



City of Palo Alto

(ID # 6654)

Architectural Review Board ARB Staff Report

Report Type: New Business

Meeting Date: 3/3/2016

Summary Title: 744-750 San Antonio Road

Title: 744-750 San Antonio Road (15PLN-00314): Request for a Community Scoping Meeting to take verbal comments regarding the scope and content of the forthcoming Draft EIR. The proposed discretionary Architectural Review application is for a request by Rashik Patel on behalf of M10 Dev, LLC for Architectural Review of a lot merger, architectural review, demolition of existing structures and construction of two new hotel buildings (297 rooms in 153,580 square feet). The project includes surface parking and an underground garage, hotel amenities and other minor site improvements. Zoning District: Service Commercial CS.

From: Sheldon A. Sing

Lead Department: Planning and Community Environment

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) conduct a Community Scoping Meeting to solicit public comments regarding the scope and content of the Draft Environmental Impact Report's environmental analysis for the proposed project at 744-750 San Antonio Road.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ARB is requested review and provide comments regarding the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for inclusion in the forthcoming EIR. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the NOP is the first step in the drafting of the EIR. Specifically, the NOP is a brief notice sent by the Lead Agency (City) to outside agencies and public that the City intends to prepare an EIR for the project.

The purpose of the notice is to solicit guidance from those noticed as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.

The applicant has proposed demolition of existing buildings on the project site followed by construction of two five-story branded hotels (AC and Courtyard by Marriott) on a podium deck with an underground parking garage. The buildings would be situated on opposite sides of a centralized driveway. The hotels would include 154 and 143 rooms respectively for a total of

297 rooms for the site. The project would provide a total of 297 on-site surface and basement level parking spaces (including valet spaces). The proposed FAR is 1.84:1. No deviations from the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) are requested.

BACKGROUND

Preliminary Review

The ARB held a preliminary hearing for this project on June 4, 2015 (video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6thKw1ldas&start=290&width=420&height=315> and meeting packet: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/47600>).

Pre-Screening

On December 7, 2015, the City Council held a pre-screening hearing to solicit early feedback on the proposed project. (Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo7CAHpcF4&start=12&width=420&height=315> and Packet: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/50007>) Several community members expressed concern about the massing of the project and potential traffic impacts. While City Council generally supports the concept of a hotel in this vicinity, they too expressed concerns about the massing and potential traffic impacts, and asked for the ARB to review the design of the project.

Formal ARB Hearing

On December 17, 2015, the ARB conducted a formal public hearing on the project. (Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx9EGvX84Bw&start=7303&width=420&height=315> and Packet: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/50284>) Feedback on the proposal by the ARB were provide to staff and the applicant that centered on massing and context of the project. At the hearing, comments from the public included concerns regarding traffic, massing, and noise.

ARB Purview

Pursuant to the PAMC new Section 18.31 (CEQA Review), the ARB has the authority to provide comments and conduct hearings with respect to CEQA documents associated with projects requiring Architectural Review. The ARB's recommendation would be forwarded to the Planning & Community Environment Director unless an EIR requires Statements of Overriding Considerations, and then their recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council for consideration.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes the construction of two five-story hotels with shared amenity spaces and parking on a podium structure. The proposed hotels would include a 143-room "Courtyard by Marriott" hotel and a 154-room "AC by Marriott" hotel, for a total of 297 new hotel rooms. The project would provide a total of 297 on-site surface and basement-level parking spaces (including valet spaces).

The site currently contains several one-story commercial and light industrial buildings, including a structure at 744 San Antonio Road that was originally used as a mortuary and funeral chapel. This building was built in 1961 and may be eligible for listing on the California Register of Historic Places, due to its architectural significance and embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of mid-century modern architecture. Both the former mortuary building and a 1983 building located at the rear of this parcel are currently used for offices. The northern parcel contains two large warehouse-type buildings built in the 1950's which are occupied by commercial and light industrial uses, including automotive repair. The existing buildings and other improvements on the site would be demolished prior to construction of the proposed hotels. New landscaping, driveways, utilities, and other facilities would be constructed as part of the project.

The project site is currently designated Regional/ Community Commercial in the City's Comprehensive Plan and is located within the Service Commercial (CS) zoning district. The project is consistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan land use designation and zoning. The project would require a lot merger to combine the two existing parcels.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of an EIR is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment; to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and to consider alternatives to the project.

This meeting of the ARB will serve as the EIR Scoping Meeting, the 'kick-off' session for the EIR preparation process, and will allow the public and ARB to provide comments regarding the scope of the environmental issues and alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR.

Environmental Consultant Team

The City has selected the environmental consulting firm of David J. Powers & Associates to prepare the EIR. In addition to technical studies already completed for the project and prepared for the City, other technical studies would be necessary to complete the environmental analysis. In order to provide expertise in specific areas outside of David J. Powers & Associates specialized knowledge, the following sub-consultants will help prepare detailed studies or peer review existing studies for the EIR:

- Illingworth & Rodkin: Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- TJKM: Transportation peer review

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the CEQA. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project;

- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; (d) effects found not to be significant; and (e) cumulative impacts.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

The EIR will describe the existing environmental conditions on the project site and will identify the significant environmental impacts anticipated to result from development of the project as described in the project description. Where potentially significant environmental impacts are identified, the EIR will also discuss mitigation measures that may make it possible to avoid or reduce significant land use impacts, as appropriate. The analysis in the EIR will include the following specific categories of environmental impacts and concerns related to the proposed project. Additional subjects may be added at a later date, as new information comes to light.

It is anticipated that the proposed project may have the following environmental effects: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources (trees), cultural and historic resources, geology and seismicity, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, transportation, and utilities and service systems.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPING MEETING

The City of Palo Alto, as the Lead Agency under CEQA, will prepare an EIR for the proposed development project. The City issued the NOP announcing the City's intention to prepare an EIR for the subject project on February 23, 2016. The issuance of the NOP starts a 30-day scoping comment period, during which federal, state, and local agencies and members of the public may submit suggestions to the City regarding the scope and content of the Draft EIR's environmental analysis of the proposed Project. The meeting of the Architectural Review Board serves as the public scoping meeting, an opportunity for the Board and members of the public to present formal EIR scoping comments. Comments will continue to be accepted through the end of the scoping period on March 23, 2016.

REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVAL FROM THE CITY

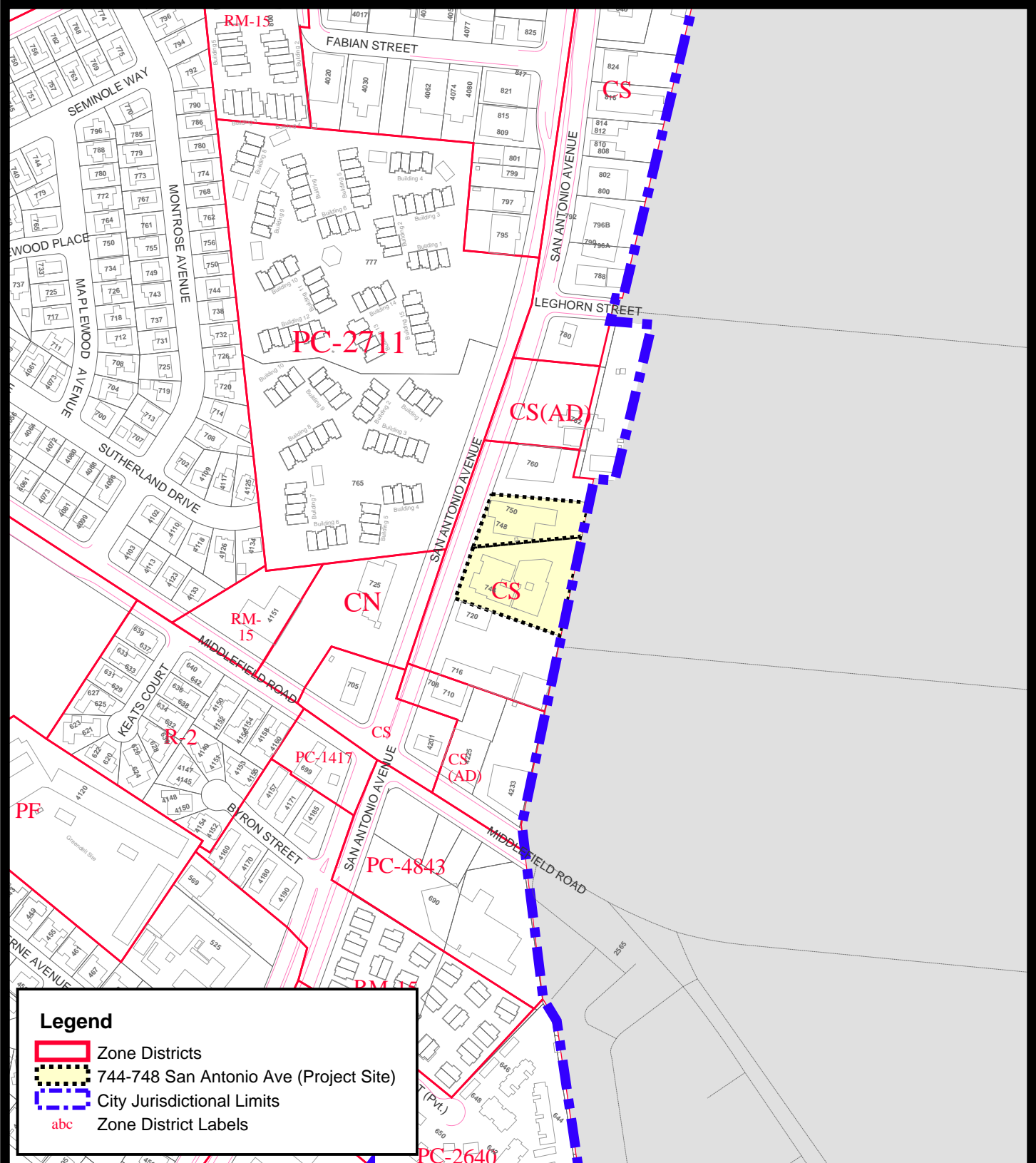
The project is required to undergo Major Architectural Review. The project will be presented and considered at a public hearing of the Architectural Review Board, and its recommendation will be forwarded to the Director of Planning and Community Environment. The project EIR will also be required to obtain approvals through a public hearing process.

COURTESY COPIES

| ~~Reviewed by:~~

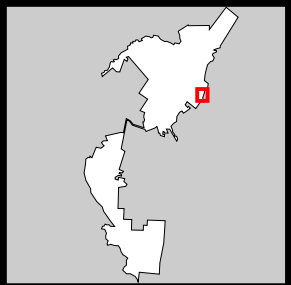
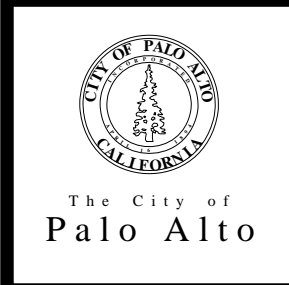
Attachments:

- Attachment A_Project Location Map (PDF)
- Attachment B_744-750 San Antonio NOP 2-16-2016 (PDF)



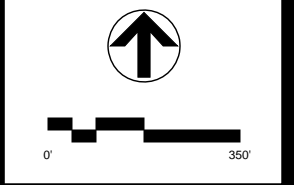
Legend

- Zone Districts
- 744-748 San Antonio Ave (Project Site)
- City Jurisdictional Limits
- abc Zone District Labels



744-748 San Antonio Avenue
with
Zoning Districts
Area Map

This map is a product of the
City of Palo Alto GIS





CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City of Palo Alto
Department of Planning and Community Environment
California Environmental Quality Act
NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

FROM: City of Palo Alto
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a Proposed Hotel Development Located at 744-748 San Antonio Road

The City of Palo Alto will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a project EIR for the project identified below.

AGENCIES: The City of Palo Alto requests the views of public agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b), if the agency will need to use the EIR prepared for the project when considering any permit or other approval for the project

ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES: The City of Palo Alto requests comments and concerns from organizations and interested parties regarding the environmental issues associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project.

PROJECT TITLE: 744-748 San Antonio Hotel Project

PROJECT APPLICANT: T2 Development 620 Newport Center Drive, 14th Floor, Newport Beach, CA 92660

PROJECT LOCATION: The 1.92-acre project site consists of two parcels located on the east side of San Antonio Road (north of West Middlefield Road in the City of Palo Alto. The site is adjacent to the City of Palo Alto's western border of the City of Mountain View. The project site is located at 744-748 San Antonio Road on Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 147-05-088 and -089. The project location is shown on attached Figures 1, 2, and 3.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project proposes the construction of two five-story hotels with shared amenity spaces and parking on a podium structure. The proposed hotels would include a 143-room "Courtyard by Marriott" hotel and a 154-room "AC by Marriott" hotel, for a total of 297 new hotel rooms. The project would provide a total of 297 on-site surface and basement-level parking spaces (including valet spaces).

The site currently contains several one-story commercial and light industrial buildings, including a structure at 744 San Antonio Road that was originally used as a mortuary and funeral chapel. This building was built in 1961 and may be eligible for listing on the California Register of Historic Places, due to its architectural significance and embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of mid-century modern

architecture. Both the former mortuary building and a 1983 building located at the rear of this parcel are currently used for offices. The northern parcel contains two large warehouse-type buildings built in the 1950's which are occupied by commercial and light industrial uses, including automotive repair. The existing buildings and other improvements on the site would be demolished prior to construction of the proposed hotels. New landscaping, driveways, utilities, and other facilities would be constructed as part of the project.

The project site is currently designated *Regional/Community Commercial* in the City's Comprehensive Plan and is located within the *Service Commercial (CS)* zoning district. The project is consistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan land use designation and zoning. The project would require a lot merger to combine the two existing parcels.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: It is anticipated that the proposed project may have the following environmental effects: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources (trees), cultural and historic resources, geology and seismicity, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, transportation, and utilities and service systems.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: This NOP and the Draft Initial Study are available for public review and comment pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b) for 30 days. The comment period for the NOP begins **February 23, 2016**, and ends on **March 23, 2016**. Due to the limits mandated by State Law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The Initial Study may be reviewed online at <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/planningprojects> or at the Planning and Community Environment office at 250 Hamilton Avenue in Palo Alto

RESPONSES AND COMMENTS: Please indicate a contact person for your agency and send your responses and comments by mail or email to:

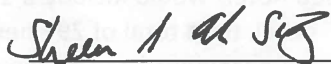
Sheldon Ah Sing
City of Palo Alto
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301
Sheldon@mplanninggroup.com

SCOPING MEETING: The City of Palo Alto will hold a scoping meeting as part of the Architectural Review Board's regularly scheduled meeting on March 3, 2016. The meeting will start at 8:30 a.m. and will be held at the City of Palo Alto Council Chambers, located in City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue. The meeting agenda will be posted to the City's website: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/boards/architectural.asp>.

The NOP and related CEQA document(s) for this project will be available for review on the web. You can view the NOP and the Draft Initial Study electronically at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/planningprojects>.

If you require additional project information, please contact Sheldon Ah Sing at (650) 938-1111.

Signature



Date

