



DATE: November 7, 2017
CATEGORY: Public Hearing
DEPT.: Community Development
TITLE: 840 East El Camino Real Hotel Addition

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution Conditionally Approving a Planned Community Permit and Development Review Permit to Allow a Four-Story, 18,366 Square Foot Addition to an Existing Four-Story, 160-Room Hotel, Including 38 New Guest Rooms and 4,024 Square Feet of Ground-Floor Commercial Space; a Provisional Use Permit to Allow 149 Parking Spaces In Lieu of the 260 Required Parking Spaces and to Allow Rooftop Amenities Above the Third Floor; and a Heritage Tree Removal Permit for the Removal of Seven Heritage Trees, Including Four Street Trees, at 840 East El Camino Real, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

Project Site

The approximately 2.4-acre project site is located on the north side of East El Camino Real between Sylvan Avenue and South Bernardo Avenue. The surrounding land uses include single-family homes to the north, commercial uses across El Camino Real to the south, a four-story hotel (Hotel Avante) to the east, and a child-care facility and commercial uses to the west.

The site is currently developed with a four-story, 160-room



Location Map

Hilton Garden Inn and restaurant for hotel guests which was constructed in the late 1990s.

Project Description

Il El Camino Hotel, LLC, proposes a four-story, 18,366 square foot addition to an existing four-story, 160-room hotel, including 38 new guest rooms (one of which will be located within the existing building), and 4,024 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, expected to be leased and occupied by one or two restaurant tenants. The applicant also requests a parking reduction to allow 149 parking spaces in lieu of the required 260 parking spaces (see Attachment 2 – Project Plans).

Public Hearings and Meetings

Development Review Committee

The Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the project on June 21, 2017 and August 16, 2017, and they recommended approval of the project with a Condition of Approval which addresses minor outstanding design issues (see Condition No. 12 in Attachment 1, Exhibit A). These minor issues include continuing to work with staff on the design of the rooftop trellis, the interior conditions of the stairwell, and other building details, colors, and materials.

Environmental Planning Commission

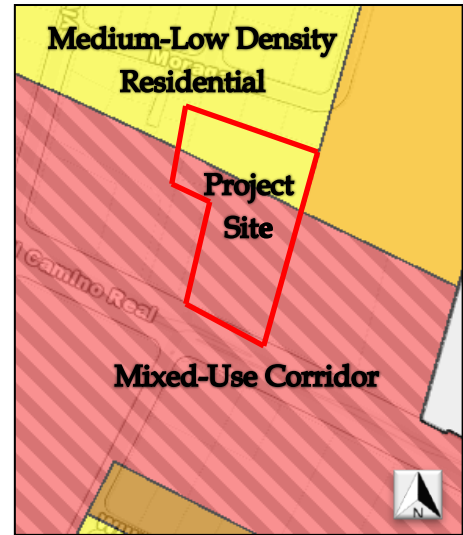
The project was considered by the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) at a public hearing on October 18, 2017. The EPC voted 6-0-1 (with one abstention) to recommend Council approval of the proposal with the addition of a Condition of Approval for tree relocation and preservation, as discussed later in this report. Prior to the EPC hearing, public notices were sent to property owners within a 300' radius of the project site; however, the EPC recommended that the applicant conduct additional community outreach prior to the City Council meeting. Following the EPC hearing, the applicant mailed letters to neighbors within a 300' radius of the project site and conducted a neighborhood outreach meeting on November 1.

Staff received public comment from two residents (see Attachment 3 – Public Correspondence). Both expressed concerns regarding parking and one expressed additional concerns regarding traffic and shading as a result of the project.

ANALYSIS

General Plan Designation

The site spans two General Plan land use designations. The southern portion of the site along El Camino Real is designated “Mixed-Use Corridor,” which supports a broad range of commercial, office, residential, and public spaces. This designation allows new projects with an FAR up to 1.85 and 3.0 at key locations, which are specified in the El Camino Real Precise Plan’s Village Center sub-area and Castro/Miramonte sub-area, and heights between four and six stories.



General Plan Designation

The northern portion of the project site is designated Medium-Low Density Residential (7 to 12 dwelling units per acre), which permits single-family homes, townhouses, duplexes, and other residential buildings with heights up to two stories.

In general, the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan’s vision for the site, with an FAR of 1.01, heights up to four stories, and commercial uses, and complies with the following General Plan policies:

- *LUD 3.1: Land use and transportation.* Focus higher land use intensities and densities within a half-mile of public transit service, and along major commute corridors.

The proposed project is located within a half mile of six bus/shuttle stops served by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and the Mountain View Community Shuttle. Several bikeway segments exist and are planned near the project site.

- *LUD 6.3: Street presence.* Encourage building facades and frontages that create a presence at the street and along interior pedestrian paseos or pathways.

The proposed project includes a variety of improvements that will enhance the street presence, including integrating a pedestrian-oriented ground-floor commercial space within 15’ of the sidewalk, transparent glazing, and a vertically opening bifolding door designed to open and activate the building corner. Additional improvements include

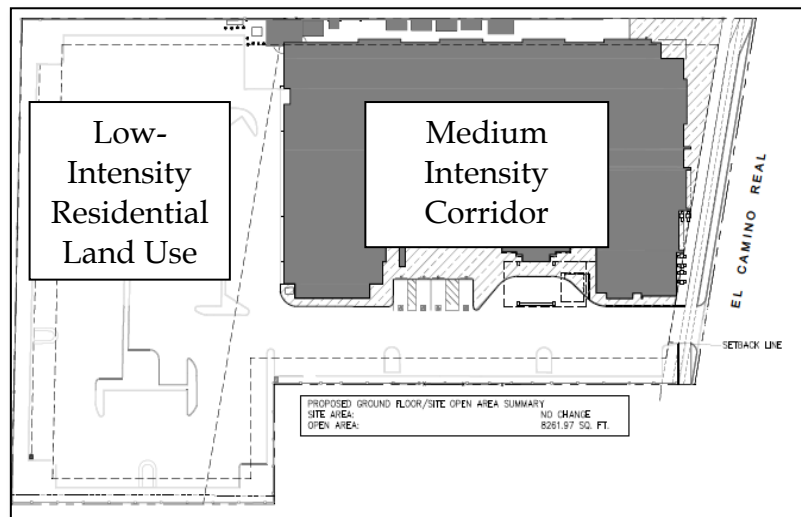
awnings, high-quality materials, and landscaping to create a pedestrian-friendly, active environment.

- *LUD 8.5: Pedestrian and bicycle amenities.* Encourage attractive pedestrian and bicycle amenities in new and existing developments, and ensure that roadway improvements address the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The project provides a 7' wide public sidewalk adjacent to a 5' landscape buffer with street trees to create a pedestrian-friendly environment along El Camino Real. The project will also provide 5 long-term secure bike parking spaces, 10 short-term surface level bike parking spaces, and 5 bicycles with helmets and locks, which will be available for free use by employees and hotel guests.

Zoning Designation

The proposed project is located within the El Camino Real Precise Plan. The project site is split between two sub-areas in the Precise Plan, with the front portion of the site along El Camino Real in the medium-intensity corridor sub-area and the rear portion of the site in the low-intensity residential only sub-area. The hotel footprint is located entirely within the medium-intensity portion of the site and parking for the site is located in the residential land use area.



Zoning Designation

When projects are located in multiple sub-areas, the Precise Plan requires all structures to comply with the land use, setback, and height standards of its area or sub-area. Hotels are prohibited in the residential land use designation; therefore, no hotel addition is permitted (or proposed) along the rear portion of the property. The Precise Plan allows hotels with a Provisional Use Permit in the medium-intensity corridor up to three stories (45') under the base standards or up to four stories (55') with a Tier 1 request.

The project includes a Tier 1 request to allow a four-story addition. The existing hotel is four stories, the adjacent hotel to the east is four stories, and the addition is located along the El Camino Real corridor away from the residential located north of the project site; therefore, staff is supportive of the Tier 1 request. Per the Precise Plan, Tier 1 projects are required to provide public benefits for every square foot above the base 1.35 FAR. Because the project is not requesting additional floor area above the base 1.35 FAR, no public benefit is required for this project.

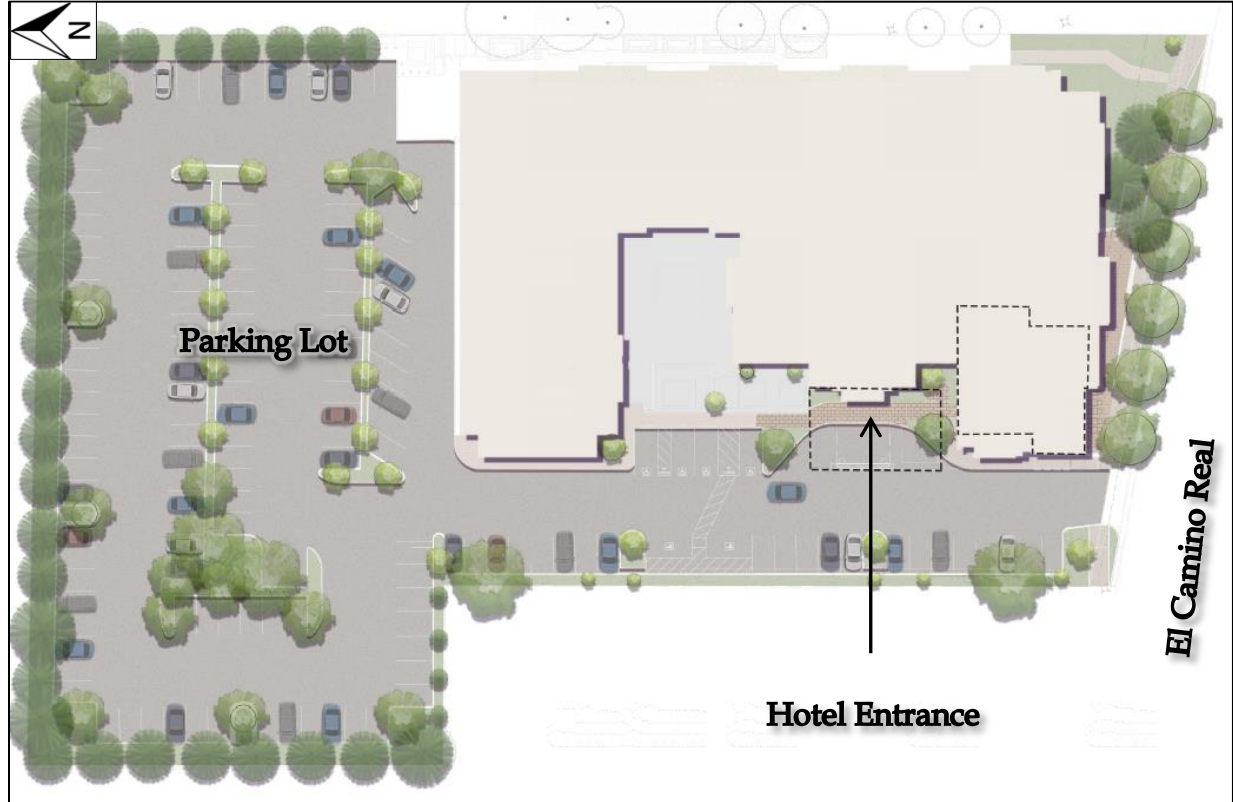
Other standards such as pavement coverage, open area, and FAR are regulated as a weighted average based on the proportion of the project in each regulatory area. The weighted proportions are shown in the following table:

	Precise Plan Standard	Existing	Proposed
Max. FAR for a Tier 1 project	1.54	.83	1.01
Max. Pavement Coverage	23.1%	47.2%	46.1%
Min. Open Space	45.7%	11.8%	12.3%

Although the proposal is unable to bring the site into full compliance with the maximum pavement coverage and minimum open space standards due to the site constraints and existing hotel, the applicant has worked to meet the intent of the Precise Plan by ensuring there is no net increase in pavement coverage and no net loss of open area, as discussed later in this report.

Project Design

The proposal includes a four-story hotel addition with 38 guest rooms and two ground-floor commercial tenant spaces with outdoor amenity areas along the El Camino Real frontage. Vehicle access to the site is provided by a driveway along the west side of the parcel leading to a porte-cochere/main hotel entry and a surface parking lot in the rear of the site. Minor modifications are proposed along the west elevation, including replacing the existing porte-cochere with an updated design, and incorporating pavers and landscaping to highlight the hotel lobby entrance.



Site Plan

The project has been designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver® status and Mandatory Measures of the 2016 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen). Sustainability measures, including energy-efficient lighting/controls in guest rooms, low-emitting materials, and a green roof have been incorporated into the project.

The Precise Plan recommends commercial spaces be constructed at sidewalk grade with a minimum 14' interior ceiling height; however, the existing building sits approximately 2' below the El Camino Real sidewalk. The grade difference and construction method of the existing hotel make it difficult to construct the addition at grade and link it to the existing hotel without significant modifications to the existing structure or completely separating the addition. A ramp and steps are proposed along the El Camino Real frontage to allow the required accessibility access to the commercial space.

In an attempt to meet the intent of the Precise Plan, the applicant proposes an at-grade, two-level corner element. Careful attention was given to the corner element to create a strong, dominant corner. The stair tower was designed as an architectural feature and consists of dark-stained cedar siding, glazing, and a decorative interior stairwell. The

addition has a wall plate height of approximately 37', designed to match the existing building. The stair tower is approximately 47' in height.

The ground-floor commercial component of the corner element has a vertical bifolding glass wall system, which acts as a storefront entry, but can also be pulled up/opened to function as an awning. The large, open window design for the upper-level corner rooms assists with distinguishing the corner element from the rest of the hotel.



View Heading East on El Camino Real

The ground-floor commercial facade is composed primarily of transparent storefront systems accented with dark-stained cedar siding, smooth concrete, and a stainless steel canopy. The upper levels consist primarily of two-toned stucco designed to match the existing building.



El Camino Real Frontage

Trees

An arborist report was prepared by certified arborist Ray Morneau to evaluate the existing trees on-site and consider options for preservation. The proposal includes a request to remove three (3) Heritage trees on-site and four (4) Heritage street trees. All of the street trees are in poor to very poor condition and need to be replaced. The three (3) Heritage trees on-site are located within the excavation area/footprint of the building and ADA ramp. The EPC requested that the applicant make a good-faith effort to preserve Heritage trees 35 and 36 and requested this be added as a Condition of Approval to the project. Due to the extent of excavation that may be required during construction, the suitability for preservation of these trees is low; however, the applicant's arborist has provided tree protection measures for the two trees and the applicant has agreed to follow all recommendations during construction. Condition of Approval No. 44 (see Attachment 1, Exhibit A) has been revised to address the EPC modification.

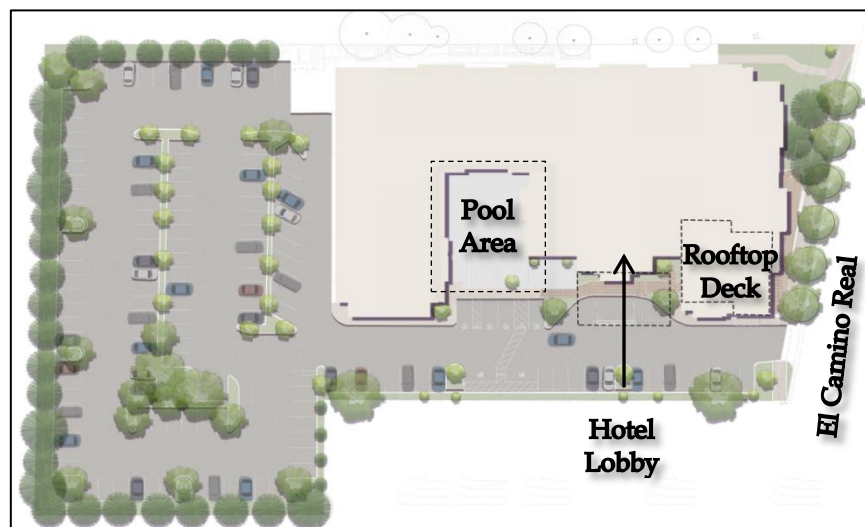
As part of the project, twenty-five (25) trees are proposed to be planted, including six (6) new street trees along the El Camino Real public street frontage. Two (2) trees (Tree Nos. 21 and 22) are proposed to be relocated on-site as well. The EPC requested Tree No. 24 (pear tree) also be relocated either on- or off-site. The applicant has agreed to relocate this tree and Condition of Approval 46 (see Attachment 1, Exhibit A) has been modified accordingly.

The arborist report includes tree protection measures to preserve the remaining sixty-three (63) trees on-site. The City arborist has reviewed the report and agrees with the recommended tree protection measures and recommendations for removal.

The existing canopy coverage of the site is 14.8 percent. After five years of growth, the anticipated canopy coverage would be 15.3 percent, and 20.6 percent at full growth.

Open Space

Open area is currently provided by two courtyards: one adjacent to



Open Space Exhibit

the lobby and consisting of a pool area, and one along the front of the property and consisting of a patio area. The proposal includes removing the patio area along the front of the property to accommodate the proposed addition.

To increase the amount of open area on the site and offset the loss of the patio, the project includes a rooftop deck with amenities, including a bocce court, benches, and landscaping.

Transportation and Parking

Traffic Study

The City hired TJKM Transportation Consultants to conduct a traffic study for the proposed project (see Attachment 4—Traffic Study). Vehicle trips generated by the project were added to existing traffic volumes to obtain estimated traffic volumes of Level of Service (LOS) on local roadways and intersections after project completion.

The proposed project is estimated to generate approximately 858 net new daily trips, including 66 new a.m. peak hour trips and 47 new p.m. peak hour trips. Existing vehicle trips generated by uses on the site were counted based on traffic data collected around the project site, and trip generation rates were used to estimate the new vehicle trips generated by the proposed hotel addition. The estimated trips that would be generated by approved but not yet constructed projects in the area were also added into the analysis.

Four intersections surrounding the project site were evaluated for impacts as part of the project (El Camino Real/SR-237/Grant Road, El Camino Real/Sylvan Avenue/The Americana, El Camino Real/South Bernardo Avenue, and El Camino Real/Crestview Drive). The results of the analysis show that the project would not result in any new or substantially increased intersection impacts than those described in the El Camino Real Precise Plan EIR; would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy established measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system; and would not conflict with the Santa Clara County Congestion Management Program.

Parking

Based on the City's parking requirements, a minimum of 260 parking spaces would be required for the project, which includes 198 spaces for hotel guests, 22 spaces for hotel employees, and 40 spaces for the restaurant use(s). The project proposes 149 parking spaces, which represents a 43 percent parking reduction.

In order to determine the parking demand for this specific project, including the potential to reduce the parking as requested by the applicant, staff hired TJKM traffic consultants to conduct a parking study (see Attachment 5—Parking Study). The applicant also provided the City with two parking studies they completed as a comparison from Hexagon and Fehr & Peers traffic consultants.

All three consultants observed existing parking demands at the existing hotel and compared observed parking ratios to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) parking rates and the City's parking requirements. Additionally, TJKM and Hexagon observed five other hotels in the area as a baseline local comparison.

All three studies concluded that based on existing parking demand, variation in peak parking demand for the hotel, hotel employees, and restaurant patrons, and the incorporation of the applicant's TDM plan, the proposed 149 parking spaces would be sufficient to serve the site. This is primarily due to the fact that hotels in this area typically generate less parking demand than the City's current parking requirements and mixed-use hotels can often share parking between uses because they have different peak parking demands.

ITE recommends 0.89 space per occupied room compared to the City requirement of 1 space per room plus one space for every two employees. The ITE ratio would require 176 parking spaces for the project rather than the 260 required by the Zoning Code; however, all three studies indicate the ITE-recommended ratio is high due to the fact that ITE rates are based on a wide variety of suburban hotels and do not accurately reflect Mountain View hotels, which primarily cater to business travelers. Business travelers often share a rental car (rather than each traveler renting their own car) or use services such as Uber and Lyft to access the hotel.

The City's parking requirements assume 100 percent occupancy; however, the typical industry average occupancy for hotels is 80 percent to 85 percent; the average occupancy for this hotel over the last four years is 77.5 percent; and the peak occupancy for this hotel over the last four years is 88 percent.

The peak demand for hotel parking occurs after 11:00 p.m., when the hotel has fewer staff members and the restaurant(s) will be closed.

Based on the findings of the parking study and the TDM plan proposed for the project, staff is supportive of the proposed 43 percent parking reduction request subject to Condition of Approval 32 (see Attachment 1, Exhibit A), which indicates if parking issues arise on-site, the applicant may be required to modify the hours of operation for

the commercial uses, modify employee hours, modify the TDM plan, implement a valet service, and/or limit hotel occupancy if necessary.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The Precise Plan requires all Tier 1 developments to develop and implement a TDM plan to reduce vehicle trips consistent with the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program (GGRP). The GGRP requires a 4 percent reduction in peak-hour drive-alone trips for employees. The project applicant has proposed a TDM plan aimed at a 20 percent reduction for employees. The TDM plan proposes a variety of options for both employees and hotel guests, including free transit passes, free loaner bicycles, secure long-term bike parking, a travel information board and transportation options packet, membership in the TMA, free airport transportation service for guests, and an Emergency Ride-Home program for employees (see Attachment 6—Transportation Demand Management Plan). Although the TMA does not currently serve the El Camino Real corridor, two additional projects were recently approved and will join the TMA. As these projects near final completion, the TMA will likely restructure their routes to serve this area.

In addition to reducing peak-hour, drive-alone trips, the proposed TDM plan was designed to provide employees and guests with options that eliminate the need for a private vehicle on-site, intended to reduce potential parking deficiencies on-site. In the event the TDM measures proposed are not sufficient and parking issues do occur, the applicant has agreed to implement a valet service.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project qualifies as categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15332 (“In-Fill Development Projects”) because it is characterized as an infill development which is consistent with the applicable General Plan and zoning designation and regulations; is on a project site that is less than five acres; contains no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and the site can adequately be served by all required utilities and public services.

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the construction value information, expected room rates, and expected occupancy rates provided by the applicant, the City is estimated to receive approximately \$274,000 in additional annual tax revenues from the combined property tax and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) sources.

The project is subject to the City's Commercial Housing Impact Fee. Payment of the required fee would result in an estimated payment to the City of \$25,900.

CONCLUSION

The proposed four-story, 18,366 square foot addition to an existing four-story, 160-room hotel, including 38 new guest rooms and 4,024 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning requirements and would result in a project that furthers the vision and goals of the El Camino Real Precise Plan. The architectural design of the addition, including colors and materials, and the incorporation of ground-floor commercial space is compatible with the surrounding area. Additionally, approval of the project would not result in any significant environmental impacts. The EPC supported the project and recommends conditional approval.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend approval of the project with modified conditions.
2. Refer the project back to the EPC for additional consideration.
3. Refer the project back to the DRC for additional consideration.
4. Deny of the project application, finding the site is not physically suitable for the proposed addition.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The Council's agenda is advertised on Channel 26 and the agenda and this report appear on the City's website. All property owners within a 300' radius and other interested stakeholders were notified of this meeting.

Prepared by:

Carly Panos
Assistant Planner

Stephanie Williams
Acting Zoning Administrator/
Planning Manager

Approved by:

Randal Tsuda
Community Development Director

Daniel H. Rich
City Manager

CP-SW/7/CAM
808-11-07-17CR-E

- Attachments:
1. Resolution Conditionally Approving a Planned Community Permit, Development Review Permit, Provisional Use Permit, and Heritage Tree Removal Permit
 2. Project Plans
 3. Public Correspondence
 4. Traffic Study
 5. Parking Study
 6. Transportation Demand Management Plan