



REPORT to the MAYOR and MEMBERS of the CITY COUNCIL
From the CITY MANAGER

DATE: October 11, 2022

SUBJECT: RATIFICATION OF THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD'S APPROVAL OF PROJECT 2021-43 (CENTER FOR NEUROSCIENCES) – A PROPOSED REMODEL AND 20,182 SQUARE FOOT ADDITION TO THE EXISTING SINGLE-STORY REHABILITATION CENTER TO CREATE A TWO-STORY CENTER FOR NEUROSCIENCES AT THE SHARP GROSSMONT HOSPITAL AT 5555 GROSSMONT CENTER DRIVE, APN 490-340-23-00 IN THE RB-G-D (RESIDENTIAL BUSINESS / GROSSMONT OVERLAY / URBAN DESIGN OVERLAY) ZONE

ISSUING DEPARTMENT: Community Development Department

SUMMARY:

Issues:

Does the proposed design meet the intent of the Urban Design Program policies and the Grossmont Specific Plan?

Recommendation:

Ratify the Design Review Board's approval of 2021-43 (**Attachment A**)

Fiscal Impact:

There would be no impact to the General Fund related to this project. City of La Mesa policy is to recover 100% of the cost of staff time through application processing fees.

City's Strategic Goals:

- Revitalize neighborhoods and corridors
- Safe community

Environmental Review:

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the proposed project which determined that the project does not have the potential to create significant adverse effect on the environment based upon project conditions that mitigate impacts to below a level of significance.

BACKGROUND:

The Sharp Grossmont Hospital campus is bounded by Grossmont Center Drive to the west, Murray Drive to the south, State Route 125 to the east, and the MTS Green and Orange lines and Grossmont Transit Center to the north. Surrounding development includes medical offices and the Grossmont Shopping Center to the west, residential mixed-use project to the north, and commercial development to the south. The project site, the existing rehabilitation center building, is situated toward the northwestern portion of the approximately 24-acre Sharp Grossmont Hospital campus, south of Center Drive, as shown on the vicinity map. Existing improvements of the project site includes the existing one-story rehabilitation facility, administrative offices, and a small park open space. The building is near the main entrance to the hospital campus and is accessed via the main driveway drop-off to the south or the adjacent parking structure to the west. The site slopes uphill toward the center of the site. Sidewalk, curb, gutter, and street trees along street frontages are present. Photos of the project site are provided in **Attachment D**.



Zoning for the project site is RB-G-D (Residential Business/ Grossmont Specific Plan Overlay/ Urban Design Overlay) zone and the planned land use designation is Public Use – Other Government Agencies. Residential Business zoning is applied for areas

that are transitioning to business development, and allows for business uses which are compatible with a residential environment. The Grossmont Specific Plan Overlay Zone allows for hospital uses and related offices.

The Urban Design Overlay zone prescribes design review by the Design Review Board, subject to City Council ratification. The Urban Design Program's Community Image Diagram designates the site as a landmark. Grossmont Center Drive is a Major Path, and Center Drive is a Minor Path. Also noted is the Grossmont Specific Plan area's designation as a Special Design District.

Project entitlement consists of site development plan review and special permit review by the Planning Commission, and design review by the Design Review Board, subject to City Council ratification. The Design Review Board reviewed and approved the project with conditions (**Attachment A**) at a public meeting held on September 12, 2022. The Planning Commission reviewed and approved the proposed site development plan and special permit application to allow the proposed building to exceed the maximum height of buildings in the RB zone on September 21, 2022. The Planning Commission adopted resolutions 1) approving the Initial Study and adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared for the project (**Attachment B**), and 2) approving the site development plan and special permit for the project (**Attachment C**).

DISCUSSION:

The Design Review Board reviewed the submitted project plans (**Attachment E**) in consideration of the City's Urban Design Program and Grossmont Specific Plan.

Project applicant Sharp Grossmont Hospital proposes to partially demolish the existing rehabilitation center and construct a one-story addition to the north side of the building, a two-story addition to the southwest corner of the building, and a tunnel for future connections for a total of 20,182 square-foot addition for the new Center for Neurosciences. The total building area would be 51,672 square feet post-project. The project would add 16 intensive care unit beds and 16 medical surgical beds and remove 12 existing medical surgical beds (resulting in a net increase of 20 beds). Additionally, 18 beds in the existing in-patient rehabilitation center would receive a cosmetic refresh. There is enough on-site parking to accommodate the proposed addition.

Grading will be carried out for the areas where the addition is proposed. Estimated earthwork quantities of 800 cubic yards of fill and 1,000 cubic yards of cut yield 200 cubic yards of export. The landscape plan provides a diverse variety of site trees as well as numerous shrubs and perennial plants. A total of 34 site trees are proposed. Raised landscape planters are proposed around the Center for Neurosciences, including a new "living wall" near the Center for Neurosciences entrance located at the south corner of

the building. Most of the existing trees around the existing rehabilitation center are proposed to be removed due to the new building footprint, but the existing lawn and canopy trees north of the building are proposed to remain. The intent of the landscaping is to create an atmosphere of peace and tranquility for patients and healthcare workers at the hospital.

The main entrance to the building is located on the south elevation, facing the driveway drop-off area to the south and the main entrance to the hospital campus. The lower level of the building contains all of the intensive care unit beds and medical surgical beds, as well all office space, a physical therapy center, and support functions including kitchen, cleaning, and storage. The second level of the building includes staff offices, lounges, and conference rooms.

Exterior architectural finishes include cement plaster, metal panels, with a small portion of the existing building proposed to remain stucco in white tones with gray accents. An aluminum curtainwall system and aluminum storefront windows are proposed for the addition located at the southwest portion of the building. Majority of the windows on the first floor of the building are proposed with fritted glass. Rooftop mechanical equipment is screened from view by the exterior parapet walls. Colors and materials for the buildings and walls are shown on **Attachment F**.

The Design Review Board concluded that the project is responsive to the existing site, and the scale of the improvements is compatible with the area. The building's exterior design incorporates the existing building while modernizing the entrance with a variety in the surface planes, forms, and texture and with design elements that are cohesive with the hospital's West Tower completed in 2010. By incorporating design elements from existing buildings on the campus, this helps create a more uniform look across the evolving public-facing campus. Overall, the project's design is consistent with the Urban Design Program, Grossmont Specific Plan, and the design policies in the Land Use and Urban Design Element of the General Plan.

CONCLUSION:

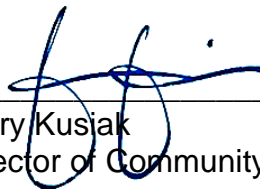
Staff recommends that the City Council ratify the Design Review Board's approval of Project 2021-43.

Reviewed by:



Greg Humora
City Manager

Respectfully submitted by:



Kerry Kusjak
Director of Community Development

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Attachments:

- A. Design Review Board Certificate of Action Project 2021-43
- B. Resolution PC-2022-09 approving the Initial Study and adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration
- C. Resolution PC-2022-10 approving the Special Permit and Site Development Plan
- D. Site photographs
- E. Project plans
- F. Color and materials board