

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED DESIGN AND LAYOUT FOR THE PHASED MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-2) COMPONENT OF THE AVILA RANCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, CONSISTING OF 297 RESIDENTIAL UNITS; THE PROJECT APPLICATION INCLUDES A FENCE HEIGHT EXCEPTION TO ALLOW A MAXIMUM 13

PROJECT ADDRESS: 175 Venture Drive

BY: John Rickenbach, Contract Planner
 Phone Number: 805-610-1109
 Email: jfrickenbach@aol.com

FILE NUMBER: ARCH-0624-2020

FROM: Tyler Corey, Deputy Director

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Draft Resolution approving the proposed site design and layout for the R-2 component of the Avila Ranch Project to be developed within Phases 1-3 of the Development Plan, including a fence height exception adjacent to an industrial area, based on findings and subject to the Conditions of Approval.

SITE DATA

Applicant	Wathen Castanos Homes
Representative	Carol Florence; Reed Onate
General Plan and Zoning	Medium Density Residential; R-2-SP within the Airport Area SP
Site Area	150 acres for the entire Avila Ranch area (27.3 acres within the R-2-SP zone)
Environmental Status	Consistent with Avila Ranch certified Final EIR

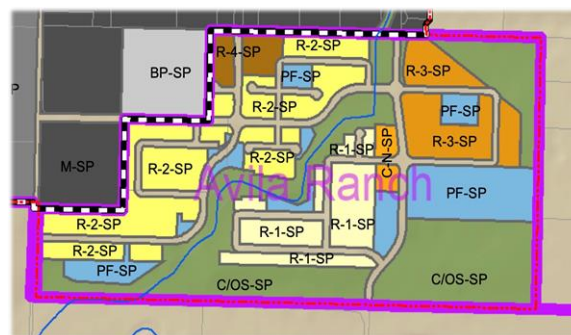


Figure 1. Avila Ranch Area within the Airport Area Specific Plan

1.0 BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

On September 19, 2017, the City Council approved the Avila Ranch project, which envisioned phased development of up to 720 homes and 15,000 square feet of neighborhood-serving commercial uses on a 150-acre site on three parcels in the southern portion of the City of San Luis Obispo, generally northeast of Buckley Road and Vachell Lane (APNs 053-259-004, -005 and -006).

ARCH-0624-2020

Planning Commission Report – September 22, 2021

The project as approved was determined to be consistent with the City's General Plan, Airport Area Specific Plan (as amended), and the City's Community Design Guidelines. It was also determined to be consistent with the County's Airport Land Use Plan.

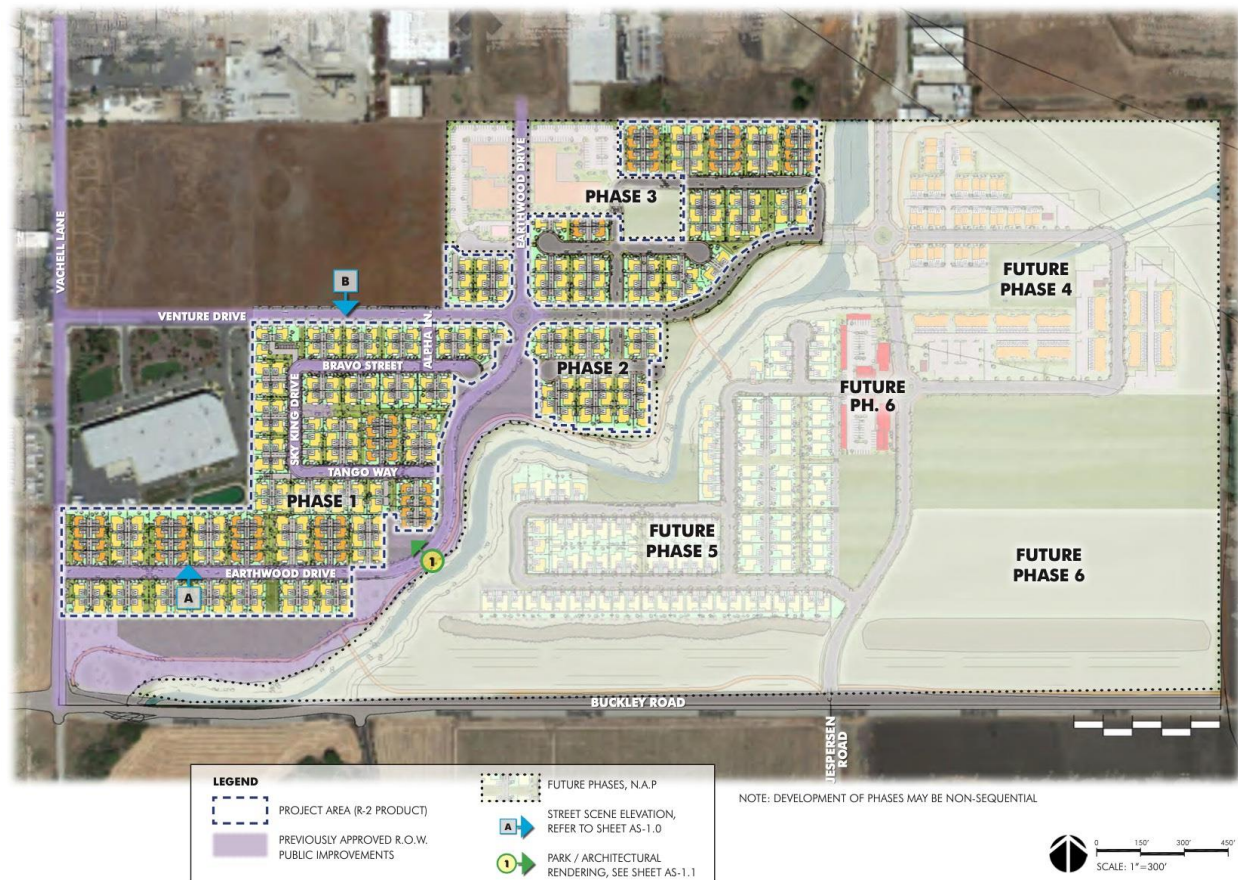
The project site is within a portion of the Airport Area Specific Plan and is designated as Medium Density Residential (R-2). Figure 1 shows the proposed project site and key information about the site. The proposed action is consistent with the certified Final EIR for Avila Ranch project.

The following entitlements were included as part of project approval to facilitate development:

- **Resolution 1832 (2017 Series)** certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report for the project, amending both the Airport Area Specific Plan and General Plan, and approving Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 3089.
- **Resolution 1638 (2017 Series)** rezoning property at 175 Venture Drive (the Project) from Business Park/Specific Plan Area (BP-SP) and Conservation /Open Space/Specific Plan Area (C/OS/SP) to be consistent with the Project's Development Plan and with the General Plan and Airport Area Specific Plan, as amended to enable development of 720 residential units and 15,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial on a 150-acre site. The Project also includes 18 acres of parks and 53 acres of designated open space.
- **Ordinance 1639 (2017 Series)** approving the Development Agreement (DA) between the City and Avila Ranch LLC. The Project was subsequently sold to Wathen Castanos Homes, and with it, the rights and obligations associated with the DA. The DA ensures phased and orderly development of the Project, and includes provisions for reimbursement for public infrastructure and improvements beyond project requirements.

The applicant now requests that the Planning Commission approve the proposed design and layout for the Medium Residential Density (R-2) component of the project. The majority of the R-2 zoned property is located within Phase 1 of the approved Development Plan, with the remainder of the R-2 zoning in Phases 2 and 3, consistent with what is described in the Development Plan. In all, the project would accommodate 297 R-2 units, which would be constructed in three phases (refer to Figure 2, Avila Ranch Project Phasing and R-2 Locations). Phase 1 would include 179 R-2 units, with 29 R-2 units as part of Phase 2 and 89 R-2 units in Phase 3. The current application also includes a fence height exception request to provide screening between the residential development and the adjacent existing industrial/manufacturing development north and west of portions of Phase 1 development.

2.0 PROJECT DETAILS



The proposed application is for the Planning Commission to consider approval of the design aspects of the R-2 component of the Avila Ranch project, which would be constructed in Phases 1-3 of the project. If approved, the R-2 products as envisioned would be developed in the framework of existing project entitlements, subject to the policies of the General Plan, AASP, and requirements of the Avila Ranch Development Agreement and Development Plan. Figure 2 shows the phasing within Avila Ranch, and the R-2 areas in more detail, which is exclusively in the first 3 phases of the 6-phase project. The layout shown is consistent with the approved Tract Map.

Two types of R-2 products are proposed, and these are described in the Avila Ranch Development Plan. These are called the Cluster and Pocket Cottage units, which differ in their design, size and layout. These are briefly described below but described in detail on Sheets A1.1 through A9.2 of the project plans (Attachment B).

Architectural Design Concept

Table 1 summarizes the proposed floor plans within the R-2 zone, including key features and the applicability of the various architectural styles.

Cluster Units						
Plan #	Size	Stories	Bedroom/ Baths	Garage	Architectural Styles	# of Units in Phase 1
Same as Cottage plan 2	1,609 SF	2	3BR / 1.5BA	1 car	A, B, C, D, E	15
Same as Cottage plan 3	1,708 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	1 car	A, B, C, D, E	5
1	1,805 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	2 car	A, B, C, D, E	17
2	1,900 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	2 car	A, B, C, D, E	20
3	2,066 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	2 car + bonus room	A, B, C, D, E	43
4	2,273 SF	2	3BR / 3BA	2 car + bonus room	A, B, C, D, E	31
TOTAL						131
Pocket Cottage Units						
1	1,169 SF	2	3BR / 1.5BA	1 car	A, B, D	8
2	1,609 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	1 car	A, B, C, D, E	12
3	1,708 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	1 car	A, B, C, D, E	13
4	1,551 SF	2	3BR / 2.5BA	1 car	A	2
5	819 SF	1	2BR / 1BA	1 car	A	13
TOTAL						48
All Phase 1						179
Architectural Style Key:						
A – Spanish (Mission) B – Bungalow C – Craftsman D – Farmhouse E – Contemporary						

ARCH-0624-2020
Planning Commission Report – September 22, 2021

Figures 3 and 4 show renderings of the development concept, and how the various architectural and design elements would interact with parks and pedestrian paseos. The intent of the overall design is to mix architectural styles and floor plans throughout the development consistent with the intent of the Development Plan. Additional renderings and design details are included in the application package (Attachment B, Sheets AS1.0 through AS1.4).



Figure 3. Rendering of Development Concept



Figure 4. Rendering of Development Concept

ARCH-0624-2020
Planning Commission Report – September 22, 2021

Details related to the treatment of pedestrian paseos, particularly how they would interact with neighboring development and landscaping, are included on Sheets L1.0 to L1.8. Additional details related to lighting, colors and materials are included on Sheets A10.0 to A10.5 (Attachment B, Project Plans).

3.0 PROPOSED FENCE HEIGHT EXCEPTION

Municipal Code section 17.70.070 allows a maximum wall/fence height of 6 feet along rear and side setbacks or up to 9 feet when combined with a retaining wall. Exceptions to these requirements can be granted for circumstances relating to topography and privacy. (SLMC § 17.70.070(H).) A fence height exception is requested along the north and west tract boundaries adjacent to an industrial property (APN 053-259-003) to allow for a 6-foot high solid fence atop a previously approved retaining wall. The requested maximum total combined wall/fence height is proposed at 13 feet.

This exception is requested in response to the site topography and to provide privacy for proposed residential uses from the adjacent active industrial development, notably the parking areas near the property line. The majority of the retaining wall would face the residential development. The proposed fences would be located in the rear and side yards of the residential development and would not be visible along public roads.

See Figure 5 for the proposed fencing concept, which shows some of the detail from Sheet E1.0, included as Attachment B. The site retaining walls were approved and permitted as part of Tract 3089 Phase 1 Improvements (FMAP-1563-2018) and are included for graphic reference only to depict the total wall/fence height. The retaining wall varies in height from 2 to 7 feet. Although the combined height of the retaining wall and fence could be as high as 13 feet, because of topographic variation, in other areas it would be under 9 feet. Due to the tract drainage improvements, topography, and location of the approved walls, it is infeasible to offset the fence from the retaining wall.

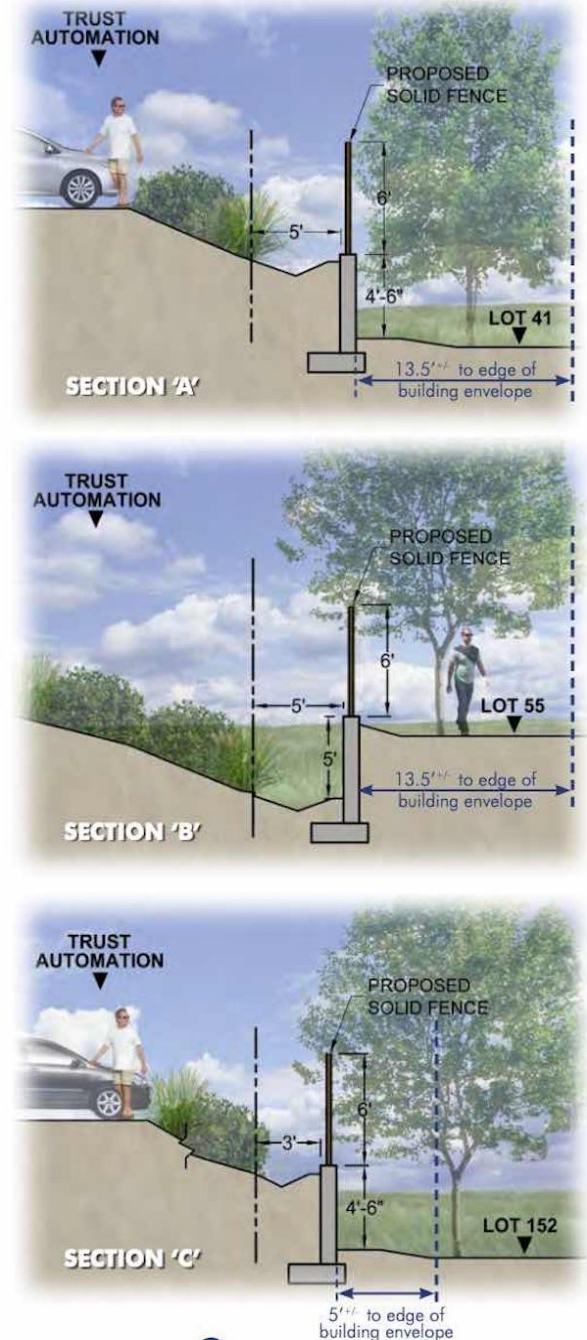


Figure 5. Proposed Fence Height Exception

4.0 PLANNING COMMISSION PURVIEW

The Planning Commission's role is to consider approval of the proposed design of the R-2 product and fence height exception request, informed by the recommendations of the Architectural Review Commission. In arriving at a decision, the Planning Commission should consider the proposal's consistency with the General Plan¹, Airport Area Specific Plan (AASP), Zoning Regulations², Community Design Guidelines, and other applicable City development standards. The Planning Commission should determine if the proposal is consistent with the intent of the Avila Ranch Development Plan.

If approved by the Planning Commission, any future development of the 297 allowed housing units within the R-2 zone may be processed ministerially, provided it complies with the Mitigation Measures in the certified Final EIR, the Conditions of Approval set forth at the time the Avila Ranch project was originally approved, and is in conformance with approved Venting Tentative Tract Map 3089 and Development Agreement.

5.0 PREVIOUS REVIEW

The Avila Ranch project was originally approved by the City Council in September 2017. This included a Development Agreement, Development Plan, VTTM 3089, and a certified Final EIR that addressed the entire development, including the R-2 portion of the project. The approved project had been previously reviewed by the Planning Commission, Architectural Review Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Bicycle Advisory Committee, and Airport Land Use Commission, all of which informed the City Council's decision. The current application that is focused on the R-2 product design and fence height exception was reviewed by the Architectural Review Commission on August 16, 2021, which unanimously recommended approval to the Planning Commission, with the following direction:

1. The Contemporary architectural scheme should be revisited to bring more "grace," and have the massing match other styles more effectively;
2. Recommended flexibility in implementing Development Plan Standard 7.1.3, such that the predominant architectural style within an identified neighborhood could be 40-60% of the units in that neighborhood, rather than the 60% prescribed by the standard;
3. Confirm compliance with sustainability requirements of the Development Agreement and Development Plan as appropriate; and
4. Supported the proposed fence height exception.

¹ General Plan: [Land Use Element](#) Chapter 2 (Conservation and Development of Residential Neighborhoods), Chapter 3 (Commercial and Industrial Development), Chapter 8 (Special Focus Areas) and Chapter 9 (Sustainability); [Housing Element](#) Chapter 3 (Goals, Policies and Programs)

² [Zoning Regulations](#) Article 3 (Regulations and Standards Applicable to All Zones)

6.0 PROJECT ANALYSIS

The proposed development must be consistent with the requirements of the General Plan, Zoning Regulations, AASP, Development Agreement, and Avila Ranch Development Plan (ARDP). Notably, upon its approval, the project (including the Development Agreement and ARDP) was found to be consistent with the General Plan and AASP, and is directly referenced in the AASP. Therefore, consistency with the Development Agreement and ARDP are the key considerations with respect to this project, and these are the focus of the analysis that follows.

The Development Agreement (DA) and ARDP were intended to work together to provide direction for the project, with the City's Zoning Regulations used to determine development parameters where the ARDP is either silent or open to interpretation. The DA, in particular, is the overarching guidance document, which specifies the required approach to a number of topics, including infrastructure, affordable housing, energy use and others. As such, it is useful for determining the intent of the DA and ARDP when provisions of those documents require interpretation, especially as the ARDP was put together without the benefit of a detailed project design, and did not anticipate all situations that arise through the design review process. For this reason, the analysis that follows is often framed in terms of whether the project application meets the intent of the ARDP, rather than necessarily follows all of the specific provisions described in that document, some of which may no longer be applicable or appropriate based on updated citywide regulations (notably some of the provisions related to energy use). Other aspects of the ARDP may be more practically achieved through the applicant's proposal, notably with regard to certain site design considerations. This is especially the case with regard to how setbacks and building heights are determined when considered in the context of the City's zoning requirements for R-2 development.

6.1 Development Agreement

Flexibility

With respect to project design within the R-2 Zone, the Development Agreement includes several relevant provisions, the most important of which is Section 8.06, which recognizes a need for flexibility during project implementation, and the need to potentially allow for minor deviations from the Development Plan, if the project is consistent with the intent of the Development Plan. Specifically, it states:

"...Implementation of the project may require minor modifications of the details of the Development Plan and affect the performance of the Parties to this Development Agreement. The anticipated refinements of the Project and the development of the Property may require that appropriate clarifications and refinements are made to this Development Agreement and Entitlements with respect to the details of the performance of the City and the Developer. The Parties desire a certain degree of flexibility with respect to those items covered in general terms under this Development Agreement."

In short, the Development Agreement recognized that in order to make a project implementable, some flexibility in project design might be necessary so long as such deviations from the Development Plan comport with the intent of the Development Agreement and Development Plan.

Energy Use

Another key section of the DA concerns energy use, which could potentially affect the project design. Section 7.07 of the Development Agreement addresses energy requirements for the project. Specifically, Section 7.07 requires that the project “*shall provide for accelerated compliance with the City’s Energy Conservation Goals and its Climate Action Plan by implementing energy conservation measures significantly above City standards and norms.*” At the time the DA was adopted in 2017, the project was evaluated and approved in the context of the 2016 building codes, which provided for energy conservation measures that were significantly greater than what was in place before that time. The intent of the DA standards and guidelines as written below was to go beyond that required by the 2016 building codes, and anticipate what was to be required in the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and the City’s *Clean Energy Choice Program*, which were not yet adopted at that time. The overall intent of the Development Plan was to improve energy conservation measures in R-1 and R-2 buildings by at least 15% over the 2016 Title 24 standards, and at least 10% for the R-3, R-4, NC and other uses. That was also the performance standard set forth in Section 7.07 of the DA.

Section 7.07 of the DA also requires that the project shall provide sustainability features including:

- (i) *housing that meets the 2019 net zero building and energy codes, or if the 2019 building and energy codes are not yet adopted upon building permit application, the equivalent to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director,*
- (ii) *implementing any future city-wide policy regarding carbon emissions reduction,*
- (iii) *solar electric panels,*
- (iv) *integrated power outlets for electric vehicles and electric bicycles,*
- (v) *building design that maximizes grey water usage, and*
- (vi) *work-at-home options with high-speed internet connectivity.*

Thus, in order to comply with the DA, and meet the intent of the Development Plan, the R-2 project must demonstrate energy conservation in excess of 15% over the 2016 Title 24 standards, and because the 2019 net zero building and energy codes were not adopted, to satisfy section 7.07(i) the project must include sustainability features consistent with 2019 energy codes to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director. The Development Agreement provides the list shown above, but ultimately leaves it to the Community Development Director to determine whether the proposed energy design is sufficient to meet requirements.

It is important to note that at the time the Development Agreement and Development Plan were approved, the City expected the 2019 energy code to provide “net zero energy” requirements. However, the California Energy Commission did not provide net zero energy requirements in the 2019 code, and instead made a pivot to value greenhouse gas emissions as a top priority and made changes to the energy code that allowed for all-electric new development. This pivot occurred in parallel with the City’s commitments to deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, prioritizing the reduction in fossil fuels (including natural gas), and supporting the transition to all-electric buildings.³

Given the shift in state code and City policy towards operational greenhouse gas emissions instead of net zero energy, the Community Development Director determined that the proposed project complies with section 7.07(ii-vi) and achieves the City’s policy objectives in alignment with the intent of the Development Agreement and Development Plan, therefore satisfying section 7.07(i). First, the project is committed to all-electric units. This is a key commitment that ensures that as the electricity grid continues to be rapidly decarbonized, buildings in the project will achieve operational carbon neutrality.

Additionally, the project proposes rooftop solar system sizes beyond what would be minimally required by the California Energy Code. This is important because the additional solar will help offset energy costs associated with increased electricity use. In the cost effectiveness report presented to Council on September 3, 2019, staff provided evidence that increases in rooftop solar above the amount required by the 2019 Energy Code ensure that the building occupants pay roughly the same or lower energy costs than if they occupied a mixed fuel building of the same design.

Table 2 provides a summary of the proposed solar size by plan type as submitted by the applicant. The applicant proposes increasing the size of the solar system by between 19 and 30 percent over 2019 California Energy Code requirements. Staff met with the applicant’s solar consultant to review the proposal and concurs that the assessment provided is accurate and reflects the maximum additional solar available given roof and site conditions.

³ For example, in 2020 Council 1) joined Central Coast Community Energy (formerly Monterey Bay Community Energy) to access clean electricity; 2) approved Resolution 11159 (2020 Series) committing to a carbon neutral community by 2035 and a goal of no new operational emissions from onsite energy consumption by 2020; and 3) adopted the Clean Energy Choice Program for New Buildings, which includes Resolution 11133 (2020 Series), that states, “it is the Policy of the City that new building should be all-electric.”

Table 2. Summary of Proposed Solar Installations					
Plan	Stories	Sq. Ft	<i>PROPOSED</i> Solar System Size	2019 Code Title 24 Code Minimum Size	% above code minimum size compliance
Plan 1 - cluster	2	1,848	2.80 kW	2.28	21%
Plan 2 - cluster	2	1,898	2.80 kW	2.28	21%
Plan 3- cluster	2	2,069	3.15 kW	2.61	20%
Plan 4 - cluster	2	2,273	3.15 kW	2.64	19%
Plan 1 - cottage	2	1,167	2.45 kW	1.86	30%
Plan 2 - cottage	2	1,611	2.80 kW	2.23	24%
Plan 3 - cottage	2	1,723	2.80 kW	2.25	24%
Plan 4 - cottage	2	1,554	2.80 kW	2.22	24%

In addition to the all-electric and additional solar commitments, the project also includes the following sustainability commitments summarized here and described more fully in Attachment C:

- LEED – ND - Compliance with the U.S. Green Building Councils Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED- ND) focuses on the following areas
- Green Point Rated
- Advanced framing systems
- Quality insulation inspections
- Energy Star rated appliances
- Dual zone high efficiency heat pumps for HVAC systems
- High efficiency tanked heat pumps for hot water heating systems including programmable “smart” systems to match heating with onsite solar production and low cost grid energy
- EPA water-sense fixtures
- Bicycle storage area in garages
- Voucher for \$750 toward an e-bike
- Dedicated circuit for EV charger pre-wire
- Negotiating with ZipCar for rideshare services

Housing Size and Affordability

Section 7.05 of the DA addresses the projects requirements with respect to providing its share of affordable and workforce housing. By reference, it bases its requirements on Appendix G of that document, which describes the intent of development within each zone, both in terms of housing size and affordability. Table 3 shows what the DA and Development Plan specify for the R-2 zone, and compares those to what is currently proposed:

Table 3. Comparison of Housing Requirements in the DA and ARDP to Proposed					
Zoning	Unit Type	Square Footage			
		<i>DA (range)</i>	<i>DA (avg size)</i>	<i>ARDP (range)</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
R-2	Cluster (Standard)	1,050-2,200 SF	1,750 SF	1,000-2,400 SF	1,609-2,273 SF
R-2	Pocket Cottage	1,050-1,300 SF	1,200 SF	1,000-1,250 SF	819-1,708 SF

The comparison of the DA and the Development Plan is important, because while they are similar, they do not completely agree. But while there are minor differences, the intent of each is to provide a range of housing sizes, generally between 1,000 and 2,400 SF for the Cluster units, and a slightly smaller size for the Pocket Cottage units. The housing size is only important to the extent it affects affordability by design, operating under the assumption that smaller housing sizes are typically more affordable.

While the DA expresses ranges for the square footage of various units, y, the proposed mix addresses the intent of the housing size provisions of the DA and ARDP document. Notably, the applicant has worked closely with City staff to develop the housing product sizes that are proposed, balancing housing size with functionality, lot configurations, outdoor open space requirements, and affordability by design. The average size of the 131 Cluster units proposed to be developed in Phase 1 is 1,990 SF, which is somewhat higher than envisioned in either the DA or Development Plan. On the other hand, the Pocket Cottage product includes 13 units at 819 SF in Phase 1, which is substantially below the anticipated range of what either document calls for. Another 8 Pocket Cottage units in Phase 1 would be 1,169 SF, which is also well below the average size envisioned in the DA, suggesting product that would be relatively more affordable by design.

The development of the R-2 housing products would be subject to the affordable housing provisions set forth in the DA, which includes 9 deed restricted units in the Pocket Cottage product in addition to those that are intended to be more affordable by design (based on size).

6.2 Avila Ranch Development Plan

The Avila Ranch Development Plan (ARDP) was approved by the City Council as one of the key project entitlements in 2017. In general, it provides the blueprint for future development in the Avila Ranch planning area, and provides the standards and guidelines for such development pursuant to that portion of the Airport Area Specific Plan, of which Avila Ranch is a part. The ARDP also works in conjunction with the Development Agreement, and in some cases, the City's Zoning Regulations, for some project aspects that are not otherwise addressed in the ARDP.

At the time the ARDP was approved, the City Council provided direction to staff for certain items to "clean up" without changing the fundamental direction of the document itself. Some of these items related to input previously provided by the ARC and Planning Commission prior to its approval and requested clarification with respect to how standards for the smaller Pocket Cottage units might vary from those for Cluster units.

Since then, staff has prepared a “cleaned up” version of the document that incorporates Council’s direction, and also includes clarifying language regarding its application in conjunction with the Development Agreement for the project. The Development Plan is included as Attachment E. The applicant’s proposed refinement of R-2 standards included in the ARDP for the Cluster and Pocket Cottage units is included as Attachment F.

Notably, some flexibility was built into the ARDP through the provisions of the Development Agreement, as previously discussed. This is important, because it allows for some deviation from Development Plan standards in project design, if such deviations are determined to be consistent with the intent of both the Development Agreement and ARDP as applicable.

Although the ARDP addresses a wide range of issues, the most important portion of the document that relates to housing and site design is the Design Framework section (Attachment E – Avila Ranch Development Plan, page 36). This section includes numerous standards and guidelines that complement the City’s R-2 Zoning requirements, and in some cases provide further direction or refinement as it relates to parameters such as building height, setbacks, and minimum lot sizes. Table 4 summarizes the key proposed project components within the R-2 zoned portion of the Avila Ranch project area, and a comparison to the regulations as set forth in both the Avila Ranch Development Plan and the City’s Zoning regulations:

Table 4. Comparison of Approved ARDP, R-2 Zoning Regulations, and Proposed Development

	Approved DP (2017)	Zoning Regs for R-2	Proposed Cluster Units	Proposed Cottage Units
Minimum Front Street setback	15 feet to dwelling; 10 feet to porch	20 feet	Same as Approved DP	Same as Approved DP
Minimum Rear setback	Alley or street access: 20 feet and 13 feet to garage; 3.5 feet for detached units; Cluster units 5 feet	Variable: 5-15 feet, which affects building height	Same as Approved DP	Same as Approved DP
Minimum Side setback	0 feet or as provided in R-2 zone (attached); 5 feet for detached	10 feet	8-13 feet for dwelling; 5-10 feet for porch	8-13 feet for dwelling; 5-10 feet for porch
Minimum Interior setback	-	Variable: 5-15 feet, which affects building height	4 feet	4 feet
Minimum Side Street setback	-	10 feet	10 feet	10 feet
Maximum Building Height	Variable: no maximum, but 1 foot per 1.5 feet of distance between road centerline and front of building.	Variable: up to 35 feet; based on setback requirements per Table 2-7.	35 feet	35 feet

ARCH-0624-2020

Planning Commission Report – September 22, 2021

	Approved DP (2017)	Zoning Regs for R-2	Proposed Cluster Units	Proposed Cottage Units
Minimum Lot Area	3,575 SF	5,000 SF	3,575 SF	2,620 SF
Lot Coverage	60% max	50% max	60% max	60% max

Although proposed development is generally consistent with the ARDP as approved, there are certain areas where the proposed design would diverge slightly. This is particularly true with respect to building heights and some setbacks. Issues related to project architecture design were previously reviewed by the ARC, and found to be consistent with the intent of the ARDP, with the following recommendations to Planning Commission:

1. The Contemporary architectural scheme should be revisited to bring more “grace”, and have the massing match other styles more effectively
2. Recommended flexibility in implementing Development Plan Standard 7.1.3, such that the predominant architectural style within an identified neighborhood could be 40-60% of the units in that neighborhood, rather than the 60% prescribed by the standard
3. Confirm compliance with sustainability requirements of the Development Agreement and Development Plan as appropriate

For further discussion on how the modifications outlined above in Table 4 are consistent with the intent of the ARDP, Community Design Guidelines (CDG) and Zoning Regulations, see table Table 5 below.

Table 5. Consistency with Intent of the Development Plan and Community Design Guidelines

Highlighted Sections	Discussion Items
<i>Avila Ranch Development Plan – Design Framework</i>	
<i>ARDP Standard 1.1: Adherence to AASP Building Orientation and Setback Standards</i>	The ARDP builds on the streetscape and pedestrian orientation standards included in the AASP, and follows the intent of setback requirements included in the Municipal Code related to the R-2 zone. The proposed design adheres to these standards and meets the intent of ARDP standards that relate to these issues. Figure 6 above shows the relevant proposed standards for the R-2 zone within the ARDP, which is consistent with the intent of the ARDP and zoning requirements.
<i>ARDP Standards 1.2, 1.6 and 1.7 and related guidelines: Building Height and Setback relationship; driveway orientation; open space orientation</i>	The intent of this standard is to avoid blocking distant views of the background topography through the relationship of setbacks to building height. As designed, the project would adhere to setback and building height restrictions of the R-2 zone as applied elsewhere in the City. The project meets the

	<p>intent of City requirements, including the municipal code and applicable ARDP standards.</p> <p>The project as designed meets the intent of standards related to driveway and garage orientation away from major street, and with its paseos and parks, meet the intent of open space orientation standards. These are also consistent with direction in the AASP and CDG.</p>
<i>ARDP Standard 2.3: Pedestrian Activity Areas</i>	<p>This standard calls for all mini parks and pocket park programmed as part of Avila Ranch to be included in project design. As indicated on project plans, the R-2 design within phases 1-3 would allow for the parks shown within these phases on the approved Tract Map and Development Plan, including Parks A-E and Stevenson Park, and with appropriate pedestrian connections as shown in Figures 3 and 4.</p>
<i>ARDP Standard 7.1.2: Required Architectural Styles</i>	<p>This standard requires that development use one or more of these architectural styles: Farmhouse, California Bungalow, Contemporary, Craftsman, or Mission (Spanish). The project design uses all five styles, distributed throughout the project.</p>
<i>ARDP Standard 7.1.3 and related guidelines: Distribution of Architectural Styles</i>	<p>This standard includes a detailed approach to ensure that architectural styles are distributed throughout the planning area. The intent is to ensure visual variety and interest throughout, and large enclaves of overly uniform style and architecture. The design as envisioned includes 6 different floor plans for the cluster units, and 5 floor plans for cottage units, with architectural styles that could apply to those floor plans. The ARC recommended some flexibility in this ARDP standard, to allow for the predominant style within an identified neighborhood to be 40-60% of the housing in that neighborhood (rather than a strict 60% minimum). The applicant has indicated the intent to comply with this recommendation. Sheets AS1.0-AS1.4 demonstrate the intent of the applicant, and show a variety of styles, colors and floor plans within a given street scene. In addition, porches are included in the project consistent with Guideline 7.1.3.E.</p>
<i>ARDP Standards 7.2.3, 7.3.2, 7.3.5 and related guidelines: Scale and massing, including the relationship between building height and setbacks</i>	<p>The ARDP builds on the streetscape and pedestrian orientation standards included in the AASP, and follows the intent of setback requirements included in the Municipal Code related to the R-2 zone. A strict adherence to the ARDP standards for calculating building heights in the ARDP would result in variable building heights that are keyed to street width and setbacks, and would generally be much less than 35 feet, or in cases even less than 30 feet. This would preclude 2-story designs for much of the development, and make it difficult to achieve the amount of housing in the context of expected densities approved with the project in 2017. Instead, the applicant proposes adherence</p>

	to the 35-foot maximum building height provisions consistent with the R-2 zone throughout the City. The proposed design adheres to R-2 zoning requirements related to setbacks and building heights, and meets the intent of ARDP by allowing for the housing densities anticipated under the ARDP.
<i>ARDP Standards 7.4.1 and 7.5.1: Architectural facades and treatment; colors and materials</i>	The intent of this standard is to ensure that visually prominent design details are compatible with the overall architectural style, and that compatible colors and materials are chosen. Key features include entries, windows, doors, and garages. See Sheets A1.0 through A9.2 that reflect this standard, showing details related to each of these features, which are consistent with the applicable architectural theme. Colors and materials proposed are shown on Sheets A10.0 to A10.5. These reflect a variety of color and material choices within compatible parameters. Colors range from muted grays, whites and browns augmented by a variety of color choices. Materials differ depending on architectural style.
<i>ARDP Standards 8.1.1-8.1.4: Landscaping</i>	The proposed project responds to these standards with a landscape plan that enhances and complements the architectural design, as shown on several project sheets, notably Sheets L1.0-L1.8, and the renderings shown on Sheets AS1.0-AS1.4.
<i>ARDP Standards 9.3.2-9.3.8: Lighting</i>	The project has not yet established a formal lighting plan, although Sheet A10.0 shows potential lighting fixtures as they relate to the different architectural styles. The project will be required to comply with the City's night sky ordinance; however, the PC may provide specific direction regarding exterior lighting for the project.
<i>ARDP Standard 12.1: Fencing</i>	The intent of this standard is to ensure that fencing design does not block views of open spaces or Tank Farm Creek. The project as designed complies with this requirement. The proposed exception to the fence height would apply only to areas between residences and industrial areas, not areas associated with open space or the creek. As described earlier in this Agenda Report, the proposed fence height exception meets the criteria for considering such exemptions, and was recommended for approval by the ARC.
<i>ARDP Standards 13.1.1 and 13.1.2: Energy</i>	The ARDP was adopted prior to the 2019 energy conservation standards, and thus refers to outdated standards. However, as noted previously, the DA includes performance standards to exceed citywide requirements as they were in place at the time of project approval. The project is consistent with the intent of

	these standards. An analysis of the consistency with the intent with the DA and the intent of the ARDP is included in Section 4.1 of this Agenda Report.
<i>CDG Chapter 5 – Residential Project Design Guidelines</i>	
<i>§ Section 5.2: Subdivision Design and General Residential Design Principles</i>	This section of the CDG includes several key principles related to integrating open space into the design, project scale, and pedestrian orientation. More specifically related to architectural review, the section also calls for durable and low maintenance finishes, the use of a variety of materials, building articulation, and garage orientation. The project seems generally responsive to these issues, and consistent with the intent of these principles. Sheets A10.0 to A10.5 illustrate a variety of complementary colors and materials that would be applied to the varied design details shown on Sheets A1.0-A9.2.
<i>§ Section 5.5: Single-Family Housing Design</i>	<p>The ARDP was previously found to be consistent with the CDG, and reflects and expands on many of the same principles articulated in the CDG. Among the principles articulated in this section of the CDG include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pedestrian orientation; 2. architectural variety, housing sizes and design details; 3. variable setbacks in compliance with the Municipal Code; 4. primary entrances facing a street, encouraging porches to transition between public and private spaces; and 5. garages subordinate to living spaces, preferably not facing the primary street entrance to the home. <p>The project is responsive to these principles. Sheets L1.1-L1.4 show how homes are integrated into and have access to pedestrian paseos. Also see the renderings in Figures 3 and 4 above. Consistent with the ARDP, five architectural styles are proposed throughout the project, with considerable design variation as described above. Garages are oriented to the side along alleys, as shown in Sheets A1.1, A2.1, A3.1, A4.1, A5.1, A6.1, A7.1, A8.1 and A9.1.</p>

6.3 Consistency with the Zoning Regulations

Although the DA and ARDP are the primary guidance documents for the proposed R-2 design, in some cases there are design provisions of the ARDP that would be difficult to implement without sacrificing some of the density anticipated under the approved plan. This is particularly true with respect to the interaction of setbacks, building heights, and lot sizes.

ARCH-0624-2020

Planning Commission Report – September 22, 2021

As proposed, the project complies with City zoning requirements for building heights and setbacks where such design challenges exist within the framework of the ARDP. This analysis is included above in Section 4.2 and Table 5 of this report.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Avila Ranch project and associated Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) were respectively approved and certified by the City Council on September 19, 2017, pursuant to Resolution No. 10832 (2017 Series). The FEIR constitutes the complete environmental determination for the project, which included the Development Agreement, Development Plan and approved VTTM 3089. The proposed R-2 design complies with previously approved project documentation as described above. For that reason, it is in substantial conformance with the Final EIR and prior environmental determination.

8.0 OTHER DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

The project has been reviewed by various City departments and divisions including Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Building, Utilities, and Fire. While a number of code requirements will apply to the project review at the building permit stage, minimal comments were provided for project specific conditions of approval since the project is consistent with the previously approved ARDP and tract map which has included prior review for tract conditions and public improvements which are not in the scope of this project review.

9.0 ALTERNATIVES

1. Continue project. An action continuing the application should include direction to the applicant and staff on pertinent issues.
2. Deny the project. Deny the proposed R-2 design by finding the finding the project inconsistent with the General Plan, AASP, previously approved Avila Ranch Development Agreement, and/or the intent of the Development Plan when considered in the context of the Development Agreement and City Zoning regulations.

10.0 ATTACHMENTS

- A – Draft PC Resolution approving the project
- B – Project Plans
- C – Avila Ranch Development Agreement (relevant provisions)
- D – Avila Ranch Sustainability Features
- E – Avila Ranch Development Plan
- F – Proposed R-2 Standards for Cluster and Pocket Cottage Development