

DATE ISSUED: November 10, 2004

REPORT NO. P-04-190

ATTENTION: Planning Commission
Agenda of November 18, 2004

SUBJECT: Initiation of an amendment to the Navajo Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan to change a land use designation from single family to multifamily residential. Project No. 50858.

OWNER/
APPLICANT: Mission Valley Church of the Nazarene

SUMMARY

Issue - Should the Planning Commission INITIATE a land use plan amendment to the Navajo Community Plan and Progress Guide and General Plan pursuant to Municipal Code Section 122.0103 ? This amendment has been requested to redesignate a site from single family to medium density multifamily residential.

Manager's Recommendation – INITIATE the plan amendment process.

Community Planning Group Recommendation – On October 18, 2004, the Navajo Community Planning Group voted 8-7-0 in support of initiating the community plan amendment. The votes not in favor were based on traffic issues and the lack of a “fit” for this project into the community. (See attachment 1)

Environmental Impact - If initiated, the proposed plan amendment and future discretionary actions will be subject to environmental review.

Housing Impact – The project proposed with this community plan amendment is anticipated to include a residential project with approximately 80 dwelling units. The current land use designation of low density single family residential would allow a density of 9 units per acre or a potential maximum of 31 dwelling units on the site. The proposed medium density multifamily land use designation would allow a density range of 15-29 dwelling units per acre, with a potential maximum of 99 units. The proposed

community plan amendment represents a potential increase of 68 dwelling units (from 31 to 99) on the site.

Approval of this initiation request does not constitute an endorsement of the project proposal. A staff recommendation will be developed once the project has been fully analyzed. This action will allow the staff analysis to proceed.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is located at 4756 Mission Gorge Place, north of I-8 and Mission Gorge Place, south of Elsa Road, east of Mission Gorge Place, and west of Filmore Way (See Attachment 2). The property is bounded on the north and northeast by single family uses and on the south and west by light industrial businesses, professional offices, and a U.S. Post Office distribution center. (See Attachment 3). The topography of the site is upwardly sloping with about an eighty foot rise to the north where existing single family residences are located. The access from the site is currently from an easement to Mission Gorge Place, east of Mission Gorge Road. The site has freeway access from Mission Gorge Road or Alvarado Canyon Road (approximately one half of a mile away).

The site is 3.4 acres and is currently used for a church. The Navajo Community Plan designates this site as single family (Attachment 4). The site is zoned RS-1-7, and allows single family residential. The proposal is to redesignate the site to multifamily residential and request a rezone to RM-1-3 (1 dwelling unit/2000 s.f.). If initiated, the applicant has indicated that they will be proposing an 80 unit “for sale” multifamily condominium project concurrently with the community plan amendment and rezone.

The site is included in the survey area that the Redevelopment Agency is in the process of formulating to facilitate the continued economic viability of the Grantville area. The Agency is investigating the creation of a redevelopment area pursuant to the California Redevelopment Law. The purpose of the proposed Grantville Redevelopment Survey Area is to ensure the continued viability of the areas commercial, industrial and retail uses. The Redevelopment Plan will be consistent with the Navajo Community Plan.

The Grantville trolley station is under construction approximately 2,500 feet south and west of the site as part of the Mission Valley East (MVE) extension of the Blue Line light rail corridor. The station is one of four new stations located along the line. The 5.9-mile MVE extension will connect the Blue and Orange lines, completing a loop that will give San Diegans new mobility and easier access to some of the region's most popular destinations and commercial and employment centers, including San Ysidro, Downtown, Old Town, Mission Valley, La Mesa, El Cajon and SDSU. Connecting bus service will be offered at the Grantville Station. MTS is scheduled to complete construction on the extension in 2005 with operation beginning in June 2005.

The subject site is adjacent to a Subregional District identified on the Opportunities Area Map in the Strategic Framework Element of the Progress Guide and General Plan. The district is in the Grantville area of Navajo and should contain corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, and retail uses with some adjacent multifamily residential uses. The City of Villages strategy

encourages further intensification of employment uses, and where appropriate, collocation of medium to high density residential uses with employment.

There are currently three other community plan amendments in process within the Navajo Community. The Boulevard project was initiated on August 19, 2004 by Planning Commission, is located east of Waring Road on Adobe Falls Road and proposes to redesignate 5.61 acres of commercial visitor to multifamily residential. The River View Village project was initiated on May 2, 2002 by Planning Commission, is located north of Wembley Street, and proposes to redesignate 6.3 acres from Light Industrial to Single Family Residential. The third project is to amend the Navajo Community Plan to develop new design guidelines which address future development adjacent to the San Diego River within the Navajo community. This amendment was initiated on January 30, 2003 by Planning Commission and is located north of Zion Avenue between Mission Gorge Road and the San Diego River (Attachment 5).

DISCUSSION

Before a community plan amendment can be initiated, Section 122.0104 of the Municipal Code requires that any one of three initial criteria or all four supplemental criteria specified in the code must be met. The Planning Department does not believe that any of the following three initial criteria can be met:

- (1) **The amendment is appropriate due to a mapping or textual error or omission made when the original land use plan or local coastal program was adopted or during subsequent amendments;**
- (2) **Denial of initiation would jeopardize the public health, safety or general welfare; or**
- (3) **The amendment is appropriate due to a material change in circumstances since the adoption of a land use plan or local coastal program whereby denial of initiation would result in a hardship to the applicant by denying any reasonable use of the subject real property.**

The Planning Department does however; believe that all of the following supplemental criteria can be met:

- (1) **The proposed land use plan amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Navajo Community Plan.**

The Progress Guide and General Plan recommendations in the Strategic Framework Element encourage when feasible the development of multifamily residential uses adjacent to subregional districts. The Grantville subregional district is located directly to the south of the site. This district was included in the opportunities map in the Strategic Framework Element as a potential subregional district that could accommodate commercial, industrial and mixed-use

development. By providing higher density multifamily residential uses adjacent to this subregional district, this would fulfill the policy guidelines set for in the Strategic Framework Element. The presence of the Grantville trolley station nearby would support a higher density multifamily residential use.

The Transit –Oriented Development (TOD) Design Guidelines recommend housing development within 2,000 feet of transit stops, or a 10 minute walking distance. This site is approximately 2,500 feet from the future trolley station and is accessible from Mission Gorge Place (via an easement) and Alvarado Canyon Road. TOD guidelines for residential areas near the trolley recommend density ranges between 18 and 25 dwelling units per acre. Because the site relates topographically to the industrial uses to the south and is accessed by Mission Gorge Place to the south (and not Fenimore Way to the north), this site relates to the periphery of the trolley station and not to the single family neighborhood to the north. Therefore, this site would be considered part of the primary area for a TOD and a candidate for higher density residential uses.

Objectives for the residential land use designation in the Navajo Community include encouraging the development of a variety of new housing types. The plan also provides additional development recommendations, which state: “Housing types and densities should be varied in residential development to create interest and provide a mix of people with various economic and social characteristics.” The proposed designation of multifamily would provide a greater variety of housing types adjacent to a predominantly single family neighborhood.

(2) The proposed land use plan amendment appears to offer a public benefit to the community or City.

The proposed land use designation from single family to multifamily residential could help fulfill the Strategic Framework Element’s goal of providing multifamily residential use adjacent to a subregional district.

The proposed redesignation of the site to a higher residential density would provide needed housing in a developed, underutilized urban area that is close to the Grantville employment area, is within 2,500 feet of the Grantville Trolley Station and has close freeway access. The residential use would also support the adjacent Grantville subregional district. In addition, the location of multifamily in this location would provide a buffer between the single family housing to the north of the site and the industrial uses to the south. Therefore, the inclusion of housing at this location would provide a benefit to the community and city.

With the proposed land use designation, there is a better possibility of achieving the goals for housing diversity set forth in the Progress Guide and General Plan by providing a range of housing for different economic levels.

(3) Public services appear to be available to serve the proposed increase in density or intensity of use.

All needed public services are available as the Navajo community is an urbanized community. Full analysis of public services and facilities will be conducted with the review of the community plan amendment, if initiated.

(4) City staff is available to process the proposed land use plan amendment without any work being deferred on General Fund supported programs or ongoing plan updates.

Staff is available to process the plan amendment request without delaying general fund programs or ongoing plan updates, as the Planning Department's work program includes staff time for non-general fund development projects. However, delays in processing the plan amendment could occur based on staff levels and workload. The costs associated with processing this amendment will be paid for by the applicant.

As outlined above, the proposed plan amendment meets all of the supplemental initiation criteria as described; therefore, the staff recommends that the amendment to the Navajo Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan be initiated.

The following land use issues have been identified with the initiation request. If initiated, these issues, as well as others that may be identified, will be analyzed and evaluated through the community plan amendment review process:

- Analysis of appropriate area of the site that could be redesignated from single family to multifamily residential, given the unique topographic and access constraints.
- Determination of the appropriate zone to implement the proposed land use and relate to the surrounding land use pattern.
- Review of current Conditional Use Permit for church site and coordinate with requested redesignation.
- Analysis of access to site and evaluation of alternative access from public streets.
- Potential for redesignating other surrounding single family sites with similar topography to multifamily residential uses to relate to the subregional district.
- Analysis of multifamily residential development adjacent to existing industrial uses.
- Fulfilling the recommendations of the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Navajo Community Plan that encourage residential use and pedestrian orientation to the street.

- Analysis of traffic impacts as they relate to Mission Gorge Road, Alvarado Canyon Road and Waring Road connections.
- Design review to ensure adequate parking and site design for the proposed project.
- Provide adequate pedestrian connections from the site to the public street.
- The appropriate siting and design of public open space.
- The potential to provide affordable housing on site.
- The potential for taking advantage of significant public views.

Although staff believes that the proposed amendment does meet the necessary criteria for initiation, staff has not fully reviewed the applicant's proposal. **Therefore, by initiating this community plan amendment, neither the staff nor the Planning Commission is committed to recommend in favor or denial of the proposed amendment.**

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not initiate the amendment to the Navajo Community Plan. Maintain the Community Plan with the current low density single family residential land use designation which allows for single family residential land use development.

Respectfully submitted,

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 Long Range Planning

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LH/lh

- Attachments:
1. Navajo Community Planners Inc. letter
 2. Location Map
 3. Surrounding Uses
 4. Navajo Land Use Map
 5. Navajo Community Plan Amendment initiations in progress
 6. Ownership Disclosure Statement

