



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: AUGUST 15, 2006

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: GPS-06-04 GENERAL PLAN SCREENING REQUEST FOR 352-382 VICTORIA STREET

DATE: JULY 31, 2006

FROM: PLANNING DIVISION/DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER
(714) 754-5278

RECOMMENDATION

Accept proposed General Plan amendment screening request, contingent upon the concurrent processing of the General Plan amendment, rezone, development project, tentative tract map.

BACKGROUND

General Plan Screening Criteria

City Council Policy 500-2 establishes a procedure for processing privately initiated General Plan amendments. This procedure involves a City Council screening of these requests prior to their acceptance for formal processing. The policy includes three criteria for accepting requests and two criteria for rejecting requests. The acceptance criteria are as follows:

1. A General Plan amendment is necessary to resolve inconsistency between the General Plan designation and zoning of a parcel.
2. A General Plan amendment is necessary to provide a uniform land use designation on a single parcel.
3. A General Plan amendment would result in decreased traffic impacts from the property.

The criteria for rejecting an application are as follows:

1. The request applies to a single small lot or a small area, especially if the change would make the property inconsistent with surrounding properties.

2. The property is located in the Redevelopment Area and requires action by the Redevelopment Agency to amend the Redevelopment Plan.

In addition to the above criteria, the policy also states that no request shall be accepted that would increase the overall, citywide development cap. It does, however, allow amendments that would result in development exchanges or transfers to be considered. The policy also acknowledges these criteria are only guidelines and City Council may accept an application which does not meet the criteria if it finds there are overriding reasons to do so.

ANALYSIS

Project Summary Sheet

A one-page, project summary sheet is attached for the screening request. This summary sheet provides the following information:

- General Plan Land Use Map and Aerial Photograph
- Project Description, Land Use and Traffic Evaluation
- Justification for Acceptance

Traffic Analysis Required

While a preliminary traffic evaluation was completed for the screening request, a detailed traffic analysis with the project-specific environmental review will be required at the time of project submittal.

In consultation with the Transportation Services Manager, the traffic analysis for the development project would generally include, where applicable, the following information:

- Pedestrian and vehicle circulation plan.
- Analysis of any increased traffic in relation to existing and projected traffic levels.

Victoria Street Specific Plan

The Victoria Street Specific Plan was adopted in 1976 to encourage lot consolidation along the north side of Victoria Street (260 – 340 Victoria Street). The Specific Plan area is located immediately east of the project site and provides precedent for residential densities above 20 du/ac along Victoria Street.

Modified development standards and higher zoning designations (density bonus incentives) were offered for lot combinations which met certain square footage/width requirements. Excluding the convalescent hospital (340 Victoria), a dental office (300 Victoria), and a small office building (276 Victoria), lots were consolidated and/or rezoned to R2-HD or R3. The Specific Plan allowed residential densities of up to 30 du/ac.

The Victoria Street Specific Plan was repealed in 1993 because it achieved what it was set out to accomplish, with the exceptions noted above. Additionally, the 1990 General Plan reduced maximum densities in the High Density Residential land use designation

from 30 units/acre to 20 units/acre. The applicant's efforts to consolidate five different properties for a high-density residential project at 26 du/ac is similar to the original objectives of the Victoria Street Specific Plan.

Lot Consolidation

The consolidation of five separate parcels into a single 3.34-acre residential development is integral to staff's support of the acceptance of this screening request for processing. Therefore, staff recommends that Council's acceptance be contingent upon concurrent processing of the General Plan amendment, rezone, development project, and tentative tract map. This would eliminate the possibility of the individual five parcels from being designated with a site-specific density of 26 du/ac.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

City Council has the following alternatives available for consideration:

1. Accept the screening request contingent upon concurrent processing of General Plan amendment, rezone, development project, and tentative tract map. Pursuant to Council Policy 500-2, Council may acknowledge that the General Plan screening criteria are only guidelines and that City Council may accept an application that does not meet the criteria based on other considerations. The justification for approving the screening request is provided on the summary sheet.
2. Deny the screening request. Denial of the screening request would maintain the existing High Density Residential designation of 20 du/ac and corresponding land use regulations.

FISCAL REVIEW

Fiscal review is not required for this item.

LEGAL REVIEW

Legal review is not required for this item.

CONCLUSION

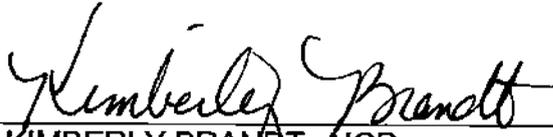
Staff has concerns regarding this site-specific density proposal, but the relative merits of the project warrant further evaluation/analysis.

In terms of the acceptance criteria, this proposal would not meet any of the three acceptance criteria. The proposal does not achieve the following objectives: (a) resolve a General Plan/zoning inconsistency, (b) provide a uniform land use designation on a single parcel, nor (c) decrease vehicle trips. In addition, site-specific densities are typically supported in conjunction with a comprehensive master plan to guide the long-term physical development of a large area (e.g. residential high rises at South Coast Plaza Town Center).

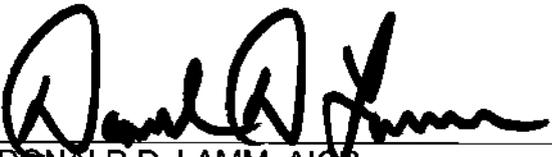
Based on a preliminary traffic and land use analysis, staff believes that the screening request merits further consideration through the General Plan amendment process. It is important to note the development proposal will be subject to further environmental analysis (e.g. mitigated negative declaration). Furthermore, acceptance of the screening request does not set precedent for approval nor constitute the approval of a development project. The approval of a screening request strictly allows the applicant to further research/develop the proposal and provide City Council with an opportunity to review the relative merits of the proposed request in greater detail prior to final action.



CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP
Senior Planner



KIMBERLY BRANDT, AICP
Principal Planner



DONALD D. LAMM, AICP
Deputy City Mgr. – Dev. Svs. Director

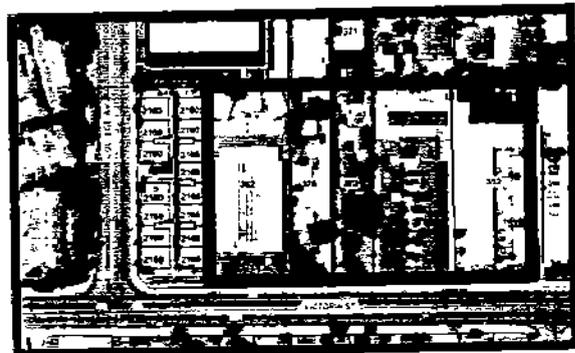
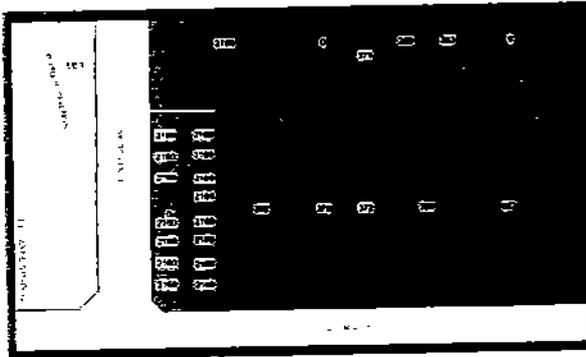
- Attachments:
- 1. Summary Sheet
 - 2. Site Photos
 - 3. Conceptual Site Plans/Sample Architecture
 - 4. Applicant Letter

cc: City Manager
Assistant City Manager
City Attorney
Public Services Director
Transportation Svs. Mgr.
Associate Engineer
City Clerk
Staff (4)
File (2)

Bryan Coggins
1835 Newport Blvd., A109
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Peter Buffa
2824 Nevis Circle
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

GPS-06-04 Victoria Residential Project by the Preface Group at 352-382 Victoria Street



GENERAL PLAN SCREENING REQUEST

The General Plan screening request is for a site-specific density of 26 dwelling units per acre for a 3.34 acre (combined) project site at 352-382 Victoria Street. A Zoning Code amendment and rezone of the property from R3 to Planned Development Residential – High Density (PDR-HD) will be required. The proposed project involves the complete demolition of the 60 existing dwelling units and construction of up to 85 dwelling units. The three story lofts/townhome development will include open space and recreational amenity areas and will feature for-sale housing.

LAND USE ANALYSIS

The project site has a High Density Residential General Plan designation which would allow a density of 20 dwelling units per acre. If the five parcels were combined, the existing density would be 18 dwelling units per acre. However, the properties at 360 and 352 Victoria Street currently have nonconforming densities of 21.5 du/ac and 28 du/ac, respectively. The request is for an additional 6 dwelling units per acre above the General Plan density allowance (max. 67 units allowed/max. 85 units proposed). In the proposed Planned Development Residential zone, the review/approval of a master plan is required. The Master Plan process would ensure that proposed building setbacks, structure orientation, placement of windows, outdoor amenity spaces, and noise attenuation, would be compatible with adjacent residential properties and the adjacent Victoria Health Center.

PRELIMINARY TRAFFIC EVALUATION

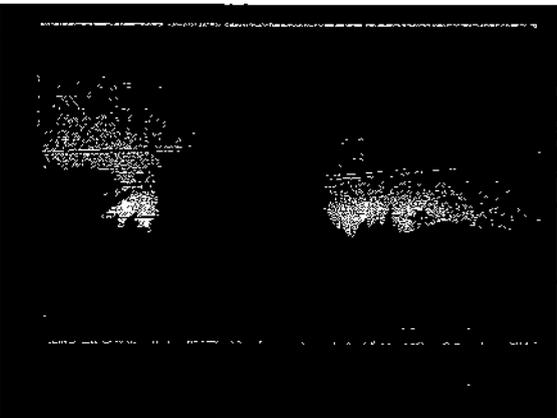
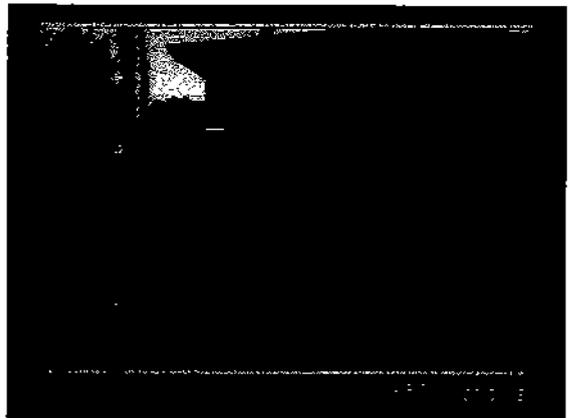
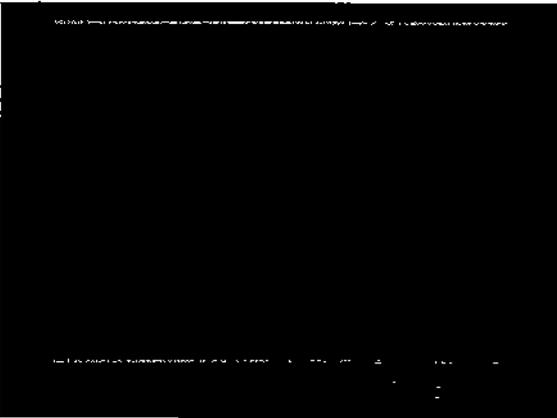
While the proposed project would involve a minor increase in average daily trips by 29 percent, this is not considered a significant traffic impact.

Traffic Scenario	AM Peak Hour Trips	PM Peak Hour Trips	Average Daily Trips
General Plan Conditions: 67 dwelling units (20 du/ac)	34	41	449
Proposed Project Conditions: 85 dwelling units (26 du/ac)	44	53	578
Percentage Increase	+29%	+29%	+29%

JUSTIFICATION FOR ACCEPTANCE OF SCREENING REQUEST

Staff has concerns regarding this site-specific density proposal but the relative merits of the project may warrant further evaluation/analysis. The proposal does not meet the acceptance criteria: (a) resolve a General Plan/zoning inconsistency, (b) provide a uniform land use designation on a single parcel, nor (c) decrease vehicle trips. In addition, site-specific densities are typically supported in conjunction with a comprehensive master plan to guide the long-term physical development of a large area (e.g. residential high rises at South Coast Plaza Town Center). However, staff recommends acceptance based on certain merits of the proposal:

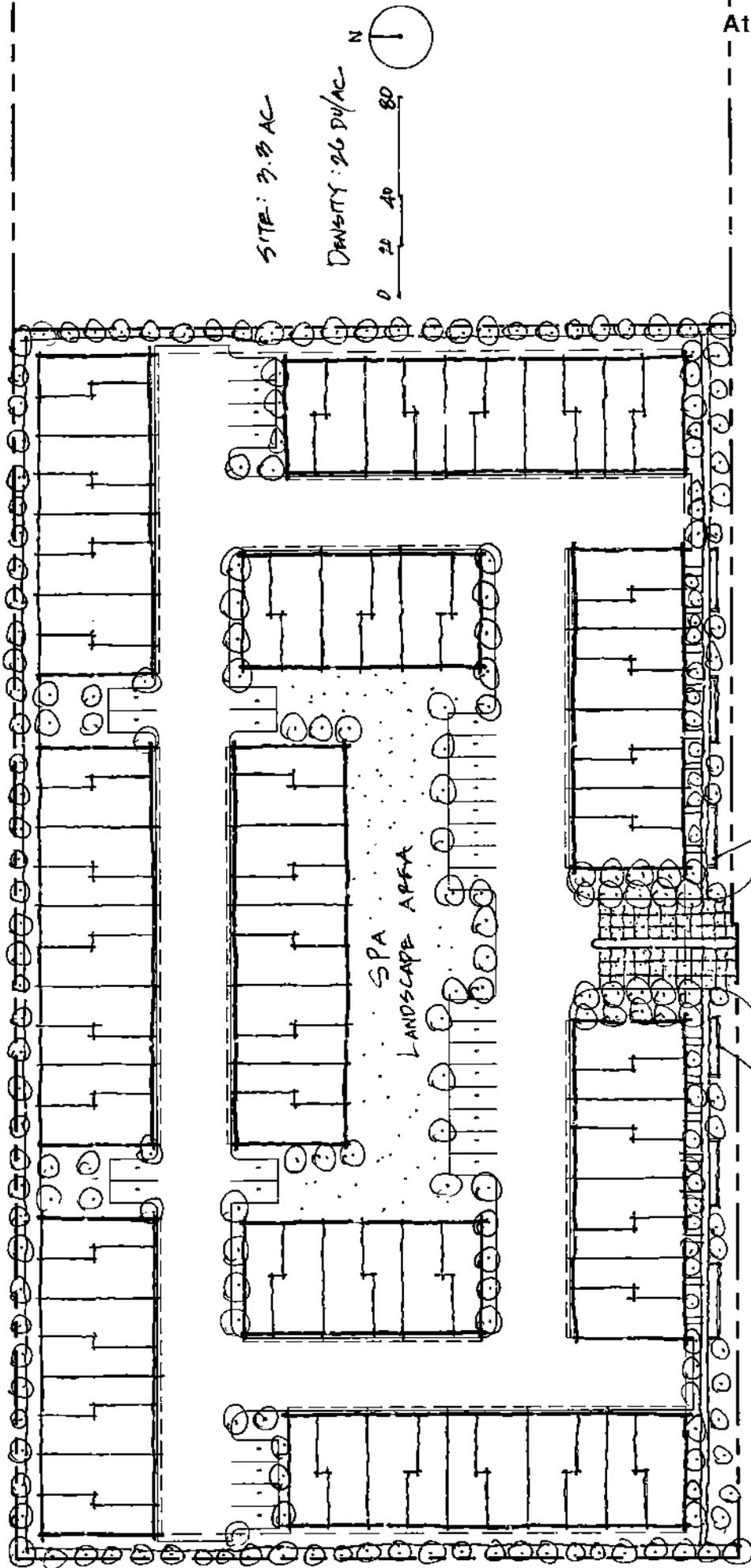
1. Consistent with General Plan Land Use Objective LU-2A. The proposed project is consistent with Land Use Objective LU-2A which encourages new development and redevelopment to improve and maintain the quality of environment. The proposed project involves a major lot consolidation of five different parcels for private market reinvestment. The residential structures which were originally built in the early 1950's and 1960's will be demolished and replaced with new housing stock.
2. Consistent with General Plan Land Use Policy LU-1F.4. This General Plan policy requires that residential densities be supported by infrastructure and that high-density residential areas not be permitted in areas which can cause incompatibility with existing single-family areas. While the proposed development may result in an increase of peak hour and average daily trips, this is considered a minor incremental increase that would still be within the development capacity of the roadway network.
3. Achieves General Plan Housing Element Goal HOU-3. The proposed owner-occupied housing project would achieve this Housing Element Goal by supplementing a diverse housing supply. The new for-sale housing development would help improve the jobs/housing balance in the City. Modern-style architecture featuring clean lines, stucco, design elements, and a natural color palette would also ensure that the new townhomes be architecturally compatible with neighboring residential uses and the adjacent Victoria Health Center.
4. Similar to development within the 1976 Victoria Street Specific Plan. The major lot consolidation of five different parcels for a high-density residential project appears to be similar to other residential development completed pursuant to the 1976 Victoria Street Specific Plan. The Specific Plan encouraged lot consolidation along the north side of Victoria Street (260 – 340 Victoria Street). The Specific Plan area is located immediately east of the project site and provides precedent for higher densities up to 30 du/ac.



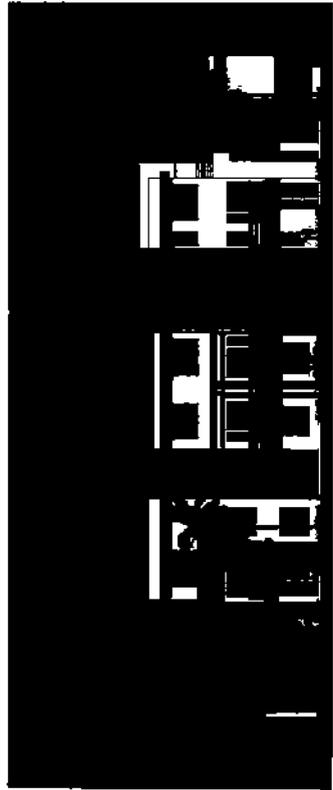
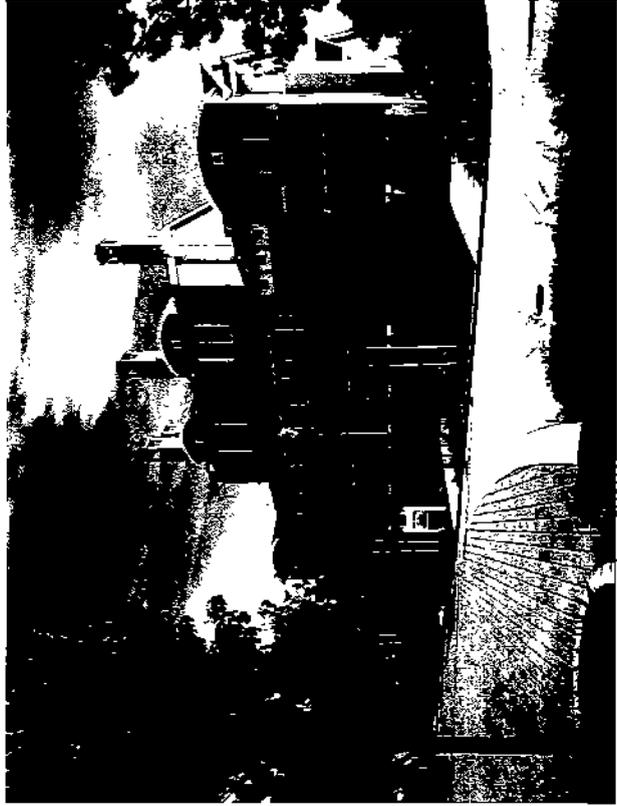
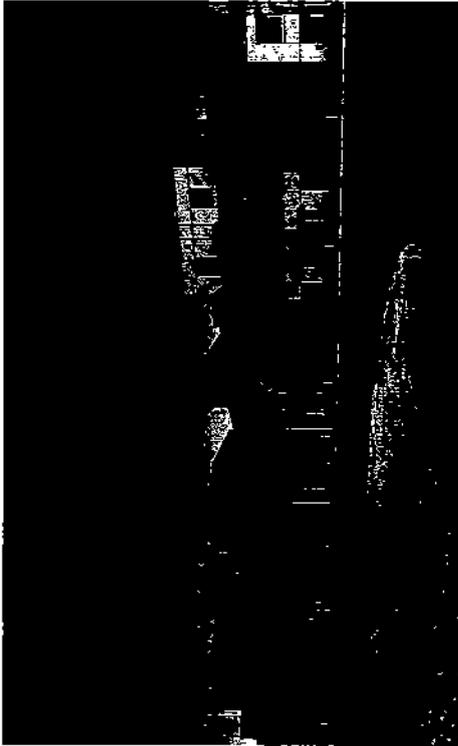
VICTORIA ST. RESIDENTIAL-
PRELIMINARY GROUP
K.T.G.Y. GROUP
6.30.06

File

GPS-06-04



VICTORIA ST.

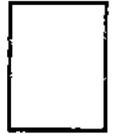
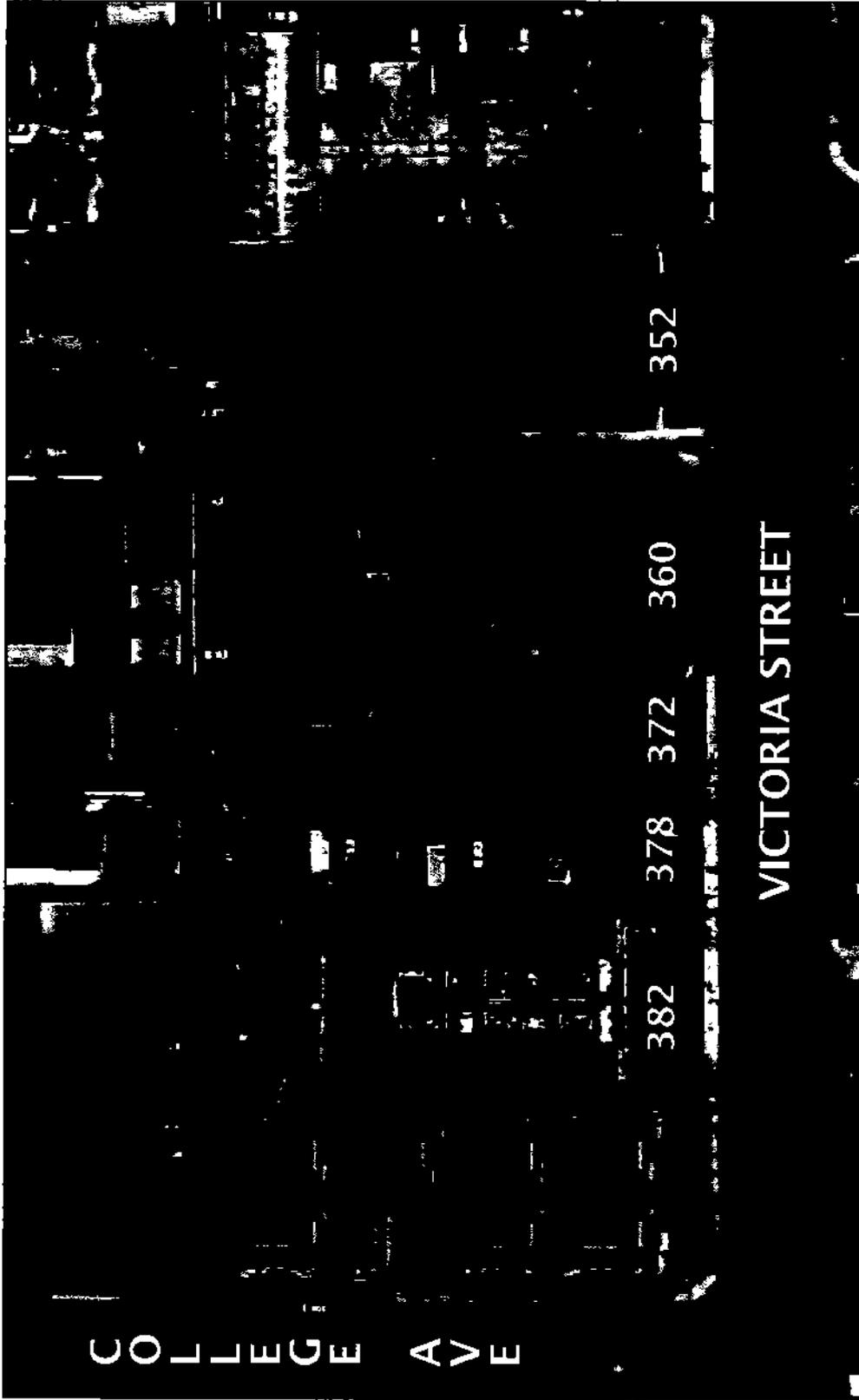


VICTORIA STREET - IMAGE CONCEPTS COSTA MESA, CA



KTGY GROUP, INC.
ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
17902 MITCHELL SOUTH
SUITE 200
IRVINE, CALIFORNIA 92614
(949) 451-3133 FAX (949) 987-1515

Project Site Aerial



Size: 3.36 Acres
Dimensions: 500' x 292.5'



June 30, 2006

Don Lamm
Deputy City Manager
City of Costa Mesa
77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92628-1200

RE: 352, 360, 372, 378, 382 Victoria Street

Dear Mr. Lamm:

I am writing to express our interest in applying for a General Plan Amendment for our property on Victoria Street. As you are aware, we began our project with the purchase of a single parcel, 372 Victoria Street. During our due diligence period, it became apparent that a larger scale project would better meet both our objectives and the cities housing goals, especially in an area which is a gateway to the city's Westside, and where redevelopment is critical.

After 12 months of intensive efforts and negotiations with multiple property owners, I am very pleased to report that we have purchased, or are arranging to purchase, four additional parcels of land at 352, 360, 378 and 382 Victoria Street, comprising 3.34 acres in total.

We envision the project as a 3 story loft / town home hybrid. We feel strongly that both the project location and the quality of the product we envision will be highly attractive to both younger buyers and "empty nesters" who want an innovative, low maintenance home, with easy access to both the freeways and the water.

We have hired KTG Y Group as our lead architect. As you know, KTG Y is a highly respected firm that has won numerous awards for its work designing medium and high-density communities throughout Southern California. Their analysis is that a project of this size can be accomplished within the majority of the city's current development guidelines.

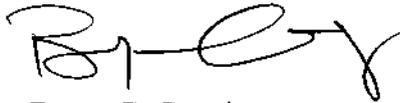
The basis for the GPA request is that the same analysis indicates that an increase of density to 26 units per acre would be needed to sustain the economics of the project, while providing the city with a marquee project that will do much to revitalize that area of the city. The current General Plan designation for the site is High Density Residential, and all surrounding buildings are for-sale and for-rent high density homes.

We also recognize and respect the city's desire to limit changes in land use that could negatively impact the city's traffic patterns. For this reason, we met with the city's traffic engineers and subsequently engaged Kunzman Associates to prepare a traffic analysis to determine the impacts of an increase in density on local traffic patterns.

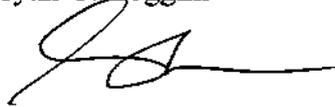
Being located on one of only two east-west streets to bisect Costa Mesa, we feel the site has significant economic and strategic importance to the city as a whole. In addition, being situated in an area of the city that has not received a lot of attention from the development community, we believe the project will serve as a catalyst for developers and landowners in the area to pursue other high quality, for-sale housing projects.

I hope you share in our excitement for this project and we look forward to working with you in the near future.

Sincerely,



Bryan G. Coggins

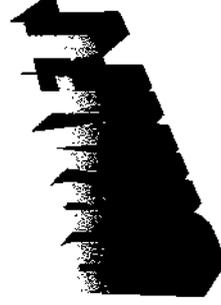


Sean W. Rawson

THE VICTORIA STREET PROJECT

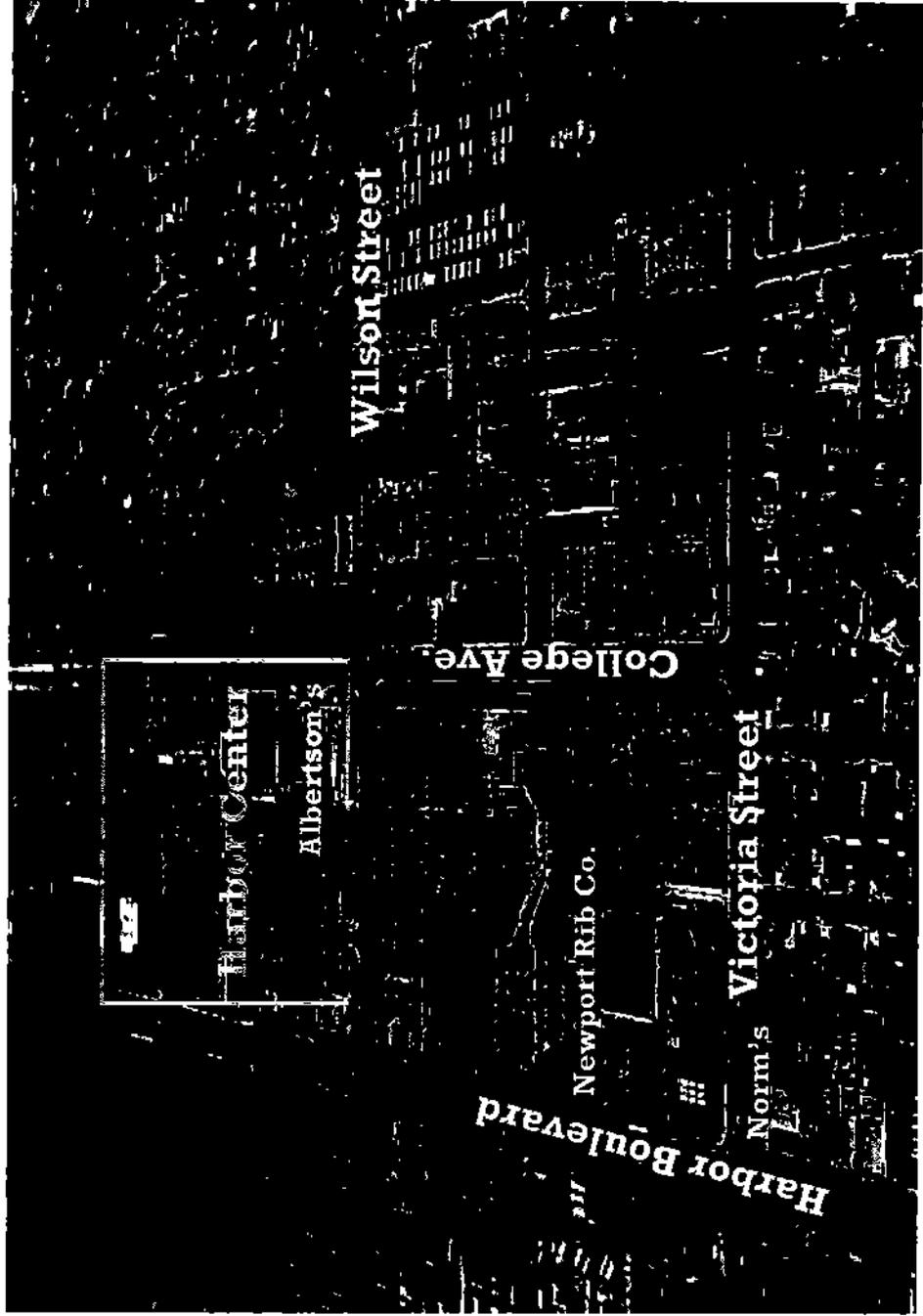
Costa Mesa, California

General Plan Screening
August 15th, 2006



Project Location

The Project Site is within walking distance of two major commercial centers on Harbor Boulevard, hosting more than 50 businesses, most of which are family owned and operated. Coffee shops, restaurants, banks, doctors and dentists, hair salons, a grocery store, and many other amenities all a short stroll away.



Goals and Objectives

Our Goal

To create a vibrant For Sale residential project on one of the city's most recognized streets, catering to people who live and work in Costa Mesa.

Our Objective

A General Plan Amendment will provide the opportunity to work with city staff and the Planning Commission to create a more efficient land use than currently exists in our proposed project area.

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Working with staff, we look forward to exploring the latest innovations in urban residential design that can yield up to 26 units per acre, creating a marquee residential project in an important, high visibility area and a gateway to the city's West Side.

*“Community planning begins with open communication
and the exchange of information and ideas.”*

- Mesa West Residential Urban Plan

Project Benefits

1. Increases city's supply of reasonably priced "For Sale" housing

First-quality new homes priced significantly less than the median home price in Costa Mesa.

Target Market: Young Professionals and "Empty Nesters"

2. Promotes redevelopment on the city's Westside

Strategic location will allow for maximum visibility by residents, workers, land owners, and the development community

3. Supports local businesses

Urban location enables new residents to support many small, medium, and large businesses within walking distance of their home

4. Reduces the number of driveways on Victoria Street from 6 to 1

Improves safety and efficiency on Victoria Street

A Unique Opportunity

The Opportunity

The project revitalizes an area that is a true gateway to the City of Costa Mesa but seldom considered for redevelopment.

Over the course of 18 months, 5 parcels of land have been assembled without public assistance to create 3.3 developable acres.

A Collaborative Effort

With the older areas of Costa Mesa almost entirely small parcels, partnerships between the city, land owners, and developers are needed to create large projects that promote comprehensive, well planned land use. The city led such a process to create overlay zones within the Urban Plans and we have assembled a first-rate team to work with the city in this endeavor.

Architecture Possibilities



VICTORIA STREET - IMAGE CONCEPTS
COSTA MESA, CA



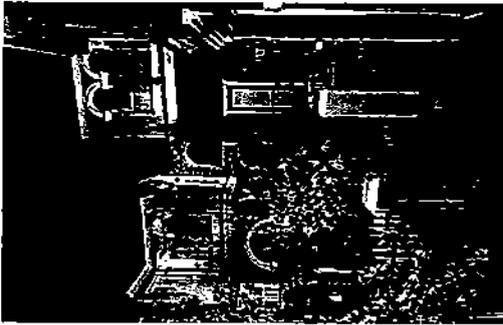
KTGY GROUP, INC.
ARCHITECTURE
INTERIOR DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
10000 S. ALVARADO ST., SUITE 100
DANA POINT, CA 92629
TEL: 949.441.1233 FAX: 949.441.1232



Notable Innovative Urban Infill Projects

TUSCANY HILLS

Developer: KB Homes
Location: San Jose, CA
Density: 25 Units / Acre



ARTIST WALK LOFTS

Developer: The Olson Co.
Location: Santa Ana, CA
Density: 24 Units / Acre



SOCO Walk

Developer: The Olson Co.
Location: Fullerton, CA
Density: 24 Units / Acre



TRIBECA

Developer: KB Homes
Location: San Diego, CA
Density: 30 Units / Acre

