



**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT
December 10, 2024**

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DATA SUMMARY:

Application Number: 24PLN-42
Subject: Conceptual Development Review for a residential development proposal. The development includes 16 detached single-family homes.
Location/APN: West side of Gates Place / APN 035-600-004
Applicant: Nevada County Habitat for Humanity
Zoning/General Plan: Community Business Park (CBP) / Business Park (BP)
Entitlement: Conceptual Development Review
Environmental Status: TBD upon formal application submittal

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Development Review Committee review the conceptual plans and offer comments relative to service requirements, public and private improvements, entitlement processing, Development Code compliance and design standards. No formal action is to be taken on this Conceptual Development Review application.

BACKGROUND:

The subject ±2-acre property is located on the west side of Gates Place, just north of the intersection with Nevada City Highway. The property is currently vacant and is zoned Community Business Park, which allows 8 dwelling units per acre as part of a mixed-use development.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Conceptual Development Review for a residential development proposal for 16 detached single-family units. The proposal does not include a non-residential component, and therefore would require a modification to the existing zoning and/or general plan designation to support a fully residential product. The two possible paths that would result in compatible zoning and land use designation that supports the conceptual proposal are detailed below:

1. Complete a Zoning Text Amendment to develop a “Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)” combining district that would allow residential developments in commercial zones that permit mixed-use projects to omit the non-residential component if the units are eligible to meet the City’s unmet lower- or moderate-income RHNA targets. Simultaneously, complete a General Plan Amendment to modify the text for the Business Park land use designation to allow 100% residential projects for eligible developments and apply for the Zoning Map Amendment to apply the new combining district, should it be supported by Council, to the subject property, preserving the CBP base zoning and BP land use designation.

2. Apply for a Zoning Map Amendment and General Plan Amendment to rezone the subject property to a compatible residential zone and designation, such as Two Family Residential (R-2) and Urban Medium Density (UMD), which permit 8 units per acre without a mixed-use requirement.

Option 1 would result in a combining district that could be applied to other properties that meet the eligibility criteria to meet the City's RHNA targets in existing mixed-use zones, while Option 2 is limited to only the subject property.

General Plan – The current General Plan land use designation for the project site is Business Park (BP), which allows residential development in mixed-use projects, with density regulated by the applicable zoning district. In order to eliminate the non-residential component, the project would require a General Plan Amendment to amend the text of the BP designation to allow fully residential projects in certain circumstances, or to change the designation to a residential land use, such as Urban Medium Density (UMD).

Zoning – The parcel is currently zoned Community Business Park (CBP) which allows up to 8 dwelling units per acre as part of a mixed-use product. In order to accommodate a residential development that allows at least 16 dwelling units without a non-residential component, the project would require either a new combining district that omits the mixed-use requirement for eligible projects or to apply a residential zone, such as Two Family Residential (R-2).

Tentative Subdivision Map – A Tentative Subdivision Map is required for division of the property for sale, lease, or financing.

Planned Development – If the applicant would like to deviate from City standards for elements such as setbacks, minimum parcel size, etc. it is recommended that they apply for a Planned Development Permit. The Planned Development process is intended to provide for flexibility in the application of Development Code standards under limited and unique circumstances. The purpose is to allow consideration of innovation in site planning and other aspects of project design, and more effective design responses to site features, uses on adjoining properties, and environmental impacts than the Development Code standards would produce without adjustment. The City expects each Planned Development Permit project to be of obvious, significantly higher quality than would be achieved through conventional design practices and standards.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

The ±3.14-acre site is an undeveloped parcel with moderate to steep slopes. Between the southern most portion of the parcel and the area where development is proposed is approximately a 50% incline. However, the bulk of the development is an area with more moderate slopes in the northern portion of the parcel, with slopes ranging from mild to moderate slopes up to 20%. The site appears to be covered with mixed oak species, grasses, and some conifer trees. The site slopes to the south down toward

Nevada City Highway. Any work done on slopes greater than 30 percent must comply with Chapter 17.54 of the Grass Valley Municipal Code for hillside development.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

In order to prepare the appropriate environment document pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), at a minimum, the project will require a biological resource study, an air quality/greenhouse gas emissions study, a traffic study, preliminary geotechnical report, and a letter from the North Central Information Center indicating whether a cultural resource study should be prepared.

PROJECT REVIEW COMMENTS:

The following are suggested comments for review of the proposed project. The Development Review Committee should develop recommendations on the Conceptual Design Review application prior to a formal application submittal:

A. PLANNING

- a. There are two possible mechanisms to maintain the residential density currently allowed on this parcel without the non-residential component of a mixed-use project:
 - i. Option 1: Maintain the Community Business Park (CBP) base zoning and apply for a Zoning Text Amendment to add a “Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)” combining district to the Development Code that could be applied to any parcel in a commercial zone where residential uses currently require a mixed-use component. The application of the combining district would exempt a property from having to meet the mixed-use component if all of the units would be eligible to meet the City’s lower- or moderate-income RHNA targets. The applicant would also apply for a General Plan Amendment to amend the text for the Business Park designation to allow eligible projects to be exempt from the mixed-use requirement, and a Zoning Map Amendment to apply the new combining district to the subject property. These applications are discretionary processes.
 - 1. Zoning Text Amendment: A Zoning Text Amendment requires that you provide a narrative that justifies the required findings:
 - a. The proposed amendment is consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plan;
 - b. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the city; and
 - c. The proposed amendment is internally consistent with other provisions of the development code.
 - 2. General Plan Amendment: A General Plan Amendment requires that you provide a narrative that justifies the required findings:
 - a. The amendment is internally consistent with all other provisions of the General Plan;

- b. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City; and,
 - c. The affected site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics, and the provision of public emergency vehicle (e.g. fire and medical) access and public services and utilities (e.g. fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal, etc.), to ensure that the proposed or anticipated uses and/or development would not endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located.
3. Zoning Map Amendment: The current zoning (CBP) requires a mixed-use component for residential projects. In order to accommodate residential without a non-residential component, the project would require a rezone to apply the new combining district. A Zoning Map Amendment requires that you provide a narrative that justifies the required the same findings as those listed above for Zoning Text Amendments and General Plan Amendments.
- ii. Option 2: Apply for a General Plan Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the subject property to at least the Two Family Residential (R-2) zone and Urban Medium Density (UMD) land use designation, or any other higher density residential zone and designation. This is application is a discretionary review process.
 - 1. Zoning Map Amendment: The current zoning (CBP) requires a mixed-use component for residential projects. In order to accommodate residential without a non-residential component, the project would require a rezone to support exclusively residential development. The required findings for this Zoning Map Amendment are the same as those listed above.
 - b. Any grading, improvements, or other work done on hillsides with greater than 30 percent inclines must comply with the requirements of Chapter 17.54 of the Grass Valley Municipal Code for Hillside and Ridgeline Development.
 - c. The site and building design should be consistent with city design guidelines, which are available at: https://www.cityofgrassvalley.com/sites/main/files/file-attachments/community_design_guidelines_rev_2011_0.pdf?1572391136:
 - d. In order to prepare the appropriate environment document pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), at a minimum, the project will require a biological resource study, an air quality/greenhouse gas emissions study, a traffic study, preliminary geotechnical report, and a letter from the North Central Information Center indicating whether a cultural resource study should be prepared. To contact the North Central Information Center, call the Department of Anthropology at (916) 278-6217. The applicant will also need to fill out the Environmental Application available on the city's website.

- e. An HOA or other site management agency should be established to maintain communal open spaces and roads.
- f. The applicant will be required to provide a will-serve letter from the Nevada Irrigation District (NID).
- g. The applicant will be required to submit a Dust Control Plan for grading activities to the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District for approval.

B. ENGINEERING

- a. Attached are the standard checklists for a grading permit, lot line adjustment, and parcel/final maps. Comments specifically related to this project are highlighted in yellow in the checklists.
- b. Required offsite improvements will be those that are shown in the proposal (curb, gutter, sidewalk, and paving).
- c. A development of this size would likely not trigger the need for a traffic study.

C. FIRE

Fire Apparatus Access

- a. All roads I streets shall be designed in accordance with CFC Appendix D, including but not limited to:
 - i. C - Residential Alley Roads shall be:
 - 1. Twenty (20) feet in width.
 - 2. One Hundred-Fifty (150) feet in length maximum, as measured from the centerline of A - Minor Residential Street Parking One-side (main street).
 - 3. If greater than one hundred-fifty (150) feet in length a dead-end fire apparatus access road turnaround designed in accordance with CFC Appendix D, Table D103.1 shall be required.
 - ii. A - Minor Residential Street Parking one-side (main street) shall be:
 - 1. Twenty-six (26) feet in width, unobstructed, where a fire hydrant is located.
 - 2. Width of parking areas cannot be included as part of the twenty-six (26) feet width due to obstruction presented by vehicles.

Water Supply

- a. Fire Hydrant Spacing shall be in accordance with CFC Appendix C, Table C102.1, including but not limited to:
 - i. Average Spacing between hydrants:
 - 1. Five Hundred (500) feet.
 - 1. A 25-percent spacing increase shall be permitted for approved NFPA 13D-16 fire sprinkler systems.
- b. Maximum Distance from any point on street or road frontage to a hydrant:
 - i. Two Hundred-Fifty (250) feet.
 - 1. A 25-percent spacing increase shall be permitted for approved NFPA 130-16 fire sprinkler systems.

General

- a. Project shall require a *Vegetation Fuels Management Plan* to be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau for the City of Grass Valley Fire Department, for review and approval prior to commencement of grading work.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity /Aerial Map
2. Applications
3. Applicant Project Description
4. Conceptual Site Exhibit
5. Standard Engineering Checklists
6. Land Use Application Fee Schedule