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Champion Buys Distressed Site for TOD

By Bob Howard



Site Aerial View

HOLLYWOOD—An affiliate of West Los Angeles-based Champion Real Estate Co. has acquired a five-building, mixed-use complex on a 2.76-acre site that is planned as part of a transit-oriented development featuring retail, restaurants and luxury apartments. The property sold for \$20 million in an all-cash transaction, according to receiver Taylor B. Grant, who heads Newport Beach, CA-based California Real Estate Receiverships. CalRER handled the sale on behalf of the lender, US Bank.

Champion plans to entitle and build a \$100 million transit oriented, mixed use project featuring retail, restaurants and luxury apartments. The developer estimates that securing entitlements will take about a year. The property—which consists of three small office buildings, two multifamily structures and three parking

lots—is bounded by Highland, Hawthorne and Selma avenues, and McCadden Place.

“This was a great opportunity for us to acquire a well located, value-added property even though it did not have entitlements,” said Robert Champion, Champion CEO. “We are actively looking for additional urban infill development opportunities for retail, multi-family and mixed use and expect to be competitive given our ability to pay all cash and buy properties without entitlements.”

According to receiver Grant, Panavision occupies one of the office buildings, about 25,000 square feet, and the other two smaller buildings are about 50% occupied. The low-rise apartment buildings are vacated and a 1,500 square-foot restaurant formerly occupied by Numero Uno Pizza is also vacant, added Bill Welch, CalRER receiver’s agent.

There were 19 offers on the property, which went into receivership April of last year, added Welch. “We think the property could have been sold sooner, but no active marketing occurred because the intent of the bank was to foreclose.”