



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Case: PA11-0028 (General Plan Amendment)
PA11-0029 (Change of Zone)
PA11-0030 (Change of Zone)

Date:

Applicant: City of Moreno Valley

Representative: City of Moreno Valley

Location: City-Wide

Proposal: The Alessandro Boulevard Corridor
Project – Phase II : Implementation

Recommendation: Approval

SUMMARY

The City of Moreno Valley used grant funds rewarded by SCAG's Compass Blueprint for Phase II of the implementation of the Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Demonstration Project that was completed through SCAG's Compass Blueprint program (Phase I was funded by SCAG's Compass Blueprint program in February 2011). Phase II includes rezoning areas along Alessandro Boulevard to Residential 30 (R30), creation an overlay district to identify areas suited for Multiple Use Districts (MUD1 and MUD2), and development of street section standards for the Alessandro Boulevard corridor as well as identify nodes along the Alessandro Boulevard corridor suited for these specialized street section standards.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The proposed “Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Implementation Project” is based on the recently completed “Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Demonstration Project” (SCAG sponsored Demonstration Project completed in June 2010) and promotes the Compass Principles by encouraging strategies to integrate transportation and community. The “Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Demonstration Project” (Phase 1) explored opportunities for mixed use transit-oriented development along Alessandro Boulevard, an important regional transportation link for Moreno Valley. The City of Moreno Valley through Phase II has further promoted the use of Alessandro Boulevard as a way to reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment and to provide efficient access to jobs and services.

To assist the City in the implementation of a vision for the Alessandro Boulevard area, Phase II includes:

- Creation an overlay district for the Alessandro Boulevard corridors to identify areas suited for Multiple Use Districts (MUD1 and MUD2);
- Creation of requirements for selecting Multiple Use Districts (MUD1 and MUD2) sites;
- Creation urban design strategies to intensify land uses;
- Rezoning of areas along Alessandro Boulevard to Residential 30 (R30) as identified in the draft General Plan Housing Element;
- Development of street section standards for the Alessandro Boulevard corridor;
- Identification of nodes along the Alessandro Boulevard corridor suited for these specialized street section standards;
- *Creation a prototype design for covered bus stops along the Alessandro Boulevard corridor; (?)*
- And amending the General Plan to include new standards.

Planning staff has been working with RBF Consulting through the second SCAG Compass Blueprint grant to complete the required CEQA documentation (Mitigation Negative Declaration), overlay district design standards and the street section standards.

Site/Corridor

Regionally, the project area is located in the southern portion of the City of Moreno Valley in western Riverside County. Locally, the project area includes an approximately 5.5-mile stretch of Alessandro Boulevard from the Old 215 Frontage Road on the west to Nason Street on the east. The project area has direct access to and from the I-215 Freeway at the Alessandro Boulevard interchange.

Surrounding Area

At 5.5 miles in length, the corridor is the longest of Moreno Valley's five corridors. It serves as an important transportation corridor that connects Interstate 215 and the nearby future planned Metrolink Station at the western end with the Riverside County Regional Medical Center approximately 5.5 miles to the east along Nason Street.

Existing physical conditions on the corridor are typical and characteristic to many suburban corridors – low intensity, automobile-oriented uses such as warehouses, office parks, drive-through restaurants and pharmacies, and multiple strip malls and community-oriented shopping centers. The roadway itself lacks consistent landscaping and an overall positive image. Buildings along the corridor tend to be located behind parking lots. Some new buildings have been built closer to the corridor, but are located behind drainage swales that are visually pleasant but tend to disconnect the building from the environment it its shaping. In some areas, established single-family neighborhoods are north and south of the corridor and present their backyard walls along the corridor. Multiple family apartments and townhomes are located in lesser amounts in the area. Some homes are located directly fronting Alessandro Boulevard, with direct driveway access along the corridor.

PROJECT

Section 1: Residential 30 Rezoning

On September 22, 2009, the City Council approved the creation of the Residential 30 (R30) zoning district (PA09-0018 – General Plan Amendment) and the creation of Residential 30 (R30) multiple family development standards (PA08-0099 - Municipal Code Amendment).

The General Plan Amendment added to Section 9.2.2 (Community Development Element Objectives and Policies) of the City of Moreno Valley's General Plan the following definition of Residential 30 (R30):

2.2.11 The primary purpose of areas designated *Residential 30* is to provide a range of high density multi-family housing types in an urban setting. Developments within Residential 30 areas shall also provide amenities, such as common open spaces and recreational facilities. The maximum density shall be 30 dwelling units per acre.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and the R30 Zone Creation

In compliance with State Law, the February 2011 Housing Element Update include text dedicated to documenting the City's compliance with its Regional Housing Needs Assessment(RHNA) allocation. Through the RHNA process, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) projects each city's demand for future housing and allocates new housing units to be planned for in order for each city to meet projected demand. The total number of projected housing units is further divided into income categories to properly address the housing need across various income levels. SCAG requires (and the State approved has approved) that forty percent of the total RHNA allocation is dedicated to producing housing for low and very low income residents.

During the planning period from 2008 through 2014, Moreno Valley's assigned RHNA number was 7,474 units. Please note: the City is not required to build the housing units assigned in the RHNA. However, the City must ensure that it has sufficient, appropriately-zoned residential sites to accommodate the RHNA allocation.

As required by SCAG, the 7,474 units have been further allocated to the four required income categories based on the relationship to the Area Median Income (AMI), which in 2010 is \$65,000 per year for a family of four. In compliance with SCAG's requirement, forty percent of the City's RHNA allocation is dedicated to producing housing for low and very low income residents.

Table 1: City of Moreno Valley, RHNA 2008-2014

Moreno Valley Regional Housing Needs Allocation 2008-2014		
Income Category	Units	Percent
Very Low-Income	1,806	24.2%
Low-Income	1,239	16.6%
Moderate-Income	1,362	18.2%
Above Moderate-Income	3,068	41.0%
Total Construction Need	7,474	100%

Source: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Proposed Final RHAN Plan-
Planning Period January 1, 2006 - June 30, 2014.4.2

State Housing Element Law Article 10.6 of the Government Code Section 65583.2 establishes guidelines under which counties and municipalities undertake the Vacant Land Inventory for Housing Elements. In particular, Section 65583.2(B) prescribes densities that the State deems appropriate to accommodate housing for lower income households. For jurisdictions in metropolitan counties with a local population in excess of 100,000 persons, the State considers a density of thirty (30) units per acre as adequate to accommodate units affordable to low and very low income households.

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Consequently, vacant sites zoned at thirty (30) units per acre will automatically be counted as meeting the very low and low income RHNA categories, whether the units are ever built or whether the unit rents are in actuality affordable.

The City Council and the Planning Commission held a joint study session in November 2007 to provide direction to Staff. Recognizing the shortfall in the City's capacity to meet the RHNA allocations, these legislative bodies proactively directed the creation of a Residential 30 (R30) zoning designation in three locations in the community, as shown in Exhibits C, D, and E of the Housing Element. **In total, 142 acres in 54 parcels are proposed for rezoning. The rezoning will result in 2,815 units, 1,945 of which will meet the remaining RHNA balance for the current Housing Element planning period. The General Plan Land Use and Municipal Code Zone and Development Standards for the R30 zone were adopted by the City Council on September 22, 2009.**

The HCD-approved Housing Element for Moreno Valley proposed to create the R30 zoning designation and then process a General Plan Amendment to apply the R30 zoning to the identified locations. The Residential 30 (R30) rezoning proposed with the Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Project is that General Plan Amendment and allows the City of Moreno Valley to meet its 2008-2014 RHNA numbers.

On February 22, 2011, the Moreno Valley City Council approved the 2008-2014 Housing Element to the General Plan, in compliance with State law. The Housing Element was certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), and was found to be in full compliance with State housing element law on October 13, 2010.

In order to maintain its compliance with State housing element law, the City of Moreno Valley is in the process of implementing programs set forth in the 2008-2014 Housing Element. Accordingly, amendments to the Moreno Valley General Plan and Moreno Valley Zoning Code are required to increase the City's maximum housing density in certain limited areas of the City. The following objective, policies, and programs are pertinent to the proposed project.

Citizen Participation

The City of Moreno Valley made a diligent effort to elicit participation from the community in developing its housing element for the planning period of 2008-2014.

In an effort to facilitate public input, staff held three community meetings in October 2007 (Senior Center, Towngate Center and Moreno Valley Ranch Golf Club). The three community meetings had a large number of attendees. Staff also met with fifteen housing advocates and developers who provide housing services to residents in the City of Moreno Valley.

Based on staff's land inventory, it was evident that the current zoning designations on the vacant parcels, available for residential development, would not generate sufficient potential units to meet the City's RHNA allocations. Consequently, staff developed a proposal to increase residential zoning designations, in various areas in the community, including areas with a significant number of underutilized parcels. The proposal was presented at the community meetings.

The overwhelming majority of owners with properties located in areas proposed for residential density increases were in support of a possible zone change and resultant increase in density. Owners viewed the proposed density increase as enhancing the value of their properties and allowing them greater flexibility for the future development of their properties. It was also evident that the idea of areas with mixed uses, such as housing, commercial and office uses, appealed to people who voted for increased housing density. People also seemed to want to provide housing in areas near existing or emerging employment centers, such as the area near the regional medical center.

On November 20, 2007 the City Council and Planning Commission held a joint study session to evaluate staff's proposals to increase zoning densities in various areas of the city. The intent of staff's proposals was to plan for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation for the period between 2008 and 2014 and to plan for future population growth and housing needs beyond 2014.

Staff compiled a parcel by parcel inventory of vacant land in the city, providing acreage, zoning, and the number of units that could potentially be developed on each parcel. Based on the inventory, it became evident that the City would fall short of its RHNA requirements in the "Very Low" and "Low" income categories, but would exceed its requirements in the "Moderate" and "Above Moderate" income categories.

In an effort to make up the shortfall, and to plan for future growth and housing needs beyond the most recent RHNA, staff presented a proposal to increase residential densities in various areas of the city. The areas chosen were on major streets, near shopping and employment and some were within the redevelopment project area.

Residential 30 (R30) Sites

The proposed locations for rezoning to Residential 30 (R30) were addressed in the 2008-2014 Housing Element, including the parcels owned by the City/RDA/? at the corner of Alessandro Blvd and Day St (Section 8.4.8 of the Housing Element on page 46). These parcels (Aless & Day) have not been rezoned yet, unlike what is stated in Table 8-23 on page 46 of the Housing Element (GPA to be completed in 2009).

Propose general plan amendment to R-30 for sites are 1) Alessandro & Day, 2) Alessandro & Elsworth (referred as "Cal 5" in the Housing Element), 3) Alessandro &

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Morrison (referred as “Cal 3” in the Housing Element) and 4) Perris & Iris (referred as “Cal 4” in the Housing Element).

General Plan Amendment

An application for a General Plan Amendment has been submitted in order to change the land use designation for the four R30 sites.

Current Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Acreage
Commercial (C)	Residential 30 (R30)	20.79
Residential/Office (R/O)	Residential 30 (R30)	88.03
Residential 15 (R15)	Residential 30 (R30)	22.31
Residential 5 (R5)	Residential 30 (R30)	19.43
	Total Acreage =	150.56

The Alessandro Boulevard Corridor Project and its proposed General Plan Amendment to meet the requirements of the 2008-2014 Housing Element is consistent with the General Plan and would not be in conflict with the goals, objectives, policies or programs of the General Plan.

Change of Zone

An application for a Change of Zone has also been submitted in order to change the zoning designation for

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Acreage
Community Commercial (CC)	Residential 30 (R30)	20.79
Office Commercial	Residential 30 (R30)	
Residential 15 (R15)	Residential 30 (R30)	
Residential 5 (R5)	Residential 30 (R30)	19.43
	Total Acreage =	150.56

REVIEW PROCESS

ENVIRONMENTAL

NOTIFICATION

Public notice was sent to all property owners of record within 300' of the project. The public hearing notice for this project was also posted on the project site and published in the local newspaper.

REVIEW AGENCY COMMENTS

Staff received the following responses to the Project Review Staff Committee transmittal; which was sent to all potentially affected reviewing agencies.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Response Date</u>	<u>Comments</u>
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

(Environmental Action)
(Approval of the Resolution)

Prepared by:

Approved by:

John C. Terell, AICP
Planning Official

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Public Hearing Notice
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. ____ with
Conditions of Approval
3. Reduced Site Plan
4. Initial Study
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