



DATE: June 26, 2019

AGENDA ITEM # 3

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Complete Streets Commission

FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: 4898 El Camino Real – New Multiple-Family Development

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of Multi-Family Design Review Application D19-002 to the Planning Commission subject to the staff recommendations

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a Design Review application for a new multiple-family development on a .39-acre site at 4898 El Camino Real. The proposal includes 21 condominium units in a five-story building along El Camino Real with two levels of underground parking. The existing site, which is located on the southern side of El Camino Real at the intersection with Jordan Avenue, includes a 8,400 square-foot two-story commercial building with surface parking in front and behind the building. The project site is designated as Thoroughfare Commercial in the General Plan and zoned CT (Commercial Thoroughfare).

The project's Traffic Report is included as Attachment A, memorandum that discusses bicycle and pedestrian access is included as Attachment B, and a condensed version of the project plans that focuses on the project's bicycle, pedestrian, circulation and parking amenities is included as Attachment B.

BACKGROUND

The role of the Complete Streets Commission is to be an advisory body to City Council on bicycle, pedestrian, parking and traffic matters. For development applications, the Commission's role is not specifically defined, but in order to be consistent with the past role of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, the Commission should review and provide a recommendation on the elements of the application that pertain to bicycle, pedestrian, parking and traffic issues.

With regard to traffic analysis, the Circulation Element in the General Plan includes an implementing program (C8) that outlines the criteria for reviewing traffic and circulation for new development as follows:

Evaluate development proposals and design roadway and access improvements based on established Level of Service standards and vehicle trip distribution to minimize impact on local residential and collector streets:

- 1) Require public review of any development project or other proposal that causes an intersection to degrade by one or more levels of service (e.g., LOS A to B, LOS B to D);

- 2) Require a transportation analysis for all development projects resulting in 50 or more net new daily trips. The analysis shall identify potential impacts to intersection and roadway operations, project access, and non-automobile travel modes, and shall identify feasible improvements or project modifications to reduce or eliminate impacts. Impact significance should be consistent with the criteria maintained by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. City staff should have the discretion to require focused studies regarding access, sight distance, and other operational and safety issues;
- 3) As part of the development review process, the primary access for major traffic generators should be established on arterial roadways, and overall access should be designed to minimize traffic intrusion to residential neighborhoods; and
- 4) Only after preparation of an environmental impact report with associated findings, accept Level of Service E or F operations at City-monitored signalized intersections after finding that no practical and feasible improvements can be implemented to mitigate the lower levels of service. A proposed development that causes or exacerbates LOS E or F operations and causes a significant intersection impact should be considered for approval if it will provide a clear, overall benefit to the City (e.g., library expansion or relocation, new community center).

With regards to bicycle parking standards, the City does not have an adopted ordinance, but does rely on the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle Technical Guidelines as a recommended bicycle parking guideline. For general multi-family dwellings, VTA recommends one Class I space per three units and one Class II space per 15 units. A Class I space is defined as one that protects the entire bicycle and its components from theft, vandalism or inclement weather and is appropriate for long-term parking (two hours to all day). A Class II space is defined as a rack to which the frame and at least one wheel can be secured with a user provided U-lock or padlock and cable and is appropriate for short-term parking (less than two hours).

DISCUSSION

Traffic and Site Circulation

The site includes an existing 8,400 square-foot office building that generates 80 average daily trips (ADT), with 0 AM peak hour trips and 16 PM peak hour trips. The proposed project, with 21 new dwelling units, will generate 114 ADT, with 8 AM peak hour trips and 9 PM peak hour trips. This will result in a net increase of 34 ADT, an 8 additional AM peak hour trips and a decrease of 7 PM peak hour trips. Since this is under the City's threshold of 50 net new daily trips, a full transportation impact analysis (TIA) is not required for the project. The project's Traffic Study (Attachment A) provides information to support this conclusion as well as an analysis of project site circulation and access.

The onsite vehicle circulation includes a driveway on Jordan Avenue in roughly the same location as an existing driveway entrance near the southwest corner of the site. The project will remove the existing driveway on Jordan Avenue near the intersection of El Camino Real and the driveway along El Camino Real. To minimize conflicts with the existing street circulation patterns, staff and the applicant identified Jordan Avenue as the most appropriate street to provide site access and discouraged the placement of the new driveway on El Camino Real. The Traffic Study also analyzed the driveway's sight-distance, ramp design, on-site (garage) vehicle circulation, garbage truck access and did not identify any design or functionality issues with these elements.

The Traffic Report includes an analysis of the nearby street network and the intersection of Jordan Avenue and El Camino Real that will receive additional traffic from the project, and evaluated the traffic conditions for four existing and future scenarios as follows:

- Existing Conditions. Existing AM and PM peak-hour traffic volumes at study intersections were based on new traffic counts collected May 9, 2019.
- Existing Plus Project Conditions. Existing plus project conditions reflect the projected traffic volumes on the existing roadway network with completion of the project. Existing plus project conditions were evaluated relative to existing conditions in order to determine potential project impacts.
- Near-Term Conditions. Near-term traffic volumes were estimated by adding to existing traffic counts the additional traffic generated by approved but not yet constructed developments in the area. The study uses a growth factor of two-percent per year until the project opening date to represent traffic growth on El Camino Real.
- Near-Term plus Project Conditions. Near-term plus project traffic volumes were estimated by adding to near-term traffic volumes the additional traffic generated by the project. Near-term plus project conditions were evaluated relative to near-term conditions in order to determine potential project impacts.

Based on this analysis, the Traffic Study found that the intersection Jordan Avenue and El Camino Real would operate at acceptable levels of service under all analysis scenarios. The amount of traffic generated would be low, and there would be no impact on the greater transportation network.

In addition to the findings, the Traffic Study provided two recommendations to enhance vehicle circulation, parking usage and bicycle parking as follows:

- A STOP sign and stop bar at the garage exit to advise motorists to STOP before exiting the driveway.
- A “Car Coming” warning sign should be provided on the wall next to the parking garage entrance to alert pedestrians and bicyclists of vehicles exiting the garage.

These recommendations have been incorporated into staff’s recommendations, which can be found at the end of the report.

Parking

The onsite parking includes two levels of below-grade parking spaces to serve the residential units. For multiple-family projects that include at least 10 percent of the units as affordable (below market rate) and are within ¼ mile of a major transit stop, an on-site parking requirement of ½ space per bedroom is permitted (Zoning Chapter 14.28.040.G.2). Since the project has 21 units, with a total of 38 bedrooms, a minimum of 19 on-site parking spaces are required by the Code. As shown on the project plans, the project is providing a total of 55 on-site parking spaces in the underground garage for the condominiums, including eight below-grade guest parking spaces on the upper level of the basement. Thus, the project is significantly exceeding the Zoning Code’s on-site parking requirement for a project that includes affordable units and is accessible to public transit. Therefore, the parking supply is adequate to serve a project of this size and type.

Transit Stop

A bus stop is located east of the El Camino Real frontage, in front of the 4906 El Camino Real, serves the VTA bus line 22. The site is approximately 0.3 miles from the San Antonio Transit Center on Showers Drive, which provides access to VTA bus lines, and approximately 0.8 miles from the San Antonio CalTrain station. Thus, the project will have good access to nearby transit options.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

As recommended by the VTA guidelines, the project should provide at least seven Class I bicycle parking spaces and two Class II spaces. As specified on the Lower Level Basement Plan (A3A), a total of 42 secure bike storage spaces and four electric bicycle racks with 110kW electrical outlets in the underground parking garage are proposed. In addition, two Class II bicycle racks (four spaces) are proposed near the lobby entrances for the condominium building (see sheet L-2). Overall, the proposed project's bicycle parking will exceed the VTA Guidelines for bicycle parking spaces for both the residential and commercial uses.

The project will be replacing the public sidewalk along its Jordan Avenue and El Camino Real frontages and improving the pedestrian environment at the intersection with Jordan Avenue. Along El Camino Real, the new sidewalk will be 7.5 feet wide, with a new street tree and landscaping along the back of the sidewalk. Along Jordan Avenue, the new sidewalk will be five feet wide, with two new street trees and landscaping along the back of the sidewalk. The project will add new ADA ramps to improve connections to crosswalk across El Camino Real and Jordan Avenue. Interior to the site, new pathways and other pedestrian amenities will be provided. The project plans include details and illustrative drawings to demonstrate the proposed pedestrian and user amenities. Overall, the project's pedestrian amenities and improvements appear to meet or exceed all applicable City policies and guidelines.

Environmental Review

It is anticipated that this project will be categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15332 of the California Environmental Quality Act because it is an in-fill development on a site in an urban setting that is under five-acres in size. A more detailed analysis will be conducted prior to the Planning Commission public hearing.

Attachments:

- A. Traffic Report, Hexagon Transportation Consultants
- B. Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Memorandum
- C. Project Plans

RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. Install a “STOP” sign and stop bar at the garage exit to advise motorists to STOP before exiting the driveway.
2. Install a “Car Coming” warning sign should be provided on the wall next to the parking garage entrance to alert pedestrians and bicyclists of vehicles exiting the garage.