



DATE: August 28, 2019

AGENDA ITEM # 5

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Complete Streets Commission

FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: 4350 El Camino Real – New Multiple-Family Development

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of Multiple-Family Design Review Application 18-D-11 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 0.66-acre site at 4350 El Camino Real. The proposal includes 47 condominium units in a five-story building along El Camino Real with two levels of underground parking and a ground level common area at the rear of the building. The site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of El Camino Real and Los Altos Avenue, and it is currently occupied by a gasoline service station, surface parking, and perimeter landscaping. The 1,466 square-foot gasoline service station building includes a convenience market, auto repair shop, and pump islands covered by fuel canopies. The project site is designated as Thoroughfare Commercial in the General Plan and zoned CT (Commercial Thoroughfare).

The project's Traffic Study is included as Attachment A, and a condensed version of the project plans that focus 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 traffic produced by a new development and the locations where that traffic would appear are estimated using a three-step process: (1) trip generation, (2) trip distribution, and (3) trip assignment. In determining project trip generation, the magnitude of traffic entering and exiting the site is estimated for the AM and PM peak hours. As part of the project trip distribution, standard trip generation rates were applied for the proposed development in accordance with the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) manual entitled Trip Generation, 10th edition. The trip rates for a Multiple-family Housing – Mid-Rise land use were used for the project to estimate total trips generated by the proposed multiple-family building. Daily and peak hour trips generated by the existing gas station on the site were counted on Wednesday May 29, 2019.

Many of the trips generated by gas stations are referred to as “pass-by” trips. Pass-by trips are intermediate stops on the way from an origin to a destination without diverting to another roadway. Typically, gas stations are an immediate stop along the primary trip destination. Thus, a pass-by trip reduction was applied to the gas station. Trips generated by the existing gas station were then compared to the trips that would be generated by the proposed residential development. Project trip generation estimates are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Project Trip Generation											
		AM Peak Hour Trips				PM Peak Hour Trips				Daily Rate	Daily Trips
Land Use	Size	Rate	In	Out	Total	Rate	In	Out	Total		
Mid-Rise Multifamily Housing	47 units	0.36	4	13	17	0.44	13	8	21	5.44	256
Existing Gasoline/Service Station ²	12 fuel pumps		-31	-29	-60	-	-44	-43	-87	76.75	-921
-Pass-by trip reduction ³	-		19	18	37	-	25	24	49	-	543
<i>Net Existing Trips</i>	-		-12	-11	-23		-19	-19	-55		-378
Net Project Trip Generation			-8	-2	-6		-6	-11	-17		-122

Notes:

Trip rates for multifamily and gas station pass-by are from the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition, 2017.

¹Mid-Rise Multifamily Housing (Land Use 221) average rates expressed in trips per dwelling unit (DU) are used.

²Existing gas station trips from driveway count 5/29/19.

³Average pass-by trip reduction percentage of 62 percent in the AM peak hour and 56 percent in the PM peak hour. Daily reduction percentage is the average of AM and PM peak-hour percentage.

The existing gasoline service station generates an average of 378 daily trips (ADT), with 23 AM peak hour trips and 38 PM peak hour trips. The proposed project, with 47 new dwelling units, will generate 256 ADT, with 17 AM peak hour trips and 21 PM peak hour trips. This will result in a net reduction of 122 ADT, and a decrease of 6 AM peak hour trips and a decrease of 17 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’s site circulation and access.

The Traffic Study includes an analysis of the nearby street network and the intersections of El Camino Real and Los Altos Avenue, and El Camino Real and Del Medio Avenue 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 in May 2019.
- Existing Plus Project Conditions. Existing plus project conditions reflect the projected traffic volumes on the existing roadway network with completion of the project.

- 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.

The results of the level of service analysis for existing plus project and near-term plus project scenarios are shown in Table 2 and 3, respectively. The intersection level of service calculation sheets are included in Appendix B of the Traffic Study (Attachment A).

Table 2: Existing Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service							
Intersections	Peak Hour	Existing		Existing plus Project			
		Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Δ in Critical Delay	Δ in Critical V/C
1. El Camino Real & Los Altos Avenue	AM	21.1	C+	21.2	C+	0.1	0.011
	PM	13.5	B	12.0	B+	-1.5	-0.019
2. El Camino Real & Del Medio Avenue	AM	29.4	C	29.7	C	0.3	0.004
	PM	21.5	C+	21.8	C+	0.2	-0.001

As shown in Table 2 above, the proposed project would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections beyond the City’s acceptable LOS standards in the existing plus project scenario.

Table 3: Near-Term Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service							
Intersections	Peak Hour	Near-Term		Near-Term plus Project			
		Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Δ in Critical Delay	Δ in Critical V/C
1. El Camino Real & Los Altos Avenue	AM	19.9	B-	20.1	C+	0.2	0.011
	PM	12.8	B	11.3	B+	-1.5	-0.019
2. El Camino Real & Del Medio Avenue	AM	28.3	C	28.6	C	0.3	0.004
	PM	20.8	C+	21.0	C+	0.2	-0.001

As shown in Table 3 above, the proposed project would not increase traffic volumes at the affected intersections beyond the City’s acceptable LOS standards in the near-term plus project scenario. The amount of traffic generated would be low, and there would be no impact on the greater transportation network.

The onsite vehicle circulation includes a driveway on El Camino Real in roughly the same location as an existing driveway entrance. The project will remove one existing driveway on El Camino Real and two driveways on Los Altos Avenue. To minimize conflicts with the existing street circulation patterns, staff and the applicant identified El Camino Real as the most appropriate street to provide

site access. 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 Study provided one recommendation to enhance vehicle circulation and parking usage as follows:

- A STOP sign and stop bar at the garage exit to advise motorists to STOP before exiting the driveway.

The recommendation has 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) an on-site parking requirement of one parking space for one-bedrooms and two parking spaces for two to three bedrooms is permitted (Zoning Code Section 14.28.040.G). Since the project has 47 units, a minimum of 84 on-site parking spaces are required by the Code. As shown on the project plans, the project is providing a total of 84 on-site parking spaces in the underground garage for the condominiums. Thus, the project meets 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. It should be noted that since the project is within one-half mile of a major transit stop and located within a high-quality transit corridor, it is eligible for a further on-site parking reduction. However, the applicant has not made such a request for this project.

Transit Stop

The project site is proximate to bus stops for VTA routes 22 and 522, with the nearest bus stop located adjacent to the site on El Camino Real. The site is generally well-served by transit; with VTA bus stops located on both sides of El Camino Real and the San Antonio Caltrain station located approximately one mile northeast of the site. The site is approximately 0.6 miles from the San Antonio Transit Center on Showers Drive, which provides access to additional VTA bus lines. Thus, the project is well placed for its residents to utilize public transit and is consistent with the Los Altos General Plan policies that encourage the use of public transit.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

As recommended by the VTA guidelines, the project should provide at least 16 Class I bicycle parking spaces and four Class II spaces. As specified on the Lower Level Basement Plan (A2.0), a total of 30 secure bike storage spaces in a locked bicycle room are proposed, which are considered Class I equivalent. In addition, two Class II bicycle racks (four spaces) are proposed near the lobby entrances for the condominium building (see sheet A1.0). Overall, the proposed project's bicycle parking will meet and exceed the VTA Guidelines for bicycle parking spaces for a new residential use.

The proposed project would provide sidewalks and street trees along the El Camino Real and Los Altos Avenue frontages to facilitate pedestrian travel in the surrounding area. The City's Pedestrian Master Plan includes goals, policies and actions for improving the pedestrian environment in Los Altos, including planning for pedestrian accommodation and facilities that serve people of all ages and abilities, developing a safe pedestrian network, and increasing pedestrian mode share. The proposed

project would include pedestrian access points to existing facilities and would support the goals of the Pedestrian Master Plan.

Santa Rita Elementary School and Egan Junior High School are both within a one-mile radius of the proposed residential development. The City of Los Altos created Suggested Routes to Schools Maps for ½-mile and one-mile walking radii, and the most likely walking and biking routes between the project and school sites are along Los Altos Avenue and Portola Avenue.

The project will add new ADA ramps to improve connections to crosswalk across El Camino Real and Los Altos 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

This project will require an environmental initial study and a Mitigated Negative Declaration as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. This evaluation is currently underway and will be completed prior to review by the Planning Commission.

Attachments:

- A. Traffic Study, Hexagon Transportation Consultants
- B. Project Plans

RECOMMENDATIONS

4350 El Camino Real – 19-D-01

1. Install a “STOP” sign and stop bar at the garage exit to advise motorists to STOP before exiting the driveway.