



AGENDA REPORT

Meeting of the San Marcos Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: Monday, April 28, 2014
SUBJECT: University District Specific Plan Amendment

Recommendation

Recommend approval of the University District Specific Plan Amendment to the City Council.

Introduction

This is an Amendment to the University District Specific Plan initiated by Urban Village San Marcos LLC. The proposed amendments will facilitate land uses and development types that respond to changing market conditions. The amendments include revisions to the grading plan, street configurations, location of parks and open space, elements of the Form Based Code, and new retail types. Formal amendments to the Specific Plan are permitted under Chapter IX – Section IX.6 of the adopted University District Specific Plan. A concurrent amendment to the General Plan is not required because proposed amendments to the Specific Plan are consistent with the goals, objectives, policies and programs of the City of San Marcos General Plan.

On March 31, 2014, a community workshop was conducted to present and discuss the Specific Plan amendments with stakeholders, residents and surrounding property owners.

Discussion

Grading

The project proposes a revised Figure VI.D: Conceptual Grading Plan to present balanced grading of the Specific Plan area (no export or import needed). Additional proposed revisions related to the grading plan include a provision that as individual projects are presented to the City of San Marcos, more precise grading plans for the project area(s) will be created to further define the grading to ensure that the individual project will meet the goals of creating a walkable, urban community and to maintain functional connectivity between buildings and sidewalks and between sidewalks and the rest of the project area(s). The revision further indicates that all proposed buildings are required to adhere to the regulations set forth in Chapter VI: Form Based Code of the University District Specific Plan and utilize creative design measures to meet the goals of the Specific Plan where topography presents an issue.



Street Configurations

The circulation network within the Specific Plan area has been designed to facilitate movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists in a safe and efficient manner. As detailed in the Form Based Code, a hierarchy of street types exists throughout the entire project area. The proposed revised street configuration is shown in Figure III.A: Required Streets Diagram and Figure VI.A: Street Type Regulating Plan. The use of roundabouts at major internal intersections is proposed along with a reverse crown street configuration with inverted medians to collect and manage stormwater. The couplet leading to the future State Route 78 overcrossing has been replaced with a single two-way street. The proposed road connection to Rush Drive is proposed to be located to the east to reduce the amount of grading to the proposed Knoll Park area and to connect with the driveway entrance to the Campus Marketplace shopping center. The existing alignment of Industrial Street is proposed to be maintained. Campus Way is proposed to be extended to Carmel Street. Changes to several street cross sections are proposed to accommodate the inverted median. In some instances, bike lanes are proposed as sharrows to accommodate the medians. Design speeds within the Specific Plan area remain at 25 miles per hour.

An updated Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was prepared and included in Chapter V: Transportation and Circulation. The focus of the TIA is a determination of whether the Specific Plan Amendment will introduce additional traffic impacts that were not identified in the original University District Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report Traffic Impact Analysis prepared in 2009. This traffic impact assessment includes a review of various traffic-related factors that have a primary influence on the potential for the revised project to generate traffic impacts. Proposed text changes to this section include reorganizing existing text and revising text to reflect the updated TIA.

Parks/Open Space

The project proposes updated locations for parks, plazas, and open spaces within the Specific Plan area as shown in the revised Figure IV.A: Parks, Plazas, and Open Space Plan. The total acreage of parks, plazas, and open space increases by an additional 0.30 acres as shown in Table 1: Proposed Changes to Parks and Open Space. Additional proposed revisions include a specific provision that actual locations and sizes of parks, plazas, and open space will be determined at the time of project-level site design. The proposed plan eliminates the North Neighborhood Green and South Neighborhood Green since the couplet concept would be replaced with a single two-way street. The Knoll Park is expanded and incorporates a portion of the area from the removal of the North Neighborhood Green and South Neighborhood Green. Additionally, the proposed plan includes revisions to the open space calculations for residential areas west of Twin Oaks Valley Road. The private open space (e.g., patios, balconies) requirements are proposed to be reduced from 150 square feet per unit to 100 square feet per unit. In addition, 65 square feet per unit is required for private common space (e.g., common outdoor recreation, tot lots, indoor fitness centers) and the provision of 2 acres within residential areas west of Twin Oaks Valley Road for future public common open space. The exact location of this public common open space would be determined when individual projects are



proposed. The plazas at the northwest and northeast corners of the Twin Oaks Valley Road and Barham Road/Discovery Street intersection are proposed to be reconfigured and reduced in size. Paseos on both sides of this intersection would continue to lead from the future bridge over Twin Oaks Valley Road to plazas, parks, and sidewalks on both sides of the intersection. The East Green is proposed to be located along the east paseos near the northeast corner of the Specific Plan area. In total, there is a proposed loss of 0.03 acres of total parks and plazas east of Twin Oaks Valley Road and an increase of 0.33 acres west of Twin Oaks Valley Road – resulting in a net gain of 0.30 acres of open space project-wide.

Proposed changes are identified in Table 1: Proposed Changes to Parks and Open Space below:

Table 1: Proposed Changes to Parks and Open Space

Type	Name	Approved	Proposed	Change	Location
Urban Plazas	East Urban Plazas	2.09	2.01	(0.08)	East
	East Mini-Plaza	0.18	0	(0.18)	East
	East Green Paseos	0.12	0	(0.12)	East
	Twin Oaks Plaza (East)	0.73	0.25	(0.48)	East
	East Paseos and Mini Plazas	0.43	1.79	1.36	East
	South Mini Plazas	0.13	0	(0.13)	East
	Twin Oaks Plaza (West)	1.91	0	(1.91)	West
	West Paseo	1.84	0.45	(1.39)	West
	West Mini Plaza	0.27	0	(0.27)	West
	Green Link Plazas	0.26	0	(0.26)	West
Total Urban Plazas		7.96	4.5	(3.46)	Total
Urban Parks	Knoll Park and Neighborhood Greens	9.32	16	6.68	West
	North Neighborhood Green	1.1	0	(1.10)	West
	South Neighborhood Green	1.77	0	(1.77)	West
	East Creek Park	1.79	0.5	(1.29)	West
	Mid-Creek Park	0.44	0	(0.44)	West
	West Creek Park	1.55	1.63	0.08	West
	East Green	1.4	1	(0.40)	East
	West Residential Amenities	0	2	2.00	West
	Total Urban Parks	17.37	21.13	3.76	Total
<i>Total East of Twin Oaks Valley Road</i>		5.08	5.05	(0.03)	East
<i>Total West of Twin Oaks Valley Road</i>		20.25	20.58	0.33	West
Total Urban Plazas and Parks		25.33	25.63	0.30	Total

Land Uses

The adopted University District Specific Plan includes large entertainment and a big-box, anchor retail uses. Due to changes in market conditions, the project now proposes small- to medium-sized retail uses in the Specific Plan area and less entertainment focus. The proposed revisions to Figure III.D: Conceptual Land Use Illustrative show more compact retail uses within the Specific Plan area and more of a grid pattern on the east side of Twin Oaks Valley Road. The revised illustrative maintains the overall vision of an attractive,



pedestrian- and transit-oriented, urban mixed-use neighborhood where residents and visitors interact and engage in a variety of social, cultural, and commercial activities. In addition, the area east of Redel Road and along Industrial Street is proposed as an adaptive reuse area where existing buildings would be re-purposed and new buildings would be added which reflect the overall character of the industrial and agricultural vernacular. Proposed standards for this area are intentionally less prescriptive in the Specific Plan than those for most other areas, but are more closely aligned with the level of standards for Community Buildings to allow for creativity and flexibility in design. The proposed plan includes plazas and paseos throughout this area.

Proposed changes are identified in Table 2: Proposed Changes to Land Use below:

Table 2: Proposed Changes to Land Use, as follows

Land Use	Unit Type	West		East		Total	
		Approved	Proposed	Approved	Proposed	Approved	Proposed
Mixed-Use Residential	Unit	1,800	2,070	800	530	2,600	
Student Housing	Unit	0		800		800	
Hotel	Room	250	200	200	250	450	
General Office	SF	500,000	452,000	138,000	200,000	638,000	
Medical Office	SF	150,000	200,000	150,000	100,000	300,000	
Mixed-Use Retail/Commercial	SF	410,000	100,000	590,000	600,000	1 M	700,000
Civic/Community	SF	30,000		0		30,000	
Parks/Urban Open Space	Acre	20.25	20	5.08	5	25.33	25
Urban Trails/Paths	Mile	1.38		0		1.38	
Habitat Preservation	Acre	15.1		0		15.1	
Public Streets	Acre	17.96	15	8.78	10	26.74	25

Form Based Code

Chapter VI of the University District Specific Plan encompasses the Form Based Code, which is the regulation that applies to all future development/redevelopment within the project area. This code represents the community's intentions regarding urban form and design, and as intended, regulates massing of the proposed development through height restrictions, setbacks, building form and orientation, mix of land uses, as well as parking standards. The proposed changes within this section reflect the proposed street configuration and cross sections, parks and open spaces, grading, and adaptive reuse area. Additionally, proposed changes include allowing student housing and residential uses within Mixed-Use Building A and Mixed-Use Building B types in certain locations, along with temporary uses that are service or education in nature. Proposed changes to Mixed-Use Building A also include removing Anchor Retail Stores around the East Urban Plaza. Upper floor retail, dining, and outdoor dining are proposed to require a Director's Permit, not a Minor Use Permit. Modifications to the landscape palette are proposed to better reflect trees that are appropriate for an urban environment, are water sensitive, and decrease infrastructure maintenance issues that may arise upon mature growth. Additional parking structure standards are proposed to reflect a more urban environment than the City's Municipal Code.



Environmental

A Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was certified for the University District Specific Plan in 2009 (State Clearinghouse No. 2008101083). The FEIR concluded the University District Specific Plan would have significant and unmitigated impacts related to: air quality (project and cumulative), greenhouse gas emissions (cumulative), and traffic (cumulative).

An Addendum to the Final EIR was prepared to analyze the proposed changes to the University District Specific Plan. The Addendum concluded that the certified FEIR adequately addressed the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment. The proposed Specific Plan Amendment would not result in any new environmental impacts that were not disclosed in the FEIR, nor would it increase in the severity of any previously identified impacts. None of the conditions described in Section 15162 of the State CEQA Guidelines calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.

Although development under the proposed Specific Plan reduces traffic generation by approximately 19 percent all of the required mitigation measures are still warranted. This traffic reduction results in a proportional decrease in traffic noise as well as vehicular air emissions and greenhouse gas. The proposed Specific Plan Amendment also reduced the amount of grading on the project site which translates to less construction-related noise and air emissions and that all the mitigation in the EIR still applies.

Attachment(s)

Resolution

Attachment A - Matrix of Proposed Amendments to the University District Specific Plan

Attachment B - Revised University District Specific Plan Amendment (Redline Changes)

Attachment C - Errata Sheet

University District Specific Plan Amendment/Initial Study & Final EIR Addendum

Prepared by:

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Garth Koller, Planner

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Approved/Submitted by:

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Jerry Backoff, Planning Division Director

Attachment "C" - ERRATA SHEET University District Specific Plan

General Comment	
Acknowledgements	Add: Garth Koller, Principal Planner Peter Kuey, Principal Civil Engineer Rick Alzaga, Associate Civil Engineer
Page VI-16	Revise all graphics per text unless otherwise noted below.
Page VI-19	Under Standards: Street Type B - remove 25' (each side of median) 60'
Page VI-20	Street type C changed to C-1 – cross-section does not match striping plan, provide one more lane
Page VI-24	Street Type E – under standards, right of way width shall be 70 feet under Drainage type – delete center median & add curb & gutter
Page VI-27	Street Type G – street not on striping plan , considered a private street
Page VI-32	Street Type K – remove Barham Drive from cross-section and create a separate cross-section for Barham Drive Street Type K for Discovery Street correct cross-section to 132' row
Page VI-33	Street Type L – correct cross-section.
Page III-12	Figure II.H - Correct the Student Housing Village Enlarge Plan to reflect student housing along Barham Drive if approved by City.
Page IV-7	Figure IV.E Twin Oaks Plaza (east) Enlarge Plan shall be approved under the Site Development Plan review.
Page VI-8	Figure VI.B Building and Public Space Regulating Plan per the revised figure said property at southeast corner of B & A-1 Street, the ground floor on the north and east elevation shall consist of retail.
Page III-9	Figure III.E: Neighborhoods/District Illustrative – per revise version, the exposed parking structure facing the freeway shall incorporate architectural treatment to camouflage structure to look like an office building.
Page VI-72	Mixed use Building A: Building Uses – ground floor, permitted by right, references student housing needs to note only allowed if permitted by City.
Page VI-5	Conceptual Grading Plan, proposed wording under Exception C (Build to Line), second line... delete "confer with Planning Director" and replace with "work through the Site Plan Review process" Conceptual Grading Plan, proposed wording under Exception A (Frontage), add, "this does not apply to major streets". Conceptual Grading Plan, proposed wording under Exception B (Ground Floor), second line... delete "confer with Planning Director" and replace with "work through the Site Plan Review process"
New Section	Development Standards for Alternative "adaptive use" – under Description: remove all reference to "residential" located in this area. Under Lot Size and Building Placement, clarify that this applies to industrial or similar buildings that are non-residential.