

Exhibit B

Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC)

**Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Removal of the
Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area from the Coastal Height
Limit**

SCH# 2022030324

July 2022

This page intentionally left blank

Exhibit B

Statement of Overriding Considerations

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Removal of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area from the Coastal Height Limit

City of San Diego

SCH# 2022030324

Pursuant to Section 21081(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15093 and 15043, CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the Removal of Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area from the Coastal Height Limit (project) as defined in the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Final SEIR). This Statement of Overriding Considerations is specifically applicable to the significant and unavoidable impacts identified in Chapter 5.0, Environmental Analysis, of the Final SEIR. As set forth in the Candidate Findings, the project would result in unavoidable adverse impacts related to visual effects and neighborhood character.

The Council of the City of San Diego, having:

- (i) Independently reviewed the information in the Final SEIR and the record of proceedings;
- (ii) Made a reasonable and good faith effort to eliminate or substantially lessen the significant impacts resulting from the project to the extent feasible by adopting recommended mitigation measures identified in the Final SEIR; and
- (iii) Balanced the benefits of the project against the significant environmental impacts, chooses to approve the project, despite its significant environmental impacts, because, in its view, specific economic, legal, social, and other benefits of the project render the significant environmental impacts acceptable.

The following statements identify why, in the City Council's judgement, the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable significant impacts. Each of these benefits serves as an independent basis for overriding all significant and unavoidable impacts. Any one of the reasons set forth below is sufficient to justify approval of the project. Substantial evidence supports the various benefits and such evidence can be found in the preceding sections, which are incorporated by reference into this section, the Final SEIR, or in the documents that comprise the Record of Proceedings in this matter.

1. The project gives the City greater flexibility to develop a wider range of housing types to accommodate the maximum densities approved with the 2018 Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan (2018 Community Plan). The mix of housing types that would result from the removal of the coastal height limit in the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan area (CP area) would allow for a greater diversity of households of various sizes and incomes levels to reside in the CP area. This would promote the development of economically and socially diverse communities, and would further the City's equitable development and affordable housing goals. The project would help further achieve the 2018 Community Plan's land use goal of creating a variety of housing types for all age, income, and social groups, and the City's General Plan Housing Element Objective I to promote a diversity of housing available to all income groups across all communities.
2. The project supports new and enhanced local commercial, retail, and office opportunities by removing development height restrictions, which will allow existing and future commercial uses to develop facilities which meet their operational needs while adhering to the development standards in the San Diego Municipal Code. The 2018 Community Plan envisions the CP area as a sub-regional employment center with employment land for the development of office and research uses that can provide jobs in proximity to residential and commercial uses and transit and will support the economic viability and attractiveness of the community. The removal of the coastal height limit would allow for a greater variety of mixed-use developments with residential and commercial components, which will encourage economic growth by providing flexibility in the types of businesses located in the CP area. This would be consistent with the goals of the City's General Plan Economic Prosperity Element which calls for commercial development which uses land efficiently, offers flexibility to changing resident and business shopping needs, and improves environmental quality; and new commercial development that contributes positively to the economic vitality of the community and provides opportunities for new business development.
3. The project supports the opportunity for more creative outdoor open spaces such as plazas, parks, and other community spaces to satisfy the need for parks and recreation facilities in the CP area. The City's Parks Master Plan (PMP) recognized that the City's parks system would need to address opportunities to deliver flexible, innovative park spaces and gathering areas that fit in areas with infill development. The removal of the coastal height limit from the CP area would allow additional on-site space to be allocated to park and open space uses as taller buildings would allow for maximizing the zoned development density within a smaller building footprint. This would allow the City to provide additional parks and recreation opportunities beyond what was identified in the 2018 Community Plan, and would help achieve the City PMP's goal of

providing access within a 10-minute walk and roll, 20-minute bike ride, and 30 minute transit ride for everyone to a park or recreational experience that can be enjoyed for at least 40 minutes.

4. The project implements the strategies in the City’s 2015 Climate Action Plan (2015 CAP) and 2022 Draft Climate Action Plan (2022 Draft CAP) by supporting residential opportunities that promote sustainable development. Approximately ninety-nine percent of the proposed residential units in the CP area would be within one-half mile of a major transit stop, and the project would remove the coastal height limit in the CP area, which would encourage the development of a wide range of housing types to accommodate the maximum densities approved in the 2018 Community Plan. Thus, the project would implement Action 3.1 of the 2015 CAP which calls for the implementation of the General Plan’s Mobility Element and the City of Villages Strategy in Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) to increase the use of transit; and Action 3.6 of the 2015 CAP which calls for the implementation of transit-oriented development within TPAs. The project would also support actions in the 2022 Draft CAP which call for focusing new development in areas that will allow residents, employees and visitors to safely, conveniently and enjoyably travel as a pedestrian, or by biking, or transit, such as in TPAs, and areas of the City with the lowest amount of vehicular travel; and maximizing new development in areas located with safe, convenient, and enjoyable access to transit (see Measure 3.5: Climate-Focused Land Use of Strategy 3: Mobility and Land Use of the 2022 Draft CAP). The proximity of future residences to transit corridors in the CP area will increase the amount of people who are able to use transit, which in turn will reduce individuals’ reliance on cars and result in critical GHG emissions reductions. The ability to develop taller buildings in the CP area will also promote building energy efficiency as a greater number of units can be accommodated within a smaller building footprint, rather than having the same amount of units spread out over a larger area. Thus, the project further the goals of the 2015 CAP Strategy 1: Energy & Water Efficient Buildings and 2022 Draft CAP Strategy 1: Decarbonization of the Built Environment.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the City Council finds that the adverse, unavoidable environmental impacts are outweighed by the above-referenced benefits, any one of which individually would be sufficient to outweigh the adverse environmental effects of the project. Therefore, the City Council adopts this Statement of Overriding Considerations.