

On August 30, 2001, the Planning Commission approved the initiation of the Community Plan Amendment. The following nine issues were identified. Each identified issue is followed by a staff response.

1. Impacts on the community circulation system to determine if any circulation improvements would be necessary to serve an increase in residential density.

Staff Response - Staff review has determined that the existing circulation system in this community is adequate to serve the proposed increase in residential density. The proposed increase in average daily trips (ADT's) resulting from the proposed development will not change the current level of service (LOS) on neighborhood streets.

2. Impact of increased density on the airport approach zone.

Staff Response - Staff has conducted an intensity study for the proposed development as required by the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for Lindbergh Field. Based on the results of this study, staff has determined that the impact of the increased density on the airport approach zone is within the parameters allowed by the CLUP.

3. Consistency between the proposed community plan amendment and the City's Strategic Framework, Transit-Oriented Development, and Housing Element goals for future development.

Staff Response -

Strategic Framework - The project conforms to the recommendations embodied in the draft Strategic Framework Element which emphasize that new residential development should contribute to increased walkability and provide housing opportunities in close proximity to local employment centers as well as along transit corridors. The project, proposing 51 rental apartments and six for-sale row homes, would be located just a few blocks from the Downtown San Diego and Hillcrest business districts. In addition, the site is located on First Avenue, which is identified as a major three-lane collector street and transit corridor in the Transportation Element of the Uptown Community Plan and is within walking distance of Balboa Park and two neighborhood commercial centers.

Transit-Oriented Development - The project is an ideal model for a Transit Oriented Development due to its proximity to numerous transit corridors in the Park West neighborhood. Bus lines 1, 3, 11, 25 and 990 are within walking distance of the proposed development and opportunities for resident ridership are high due to the number and frequency of bus trips. In addition, the Park West neighborhood is a strong candidate for

the Transit First Showcase Project which is being developed by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board. The Project proposes to provide high-speed transit service connecting major activity centers such as Balboa Park, Fashion Valley and the Hillcrest Medical Center. The Transit Project is proposing a transit stop at the corner of 4th Avenue and Juniper Street, 3 blocks from the proposed project site.

Housing Element - The proposed community plan amendment would allow for 57 dwelling units to be built on a site where only 32 dwelling units could be developed under existing designations. Due to the proposed increase in density, the Planning Department requested that the project incorporate an affordable housing component. However, due to market economics and the lack of available affordable housing subsidies, the applicant was unable to accommodate the request and all 51 apartments and 6 row homes would be offered at market rates. The applicant has indicated that the amendment would result in a significant rental project whereas a 100% for-sale project would likely result from existing designations. The applicant has also documented the presence of 1,825 affordable housing opportunities within a two-mile radius of the project site.

In addition, the applicant is proposing to build ‘Renaissance at North Park’ approximately three and half miles from the project site. This 135-dwelling unit proposed project would be developed with assistance from the Redevelopment Agency and would include 112 affordable dwelling units (80%). Of these, 98 units would be reserved for rent by low- to very- low-income seniors and 14 units would be for-sale townhomes offered at 80% of the median income level. The applicant has requested that the affordable housing proposed in Renaissance at North Park be used as an offset to an affordable housing component for Nob Hill Place.

4. The appropriate density range for the site.

Staff Response - The proposed amendment to the Uptown Community Plan would redesignate the easterly .57 acres of the project site from 15-29 dwelling units per acre to 44-73 dwelling units per acre. The westerly portion (.35 acres) of the site would retain it’s recommended density of 29-44 dwelling units per acre. Properties directly to the east and west of the project site are designated for 29-44 dwelling units per acre while properties along the Sixth Avenue corridor and the 4th Avenue and Laurel Street commercial area are designated for 73-110 dwelling units per acre. The redesignation of a portion of the subject site to 44-73 dwelling units per acre would not conflict with this varied mixture of residential density designations. Furthermore, the project would fulfill a goal of the Uptown Community Plan to concentrate medium to high density residential development adjacent to commercial corridors and near transit and higher volume traffic corridors.

5. The adequacy of parks and other public facilities to service additional residential development within the community.

Staff Response - Community facilities and services addressed in the Uptown Community Plan include schools, libraries, fire stations, police, water and sewer services as well as parks and open space. The following is an analysis of each facility/service:

Fire - According to the Plan, existing fire protection facilities and programs adequately service the needs of the Uptown Population. There are presently three fire stations serving Uptown. The station in closest proximity to the project area is Station #3 located at State Street and Kalmia Street and is a standard 4-person unit.

Sewer/Water - The City is presently undertaking an extensive water and sewer replacement program that includes the area surrounding the proposed project site. The replacement of outdated sewer and water lines will assist in providing better service to both current and future residents.

Police - The Uptown Community is served by two police substations. The Central Area Substation as well as the Western Area Substation. The Police Department has staff available to service the proposed project.

Library - There are presently two libraries in the Uptown Community: the Mission Hills and University Heights Libraries. The Central Library in Centre City also serves the Park West community. The General Plan standards recommend one branch library for every 18,000 to 30,000 residents. Library facilities are in place for the proposed project's number of residents units. In addition, the development of the new Central Library in Downtown San Diego will provide extensive new services for residents in the Park West community.

Schools - The proposed project would be served by Washington Elementary School located on State Street in Little Italy. According to a school representative, the current 2002 student enrollment is 385 students. The school is anticipated to accommodate up to 450 students. Therefore, there are adequate school facilities in place to service the proposed project.

Parks and Open Space - Uptown is bordered by two Regional/Resource based parks, Balboa Park and Presidio Park. Although intended for City-wide use, these parks are used as population-based parks by the residents of Uptown. Balboa Park is located five blocks to the east of the project site. Maple Canyon, an open space park, provides

additional recreational opportunities is also located in close proximity to the proposed development.

According to Park and Recreation Department staff, residential development proposed by Nob Hill will generate the need for additional public parks within the community. City staff uses park standards as established in the Recreation Element of the Progress Guide and General Plan to determine specific park requirements. City staff currently assume that each multi-family residential unit will generate a total of 2.5 residents per unit.

Based on staff's calculations, the project should provide a total of .40 usable park acres on site or within one-quarter mile of the proposed project or pay in lieu fees to mitigate the impact. Fees for satisfying the park requirements per the General Plan standards for this development shall be collected at the time the building permit is issued in accordance with established ordinances or resolutions pertaining to Development Impact Fees (DIF) and Facility Benefit Assessment (FBA) or park fees as applicable.

6. Provision of adequate parking on-site;

Staff Response - The Land Development Code requires a minimum of 96 off-street parking spaces be provided for the development. The proposed project includes a total of 89 off-street parking spaces, a deficit of seven spaces. A deviation is being requested to allow this reduction based on the need for design flexibility to provide for a higher density, multi-family residential development.

7. The number of curb cuts the project is proposing;

Staff Response - The project proposes to provide access to off-street parking for the project from Juniper Street via two, 24-foot wide drive aisles. An existing curb cut located along the Front Street frontage would be closed.

8. Urban design and architecture so as to ensure that the proposed project fits within the context and scale of surrounding structures.

Staff Response - The project proposes development of a four-story, 51-unit residential apartment building over a parking garage located at the corner of First Avenue and Juniper Street, and a three-story row house building, located at the corner of Juniper and Front Streets. The proposed apartment building is comprised of four separate buildings grouped around a landscaped, linear, central courtyard and linked with walkways. The maximum height of the apartment buildings will be 55.5 feet and the row homes will be 46 feet. The maximum height allowed under the zone is 60 feet. Both the apartment

buildings and row homes are within the height limit allowed by the Land Development Code.

The urban design guidelines of the Uptown Community Plan recommend that new construction and improvements to existing structures be compatible with existing architectural detail, color texture and overall appearance of the quality of development in the surrounding neighborhood. Surrounding development to the north and east of the block consists of one- and two-story single-family residential, offices and multi-family residential use in multi-story apartment buildings. Development to the south of the block consists of commercial and multi-story residential uses. Development to the west includes a multi-story, multi-family residential apartment building and two-story office building.

The project proposes to utilize common architectural elements found in the homes and buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. The common elements derived from the neighborhood that are integrated into the 57-unit project include massing the building around a central courtyard, incorporating entry stoops, rusticated base and roof parapets, using stucco as the primary finish and incorporating trellised patios and entries. The project also incorporates the historic triple-scored sidewalk pattern found throughout the neighborhood and is providing street trees that add to the established neighborhood street tree theme. Therefore, the design of the four-story apartments and row homes would not conflict with the context and scale of surrounding structures.

9. Consideration of surrounding densities.

Staff Response - According to the Intensity Study conducted by Development Services staff, total occupancy per acre within a quarter mile of the proposed project area is 187.82 persons per acre. The project is proposing a project intensity of 186 persons per acre. Therefore, the proposed project is compatible with existing densities and consistent with intensity provisions of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Lindbergh field (which would permit a maximum density of up to 207 persons per acre).