



**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE  
STAFF REPORT  
August 27, 2024**

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**Prepared by:** Amy Wolfson, City Planner

**DATA SUMMARY:**

**Application Number:** 24PLN-28  
**Subject:** Conceptual Development Review for a residential development proposal that will require annexation to the city. The development includes 130 multi-family units, 22 duplex units, and 14 single-family units for a total of 166 units.  
**Location/APN:** 12000 block of Old Tunnel Road /035-396-008, -011, -012, 035-400-065, & -66  
**Applicant:** Martin Wood, SCO Planning & Engineering  
**Zoning/General Plan:** No City Pre-zone/Urban Estate Density Residential  
**Entitlement:** Conceptual Development Review  
**Environmental Status:** TBD upon formal application submittal

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**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 ±27-acre property is located at the intersection of Old Tunnel Road and Town Talk Road, just north of three apartment complexes and across the street from Brunswick Commons. The County's zoning designation is RA-1.5, which would allow a total of 18 dwelling units if developed in the County.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Conceptual Development Review for a residential development proposal including 130 multi-family units, 22 duplex units, and 14 single-family units for a total of 166 units. The property is within unincorporated Nevada County and requires annexation into the City of Grass Valley among other land use entitlements. Entitlements include Annexation, Pre-Zone, Tentative Subdivision Map, Development Review and Planned Development as outlined.

*Annexation* – The annexation process is facilitated by the Nevada Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo). This project site is currently outside the city limits, within the long-term sphere planning horizon and will require annexation and an amendment to the near-term planning horizon.

*General Plan* – The current General Plan land use designation for the project site is Urban Estate Density (UED), which allows up to a maximum of one dwelling unit per acre. In order to accommodate multi-family development and the 166 dwelling units proposed on the 27-acre site, the project would require a General Plan Amendment to support up to 6 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with the Urban Medium Density land use designation.

*Pre-zone* –Pre-zoning is required as part of the annexation process and would need to be proposed for Medium Density Residential zoning designation (R-2A) in order to be compatible with the UMD General Plan designation. The R-2A Zone is applied to areas of the City that are appropriate for a variety of higher density housing types, located in proximity to parks, schools, and public services. 3,500 square feet of site area is required per unit in the R-2A Zone.

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

*Development Review* – In accordance with Table 7 – 2, a Development Review Permit is required for Duplex or multi-family unit projects with five or more dwellings. The design is subject to the City’s Design Guidelines.

*Planned Development* – A Planned Development Permit is recommended to deviate from City standards for elements such as setbacks, minimum parcel size, etc. 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 ±27-acre site is an undeveloped parcel with mild to moderate slopes between 9% and 21% with the bulk of the development proposed within the milder slope area. The site appears to be covered with mixed-conifer trees, dominated by cedars and ponderosa pines, and some oak species. The site slopes westerly from the D-S Canal down toward Old Tunnel Road.

**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. General Plan Amendment: The project would require a General Plan Amendment to support up to 6 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with the Urban Medium Density land use designation. A General Plan Amendment requires that you provide a narrative that justifies the required findings:
  - i. The amendment is internally consistent with all other provisions of the General Plan
  - ii. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City; and,
  - iii. 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.
- b. 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](https://www.cityofgrassvalley.com/sites/main/files/file-attachments/community_design_guidelines_rev_2011_0.pdf?1572391136));
- c. 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.
- d. Consider adding a recreational amenity since there are no public park or recreational facilities nearby the project.

- e. An HOA or other site management agency should be established to maintain a forested aesthetic around the project site with a management entity such as an HOA to ensure fire and ladder fuels are managed appropriately.

**B. Engineering:**

The Engineering Comments for this project are as follows:

- a. Attached are the standard checklists for a grading permit, lot line adjustment, and parcel/final maps. Without additional details, Engineering does not know if all the checklists will apply, but these checklists should be referenced if submitting for any of those entitlements.
- b. Offsite improvements that will be required include sidewalk, curb and gutter along both Old Tunnel Road and Town Talk Road to the limits of the new home construction (if the bottom portion of the parcel is not to be developed at this time, the offsite improvements in that location would be conditioned with the building permit for that area).
- c. The sewer main ends approximately 300' south of Town Talk Road on Old Tunnel Road. The City would require that the sewer be extended up Town Talk to serve the new development.
- d. A traffic study will be required as this large of a development may severely impact the intersection of Old Tunnel Road and Brunswick Road requiring the installation of a traffic signal.

**C. Fire:**

- a. TBD

**D. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:**

- a. According to the NSAQMD Rule 226, "A dust control plan must be submitted to, and approved by, the Air Pollution Control Officer before topsoil is disturbed on any project where more than one acre of natural surface area is to be altered..." Therefore, a Dust Control Plan will be required. If needed, the minimum dust plan requirements can be provided to the applicant to assist with this process. (The site is not located on mapped asbestos soils, so more extreme dust control measures are not required.)
- b. Actual allowable square footage is determined by occupancy, type of construction and setbacks to property lines. Information on plans is insufficient to determine if building size is allowed. Note: a building this size is not allowed to be constructed as a type VB building far as general air pollution is concerned, this location presents an opportunity for a low emission development. The proximity to services, such as a grocery store, pharmacy, restaurants, the motor vehicle administration, and a medical clinic could create a walkable community that enables low personal car usage. To

promote this type of use, care must be taken in planning. The preliminary plans do not show necessary facilities, such as grade separated sidewalks, crosswalks, and enhanced shade coverage through street trees (located between the sidewalk and roadway) that would need to be present to encourage pedestrian use in a warm climate. Ideally there would also be close coordination with the neighboring developments to allow pedestrian walkways and pass-throughs for efficient travel. This type of planning can not only allow more sustainable growth in the community, but it can also alleviate some of the traffic concerns of neighboring.

**E. Nevada Irrigation District:**

NID Comments by Department:

- a. Encroachments: No existing violations, all new construction must respect the ROW, any facility put within easement will require an encroachment permit.
- b. ROW: Site plans need to include any/all existing NID easements. Proposed NID on site facilities will require standard easements approved by NID staff
- c. Operations: No water connections to transmission main transversing property will be allowed.
- d. Engineering: Will require a mainline extension, may require looping of mainline.

**F. Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO):**

- a. Documentation that the City and Nevada Irrigation District municipal services including water, wastewater, fire, and emergency response service can be provided is required. LAFCo will use this information to update the Municipal Service Review determinations in the context of Annexation
- b. Detachment from Nevada County Consolidated Fire District to the City of Grass Valley would be included in LAFCo's action
- c. A LAFCO annexation application to the City of Grass Valley is required following Planning Commission and City Council consideration of the project.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. Vicinity /Aerial Map
- 2. Applications (Conceptual Review)
- 3. Conceptual Site Exhibit