CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

PROJECT TITLE

Acacia Village

APPLICANT

Robert Upton, Acacia Village LLC

ADDRESS/LOCATION

746 Acacia Lane

PROPERTY OWNER

Marcene Mork

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

182-520-050

FILE NUMBERS

PRJ24-006

APPLICATION DATES

April 15, 2024

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATES

July 30, 2024

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Conditional Use Permit, Tentative Map and Density Bonus

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

PROJECT SITE ZONING

R-1-6 (Single-Family Residential)

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Low Density Residential

PROJECT PLANNER

Suzanne Hartman

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

Agenda Item #11.3
For Planning Commission Meeting of: September 12, 2024

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: SUZANNE HARTMAN, CITY PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: ACACIA VILLAGE

AGENDA ACTION: TWO RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Planning Commission, by two resolutions, approve a Conditional Use Permit and Tentative Map for Acacia Village, a 25-unit housing development, located at 746 Acacia Lane.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The Acacia Village (Project) site is located on the east side of Acacia Lane, in the northeast quadrant of Santa Rosa. The Project proposes to subdivide a 2.5-acre parcel into 25 lots and construct 25 detached single-family dwellings, of which three will be designated for low-income owners (Lots 16, 18 and 19). Individual lots will range in size from 1,966-square-feet to 3,544-square-feet.

The Project will have two access points, one off Acacia Lane and the other from Winding Creek Avenue. Winding Creek Avenue will be extended to Acacia Lane as part of the Project's required improvements. The site plan includes 65 parking spaces (53 onsite and 12 along the street). Six units have connected tandem garages coupled with driveway spaces, four of which take direct access off Winding Creek Avenue and two off Acacia Lane. All other units are provided with one designated garage space and share guest parking. One common parking area is in the northwest corner of the site and the other is in the southeast corner. There are also common trash enclosures in each parking lot, a recreation area with outdoor dining area, children's play areas, and landscaping.

The homes along the eastern property line all have the same orientation with the backyard on the east side, which was intended to maximize the distance between residential structure to the east, along Breeden Street. The applicant is proposing a mix of one- and two-story units, with three floor plans, one of which is available with either three or four bedrooms. Each unit will have a front porch, and windows on all four elevations. Several units have a direct view of the common open space area, putting more eyes on it for safety.

The Project will construct the final segment of Winding Creek Avenue, which will connect to Acacia Lane. In response to neighbor concerns of high speeds and cut-through traffic, a narrow street standard will be constructed in that section of Winding Creek Avenue.

The Project involves a five-unit Density Bonus over the maximum allowable density, which is discussed below. Required entitlements include a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a small lot subdivision, and a Tentative Map (TM) to subdivide a 2.5-acre parcel into 25 individual lots.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

North: Low Density Residential (2-8 units per acre); currently developed with residential uses.

South: Low Density Residential; currently developed with residential uses.

East: Low Density Residential; currently developed with residential uses.

West: Low Density Residential; single-family residences are currently under construction.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The site is currently developed with a single-family residential structure and outbuildings. Fences divide the parcel into several sections. All existing structures will be removed prior to construction of the Project.

4. Project & Site History

December 20, 2016	A Pre-application Meeting was held with City staff.
April 5, 2018	A Neighborhood Meeting was held.
May 31, 2018	Project applications were submitted.
June 11, 2019	The Density Bonus was approved.
June 27, 2019	The Planning Commission approved Resolution Nos. 11969 & 11970 for a CUP & Tentative Map, respectively.

AB 1561	State-mandated 18-month time extension, extending the expiration date to December 27, 2022.
December 27, 2022	The approved CUP and Tentative Map entitlements expired.
April 15, 2024	A new application package was submitted for the same Acacia Village project.
May 10, 2024	A Notice of Application was distributed.
May 20, 2024	A Neighborhood Meeting was held.
July 30, 2024	The application was deemed complete.
August 9, 2024	A Notice of Public Hearing was distributed.
August 22, 2024	The Planning Commission continued the item to September 12, 2024.

ANALYSIS

1. Density Bonus

Projects that qualify for Density Bonus may exceed allowable densities set forth by the General Plan by allocating affordable units that are deed restricted for a set period, usually 55 years. The number or percent of units restricted, and the affordability level they are restricted at, determine the number of concessions or incentives allowed. These projects are also eligible for unlimited waivers to development standards that would otherwise preclude the development of affordable housing. Pursuant to the Government Code Section 65589.5 (the Housing Accountability Act), the City may not disapprove, or condition approval for a housing development project for very low-, low-, or moderate-income households in a manner than renders the proposal infeasible, unless specified written findings are made.

When the Acacia Village project was approved in 2019, the project was found in compliance with both City Density Bonus regulations (Zoning Code Chapter 20-31) and State regulations (California Code Section 69515). The maximum allowable density for the subject site is/was 20 units. Because 15% (three units) of the proposed units were designated for low-income property owners, the project was eligible for a 27.5% (up to six units) density increase. The project included five density bonus units and was granted four waivers applied to development standards, for reductions in setbacks, lot size, and private open space, and increase in lot coverage.

In the current proposal, there are no changes to the number of units or the affordability level for deed-restricted units. As explained in the memo included in Attachment 11, the Density Bonus approval was modified to include one concession, which is allowed pursuant to Zoning Code Table 5-3, for a reduction in lot size, which will allow parcels smaller than 2,000 square feet. The project maintains three other waivers for reductions in setbacks and private open space,

and an increase in lot coverage.

2. General Plan

The General Plan addresses the physical development and growth of Santa Rosa and guides the City's planning and zoning functions. The General Plan land use designation is Low Density Residential, which is intended for single family residential development at densities ranging from 2-8 units per acre. Without the five density bonus units, the subject 2.5-acre project site would be limited to 20 residential units.

LAND USE AND LIVABILITY

LUL-F Maintain a diversity of neighborhoods and varied housing stock to satisfy a wide range of needs.

URBAN DESIGN

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

UD-G-4 Provide through-connections for pedestrians and bicyclists in new developments. Avoid cul-de-sac streets unless public pedestrian/bikeways interconnect them.

UD-G-6 To promote social interaction, houses in new developments should contain porches, front gardens, and windows overlooking front yards and sidewalks.

UD-G-7 Ensure that garages do not dominate streetscapes by setting them back from the front of houses, locating them at the rear of the site, accessed by an alleyway, or clustering them on shared driveways.

UD-G-8 Promote personal safety in project design, particularly in multifamily development, by locating windows and walkways to assure visual access to common areas. Locate children’s play space within view of the nearest units and discourage designs with unutilized open space.

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-C Expand the supply of housing available to lower income households.
H-C-15 Encourage new affordable housing development to provide amenities for residents, such as on-site recreational facilities.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GM-B-4 Direct growth to areas where services and infrastructure can be provided efficiently.

TRANSPORTATION

T-B Provide a safe, efficient, free-flowing circulation system.

T-C-3 Implement traffic calming techniques on streets subject to high speed and/or cut-through traffic to improve neighborhood livability.

Acacia Village will help meet the housing needs of Santa Rosa by constructing 25 detached single-family residences, of which three will be designated for low-income property owners. The site plan promotes social interaction with residents of this development and with neighbors. and conceptual housing add diversity in housing type in the neighborhood, all utilities and emergency services are available at the location, and Winding Creek Ave will be extended to meet Acacia Land implementing a narrower street standard to reduce the speed of cut through traffic.

3. City Code, Title 19 (Tentative Map)

City Code, Title 19, provides regulations pertaining to Tentative Maps. Pursuant to City Code Chapter 19-24, the Planning Commission must make the following findings before approving a Tentative Map:

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

2. The proposed subdivision meets the housing needs of the City and the public service needs of the subdivision's residents are within the available fiscal and environmental resources of the City.

3. The design of the proposed subdivision has, to the extent feasible, provided for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities in the subdivision; and

4. 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.

As shown in the attached draft resolution, staff analysis demonstrates that required findings can be met.

4. Zoning

The Zoning Code implements the goals and policies of the General Plan by classifying and regulating the use of land and development within the City. The project site is within the R-1-6 (Single-Family Residential) zoning district, which is consistent with the General Plan land use designation.

Zoning for surrounding properties:

North: R-1-6 (Single-family Residential) zoning district

South: R-1-6 (Single-family Residential) zoning district

East: PD (Planned Development) residential zoning district.

West: R-1-6 and PD zoning districts for small lot residential development.

Zoning Code Section 20-42.140 provides development standards for small lot subdivisions. Parcels in small lot subdivisions are permitted to range in size from 2,000-6,000 square feet. The proposed lot sizes range from 1,966 to 3,544 square feet, with Lots 2, 4, 8, 9, 10 and 14 being less than 2,000-square feet. As explained in the Density Bonus section of this report, the project is entitled to one concession, which has been applied to lot size.

The standard requirement for private open space in 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. In lieu of the traditional set back and private open space requirements, the project proposes a ‘pocket neighborhood’ that encourages social interaction. The site design places an emphasis on a central common area designed for active and passive uses, that includes a covered community pavilion with an outdoor kitchen and seating, and a children’s play area. Two existing heritage trees will be incorporated into the landscape design in that area. Other amenities for the residents will include a community garden. A waiver has also been applied to this development standard.

The standard allowable lot coverage in a small lot subdivision is 60%. Lot coverage ranges from 44.4% to 60.5%. Lots 2, 9 and 10 exceed the allowable lot coverage with 60.5%. A waiver has also been applied to this development standard.

As depicted on the site plan and summarized in the table below, the project will

require reduced setbacks, for which a development waiver will be used:

	Acacia Village setback range	Standard setbacks pursuant to 20-42.140	Comments
Front yard	2 - 11 Feet	10 Feet	Where the seback is below ten feet, the homes are oriented towards common landscaped areas within the subdivision. Units that front onto strees have 11-foot setbacks.
Rear yard	10 - 10.3 Feet	15 Feet	The project provides a common recreation area.
Side yard - interior	3 - 5 Feet	4/8 Feet (first/second floor)	The site plan does not idicate any second-story stepping on side yard elevations.
Side yard - exterior	5.8 - 10.15 Feet		

Zoning Code Table 3-4 requires four parking spaces per home in single-family residential neighborhoods, which can consider street parking. Pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-31 and California Government Code Section 65915(p), upon request by the Applicant, for which a request was made, the City may not require a proposed Housing Development that is eligible for a density bonus to provide more than the following parking ratios:

- Studio or units with one bedroom must provide one onsite parking space;
- Units with two or three bedrooms must provide two onsite parking spaces; and
- Units with four or more bedrooms must provide 2.5 parking spaces.

The Project proposes six units that provide an option for either three or four bedrooms. For the purpose of calculating the parking requirement, a worst-case scenario was assumed (all six units at four bedrooms). Based on that assumption, the Project is required to provide 56 parking spaces. The Project provides 65 spaces (53 on site and 12 along the street). The project is in compliance with Zoning Code requirements.

The Project is conditioned to comply with Zoning Code Section 20-30.080, which limits the height of outdoor lighting fixtures to 17 feet high and requires lighting fixtures to either be shielded or recessed to minimize light bleed to neighboring properties. As conditioned, the Project complies with the Zoning Code.

In an arborist evaluation, prepared by Becky Duckles, Consulting Arborist, dated May 22, 2018, 21 trees were identified on the project site, of which 19 are proposed for removal. Included in the trees to be removed are four heritage trees

and four exempt trees. Because the arborist report is now six years old, the project has been conditioned to provide an updated arborist report and tree replacement in compliance with City Code Chapter 17-24.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-52.050, the Planning Commission may approve a Conditional Use Permit only after making the following findings:

- 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;
- The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;
- The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed activity would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity;
- The site is physically suitable for the type, density, and intensity of use being proposed, including access, utilities, and the absence of physical constraints;
- 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
- The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

As shown in the attached draft resolution, staff analysis demonstrates that required findings can be met.

5. Summary of Public Comments

The following list summarizes neighborhood concerns coupled with staff's response.

Concern: Not enough traffic calming measures
Staff Response: The Project is conditioned to improve both Acacia Lane and Winding Creek Avenue to the Minor Street standard.

Concern: Not enough parking
Staff Response: Reduced parking is permitted pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-31 because the Project will provide affordable housing and has been granted a Density Bonus.

Concern: Emergency evacuation
Staff Response:. The Fire Department has confirmed that the Project will not

negatively affect the City's evacuation procedures.

Concern: Changes to CC&Rs
Staff Response:. Amending CC&Rs is a function of the Homeowner's Association, not the City, although the project has been conditioned to add several maintenance provisions to the CC&Rs.

Concern: Site Maintenance
Staff Response: The CC&Rs are required to address onsite maintenance.

Concern: Grading and site drainage
Staff Response: The project will comply with City standards for site drainage and has been conditioned accordingly.

6. Public Improvements

The Project will be required to improve both Acacia Lane and Winding Creek Avenue to the Minor Street standard. For a comprehensive list of on- and off-site improvements, refer to the Development Advisory Report, dated September 4, 2024, and attached to the Tentative Map draft resolution.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the Project will not have an effect on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Project has been found in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, the Project qualifies for a categorical exemption as in-fill development.

- The Project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning. The land use designation is Low Density Residential and the zoning is R-1-6, which are consistent and intended for signal family residential uses at densities ranging from 2-8 units per acre. With an approved density increase, the project exceeds the allowable density. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65915, as determined by *Wollmer v. City of Berkeley*, a housing development that exceeds the maximum allowable densities due to a Density Bonus remains consistent with the General Plan.

- The Project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species. A Biological Resources Assessment, prepared by WRA Inc., dated November 2017, "no wetlands, streams, or riparian areas are present. All special-status plant and wildlife species documented within the vicinity of the

Study Area are unlikely or have no potential to occur. No further studies are required or recommended for this site." In a Memorandum dated August 14, 2024, WRE has confirmed the previous findings still apply.

- The Project occurs on a site that is less than five acres within City limits and is substantially surrounded by urban uses.

- Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic. A study conducted by W-Trans, dated August 7, 2018, and updated memorandum dated concluded that "given the limited number of peak hour trips that the project would be expected to generate, it's reasonable to conclude that its impact on traffic operation will be less-than-significant.

  A memo from Dalene J. Whitlock of W-Trans, dated August 13, 2024, states that, "though the rates in the latest version of the Trip Generation Manual are slightly different, the results would be nearly identical and the trip generation still well below the City's threshold of 50 peak hour trips; a more extensive study is therefore still not required. Assuming that the physical conditions in the project vicinity have remained relatively constant, the findings regarding pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities as well as site access would remain unchanged. Similarly, assuming the City's parking requirements have not changed, the parking analysis would still be valid."

- The project is required to comply with the City's Low Impact Development standards, which will treat stormwater runoff generated by a one-inch storm over a 24-hour period.

- An Environmental Noise Assessment, prepared by Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., dated September 18, 2018, concluded that the implementation of standard conditions of approval would reduce temporary construction noises to a level less than significant. The project has also been conditioned to remain in compliance with the Noise Ordinance, City Code Chapter 17-16.

- The Project site is located in a developed area where it can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. City staff has reviewed the plans and conditioned the Project appropriately.

The project is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Section 15183, in that the project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning, for which an Environment Impact Report (EIR) was certified by Council in 2009. The EIR analyzed impacts to traffic, air quality & greenhouse gases, and noise for implementation of the General Plan. There are no impacts peculiar to the site or off-site or cumulative impacts that were not analyzed in the prior General Plan EIR.

No exceptions to the exemption apply and there is no reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

(CEQA Guidelines section15300.2.)

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The project 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 occupants, 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. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65091, where necessary, the City has incorporated notice procedures to the blind, aged, and disabled communities. These procedures include audio amplifier/assistive listening device support at public meetings, closed captioning, and optical character recognition conversion of electronic notices.

ISSUES

There are no unresolved issues pertaining to the Project.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Disclosure Form
Attachment 2: Location Map
Attachment 3: Project Narrative
Attachment 4: Project Plans
Attachment 5: Noise Study
Attachment 6: Air Quality & Community Risk Assessment
Attachment 7: Traffic Study
Attachment 8: Addendum to Traffic Study
Attachment 9: Biological Resource Assessment
Attachment 10: Arborist Report
Attachment 11: Geotechnical Investigation
Attachment 12: Density Bonus Approval
Attachment 13: Development Advisory Report
Attachment 14: PC Resolution 11970

Resolution 1: Conditional Use Permit
Resolution 2: Tentative Map (w/Development Advisory Report)

CONTACT

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