



## DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

### Advisory Review and Comments

**Meeting Date** February 22, 2024      **DRB Case No.** PDR No. 000628-2022

**Address** 601 North Brand Boulevard

**Applicant** ONNI Group

#### Project Summary:

The project site is the eastern approximately three-quarters of the block created by Sanchez Drive to the north, North Brand Boulevard to the east, West Doran Street to the south and North Central Avenue to the west and is approximately 5.4 acres. The proposal consists of the demolition of an existing 144-space surface parking lot (approximately 78,000 sf) located in the northern portion of the site and the construction of a new 858-unit, 858,000 SF (total development 7.5 FAR) multi-family development. The multi-family dwelling units will be contained in two 380-ft. high towers over a podium level. The 942 parking spaces will be located at-grade as well as within four levels of below grade parking. Most of the proposed publicly accessible open space is located within a newly created plaza formed by the proposed project and an existing on-site office building (to be maintained), fronting Brand Boulevard. Additional publicly accessible open space is proposed adjacent to the Sanchez Drive right-of-way. The project site is in the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) Gateway District.

Aside from the surface parking lot where the project is proposed, existing development will be maintained on the project site. The project site features a 14-story office tower fronting Brand Boulevard, a one-story retail building located at the intersection of Brand Boulevard and Doran Street and a five-story parking garage located in the western portion of the site fronting Doran Street.

#### The project includes:

- 594 1-bedroom units and 264 2-bedroom units. Each residential tower will contain 429 units.
- 942 parking spaces (net spaces 798) are provided at-grade and at four levels of subterranean parking.
- The podium level at the street will contain a restaurant at the Brand/Sanchez intersection opening onto the proposed plaza, two lobbies, a leasing office, two loading docks, back-of-house uses and bicycle storage. A porte-cochere bisects this level.
- The second level of the podium will contain co-working spaces, an amenity space, two lounges, and a fitness center. The outdoor area at this level includes a swimming pool, spa, two dog parks, an outdoor kitchen with dining, a bar, seating/lounging areas and an event lawn.
- The third through 35<sup>th</sup> levels of the towers are entirely made up of residential units. A green

bridge planting area connects the two residential towers at the third level.

- The 36<sup>th</sup> level of both towers contain indoor amenity spaces and outdoor covered and uncovered terraces for residents of the project.
- Proposed publicly accessible open space includes a newly created plaza fronting Brand Boulevard as well as areas adjacent to the Sanchez Drive right-of-way. Existing publicly accessible open space includes areas adjacent to and between the existing development on the site.

An FAR of 7.25 and building height of 275 feet are the maximums permitted by right in the DSP Gateway District. An FAR of 7.5 and building height of 380 feet are the maximums per the DSP Community Benefits Chapter 7 for affordable housing projects. The project must comply with the City’s inclusionary housing ordinance, which requires a minimum of 15% affordable housing. For the subject project, this would equate to 129 units of low or very low income housing. Because the project is providing affordable housing units, the development is eligible for a density bonus per GMC 30.36 and community benefit development incentives, per DSP 7.2.1. The density bonus and community benefit development incentives will be addressed at City Council Stage II review of the project. The applicant will be requesting the following incentives and waivers:

- DSP 4.2.C – Building footplates above 200 feet high shall be reduced in area by 15%.
- DSP 4.2.M – High rise facades above 60 feet must be stepped back a minimum of 20 feet.
- DSP 4.2.4.A – Building facades over 200 feet in length must include building separation at the street level or at 16 feet above street level.
- DSP 4.2.4.B – Building separation must be at least 40 feet wide.
- DSP 4.2.14 – No more than 40% of balconies shall extend beyond the building façade and project a maximum of 25% of balconies full depth.

**Design Review:**

| Board Member | Present | Absent |
|--------------|---------|--------|
| Kaskanian    |         | X      |
| Lockareff    | X       |        |
| Simonian     | X       |        |
| Tchaghayan   | X       |        |
| Welch        |         | X      |

**Site Planning**

- Better integrate traffic/service/ride-sharing infrastructure into the site planning of the project. Widen Sanchez Drive so traffic pattern is less impeded.
- Consider the long-term plan for public transportation in the area.
- Lobby entries need to be celebrated and not located off the porte cochere, as presently proposed.
- Publicly accessible open space:

- Going in the right direction.
  - Consider the programming of this area when refining its design.
  - Consider interactive spaces and public concerts.
  - Better integrate and coordinate the proposed trellis element into the design with other components in this area, including planters and seating. Consider a ramp up to the top of the trellis. Curved forms of the trellis could emulate the facades of the project to soften the publicly accessible open space.
  - Restudy the landscape plans. Increase the number of trees within this area and reduce the amount of hardscape. Ensure that landscaping at the borders of this area provides transparency and does not unduly prohibit access.
- Gateway at Brand Boulevard and Sanchez Drive intersection.
    - The design of the project at this corner needs to be extremely special.
    - Design ideas are limited by the currently proposed second level podium seating.
    - The corner design should use shapes and forms to distinguish it from the remainder of the project.
    - Consider public art in this area.

### **Mass and Scale**

- Towers
  - Massing of the towers does not address context.
  - Massing is flat, monolithic, sterile and plain vanilla (particularly compared with the previous design). The design of these features needs to contain more interest and be more playful and unique, particularly the north elevation.
  - The towers do not need to be identical.

### **Design and Detailing**

- The project is such a big example for the City. With the proposed concessions/waivers, the overall design of the project needs to excel in other areas, such as in the use of environmental materials and the design of the publicly accessible open space and corner “Gateway” feature. Consider a bridge connecting the two towers.
- The overall design and detailing of the project should be influenced by its location in Glendale. The current project design could be located anywhere.
- Consider how the proposed project integrates with other on-site buildings and revise design accordingly.
- Consider including 3-bedroom units into the unit mix of the project.

## Conditions

The Design Review Board concurred with the conditions of the City Council Stage I review of the project, which were addressed in their comments with regard to the project.

1. The applicant shall refine the design of the project at the Brand/Sanchez intersection (commercial tenant area) to better differentiate it from the remainder of the proposed development and highlight it as a prominent downtown Glendale entrance and landmark architectural feature location. This could include unique, complementary facing materials, lighting, signage or architectural elements.
2. The applicant shall refine the designs of the lobbies/entrances to the residential towers to incorporate the features specified in the DSP and better highlight these important areas of the project.
3. Provide landscaping and programming for the common open space proposed on the rooftop towers.

DRB Staff Member     Roger Kiesel, Senior Planner