



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number:
P.C. 3/17/03 Item:

File Number:
GP03-05-01/GPT03-05-01

Council District and SNI Area:
5

Major Thoroughfares Map Number:
68

Assessor's Parcel Number(s):
484-02-008 through -013 and - 054, -055

Project Manager: Deanna Chow

GENERAL PLAN REPORT

2003 Spring Hearing

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Plan amendment request to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation from High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC) to Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC).

General Plan text amendment to modify Urban Design Policy #10 to increase the maximum building height to 75 feet at the southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues.

LOCATION: Southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues

ACREAGE: 1.3

APPLICANT/OWNER:

Jerry Strangis/Various

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION DIAGRAM DESIGNATION:

Existing Designation: High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC)

Proposed Designation: Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC)

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT(S): R-1-8, A(PD) and R-M

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION(S):

North: Office and Multi-family residential - Office

South: Multi-family residential - High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC)

East: Single-family residential - High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC)

West: Office and Multi-family residential - Office and Medium High Density Residential (12-25 DU/AC)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS:

Mitigated Negative Declaration pending

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC) on 1.3 acres and amend Urban Design Policy #10 to increase the maximum building height to 75 feet on the subject site

Approved by:
Date:

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

CITY DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- Department of Transportation - No long-term traffic impact.
- Department of Public Works - The site is located in Flood Zone D. The site is not located in a Geological Hazard Zone, State Landslide Zone or State Liquefaction Zone. The site does not have major access constraints or have inadequate sanitary and storm capacity.
- Valley Transportation Authority - The site is within a ¼ mile of the proposed station at Jackson Avenue on the Santa Clara/Alum Rock (Downtown/East Valley) Transit Project. VTA strongly supports the General Plan amendment and states that sites within a ¼ mile of transit stations should have a very high density designation with no maximum cap in order to provide a wide-ridership base and to allow transit to serve more destinations and riders with the same infrastructure.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- None received.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This is a privately initiated General Plan amendment to change the *San Jose 2020 General Plan* Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation on a 1.3-acre site located on the southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues from High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC) to Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC). The proposed change could facilitate higher density residential development and/or mixed use (residential/commercial) development. The Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC) designation is intended for residential development in close proximity to major public transit facilities such as light rail stations and along major bus routes.

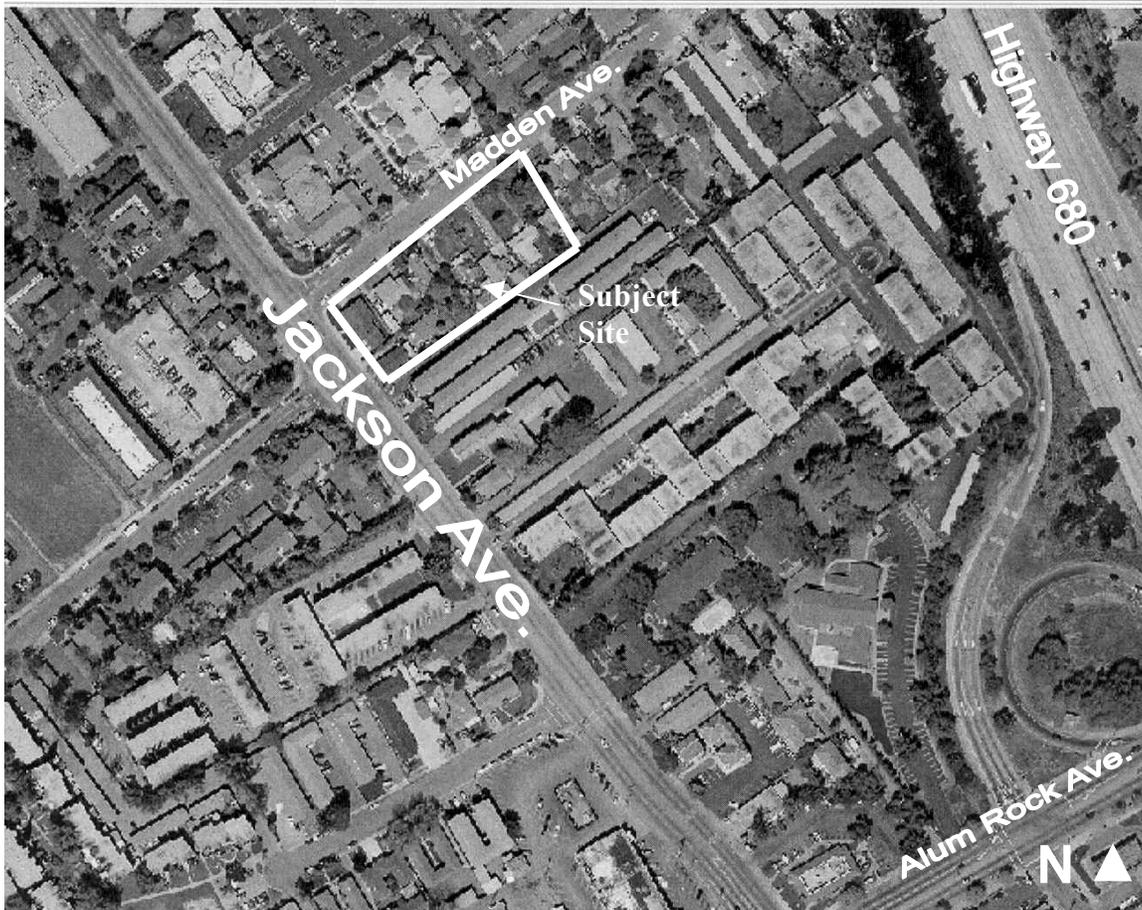
In addition, an associated General Plan text amendment requests to modify Urban Design Policy #10 to increase the maximum building height from 50 feet to 75 feet on the 1.3-acre site.

The General Plan amendment is being proposed to facilitate the future redevelopment of the site. A Planned Development Zoning for a 0.94-acre portion of the site is currently on file with the Planning Division. This zoning proposes 70 attached dwelling units.

BACKGROUND**Site and Surrounding Uses**

The amendment site is located on the southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues. The site is currently occupied by 8 single-family residences, a majority of which front onto Madden Avenue. The homes were constructed over time from the early to mid 1900s. None of the individual homes have historical significance. The single-family residential uses are inconsistent with the existing High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC) designation of the subject site.

Uses to the north include an office building and high density residential. Existing development along the south side of Madden Avenue, east of the site, consists predominantly of single-family residences and a new townhome project. Uses to the south and west also include multi-family residential uses. The Regional Medical Center of San Jose and associated office uses also are located to the west across Jackson Avenue, an arterial street.



Aerial photograph of site and surrounding uses



New townhome project on the south side of Madden Avenue, east of the subject site at the end of the street



Example of existing single-family home on the subject site

Downtown/East Valley Light Rail Project

The subject site is within close proximity to the Downtown/East Valley Transit Project which is within the Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue Transit-Oriented Development Corridor (TOD). The TOD Corridors are areas designated by the City as generally suitable for higher density residential, more intensive non-residential uses, and mixed-use development. These corridors are centered along existing or planned light rail transit lines and/or major bus routes. Downtown/East Valley Transit is planned to link the Diridon Station west of Downtown to the Alum Rock Station on the Capitol Light Rail Transit line. Although station locations have not been finalized, the subject site is within one-quarter mile of the proposed Jackson Station. The planning of the Downtown/East Valley Transit is currently in the conceptual engineering and environmental review stages of the process.

ANALYSIS

Land Use Compatibility/Policy Consistency

The proposed land use amendment is compatible with the existing and planned land uses in the vicinity. The proposed change to the Land Use/Transportation Diagram from High Density Residential (25-50 DU/AC) to Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC) provides an opportunity to intensify land uses in an appropriate location.

The proposed land use change is in close proximity to the Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue TOD Corridor and is consistent with several General Plan Major Strategies, including Growth Management, Housing and Sustainable City. These strategies support the increase of residential densities near transit stations, foster infill development, and encourage the efficient use of resources and infrastructure. The proposed amendment is also consistent with several General Plan Goals and Policies which encourage higher density housing near light rail lines and other major transportation facilities. Balanced Community Policy #2 supports the integration of housing with transportation systems and Residential Land Use Policy #3 states that locations near light rail transit stations and along bus transit routes are preferable for higher density housing. The intensification of areas near access to transit allows for higher density housing in appropriate urban locations, where city services and facilities are already provided, resulting in reduced sprawl and efficient use of resources.

Height

Urban Design Policy #10 states that building height of either occupied space or exterior building features should not exceed 50 feet. There are several areas where heights can exceed 50 feet, such as in the Downtown, specific plan areas, transit areas and other site specific locations. For example, the maximum building height for sites within a reasonable walking distance to an existing or designated passenger rail station is 120 feet. Although the subject site is within a reasonable walking distance to a proposed transit station, the exact location has yet to be finalized. The maximum height limit is thus currently 50 feet.

Additional building height is appropriate in proximity to transit corridors. The increase in building height limit to 75 feet on the subject site would provide opportunity for additional density on an infill parcel in close proximity to a transit investment without creating incompatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed height is compatible in scale and character of the surrounding multi-family and office buildings. The proposed 75-foot building height limit would define the building envelope. Issues such as site design, setbacks, building type and relationship of the height of buildings to surrounding uses would be discussed as part of a future development application (i.e., zoning) to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and consistency with General Plan policies. Staff recommends increasing the maximum building height limit to 75 feet.

The proposed General Plan text amendment is consistent with the Sustainable City Major Strategy which seeks to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, wastefulness, and environmental degradation of our living environment. The amendment site is located in close proximity to the proposed Downtown/East Valley Transit Project. Orienting development in already urbanized areas and around transit contributes to efficient use of existing resources and infrastructure.

Environmental Issues

The proposed change in the General Plan land use designation and increase in height on the subject site was analyzed in an initial study that resulted in a Mitigated Negative Declaration. The initial study determined that the change in land use designation would create a less than significant impact with mitigation measures in the following categories:

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The property owners within the amendment site boundaries and/or property owners within a 1000-foot radius of the amendment site were sent a newsletter regarding the two community meetings that were held on February 24th and 26th 2003 to discuss the proposed General Plan amendment. They also received a public hearing notice regarding the public hearings to be held on the subject amendment before the Planning Commission in March and City Council in April. In addition, the community can be kept informed about the status of amendments on the Department's web-site, which contains information on the General Plan process, each proposed amendment, staff reports, and hearing schedule.

One community member expressed concern about the change to Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC). The resident stated that the East Side of San Jose is congested, the streets are narrow, parking is a problem and emergency access is an issue for the site. Additionally, the height of new construction should be only two-stories and should reflect the character of the area and not detract from Mexican American Community Services Agency (MACSA) residential and office development, which is located across Madden Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends Transit Corridor Residential (20+ DU/AC) on 1.3 acres and modification to Urban Design Policy #10 to allow maximum building heights up to 75 feet at the southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues.

Attachments

PBCE002/GP_Team/2003 Annual Review/Staff Reports/Spring Review/GP03-05-01.doc

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT

Amend Chapter IV Goals and Policies; Community Development; Urban Design Policy #10; pages 63-65 as follows:

SPECIFIC SITES AND GEOGRAPHIC AREA
EXCEPTIONS:

- ❖ Single Room Occupancy buildings (outside the Downtown Core and Frame Areas), wholly or combined with commercial uses, should not exceed 60 feet in height and should be compatible with adjacent uses.
- ❖ In the North San Jose/Rincon de Los Esteros Redevelopment Area, the maximum building height is 90 feet.
- ❖ On the southeast corner of State Route 237 and North First Street, the maximum building height is 120 feet.
- ❖ On the north side of Ridder Park Drive, west of Coyote Creek, the maximum building height is 55 feet.
- ❖ At the northeast corner of Yerba Buena Road and Murrillo Avenue, the maximum building height is defined by the PD zoning PDC 80-11-279.
- ❖ At the southeasterly corner of Silver Creek Valley Road and U.S. Highway 101, the maximum building height is 120 feet.
- ❖ In the North Coyote Valley Campus Industrial area, the maximum building height is 135 feet.
- ❖ At Oakridge Mall along Blossom Hill Road between Santa Teresa Boulevard and Winfield Boulevard, the maximum building height is 70 feet.

- ❖ For the property located at the southeast corner of Stevens Creek and Winchester Boulevards

(generally known as Santana Row), the maximum building height is 120 feet for one hotel; one residential building including parking and/or commercial space; and one hotel or one building with residential units combined with parking and/or commercial space. The remainder of this site has a height limit of 90 feet, except for the easternmost edge which has a limit of 35 feet.

- ❖ Along the east side of South Bascom Avenue between Interstate 280 and approximately 600 feet north of Fruitdale Avenue, the maximum building height is 95 feet.
- ❖ At the southeast corner of Jackson and Madden Avenues, the maximum building height is 75 feet.