

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

**June 9, 2022**

**PROJECT TITLE**

Cherry Ranch Subdivision

**APPLICANT**

Doug Hilberman, AXIA Architects

**ADDRESS/LOCATION**

930 Fresno Avenue

**PROPERTY OWNER**

1480 Guerneville Rd LP

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER**

035-101-004

**FILE NUMBER**

PRJ20-018 (MAJ20-004, CUP20-056)

**APPLICATION DATE**

October 12, 2020

**APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE**

July 14, 2021

**REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS**

Tentative Map, Minor Conditional Use  
Permit

**FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Minor Design Review (Zoning  
Administrator)

**PROJECT SITE ZONING**

R-1-6 (Single-Family Residential)

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION**

Medium Low-Density Residential

**PROJECT PLANNER**

Conor McKay

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval

Agenda Item # 9.1  
For Planning Commission Meeting of: June 9, 2022

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION  
FROM: CONOR MCKAY, CITY PLANNER  
PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: CHERRY RANCH SUBDIVISION

AGENDA ACTION: THREE RESOLUTIONS

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RECOMMENDATION

Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Planning Commission, by resolutions: (1) adopt an Addendum to the Southwest Area Projects Subsequent Environmental Impact Report, (2) approve a Minor Conditional Use Permit for a Small Lot Subdivision, and (3) adopt a Tentative Map for the Cherry Ranch Subdivision, a 67-lot subdivision, located at 930 Fresno Ave, Assessor's Parcel Number 035-101-004.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The request is for the adoption of an Addendum to the Southwest Area Projects Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and approvals of a Tentative Map and Minor Conditional Use Permit to establish a 67-lot Small Lot Subdivision of five single-family detached dwellings and 62 single-family attached dwellings on a 6.87-acre parcel.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The project site is located in the southwest area of the City, on the east side of Fresno Avenue in the Sebastopol Road Corridor Priority Development Area (PDA). The 6.87-acre site consists of undeveloped land. To the west of Fresno Avenue across from the project site is single-family residential development, with rural residential to the southwest of the site and the Courtside Village single-family residential development to the west of the site. Single-family residential development, part of the Fresno-Sebastopol Commercial District (PD 0436), is located directly north of the project site and forms the northern boundary. East of

the project site is a former airstrip that is now located in the Open Space – Conservation (OSC) zoning district.

The proposed project would consist of 22 one-story single-family attached units, 40 two-story single-family attached units, five single-family detached units. Each dwelling would include at least 400 SF of private open space and a garage. The proposed project also includes the construction of 188 total parking spaces, provided by a combination of garages, driveway aprons, and on-street parking. The City's Zoning Code would require 168 parking spaces, so the applicant is providing 20 parking spaces beyond what is required by the code.

The project site would be accessed from three separate ingress and egress points along Fresno Avenue, which is required to be improved to include a turn lane, travel lane, class 2 bike lane, parking lane, curb and gutter, and planter strip/bioswale all compliant with applicable City Standards. Project site circulation would be provided by an internal network of roadways that are compliant with all Fire Code standards.

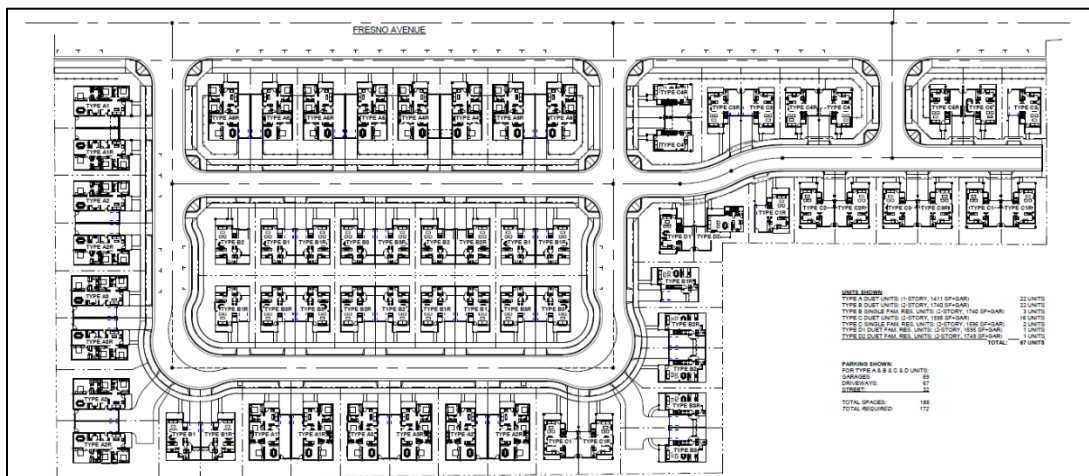


Figure 1: Cherry Ranch Site Plan

## 2. Surrounding Land Uses

North: Rural Residential

South: Vacant, former airstrip

East: Vacant, former airstrip

West: Fresno Avenue, Rural Residential, Low Density Residential

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The 6.87-acre site consists of undeveloped land that was previously operated as a livestock auction yard.

4. Project History

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 16, 2006     | Southwest Area Projects Subsequent EIR certified by City Council                                                                                                                                                          |
| November 7, 2006 | City Council approved a rezoning from RR-40 to R-1-PD, adopted the Cherry Ranch Policy Statement, and approved a Development Plan for the Cherry Ranch project consisting of 39 single family detached units and 39 ADUs. |
| July 31, 2019    | A Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting was held for the Cherry Ranch project, which proposed 83 residential units across single-family detached dwellings and multi-family apartments.                                    |
| August 20, 2020  | Cherry Ranch project, which was reduced to 67 residential units across single-family detached dwellings and single-family attached dwellings, received Concept Design Review by the Design Review Board.                  |
| October 20, 2020 | Tentative Map and Conditional Use Permit applications received for Cherry Ranch project (MAJ20-004, CUP20-056)                                                                                                            |
| November 6, 2020 | Notice of Application distributed to residents and property owners within 600ft of the project site.                                                                                                                      |
| February 9, 2022 | Southwest Area Projects Subsequent EIR Addendum – 930 Fresno Avenue and associated Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program submitted.                                                                                 |

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The project site is designated Medium Low Density Residential on the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 land use diagram, which allows residential development

at a density of 8 to 13 dwelling units per acre. The parcels in the project's vicinity are primarily Low Density Residential, with Low Density/Open Space and Open Space to the east and Retail & Business Services at the corner of Fresno Avenue and Sebastopol Road.

The following General Plan goals and policies are most relevant to the proposed project:

#### LAND USE ELEMENT

Medium Low Density – Housing at a density of 8 to 13 units per gross acre. This classification is mainly intended for attached single-family residential development, but single family detached housing and multifamily developments may be permitted. Development at the mid-point of this density range is desirable but not required.

LUL-E Promote livable neighborhoods. Ensure that everyday shopping, park and recreation facilities, and schools are within easy walking distance or more residents.

LUL-F-3 Maintain a balance of various housing types in each neighborhood and ensure that new development does not result in undue concentration of a single housing type in any one neighborhood.

#### Staff Response

At 9.75 units/acre, the proposed project would conform with the existing Medium Low Density Residential designation. The project also achieves the goal of the Medium Low Density Residential designation by proposing a density that is near the midpoint of the allowable density range. The development plan also proposes two housing types (single family attached and single family detached) 1.1 miles from Wright Elementary School, 0.9 mile from Lawrence Cook Middle School, and .01 mile from a public park (Village Green Park).

#### URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

UD-F Maintain and enhance the diverse character of Santa Rosa's neighborhoods. Promote the creation of neighborhoods – not subdivisions- in areas of new development.

UD-F-3 Encourage creative subdivision design that avoids walling off neighborhoods abutting regional/arterial streets with long monotonous stretches of fencing or walls. Streets along edges of new residential neighborhoods should have active fronting uses such as multifamily housing, local commercial uses, institutional uses, or parks.

UD-F-4 Provide visual interest in building, site, and landscape design that avoids the sense of monotonous tract development. Visual interest can be created in

many ways: varied massing and roof types, floor plans, detailed planting design, or color and materials. Overall harmony should be maintained while providing smaller scale variety.

UD-G Design residential neighborhoods to be safe, human scaled, and livable.

#### Staff Response

The applicant has modified the original design of the proposed project by rotating the residential development on the Fresno Avenue frontage to face the street, activating the street and sidewalk along the project's eastern border. This modification helps the project achieve consistency with UD-F-3, which encourages creative subdivision design that avoids monotonous stretches of walls and/or fencing.

The project proposes two varieties of housing types: single family attached and single family detached. These housing types also have alternate floor plan layouts and elevations which provide a variety of architectural features while maintaining a sense of community within the development with common landscaping and overall architectural style.

#### HOUSING

H-A Meet the housing needs of all Santa Rosa residents.

H-A-2 Pursue the goal of meeting Santa Rosa's housing needs through increased densities, when compatible with existing neighborhoods. Development of existing and new higher-density sites must be designed in context with existing, surrounding neighborhoods.

H-G Develop energy-efficient residential units and rehabilitate existing units to reduce energy consumption.

H-G-1 Maximize energy efficiency in residential areas.

#### Staff Response

The project would introduce 67 new residential units on a presently vacant lot, which will improve the overall housing supply available to existing and future residents of the City of Santa Rosa. The project proposal has been modified to account for community concerns related to density expressed during the project's Neighborhood Meeting to decrease the number of proposed units from 83 to 67 and remove the multifamily apartment development. This achieves greater compatibility with nearby rural residential and low-density residential developments, which is consistent with goal H-A-2 as described above.

The project would also be required to comply with all CALGreen Tier 1 standards to overall reduce the consumption of energy relative to existing residential developments, including but not limited to the establishment of real-time energy monitors, pre-wiring/pre-plumbing for compatibility with photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, and installation of low water use landscaping.

## 2. Zoning

The proposed project would maintain the existing R-1-6 Zoning District and Medium Low Density Residential General Plan Land Use Designation. Because the subdivision proposes lot sizes smaller than the R-1-6 minimum lot size of 6,000 square-feet, the applicant has requested a Conditional Use Permit for a residential small lot subdivision. Zoning Code Section [20-42.140](#) provides development standards for residential small lot subdivisions and allows flexibility for setbacks and two-story individual units or project design alternatives if authorized by the review authority as part of Conditional Use Permit approval. The project site is located in the Sebastopol Road Priority Development Area (PDA), which reduces the permitting requirement for Small Lot Subdivisions from a Major Conditional Use Permit to a Minor Conditional Use Permit pursuant to Zoning Code Section [20-16.060](#). The project proposes development and design standards for second-story side setbacks and private open space that require Planning Commission approval and are summarized below along with other residential small lot development standards:

Lot Size, Configuration - The Code does not limit the lot size for attached units. The Project proposes lots ranging in size from 2,301 to 5,129 square-feet and provides a variety of lot configurations.

Setbacks - For residential small lot subdivisions, the side setback requirements are four (4) feet for one-story portion of the residence, and eight (8) feet for the second-story portion of the home. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-42.140(F)(4), the review authority may approve different setbacks, if the review authority determines that the alternative approach is more appropriate to the characteristics of the site and surroundings. In this case, the Project proposes a reduction in the second-story portion for all lots to be no less than five (5) feet for all two-story units. The reason for this request is that the contemplated modular construction does not lend itself easily to second story setbacks on the sidewalls that are offset from the first floor. The rear setback alternative sought is a reduction of the required 15-foot setback to be 10 feet for lots 8, 9, and 33 through 67 as identified on the Tentative Map (Attachment 5) in order to maximize the development potential of the project while maintaining the 400 square-foot minimum of private open space.

Private Open Space - The standard requirement for private open space on individual lots within a small lot subdivision is 400 square feet, of which no dimension should be less than 15 feet, unless otherwise approved through the CUP process. While all lots comply with the minimum of 400 square feet

of private open space, for the reasons noted above, the applicant proposes a 10-foot rear setback which would result in a 10-foot rear dimension of the private open space, which is five feet shorter than the standard established by Zoning Code Section 20-42.140.F.5.

Building Height - The maximum allowable building height for residential structures is 35 feet. The proposed elevations depict the proposed units at 28 feet tall. While these plans are not binding through the CUP process, the plans indicate the applicant's intent to develop within the height regulation. The Project has been further conditioned to comply with development standards in Zoning Code Section 20-42.140.

Site Coverage - No residential unit shall exceed 65% of allowable lot coverage. While the project plans do not identify each lot coverage, the Draft CUP Resolution includes a Condition of Approval indicating the restriction on allowable lot coverage. Based on the proposed development plan, the project would comply with the required lot coverage standard.

Two-Story Structures – Proposed detached dwellings shall be designed as follows unless the review authority approves otherwise:

- a. The floor area of a second story is no more than 50 percent of all the roofed first floor area of the dwelling (including covered porch area and an attached garage, but not a detached garage); or
- b. 25 percent of the dwelling units in the project are one-story; or
- c. All two-story units have one-story elements.

The second story elements of each two-story unit are greater than 50% of all the roofed first floor area of the dwelling. However, there are 22 single-story units included in this project out of a total of 67 units, which is 32.8% of the total project, and there are one-story elements of each of the two-story units. The project does not need to request Planning Commission approval of these design elements because the project complies with both subsection B and C as described above.

Parking - Pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-36, Table 3-4, a single-family attached dwelling with two or more bedrooms is required to provide one covered space, plus 1.5 visitor spaces per unit. For the proposed single-family detached units, the Code requires four spaces per unit, one of which must be on-site, covered and outside setbacks, while the remaining three spaces may be on-site (in the driveway and tandem) or on a public or private street when directly fronting the lot. The proposed single-family attached units are required to provide one covered space plus 1.5 visitor spaces, which may be in tandem with spaces for the unit; or on-street abutting the site. 45 of the residential units have a one-car garage, and the remaining 22 residential units have a two-car garage which achieves compliance with the off-street parking requirement. Each unit also accommodates one car in the driveway, which results in a total of 67 driveway spaces. The subdivision also includes 32



street spaces, distributed between Fresno Avenue and within the project site abutting the proposed residences. Overall, the project proposes to include 188 total parking spaces, while the Zoning Code would require 175 spaces. Therefore, the project is providing 13 parking spaces beyond what is required by the Code and complies with all parking standards established by [Zoning Code Chapter 20-36 \(Parking\)](#).

3. Design Guidelines

Final Design Review for this project will be provided by the Zoning Administrator pursuant to Zoning Code [20-16.070](#) in that the project site is located within the boundary of the Sebastopol Road Corridor PDA, which reduces the review authority for the Design Review process for multi-family residential development from the Design Review Board to the Zoning Administrator. Through this process, Concept Design Review is required at the Design Review Board level, which was completed for this project on August 30, 2020.

4. Neighborhood Comments

A neighborhood meeting was held on July 31, 2019. Staff received comments relating to overcrowding at the project site and increase in density relative to the surrounding neighborhood. There was specific concern related to the high density of the proposed multifamily apartment development and the amount of parking proposed not being sufficient for the proposed density.

To respond to these concerns, the applicant modified the project description to reduce the total unit count from 83 to 67 units, and completely remove the multifamily apartment development from the proposal. This modification addresses the concerns related to density, and results in a lower parking requirement and overall traffic entering and exiting the project site. The applicant now proposes duplexes instead of multifamily apartments and is providing 13 parking spaces in excess of Code requirements.

5. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

Fresno Avenue shall be dedicated and improved as a modified Boulevard Street to City street standard No. 200I along the entire project frontage. Half street improvements shall consist of a 10 feet wide left/right turn lane, 1-11 feet wide travel lane, a 5-feet wide, class 2 bike lane, an 8 feet wide parking lane, a concrete curb and gutter, an 8.0-feet wide planter strip/bioswale and 5-feet wide sidewalk, with a 10.5-feet wide Public Utility Easement (PUE) and sidewalk access easement behind the Right of Way (ROW) line. The complete half street width of 41 feet wide ROW along Fresno Avenue shall be dedicated and frontage improvements constructed with public improvement plans for this development.

FINDINGS REQUIRED FOR TENTATIVE MAP

Decisions on Tentative Maps are based on the four discretionary standards found in City Code Section 19-24.080(A-D). Applicable Tentative Map standards followed by a staff analysis of the project's compliance with the standards is as follows:

- A. That the proposed map is consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plans as specified in Government Code Sections 65451 and 66474.5.

**Staff Response:** The project site is located in an area designated by the General Plan Land Use Diagram as Medium Low Density Residential, which allows residential development at a density of 8-13 units per acre. The project is proposed at a density of 9.75 units per acre. The proposed project is also consistent with General Plan goals and policies as described in this staff report above.

- B. That the proposed subdivision meets the housing needs of the City and that the public service needs of the subdivision's residents are within the available fiscal and environmental resources of the City.

**Staff Response:** The proposed project would add an additional 67 residential units, with varying unit sizes and types, further the City's goals of new housing development. Further, City Staff has reviewed the proposed development and determined that there is adequate water and sewer capacity. The site will be developed in compliance with the City's Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP).

- C. That the design of the proposed subdivision has, to the extent feasible, provided for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities.

**Staff Response:** All structures have been designed with sufficient windows to allow the inflow of sunlight for natural heating, and larger tree species will be planted throughout the subdivision providing shade or cooling opportunities.

- D. That the proposed subdivision would not discharge waste into the City's sewer system that would result in violation of the requirements prescribed by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Ord. 3396 § 1, 1998; Ord. 2622 § 1, 1987).

**Staff Response:** The proposed development has been reviewed by City Staff and will be required to comply with all City Utilities and Infrastructure requirements, including required connections to City sewer and storm water systems.

#### FINDINGS REQUIRED FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

- A. The proposed use is allowed within the applicable zoning district and complies with all other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code and the City Code;

**Staff Response:** The proposed residential small lot subdivision at a density of 9.75 units per acre is allowed with Conditional Use Permit approval as regulated in Zoning Code Section [20-42.140](#) and complies with all other Zoning Code and City Code regulations. The project requires Planning Commission approval of modified development standards related to second-story setbacks and private open space as described in this staff report. These modifications would not significantly impact the project's livability and are necessary in order to maximize the development potential of the parcel and provide a greater number of housing units to the City. Future residents would be provided with at least 400 SF of private open space and are within close walking distance to a public park.

- B. The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;

**Staff Response:** The site is designated Medium Low Density Residential, which allows 8 to 13 units per acre for which this project's density is 9.75 units per acre, while implementing General Plan Goals and Policies including but not limited to promoting livable neighborhoods; maintaining a diverse housing type; and encouraging creative subdivision design that avoids walling off neighborhoods abutting regional/arterial streets. The project site is not located within the boundary of any specific plan.

- C. The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed activity would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity;

**Staff Response:** The proposed activity is consistent with the Zoning Code and General Plan Land Use designation, which both envision residential development in this area which would include single-family attached and detached units on small lots. The project site is located within walking distance to two schools and a public park. The site would be accessed from Fresno Avenue and respects the scale of existing residential development to the east and southeast of the project site. The site plan provides circulation, setbacks, and design features compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and similar to the surrounding residential uses.

- D. The site is physically suitable for the type, density, and intensity of use being proposed, including access, utilities, and the absence of physical constraints;

**Staff Response:** The project complies with General Plan objective criteria for land use and density, as well as all site development and use standards contained in applicable Zoning Code regulations. The project site is located in a developed area within the City that has access to City services and has been reviewed by City staff and conditioned to include improvements as necessary to support the project and its associated uses.

- E. Granting the permit would not constitute a nuisance or be injurious or detrimental

to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare, or materially injurious to persons, property, or improvements in the vicinity and zoning district in which the property is located; and

**Staff Response:** The proposed scale, scope, and operations of the Project has been thoroughly analyzed and reviewed by multiple City departments, undergone significant environmental analysis, and been conditioned to avoid potential impacts on the environment and surrounding neighborhood. The traffic memo that was prepared to support the environmental analysis that the project would be anticipated to generate 38 new peak A.M. vehicle trips, and 46 new peak P.M. trips. The widening and associated improvement of Fresno Avenue would accommodate this increase, which has been envisioned in the designation of the project site for residential development.

- F. The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Staff Response:** An Addendum to the Southwest Area Projects Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared, which includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project that implements mitigation measures established by the EIR. See Environmental Impact Section below for further information.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Project has been found in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Southwest Area Projects Subsequent EIR (the EIR) evaluated the environmental impacts of 29 individual residential projects, including a 39-unit residential development at the project site. The proposed project exceeds the residential density that was analyzed in the EIR, so an Addendum to the Southwest Area Projects Subsequent EIR was prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed Cherry Ranch project, which proposes 67 residential units. This Addendum is supported by biological, cultural, and traffic analyses and concludes that with the implementation of mitigation measures established by the EIR, the project would not cause new significant environmental effects or substantial increases in the severity of significant effects beyond those previously identified in the Southwest Area Projects EIR.

An Addendum to an adopted EIR may be prepared if no significant environmental effects will occur and none of the previously identified effects will increase in severity. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164). None of the circumstances under CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 are triggered; therefore, no additional analysis is required.

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15164(b), an addendum to a previously certified EIR is not required to be circulated for public review but will be considered by the Lead Agency prior to making a decision about the project.

### NOTIFICATION

This item was noticed as a Public Hearing per the requirements of Chapter 20-66 of the City Code. Notification of this public hearing was provided by posting an on-site sign, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, mailed notice to surrounding property owners and tenants within 600 feet of the project site, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place in this geographic area of Santa Rosa, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City website.

### ISSUES

There are no unresolved issues identified with this project.

### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Disclosure Form  
Attachment 2 – Neighborhood Context Map  
Attachment 3 – Site Analysis Map  
Attachment 4 – Project Summary  
Attachment 5 – Tentative Map  
Attachment 6 – Site Development Plan  
Attachment 7 – Architectural Plans  
Attachment 8 – Landscape and Irrigation Plans  
Attachment 9 – Photometric Analysis  
Attachment 10 – Public Correspondence as of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022  
Attachment 11 – Southwest Area Projects Subsequent EIR Addendum with Appendices  
and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program  
Resolution 1 – Addendum  
Exhibit A – Engineering Development Services Exhibit A  
Resolution 2 – Conditional Use Permit  
Exhibit A – Engineering Development Services Exhibit A  
Resolution 3 – Tentative Parcel Map  
Exhibit A – Engineering Development Services Exhibit A

### CONTACT

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