and Non-Restricted Gaming (U-0043-02), and a Variance (V-0027-02) to allow the construction of a parking garage directly on the north property line and 12-foot high perimeter walls were also approved at that time. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.

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06/02/04	The City Council approved an Extension of Time (EOT-4349) for the Variance (V-0027-02) request that allowed a zero-foot setback for the parking structure and 12-foot high perimeter walls. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval. NOTE: This approval expired June 5, 2006.
08/04/04	The City Council approved a Site Development Plan Review (SDR-4534) and a Special Use Permit (SUP-4540) for a Mixed-Use development consisting of 39 stories, 808 residential units and 35,500 square feet of commercial space. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
12/16/04	The Planning Commission approved a Tentative Map (TMP-5574) for an 810-unit mixed-use condominium subdivision on 3.90 acres adjacent to the northwest corner of Sahara Avenue and Fairfield Avenue. Staff recommended approval.
04/06/05	The City Council approved a Vacation (VAC-5902) to vacate public utility easements at 200 West Sahara Avenue. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
06/29/05	The Planning and Development Department administratively approved a request for a Final Map Technical Review (FMP-5750) to revert various parcels to remove extraneous lot lines.
07/06/05	The City Council approved a Site Development Plan Review (SDR-6588) for a 41-story mixed-use development including: 900 residential units, 10,200 square-feet of commercial space and waivers from the Downtown Centennial Plan on 3.90 acres located at the northwest corner of Sahara Avenue and Fairfield Avenue. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
09/08/05	The Planning Commission approved a Tentative Map (TMP-5574) for a 902-unit mixed-use condominium subdivision on 3.82 acres adjacent to the northwest corner of Sahara Avenue and Fairfield Avenue. Staff recommended approval.
02/01/07	The Planning and Development Department administratively approved a request for a Final Map Technical Review (FMP-17618) of a one-lot commercial subdivision of 3.86 acres located at northwest corner of Sahara Avenue and Fairfield Avenue.
06/20/07	The City Council approved a request for a Vacation (VAC-20805) to vacate a 27-foot 4-inch wide section of public right-of-way generally located between Cincinnati Avenue and Sahara Avenue and a Variance (VAR-20806) to allow a 12-foot tall wall along the west and north property lines where eight feet is the maximum height permitted on property located at 300 West Sahara Avenue. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
12/19/07	The Planning and Development Department received a request for an administrative approval for a Final Map Technical Review (FMP-26120) to amend a two-lot subdivision of 2.05 acres located at northwest corner of Sahara Avenue and Fairfield Avenue.
02/14/08	Companion items for a Rezoning (ZON-25295), Special Use Permits (SUP-25263 and SUP-25264) and a Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) will be heard concurrently with this item.

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<i>Related Building Permits/Business Licenses</i>	
06/11/07	A building permit application, plan check L-1146-07, was submitted for the site. This was for a plan check review for the demolishon of an existing service station at 300 West Sahara Avenue. This permit (07001894) was reviewed and approved by the Planning and Development Department and issued by the Building and Safety Department on the day as submitted. This permit received a final inspection on 06/15/07.
<i>Pre-Application Meeting</i>	
10/08/07	A pre-application meeting was held, where submittal requirements and elements of this application were discussed. Specifically, the applicant was informed that the proposed project may necessitate a major amendment to the approvals for the adjacent (previously companion) site.
<i>Neighborhood Meeting</i>	
A neighborhood meeting is not required for this application, nor was one held.	

- * This business license has been issued with no indication that it was reviewed or approved by the Planning and Development Department.

<i>Field Check</i>	
12/07/07	The Department of Planning and Development conducted a site visit that found that this is an undeveloped site that has previously had improvements that have been removed. The site is being used as the staging area for equipment and materials for the development to the east of the site. There is also an off-premises (billboard) sign on-site. Around the site there is temporary, screened chain link fencing.

<i>Details of Application Request</i>	
<i>Site Area</i>	
Gross Acres	2.39
Net Acres	2.23

Surrounding Property	Existing Land Use	Planned Land Use	Existing Zoning
Subject Property	Undeveloped	C (Commercial)	C-1 (Limited Commercial) [Proposed: C-2 (General Commercial)]
	Undeveloped	C (Commercial)	C-2 (General Commercial)
North	Undeveloped	MXU (Mixed Use)	R-4 (High Density Residential)
	Multi-Family Residential	MXU (Mixed Use)	R-4 (High Density Residential)

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South	Undeveloped	Clark County	Clark County
East	Mixed-Use Development	C (Commercial)	C-2 (General Commercial)
West	Commercial Shopping Center	C (Commercial)	C-1 (Limited Commercial)

<i>Special Districts/Zones</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Special Area Plan			
Downtown Centennial Plan	X		N *
Redevelopment Plan Area	X		Y
<i>Special Districts/Zones</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Special Purpose and Overlay Districts			
Downtown Overlay District	X		N *
G-O Gaming Enterprise Overlay District	X		Y
A-O Airport Overlay District (175 Feet)	X		N **
Trails		X	n/a
Rural Preservation Overlay District		X	n/a
Development Impact Notification Assessment	X		Y ***
Project of Regional Significance	X		Y ***

* The proposed development requires a waiver from the Northern Strip Gateway District standards as identified in the Downtown Centennial Plan. The waiver is addressed in the companion Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) and if approved will grant relief from City standards.

** The proposed height of the hotel/condo tower, 795 feet, exceeds the height limitation of 175 feet for this area established by the McCarran International Airport Overlay Map portion of A-O (Airport Overlay) District. This application has been submitted pursuant to Title 19.06.080 and if approved would grant relief from the height limitation.

**** Pursuant to Ordinance No. 5227, the project under review outlines a project that meets the threshold that defines a Project of Significant Impact as outlined in the ordinance for a development in excess of 300 units intended for tourist accommodations. Further, pursuant to Ordinance No. 5477, the proposed project is deemed to be a Project of Regional Significance, as there are requests for Special Use Permits within 500 feet of the City's boundary with unincorporated Clark County. Three Special Use Permits are requested in conjunction with this project. The applicant has prepared and submitted, as part of the overall project submittal, an impact report as required by the Ordinances for referral to affected agencies. As of 12/26/07, comments have only been received from the following agencies:

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- The Metropolitan Police Department has determined that the proposed project has the potential to increase calls for service and increase response times in the Downtown Area Command.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Pursuant to the Downtown Centennial Plan, the following development standards apply:

Standard	Required/Allowed	Provided	Compliance
Min. Lot Size	N/A	104,108 SF	N/A
Min. Lot Width	N/A	335 Feet	N/A
Min. Setbacks			
• Front	0 Feet (at least 70%)	20 to 60 Feet	N *
• Side	N/A	0 Feet	N/A
• Corner	0 Feet (at least 70%)	N/A	N/A
• Rear	N/A	0 Feet	N/A
Max. Lot Coverage	Unlimited	95%	Y
Max. Building Height	N/A	795 Feet (72-Stories)	N/A
Trash Enclosure	Gated and Screened	Internal to the building	Y
Mech. Equipment	Screened	Screened	Y

- * The proposed structure does not comply with the minimum build-to-line requirement as the building is not situated directly at the front property line as required by the Downtown Centennial Northern Strip Gateway District Site Planning Standards. A waiver has been requested as a part of the Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) that, if approved, would allow the building to be setback up to 60 feet from the front build-to-line.

ANALYSIS

The subject site is located within the boundaries of the Las Vegas Redevelopment District of the Southeast Sector Plan of the General Plan, and is designated as C (Commercial). The C (Commercial) designation allows for commercial uses that are normally allowed within the O (Office), SC (Service Commercial), and GC (General Commercial) General Plan land use categories. The proposed use is compatible with this land use designation and the neighboring zoning districts, which are intended for higher intensity commercial uses.

There is a Rezoning (ZON-25295) proposed to change the zoning of a portion of the project site where two of the parcels are zoned C-1 (Limited Commercial). This would bring the entire project area into a single C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district. The uses proposed for this location are permissible in the proposed/existing C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district with this approval and that of the companion Special Use Permits (SUP-25263 and SUP25264) and would then be consistent with the C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district and the C (Commercial) General Plan designation.

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As previously noted, the parcels are within the boundaries of the Las Vegas Redevelopment Area, with a C (Commercial) land use designation. The proposed uses are in conformance with Redevelopment Plan policies that encourage innovative, mixed use projects in this area of the City. The proposed development is in compliance with the C (Commercial) designation.

The site is within the McCarran International Airport Overlay Map portion of the A-O (Airport Overlay) District. The proposed height of the tower, 795 feet, exceeds the height limitation of 175 feet for this area. This application has been submitted pursuant to Title 19.06.080 and if approved would grant relief from the height limitation.

The subject parcels are within the Las Vegas Downtown Centennial Plan boundaries, and are located in the Northern Strip Gateway District, which is centered by the Stratosphere Tower Hotel and Casino. This district is intended as one of two entertainment and activity anchor districts that provide a distinct area of landmark status. The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Downtown Centennial Plan.

Pursuant to Title 19.06.060 properties within the Downtown Centennial Plan area are exempt from the automatic application of development standards for building height limitations, setbacks, lot coverage, residential adjacency, standard landscaping requirements, and standard parking requirements. The proposed development generally conforms to the applicable setbacks and lot coverage requirements specified by the Downtown Centennial Plan; height limits and parking requirements are not automatically applied. There is a waiver requested as a part of the companion Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) to allow the building to be setback fully from the front property line where the build-to line standard would require at least 70 percent of the front façade to be at the front property line.

The project site encompasses three parcels with the proposed building built across the lot lines. As it is the stated intention of the applicant to create a mixed-use subdivision, there will need to be a tentative map review and final map technical review prior to any building permits being issued. Recordation of any necessary maps may be required prior to the issuance of certain other permits.

Pursuant to Title 19.06.080, the provisions for a Special Use Permit to exceed the height limitation in the 175-foot limitation zone of the A-O (Airport Overlay) District are:

1. Any person desiring to erect or increase the height of any structure, or to permit the growth of any tree, or otherwise use property in a manner which would exceed the limitations of this subchapter may apply to the Planning Commission for a Special Use Permit. The Special Use Permit application shall be processed in accordance with the Special Use Permit procedures set forth in Subchapter 19.18.060, except that:
 - a. The applicant shall notify the FAA regional office and the Clark County Department of Aviation of the application prior to the time of submission; and

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- b. Any approval by the Planning Commission must be referred automatically to the City Council for final disposition.
2. Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this subchapter, no Special Use Permit shall be granted that would allow the establishment or creation of an obstruction or permit a nonconforming use, structure or tree to become a greater hazard to air navigation than it was on the effective date of this subchapter or any amendment thereto

This special use permit has been submitted in conjunction with a Rezoning (ZON-25295) to change the western portion of the project site to a C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district, a Special Use Permit (SUP-25263) to allow a mixed-use development with residential uses in the existing/proposed C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district, a Special Use Permit (SUP-25264) to allow a Gaming Establishment, Non-restricted use in the existing/proposed C-2 (General Commercial) zoning district, and a Site Development Plan Review (SDR-25261) to site a proposed 72-story mixed-use development that includes 1,300 hotel rooms, 67,800 square feet of non-restricted gaming facility, 254,240 square feet of commercial space and 40 residential condominium units.

The request to exceed the A-O (Airport Overlay) District height of 175 feet is appropriate in this area, provided all necessary approvals from the Federal Aviation Administration and Clark County Department of Aviation are obtained per Title 19.06.080. Due to the compatibility of this development with the surrounding present and future land use designations, staff is recommending approval of this special use permit.

FINDINGS

In order to approve a Special Use Permit application, per Title 19.18.060 the Planning Commission and City Council must affirm the following:

1. **The proposed land use can be conducted in a manner that is harmonious and compatible with existing surrounding land uses, and with future surrounding land uses as projected by the General Plan.**

The design of the development adequately separates the commercial and residential components, and will not significantly impact the adjacent land uses. The Centennial Plan seeks a broad diversity of uses in the downtown area, and states that integrating a successful residential community adjacent to the Downtown is vital to the success of the area. The proposed uses can be conducted in a manner that is harmonious and compatible with the existing surrounding land uses, and those future uses as projected by the General Plan.

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2. The subject site is physically suitable for the type and intensity of land use proposed.

The subject site is physically suitable for the uses and scale of development proposed for the site. The Downtown Centennial Plan specifically calls for development of this type and intensity in this area.

3. Street or highway facilities providing access to the property are or will be adequate in size to meet the requirements of the proposed use.

West Sahara Avenue, a 100-foot primary arterial street, will be the principal vehicular access point for the development with additional access via Cincinnati Avenue, a 50-foot local access street. Further, the frontage along West Sahara Avenue will be used by pedestrians patronizing the casino and commercial businesses and has access to public transportation, which may assist in reducing the number of vehicle trips generated by the development. The project is approximately 0.5 miles from a major interstate and is situated just west of the intersection of two primary arterial streets which should be adequate in size to provide access to the site.

4. Approval of the Special Use Permit at the site in question will not be inconsistent with or compromise the public health, safety, and welfare or the overall objectives of the General Plan.

Provided that there are no impacts to existing flight routes and patterns, approval of this special use permit will not compromise public health, safety or welfare. Further, it will not compromise the objectives of the General Plan.

5. The use meets all of the applicable conditions per Title 19.04.

This special use permit is required as a provision of Title 19.06.080 and has no applicable conditions under Title 19.04. Pursuant to Title 19.06.080, a Directors Permit application must be approved by the Clark County Department of Aviation prior to the issuance of a building permit.

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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS NOTIFIED 12

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 9

SENATE DISTRICT 10

NOTICES MAILED 90

APPROVALS 0

PROTESTS 0