

# Planning and Zoning Commission

## Planning Department Staff Report

**Report Date:** May 17, 2019  
**Case No:** 2019-3-SUP  
**Project Planner:** Madison Thomas, AICP, Historic & Downtown Planner, and Robyn Miga, Contract Planner

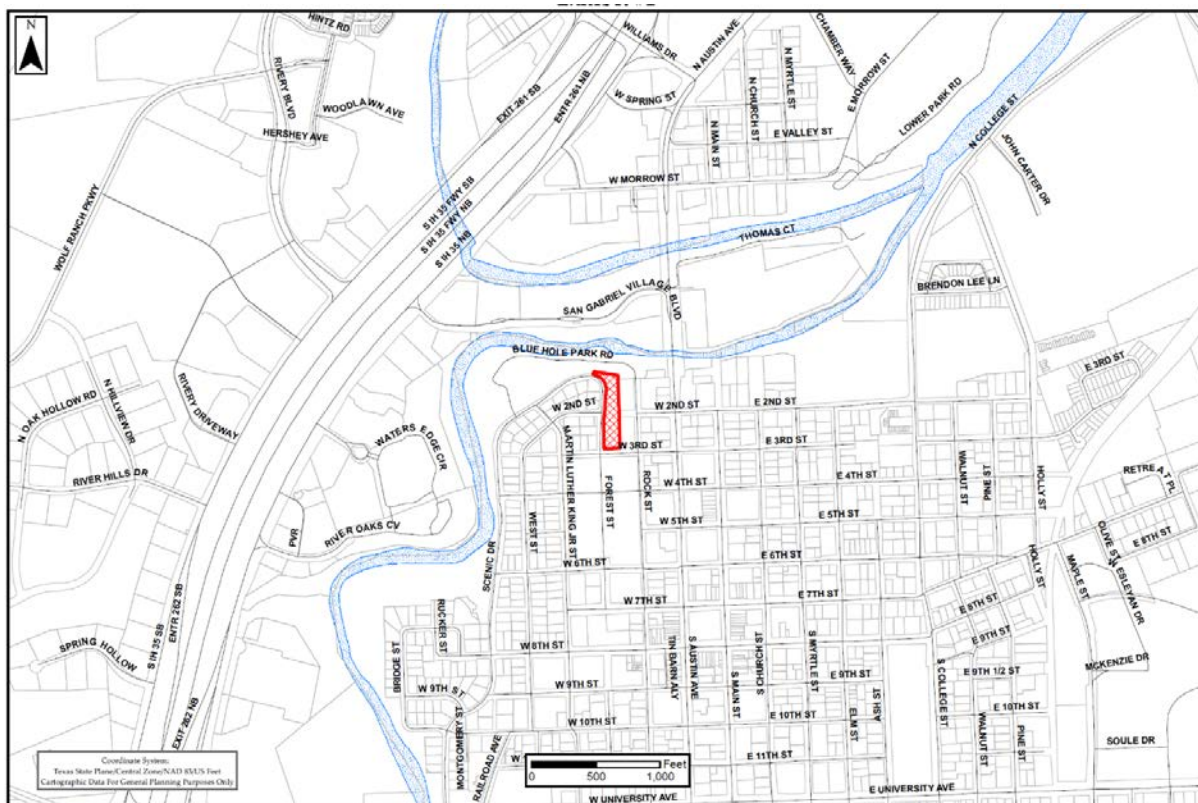
### Item Details

**Project Name:** Riverbluff Multifamily  
**Project Location:** 203 Forest St., within City Council district No. 6  
**Total Acreage:** 1.46  
**Legal Description:** 1.46 acres out of the Nicholas Porter Survey, Abstract No. 497, also being Lots 5, 6, 7, and part of Lot 8, Block 8, Division D, part of Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8, Block 4, Division D, and a part of Outlot I, Division D, of the Original Townsite of the City of Georgetown, and a portion of W 2nd St and Forest St.

**Applicant:** Austin Pfiester  
**Property Owner:** WAAPF Properties

**Request:** Special Use Permit (SUP) for “**multifamily, detached dwelling units**” specific use within the **Mixed Use Downtown (MU-DT)** zoning district

**Case History:** This is the first public hearing of this request.



*Location Map*

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### Overview of Applicant's Request

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) for the specific use of "multifamily, detached dwelling units" within the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) zoning district to construct 16 multifamily, detached buildings, for a total of 26 dwelling units.

According to the applicant's Letter (*Exhibit 6*), the development will be a cottage style mix of single-story and two-story wood framed structures. The building footprints for the units are small, ranging from 400 to 600 square feet, and each unit will have a front porch to encourage community interaction, with pathways between the units.

### Site Information

#### Location:

The subject property is located at the northwest corner of Forest St and W 3<sup>rd</sup> St just south of the South Fork San Gabriel River, and to the east of the bend at Scenic Drive where the road turns south and turns into Forest Street. It is approximately 440 feet east of S Austin Ave.

#### Physical and Natural Features:

The subject property is undeveloped and is partially located within the 100 and 500-year floodplain. In addition, the subject property is covered in brush and trees with a significant elevation change towards the west, and is bordered on the north side by the South San Gabriel River Trail.

#### Future Land Use and Zoning Designations:

The subject property has an existing Future Land Use designation of Parks, Recreation, Open Space. A small portion along the southern border of this property is located within the Downtown Transition Area, which is an area meant to transition downtown between the residential neighborhoods. It is currently zoned Mixed Use Downtown (MU-DT), and is also in the Downtown Overlay District.

#### Surrounding Properties:

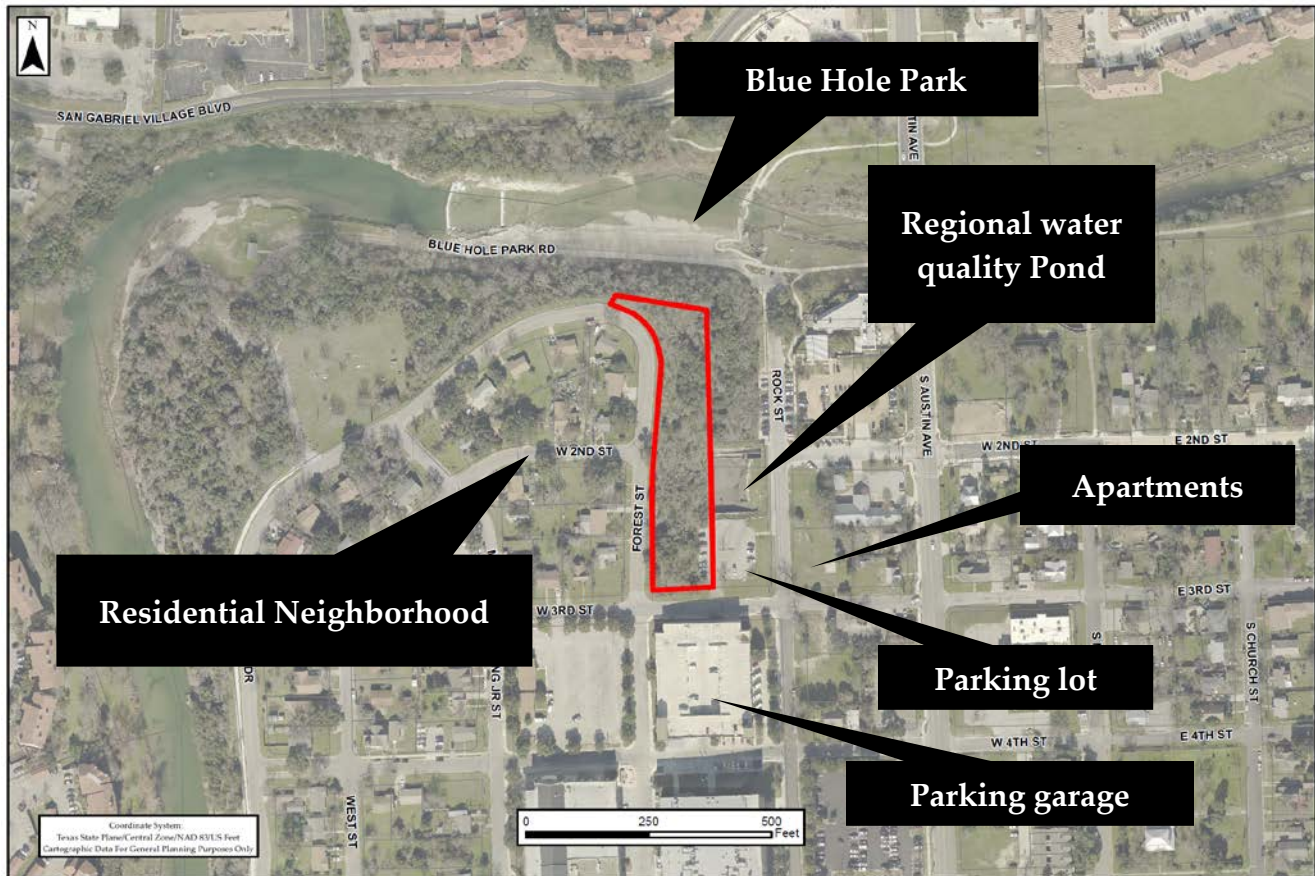
The subject property is located just south of the San Gabriel River, and has frontage along both 3<sup>rd</sup> and Forest Streets. Nearby uses include undeveloped land, open space, a regional water quality pond, parking lot and structure, county facilities, restaurant, multi-family and single-family residential, as well as commercial uses along the Austin Ave corridor.

The current zoning, Future Land Use designation, and existing uses of the adjacent properties to the north, south, east and west are outlined in the table below:

DIRECTION	ZONING DISTRICT	FUTURE LAND USE	EXISTING USE
North	Residential Single-Family (RS)	Parks, Recreation, Open Space	Blue Hole Park (San Gabriel River)
South	Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) and Downtown Overlay	Specialty Mix Use Area	Parking garage

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DIRECTION	ZONING DISTRICT	FUTURE LAND USE	EXISTING USE
East	Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) and Downtown Overlay	Parks, Recreation, Open Space; and Moderate Density Residential	Undeveloped land, downtown water quality pond, and public parking lot.
West	Residential Single-Family (RS)	Moderate Density Residential	Residential



*Aerial Map and Surrounding Uses*

### Property History:

The subject property was rezoned from the Residential Single-Family (RS) to the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) zoning district in 2014 (Ordinance 2014-90). In 2015, the City entered into an agreement under Resolution No. 112514-E, which included a land exchange to allow the city to improve access to Blue Hole Park, and agreeing to allow the property to be used as a mixed-use residential development.

### Comprehensive Plan Guidance

#### Future Land Use Map:

The *Parks, Recreation, Open Space* designation applies to existing public parks, golf courses, and protected open spaces of city-wide significance, which are expected to remain as open space in

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perpetuity. Potential future large-scale park acquisitions, as well as smaller neighborhoods parks and recreational uses are shown in the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

While the subject property is located within the *Parks, Recreation, Open Space* future land use designation, it is important to note that the Future Land Use designations are not intended to be applied on a parcel by parcel basis, and instead reflect the Comprehensive Plan's board policy for future distribution of land uses. The subject property is also located near the edge of the Moderate Density Residential and Specialty Mixed Use Area future land use designations.

The *Moderate Density Residential* category is described in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan as comprising single family neighborhoods that can be accommodated at a density ranging between 3.1 and 6 dwelling units per gross acre, with housing types including small-lot detached and attached single-family dwellings (such as townhomes). This category may also support complementary non-residential uses along major roadways such as neighborhood-serving retail, office, institutional, and civic uses, although such uses may not be depicted on the Future Land Use Map.

The *Specialty Mixed-Use Area* designation accommodates large-scale mixed-use developments that are mostly commercial and usually near intense regional commercial uses and the I-35 corridor. This category encourages the creation of well planned "centers" designed to integrate a variety of complementary uses, with an emphasis on retail, offices, and entertainment activities. These centers may also include civic facilities and parks or other green spaces. Housing, in the form of apartments, townhomes, condominiums, and live-work spaces, is also encouraged in these mixed-use areas, generally in higher densities. These areas should be designed in a pattern of pedestrian-oriented, storefront-style shopping streets, with shared parking and strong pedestrian linkages to the surrounding areas.

### **Growth Tier:**

The subject property is located within Growth Tier 1A. **Tier 1A** is that portion of the city where infrastructure systems are in place, or can be economically provided, and where the bulk of the city's growth should be guided over the near term. Within Tier 1A, the city is called on to conduct assessments of public facility conditions and capacities, and to prioritize short and long term capital investments so as to ensure that infrastructure capacity is sufficient to serve development intensities as indicated on the Future Land Use Map and in the zoning districts.

### **Other Master Plans: Downtown Master Plan:**

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan identifies a number of land use goals, policies and actions that support the densification and diversity of land uses in, and immediately surrounding, the Downtown Overlay District. These policies include:

- 1.B. Promote more compact, higher density development (e.g., traditional neighborhoods, Transit-Oriented Development, mixed-use, and walkable neighborhoods) within appropriate infill locations.
- 1.E. Expand regulatory provisions and incentives to encourage innovative forms of compact, pedestrian friendly development (mixed-use, traditional neighborhood design), and a wider array of affordable housing choices.



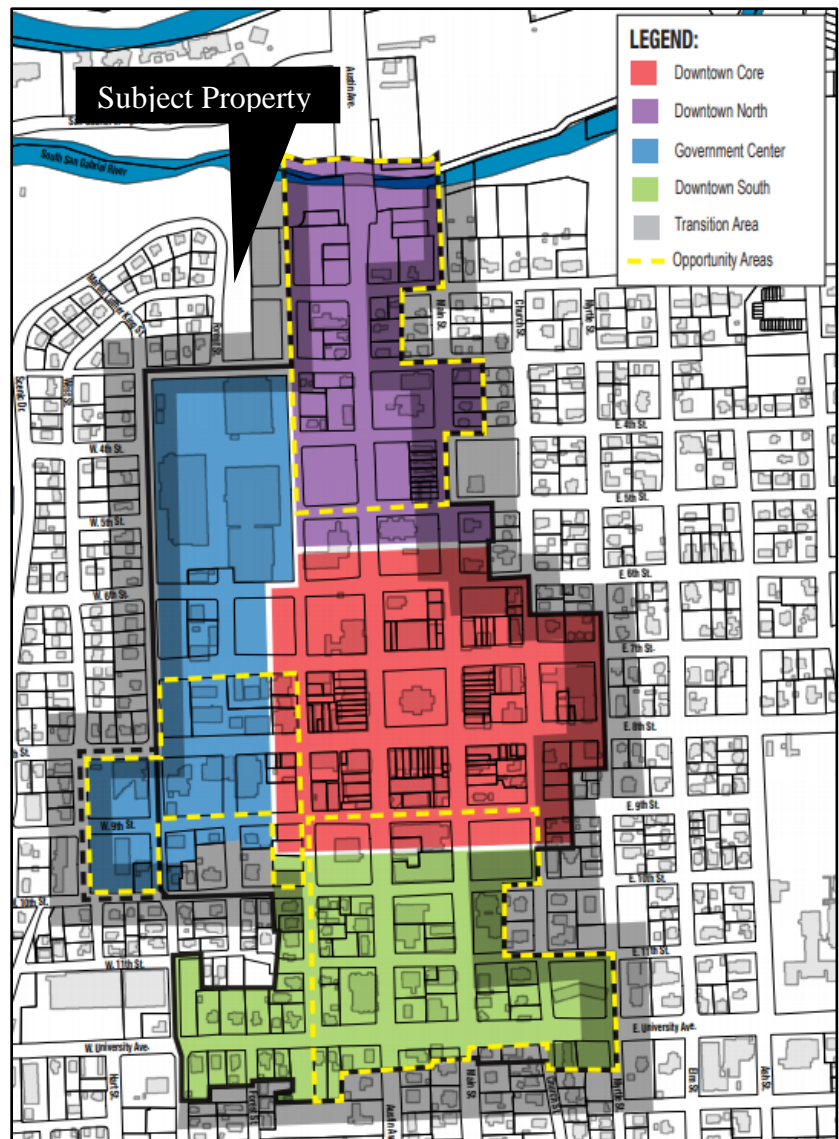
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- 2.A. Remove present inadvertent impediments to infill and re-investment in older, developed areas.
- 4.A. Minimize impacts and encroachments of incompatible land uses (e.g., commercial intrusions into healthy residential neighborhoods).

The Downtown Master Plan, an element of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, recognizes the potential for development that is compatible in design and scale between the Downtown Overlay District and surrounding residential neighborhoods. As such, the Downtown Master Plan seeks to maintain the city's unique character while maximizing opportunities for economic development and for enhancing the quality of life for its residents. The intent is to move the downtown area towards becoming a center of activity not only in the day, but also at night and on weekends, by promoting a mix of commercial, entertainment residential, and civic uses. Creative forms of housing are encouraged, such as attached homes, "lofts," and live-work units.

The Downtown Master Plan identifies the most southern portion of the subject property as being located in the Downtown Transition Area. The transition area is meant to serve as a transition between the Downtown Core and the existing residential neighborhoods located within downtown, and recommends that development along the edges of the Downtown Overlay District should be sensitive to the existing established residential neighborhoods to the west. Within this transition zone, the Downtown Master Plan recommends the following projects as suitable for the area:

- Bed and Breakfast or boutique hotels;
- Multifamily housing of 2-3 stories;
- Townhomes, duplexes, and small lot single-family homes;
- Professional offices;
- Neighborhood-based services, including day care; and
- Small parks, plazas, and courtyards.



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The Downtown Master Plan also identifies areas abutting existing neighborhoods such as western edge of the Downtown along Rock Street near the Justice Center. According to the Plan, this edge could work well as a service-oriented side for some development scenarios, such as parking. New residential development west of Rock Street and north of 2nd Street should also be considered to help activate Blue Hole Park and its pedestrian connections along Rock Street.

### Utilities

The subject property is located within the City's service area for water, wastewater, and electric. It is anticipated that there is adequate water and wastewater capacity to serve the subject property at this time. A Utility Evaluation may be required at time of Site Development Plan or platting to determine capacity and any necessary utility improvements.

### Transportation

The subject property is located at the northeast corner of Forest and Third streets. These are both classified as local neighborhood streets, but the property would take access from both with the proposed development. This property is also located in close proximity to the GoGeo Transfer Station at the Georgetown Public Library on 8<sup>th</sup> Street as well as the stop at 2<sup>nd</sup>/Austin Ave, providing access to other residential and commercial areas within the city, including the convention center, St. David's Hospital, the Georgetown Recreation Center and Wolf Ranch Town Center.

### Zoning district

The Mixed Use Downtown District (MU-DT) is intended to provide a location for a mix of land uses including general commercial and retail activities, office as well as single-family and multi-family in the downtown area. Developments in the MU-DT District are typically smaller in size and scope although there may be occasional heavy traffic. The Mixed Use Downtown Zoning District is only appropriate in the traditional downtown area of Georgetown. Properties in MU-DT shall meet the design requirements of the Downtown Overlay District. Exhibit 4 contains a comprehensive list of the MU-DT district permitted uses and development standards.

Per Section 5.02.020 of the Unified Development Code (UDC), a Special Use Permit (SUP) is required in the MU-DT district for a "Multifamily, Detached Dwelling Units". A SUP allows for City Council approval of uses with unique or widely varying operating characteristics or unusual site development features, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the UDC. SUPs may be issued only for uses that are generally compatible with other uses permitted in a zoning district, but that require individual review of their location, design, intensity, etc. UDC Section 5.02.020 outlines specific SUP requirements for the detached multi-family specific use, and include the following:

- a. The location and context of the detached multifamily development shall be secondary and supportive to established surrounding commercial uses, helping to facilitate an active, pedestrian friendly environment where the mixture of uses enables people to live, work, play, and shop.
- b. Setbacks shall be in conformance with the setbacks of the district in which the detached multifamily development is proposed.

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- c. Building height shall be in conformance with the building height of the district in which the detached multifamily development is proposed.
- d. Detached multifamily development in all districts shall also meet the building design standards of Section 7.03, the lighting design standards of Section 7.04, and the non-residential landscape requirements of Section 8.04.
- e. Detached multifamily development in all districts must also meet the common amenity area requirements of Section 6.06.020 and the parkland dedication requirements of Section 13.08.

### Approval Criteria

Staff has reviewed the request and determined that the proposed request **complies** with the criteria established in UDC Section 3.07.030.C for a Special Use Permit, as outlined below:

APPROVAL CRITERIA	FINDINGS	STAFF COMMENTS
1. The proposed special use is not detrimental to the health, welfare, and safety of the surrounding neighborhood or its occupants.	Complies	The proposed special use is not detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood. The majority of the area surrounding this property has been developed as parking, restaurant, and multi-family as well as a regional water quality pond that is slated for upgrades in the near future. There is a single-family neighborhood to the west of this site, on the other side of Forest Street, right near the bend at Scenic Drive. The proposed development will be secondary and supportive to established surrounding commercial uses of the Downtown area, and serve as a transition between the highly intense uses of the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) zoning district and the residential neighborhood. In addition, it will meet all city guidelines at the time of development, including parking, drainage, access for emergency services, and all other adopted codes to protect the health and public safety of residents as depicted in the attached Concept Plan. The proposed use complies with the additional design standards for detached multi-family units including setbacks, height, building design standards, landscaping and parkland.

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<p>2. The proposed conceptual site layout, circulation plan, and design are harmonious with the character of the surrounding area.</p>	<p>Complies</p>	<p>The proposed conceptual site layout, circulation plan, and design are harmonious with the character of the surrounding area. While this property is located in the far northeastern corner of the Downtown district, and is only partially located within the Downtown Transition Area as outlined in the Downtown Master Plan, it is on the edge of the transition into an older, established neighborhood at the bend of Scenic Drive and Forest Street. The proposed development includes a mix of 1 and 2-story buildings with a maximum overall building height of 25 feet, which is in character with the height and scale of the adjacent residential neighborhood. In addition, the proposed conceptual plan meets all circulation, site development and use specific standards, including setbacks, parking, lighting and landscaping. The subject property will also meet all applicable design guidelines for the Downtown Overlay District to maintain the character of the historic district.</p>
<p>3. The proposed use does not negatively impact existing uses in the area and in the City through impacts on public infrastructure such as roads, parking facilities, and water and sewer systems, and on public services such as police and fire protection and solid waste collection and the ability of existing infrastructure and services to adequately provide services.</p>	<p>Complies</p>	<p>The proposed use does not negatively impact the current public infrastructure system of the area. The roadways and utilities are already in place for the Downtown area including the subject property, and it is expected there is adequate capacity for the city to serve utilities to this development. The property owner/developer will be required to provide for all onsite utilities and ensure they meet all required standards. The proposed conceptual plan requires 42 parking spaces, of which 27 parking spaces are proposed on site. The applicant has stated that they will be applying for an Administrative Exception for an alternative parking plan for the proposed development. There are</p>



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APPROVAL CRITERIA	FINDINGS	STAFF COMMENTS
		also trails across the subject property to encourage walkability throughout the development, as well as to encourage the active use of the public park and regional trail to the north and the Downtown Square to the south helping to facilitate an active, pedestrian friendly environment where the mixture of uses enables people to live, work, play, and shop.
4. The proposed use does not negatively impact existing uses in the area and in the City through the creation of noise, glare, fumes, dust, smoke, vibration, fire hazard or other injurious or noxious impact.	Complies	The proposed use will not create any hazardous, injurious, or noxious impacts. The proposed use is residential and will be subject to the noise, smoke and other nuisance standards of the City Code to ensure no adverse impact on the adjacent properties.

In summary, the proposed use of “Multifamily, Detached Dwelling Unit” complies with the approval criteria for an SUP and the zoning use regulations. Staff has found that the proposed special use does not affect the surrounding area and fits within the character of the Downtown area, including its Transition area. The detached multi-family use, where proposed, will serve as a transition from the more intense and dense uses of the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) district to the residential neighborhood to the west, while protecting the character of both areas. In addition, it will provide a balance of land uses within the downtown area, particularly with the commercial uses located along the Austin Ave corridor.

### Public Notification

As required by the Unified Development Code, all property owners within a 200-foot radius of the subject property and within the subdivision were notified of the Special Use Permit request (22 notices), a legal notice advertising the public hearing was placed in the Sun Newspaper (May 5, 2019) and signs were posted on-site. To date, staff has received zero (0) written comment in favor, or in opposition to the request.

### Meetings Schedule

5/21/2019 – Planning and Zoning Commission  
6/11/2019 – City Council First Reading of the Ordinance  
6/25/2019 – City Council Second Reading of the Ordinance

### Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Location Map  
Exhibit 2 – Future Land Use Map  
Exhibit 3 – Zoning Map

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Exhibit 4 – Development Standards and Permitted Uses of the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT) zoning district

Exhibit 5 – Conceptual Plan

Exhibit 6 – Letter of Intent