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NATIONAL CITY

Proposed mixed-use, affordable-housing project in National City gets support from city



A 400-unit, mixed-use development is proposed for Roosevelt Avenue along Interstate 5 in National City. (Courtesy of city of National City)

The housing units would be reserved for residents who earn between 40 and 80 percent of the region's median income

By DAVID HERNANDEZ

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NATIONAL CITY — National City will team up with developers to apply for state funding for a \$196 million, mixed-use development envisioned along Interstate 5.

Plans include 400 mixed-income housing units — condos and one- to three-bedroom apartments — as well as amenities such as a gym, a coworking space and a sky lounge. Also proposed is an on-site child care center/preschool for up to 200 children.

“Projects like this — long overdue in our downtown,” Councilman Ron Morrison said.

Dubbed 233 Roosevelt Tower, the development is being proposed by MAAC and MirKa Investments LLC.

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MAAC, a social services nonprofit that has built hundreds of units of affordable housing across San Diego County, owns the proposed site on Roosevelt Avenue between Second and Third streets.

According to a proposed rent matrix, the 233 Roosevelt Tower units would be reserved for residents who earn between 30 percent and 80 percent of the region's median income. For a family of four, the 2019 median income in San Diego County was \$86,300.

In a unanimous vote Feb. 4, the City Council agreed to offer support for the project. Specifically, the city, MACC and MirKa Investments will apply for \$30 million from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program: \$20 million for the development and \$10 million for transportation- and transit-related capital improvements or programs in the vicinity of the development.

The state program aims to make housing, jobs and key destinations accessible by alternative modes such as walking, biking and transit.

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Officials said the \$10 million would complement about \$7 million in grants the city already received to fund street, bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the area, including the addition of lighting, trees, parking spots and bike lanes on Roosevelt Avenue between Main and West Eighth streets.

Of the \$7 million, the city received \$2 million from SANDAG, the region's planning agency, and \$5 million from Caltrans.

While the city will be a co-applicant alongside MAAC and MirKa Investments for the state funds from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program, the city is not expected to contribute city funds should the grant funding be awarded.

According to a city staff report, MAAC and MirKa Investments "expressed that they would be positioned to secure all other sources of funding needed to finance the project without requesting any additional financial support" from the city.

Funding sources include tax-exempt bonds and tax credits intended to encourage construction of affordable housing for low-income residents.

The discussion about the proposed project drew comments from two community members.

Danny Serrano of the National City-based Environmental Health Coalition urged the city to do "what it can" to ensure the development team mitigates noise and air pollution, given the proposed site's proximity to I-5, and especially because the development will house families and a preschool/day care center.

Marcus Bush, a member of the city's new housing advisory committee, applauded the project, saying the development would be close to transit and jobs and, therefore, offer great "connectivity."

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Bush, who will seek a City Council seat in November, added that the project would bring business to the area as well as “eyes on the street” in an area with a history of crime-related issues.


“I hope to see more projects like this,” he said.

The project is scheduled to break ground in 2021, with completion slated for 2022.

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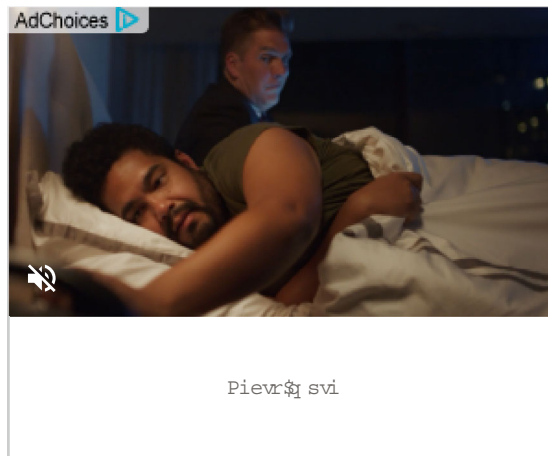
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