

SPECIAL REPORT

New Community Retail Center

The Project

You probably drive by it every day—the large lot on the southeast corner of Scripps Poway Parkway and Interstate 15. It's known as the Watermark project, and the site is being developed by Sudberry Development, Inc. It is jointly owned by MedImpact Company that has its corporate headquarters there.

The land-use planning process began more than four years ago but was interrupted by the construction of the MedImpact buildings. Now, the proposal is back before the city. The developer has submitted a proposal to the city of San Diego to build a complex to include:

- An office building
- Retail stores
- Restaurants
- Food market
- Hotel
- Movie theater

To date, the developer has not released names of potential tenants.

In this *Special Report*, you will find a detailed description of the proposal presented in a factual manner. The Miramar Ranch North Planning Committee (MRNPC) is the lead advisory committee on this project to the city. The MRNPC will make a recommendation as early as its May meeting to the City Planning Commission and City Council, the ultimate decision makers.

The MRNPC will meet on Tuesday, **Feb. 5, at 7 pm** at the SRCA Community Center at 11885 Cypress Canyon Road. The meeting will be a “workshop” to inform the community about the project. This development was mentioned in the *SRCA Newsletter* 22 times in the past three years but not to this level of detail.

Of importance to note, at press time, the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was not released by the city. It was expected to be released the week of Jan. 28, which begins the typical 45-day review period for residents to comment. The SRCA will put the DEIR on its website at [www.scrippsranh.org]. Questions and comments on the DEIR can be

sent to [President@ScrippsRanch.org] and will be forwarded to the city.

The Facts

This development proposal requires the following discretionary permits:

- General Plan Amendment
- Community Plan Amendment
- Planned Development Permit
- Rezone
- Conditional Use Permit (for theater)
- Vesting Tentative Map

The property is zoned for a mix of light industrial and office uses. The request is to rezone it to add a regional commercial designation. Residential is prohibited.

The site is 34.96 gross acres—18.9 graded acres. It has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. FAR is the total square footage of all floors of all buildings divided by the site acreage. The proposal has a FAR of 0.63, slightly less than one-third of the allowable FAR.

The proposal calls for 602,823 square feet of *total* space for *all* proposed uses. In comparison: The Forum of Carlsbad is 265,000 square feet; Otay Ranch Town Center, 860,000 square feet; Westfield UTC, 1,034,600 square feet; and, Westfield North County, 1,259,463 square feet. None of these retail centers have professional office or hotel space.

For completeness, the full build-out of the MedImpact buildings will be 350,743 square feet plus two parking structures of 1,448 parking spaces. The city has approved the other office building (labeled MedImpact Building 2 on the site map on page 15), employee support building (MedImpact Building 3), and a second parking structure, which is not part of the Watermark development.

As mentioned, the property is being partially rezoned from industrial park to regional commercial. The MedImpact buildings will remain industrial. As most of the property may become commercial, the developer is asking for a deviation from the 60' height limitation. The developer wants these height limitations:

- 90' for the hotel

- 74'–103' for the parking structure, elevator shaft, and shade canopies
- 103' for the theater
- 75'–85' for the food market

The footing of the parking structure will be 22' below the I-15 elevation and will top out at 42' above I-15 in an effort to shield the plaza from freeway noise.

All proposed structures will be lower in height than the existing 112' MedImpact building. The proposal calls for:

- Retail buildings—one to two stories
- Theater—two stories
- Hotel—five stories
- Parking structure—five stories
- Office building—six stories
- Food market—one story

The Theater

The theater square footage—35,917—in the Watermark plan submitted Oct. 12, 2012, describes the theater as having 320 seats, used to calculate parking requirements. For comparison, the Westfield UTC ArcLight is 14 screens, 1,800 seats, and 52,000 square feet. The Cinepolis Cinema in Carmel Valley has eight screens and 550 seats.

The theater will have an underground retail space of 27,000 square feet, which the plans show as having a possible 38-lane bowling alley. The developer has not disclosed any theater tenants.

Other Buildings: Hotel, Retail, and Office

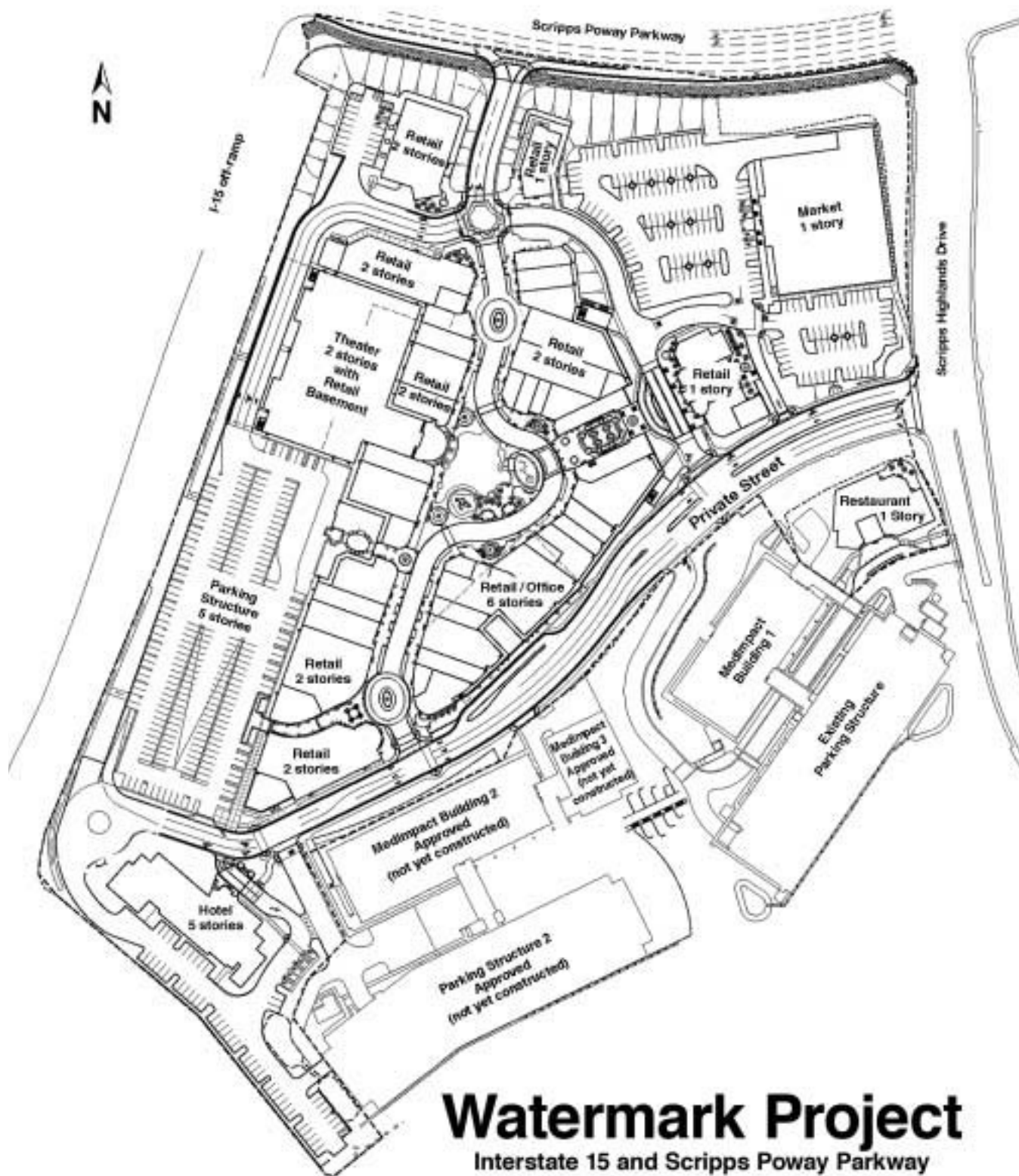
The proposed five-story hotel is shown to be 130 rooms. There are two hotels across the street. The Springhill Suites, with 137 rooms, is a four-story building plus a rooftop marquee. The Marriott is three stories with 95 rooms.

The project is required to have 2,668 feet of recycling and refuse storage, for which the plans have 4,800 feet—55% more than required. Within the commercial center will be a six-story retail/office building of 117,000 square feet.

Traffic Impacts

As the DEIR was not yet released, we have only minimal traffic information.

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We don't know what the average daily trips (ADT) proposed are or the impacts to the morning and afternoon peak traffic hours. We do know that there will be a new right-turn lane to enter the project from Scripps Poway Parkway (SPP) eastbound and a right-turn only lane leaving the project, also on SPP.

To improve the pedestrian and internal traffic within the site, Scripps Gateway Court, currently a public street, will be turned into private property and given to the developer to construct private streets in the project. There are no known changes to Scripps Highlands Drive.

The proposal overall has 2,190 parking spaces while only 1,982 are required. The hotel and one restaurant will share parking spaces with MedImpact.

Questions and Answers

To prepare this *Special Report*, we asked the developer some questions.

What are the potential proportional traffic counts that will enter the project,

once built, using the new access point on SPP versus Scripps Highlands Drive? *25% at SPP and 75% at Scripps Highlands Drive. There will be no increase in the morning peak trips to Scripps Highlands Drive, with the afternoon/evening peak trips estimated at 1,100 ADT.*

What are the potential proportional traffic counts that will exit the project, once built, using the new access point on SPP versus Scripps Highlands Drive? *15% at SPP and 85% at Scripps Highlands Drive. There will be no increase in morning peak trips; afternoon/evening peak trips will be 1,100 ADT.*

Can there be a connection to the project from the bike path parallel to I-15 other than at SPP? *Not at this time. We are providing solutions and access that are safer than the I-15 area. We will present these at the MRNPC meeting.*

Project Décor

According to the Master Plan Guidelines, the Watermark project will be a

classical Mediterranean-style development. Stairways will be decorated reminiscent of grand stairways of Europe. The heart of the project will be a grand lawn, children's play area, and oversized water feature. A silent clock/bell tower will be a focal point in the plaza.

The landscaping will be drought-tolerant, non-invasive plants in a garden setting. New plantings along SPP and Scripps Highlands Drive will be the same as currently there. The roof-mounted heating/air conditioning units will be painted the building colors and will have extra screening. There will be no flashing, moving, or audible signs.

Voice Your Opinion

At the Tuesday, Feb. 5, MRNPC meeting, city staff, the developer, and its consultants are scheduled to attend to answer your questions. Comments—in favor and against—are encouraged so that all stakeholders can understand the community's sentiment. 