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ADVISORY NOTICE RELATIVE TO PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES AND TUNNELS

TO: APPLICANTS FOR PROJECTS THAT INCLUDE A PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OR TUNNEL CROSSING A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

FROM: THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2016

APPLICABILITY AND INTENT OF THIS ADVISORY NOTICE

This notice serves to advise applicants of discretionary land use requests of the Commission's concerns with respect to the potential impact pedestrian bridges and tunnels can have on the pedestrian environment. Project design alternatives for projects that include such elements, as well as criteria for considering the appropriateness of these elements have been identified below.

STANDARD CRITERIA AND DESIGN ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER

When pedestrian bridges or tunnels are proposed as part of a discretionary project, the City has an opportunity to lessen the detrimental effects these elements can have on the public realm. The City may impose Conditions of Approval addressing the following aspects of pedestrian bridges or tunnels:

1. Appropriate location;
2. Appropriate design features; and
3. Operation and maintenance requirements.

Incorporating the following standard criteria can further enable decision makers of discretionary requests to evaluate the merits of a pedestrian bridge in order to make required Findings of consistency with existing policies in the City's adopted General Plan. A first set of criteria can be employed to determine whether a pedestrian bridge or tunnel is appropriate for the proposed site. If it is determined that a pedestrian bridge or tunnel is appropriate, a second set of criteria can be used to evaluate the design merits of the project.

1. Locational Criteria

The City Planning Commission advises applicants with projects that propose pedestrian bridges or tunnels that the following locational criteria will be considered as part of the evaluation process to determine if such an element is appropriate for the site:

- Is the bridge or tunnel required to provide publicly accessible pathways between public or publicly used buildings?
- Is the bridge or tunnel required to address physical constraints such as grade changes? Is the bridge or tunnel required to create pedestrian connections over large infrastructure such as freeways?
- Is the bridge or tunnel required to link hospital, institutional, and similar uses?
- Is the bridge or tunnel required to provide secure and safe access between schools and similar uses?
- Does the bridge or tunnel not interfere with existing or planned utilities or infrastructure?

2. Design Criteria

The City Planning Commission advises applicants with projects that include pedestrian bridges or tunnels that the following design criteria will be considered as part of the evaluation process:

- Is the bridge or tunnel designed to be architecturally integrated with the design of the buildings they connect?
- Is the bridge or tunnel constructed with non-solid, transparent materials to limit visual impact?
- Is the bridge or tunnel built at an appropriate height and width and with a minimal footprint so as to minimize impact on the street below?
- Does the bridge provide exterior lighting under and adjacent to the pedestrian bridge to enhance the pedestrian environment and safety?
- Is the bridge free of signage?
- Does the bridge limit the impact of support structures in the public rights-of-way?
- Does the bridge or tunnel, if accessible to the public, provide clear visual connections to adjacent buildings and streets?
- Does the bridge or tunnel include a maintenance and security program at the expense of the applicant?
- Does the bridge or tunnel include improvements to the areas immediately under and around that minimize potential impacts such as:
 - Streetscape enhancements of the affected public right-of-way or other public rights-of-way abutting the property, with special attention paid to any streets identified as primary or pedestrian priority streets?
 - Publicly accessible open spaces?
 - Expanded sidewalks?
 - Pedestrian connections?
 - Enhanced landscaping?
 - Street furniture?
 - Public art?
 - Wayfinding improvements?

EXISTING ADOPTED POLICIES

The City's General Plan contains policies addressing the pedestrian experience, which can be impacted by pedestrian bridges and tunnels. Below are a selection of policies that will be implemented with this Advisory Notice as they directly relate to the placement of pedestrian bridges above the public right-of-way or tunnels below public City streets:

General Plan Framework Element

Objective 5.5: Enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.

Policy 5.5.3: Formulate and adopt building and site design standards and guidelines to raise the quality of design Citywide.

Objective 5.8: Reinforce or encourage the establishment of a strong pedestrian orientation in designated neighborhood districts, community centers, and pedestrian-oriented subareas within regional centers, so that these districts and centers can serve as a focus of activity for the surrounding community and a focus for investment in the community.

Policy 5.9.1: Facilitate observation and natural surveillance through improved development standards which provide for common areas, adequate lighting, clear definition of outdoor spaces, attractive fencing, use of landscaping as a natural barrier, secure storage areas, good visual connections between residential, commercial, or public environments and grouping activity functions such as child care or recreation areas.

Policy 5.9.2: Encourage mixed-use development which provides for activity and natural surveillance after commercial business hours through the development of ground floor retail uses and sidewalk cafes. Mixed-use should also be enhanced by locating community facilities such as libraries, cultural facilities or police substations, on the ground floor of such building, where feasible.

Mobility Plan 2035

Policy 2.3: Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high- quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.

Walkability Checklist

Objective: Support ease of pedestrian movement and enrich the quality of public realm by providing appropriate connections and street furnishing in the public right of way.

Objective: Pedestrian safety is the primary concern in designing and managing street crossings. Crossings that are safe, easy to use, and well-marked support active, pedestrian-friendly environments and link both sides of the street physically and visually.

Goal: Maintain the character of a pedestrian friendly street.

BACKGROUND

The development of the Advisory Notice arose from the need to establish further policy direction and guidance regarding the evaluation and design review of pedestrian bridges and tunnels that cross a public right of way.

The City's guiding policy document, the General Plan Framework Element, identifies the City's intent to encourage well designed buildings that provide a safe, secure, and attractive public realm. Additionally, the Mobility Plan 2035, the Mayor's Vision Zero plan, the Department of City Planning's Walkability Checklist, and LADOT's Great Streets Strategic Plan City all recognize the need for improving and enhancing pedestrian environment, and pedestrian safety. Numerous City

policies require projects to incorporate pedestrian oriented urban design features and consider pedestrian facilities that contribute to the safety and vitality of pedestrian environments and the public realm. While there is considerable policy direction related to the quality of the pedestrian experience as it relates to urban design, there is little direct guidance on how pedestrian bridges and tunnels should be evaluated. This Advisory Notice clarifies how these City policies apply to pedestrian bridges and tunnels.