

TO: HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
FROM: RON WHISENAND, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CURRENT ZONING FOR CAPITOL HILL AREA  
DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2007

Needs: Provide background information regarding the effects of the 2003 General Plan Update on R2 zoned lots located in the Capitol Hill area.

- Facts:
1. The Capitol Hill area is designated by the General Plan for Residential, Multi-Family, 8 units per acre land use and is zoned R-2.
  2. In May 2005, the City Council adopted Ordinance 900 N.S., which revised multi-family zoning regulations to implement the 2003 General Plan.
  3. Ordinance 900 N.S. changed the method of calculating densities for multi-family development on the East Side. The new density factors are set forth in Table 21.16I.060.A.3 (referred to as Table A3 in this report), a copy of which is attached.
  4. Prior to Ordinance 900 N.S., multi-family densities were calculated in the same fashion throughout the City using square footage factors shown in Table 21.16I.060.A.2 (referred to as Table A2 in this report), a copy of which is attached.
  5. Attached is a “Brief History of Multi-Family Land Use Categories and Zoning in Paso Robles”, which provides important background explaining the rationale behind the 2003 General Plan and Ordinance 900 N.S.
  6. The effect of Ordinance 900 N.S. was to reduce the allowable densities on one or more lots on Capitol Hill.

Analysis and

Conclusions: As noted in the attached *Brief History*, West Side and East Side areas with the same land use category and zoning were achieving significantly different gross densities, owing to different styles of development. Ordinance 900 N.S. was adopted to bring East Side densities into conformance with the intent of the General Plan.

Options: After consideration of all public testimony, the Planning Commission should consider the following options:

- A. Receive and file the above information;
- B. Request staff to forward the matter to the City Council to see if there is support for a City initiated General Plan amendment;
- C. Amend, modify, or reject the above options.

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Attachments:

1. Table A.2 & A.3
2. A Brief History of Multi-Family Land Use Categories and Zoning in Paso Robles

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**Table 21.16I.060.A.2**

Average Slope of Developable Area (%)	Maximum Density (units/square foot)		
	R-2 Zone	R-3 Zone*	R-4 Zone*
0 – 4	4,000	2,667	2,000
5 – 9	5,000	3,333	2,500
10 – 14	6,250	4,167	3,125
15 – 24	7,500	5,000	3,750
25 – 34	10,000	6,667	5,000

\* See exceptions below.

Exceptions to Table 21.16I.060.A.2 are as follows:

(a) For those R-3 zoned lots located west of Vine Street, between 32nd and 36th Street, which were re-categorized by the 1991 and 2003 general plan as RMF-8, the densities for the R-2 zone shall apply.

(b) For those R-4 zoned lots located north of 24th Street, east and west of Spring Street, which were re-categorized by the 1991 and 2003 general plan as RMF-12, the densities for the R-3 zone shall apply.

**Table 21.16I.060.A.3**

Average Slope of Developable Area (%)	Maximum Density (units/acre)			
	R-2 Zone*	R-3 Zone*	R-4 Zone	R-5 Zone
0 – 4	8.0	12.0	16.0	20.0
5 – 9	6.5	9.5	13.0	16.0
10 – 14	5.0	7.5	10.0	13.0
15 – 24	4.0	6.5	8.5	10.5
25 – 34	3.0	5.0	6.5	8.0

\* See exceptions below.

Exceptions to Table 21.16I.060.A.3 are as follows:

(a) Those R-2, B-3-zoned lots located in the Orchard Bungalow subdivision, north of Creston Road, between Walnut Drive and Orchard Drive may have a maximum of three units for every twenty thousand square feet of lot area, regardless of the underlying average slope category.

(b) For those R-3 zoned lots located west of Creston Road at Cedarwood Drive, which were re-categorized by the 1991 and 2003 general plan as RMF-8, the densities for the R-2 zone shall apply.

**Attachment 1**  
**Table A.2 & A.3**

## **Brief History of Multi-Family Residential Land Use Categories and Zoning in Paso Robles**

### **1943 - 1991**

- In 1889, the West Side of the City was subdivided into 7,000 sq ft lots.
- 7,000 sq ft lots zoned R-1 could have one unit.
- 7,000 sq ft lots zoned R-2 could have two units.
- 7,000 sq ft lots zoned R-3 could have three units.
- 7,000 sq ft lots zoned R-4 could have four units.
- The General Plan established 3 multi-family residential land use categories:
  - Low Density Multi-Family (10 units per acre); the R-2 Zone implemented this category;
  - Medium Density Multi-Family (20 units per acre); the R-3 Zone implemented this category;
  - High Density Multi-Family (30 units per acre); the R-4 Zone implemented this category;

### **1991 General Plan**

- Extensive apartment development in the 1980's, particularly in the northwest portion of the City (Uptown) had been viewed as a blighting influence in the City. The Citizen Involvement Questionnaires revealed a strong desire to reduce densities for multi-family residential.
- The densities for Multi-family residential land use categories were reduced and the names of the categories changed (to match those used by the County). The new multi-family land use categories were as follows:
  - Residential, Multi-Family – low density, 8 units per acre (RMF-L);
  - Residential, Multi-Family- medium density, 12 units per acre (RMF-M);
  - The 30 unit per acre land use category was eliminated.
- The 1991 General Plan also called for residential densities to decrease as the underlying natural slope increased. To implement this policy, zoning regulations adopted what is presently Table 21.16I.060.A2 (or “Table A2” for short), which increased the minimum lot area per unit (i.e. decreasing the density) as the slope increased. The square footage factors were based on achieving the historical 2 or 3 units per 7,000 sq ft West Side lot.

### **2003 General Plan**

- The City noted that the densities allowed by Table A2 exceeded the densities established by the General Plan. For example, a flat one acre East Side lot would allow one unit per 4,000 sq ft, yielding 11 units per acre, not the maximum of 8 units per acre envisioned by the General Plan.
- The predominant pattern of multi-family development on the East Side was to have very large lots with numerous units served by private drives. Whereas, multi-family development on the West Side was mostly comprised of finished lots that fronted onto public streets and served with alleys. If densities were calculated on a gross acreage basis, to the centerline of adjacent streets and including alleys, an R-2 zoned West Side block would have 24 units on 12 lots, spread over 3.3 acres, yielding a gross density of 7.2 units per acre.
- To solve the density disparity issue, the multi-family zoning regulations were amended to adopt Table A3 so that East Side densities were calculated by multiplying the acreage of the lot by the General Plan density factor (adjusted for underlying slope.)