

P97-016 ALHAMBRA BOULEVARD OFFICE CONVERSION

REQUEST:

- A. **Negative Declaration**
- B. **Central City Community Plan Amendment of 0.079± developed acres from "Commercial" to "Residential Office" for an office conversion.**
- C. **Rezone of 0.079 developed acres from "Single Family Residential" (R-1[SPD]) to "Residential-Office" (RO[SPD]) to convert a 1,382 square foot residential unit into an office building in the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District.**
- D. **Special Permit to allow 100% office use in the Residential Office (RO[SPD]) zone.**
- E. **Special Permit to waive one required parking space.**
- F. **Variance to waive the required masonry wall on the east side of the project.**
- G. **Variance to provide tandem parking.**

LOCATION:

1919 Alhambra Boulevard
APN: 010-0064-022
Council District 5
Central City Community Plan Area

APPLICANT:	Jim Plumb, 916-452-5833 1249 32nd Street, Sacramento, CA 95816
OWNER:	Jim Plumb, 916-452-5833 1249 32nd Street, Sacramento, CA 95816
APPLICATION FILED:	February 14, 1996
STAFF CONTACT:	Mark Kraft, 264-8116

SUMMARY: The applicant is requesting the necessary entitlements to convert an existing residential structure to office use. The project involves the redesignation and rezoning of the site to accommodate this conversion. Establishment of this use also requires a Special Permit for 100% office use (in the R-O zone). Due to site constraints, the owner is requesting a Special Permit to waive one required parking space, and a variance to provide tandem parking. The owner is also requesting a Variance to allow the retention of a wood fence instead of the required masonry wall along the east property line.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the project, subject to conditions. This recommendation is based upon the suitability of the site for the proposed use, the compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding land uses, the minimal impact upon the surrounding residential neighborhood and the preservation and enhancement of an architecturally distinctive structure.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

General Plan Designation:	Low Density Residential (4-15 du/na)
Existing Community Plan Designation:	Commercial
Proposed Community Plan Designation:	Residential Office
Existing Zoning:	Standard Single Family- Alhambra Corridor SPD (R-1[SPD])
Proposed Zoning:	Residential Office- Alhambra Corridor SPD (R-O[SPD])
Existing Land Use:	Residential

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North:	Office; OB
South:	Residential; R-1
East:	Residential; R-1
West:	Restaurant/Grocery Store; C-2/RO

Property Dimensions:	40 x 86.5 (.079 acres)
Size of Existing Building:	1382 square feet
Height of Existing Building:	23 feet
Height Limit R-1 or RO zone:	35 feet
Total Required Parking:	3 spaces
Total Proposed Parking:	2 spaces
Street Improvements:	Existing

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED: In addition to the above land use entitlements, the project will be required to obtain building permits.

BACKGROUND: The applicant is proposing to convert the existing structure located on

the project site, to office use, to serve as administrative space for the Sacramento Food Co-op, which is located directly across Alhambra Boulevard from the site. No exterior modifications to the structure, nor any signage, is proposed. 1230 square feet would be used for office space and 152 feet for storage space. The office would accommodate 4 employees, who would relocate from existing quarters within the Sacramento Food Co-op building. The office hours would be 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. The applicant's justification for the requested entitlements includes the following:

1) The location and configuration of the site render it more a part of the commercial Alhambra Boulevard strip than the Serra Way residential street, and make it difficult to attract desirable residential tenants; 2) The structure is unique, and increased revenue from the office use would facilitate appropriate maintenance; 3) The project would not result in any new employees in the area, and therefore would have minimal impact on the neighborhood; 4) the proposed RO zoning would preserve the option of future residential use of the property.

STAFF EVALUATION: Staff has the following comments:

A. Policy Considerations

There is an inconsistency between the existing General Plan and Central City Community Plan designations for the site; the General Plan designates the site Low Density Residential (4-15 du/na), and the Central City Community Plan designates the site General Commercial. The General Plan does state (Sec 2-4) that in Low Density Residential areas other related neighborhood uses may be indicated in community plans. While the Central City Community Plan designates the site as Commercial, the existing zoning (R-1) does not allow commercial or office uses. The proposed rezoning and redesignation of the site will establish consistency between the General Plan, Community Plan, and zoning for the site, allowing for office use, but retaining the option of residential use for the single family home on the site.

In allowing office use on a site which previously allowed only residential use, the project could be interpreted as inconsistent with General Plan and Community Plan goals encouraging the preservation of existing housing stock. However, the project is consistent with certain other plan goals, as follows:

The existing structure on the site, although not a listed structure, is architecturally distinctive and is included in the current survey of structures under consideration for listing as "Essential" or "Priority". As such, the preservation of the structure under the proposed project, and the potential provision of a revenue source to facilitate increased maintenance, is consistent with General Plan and Central City Community Plan policy encouraging the preservation of architecturally significant structures.

The project site represents a point of transition in the Alhambra Corridor between commercial uses to the north and low density residential uses to the south and east. By providing a low intensity office use, with a residential scale and architectural character, at this location, the project is consistent with General Plan policy prohibiting the intrusion of incompatible uses into residential neighborhoods through adequate buffers, screening and zoning practices, and is also consistent with Central City Community Plan policy encouraging the development of transitional land use areas with land uses compatible with adjacent developments.

In allowing office use on the site, but preserving the existing residential structure without exterior modification, the project is consistent with the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District goal of maintaining the character of individual neighborhoods and also consistent with the goal of providing a balanced mixture of uses in neighborhoods adjacent to transit facilities and transportation corridors.

B. Zoning Considerations

1. Rezone

The current zoning of the site is Single Family Residential-Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District. This zone does not allow office development. Therefore, in order to facilitate the office conversion, a rezone of the property is required. In requesting the rezone to Residential Office, the site would be allowed to convert to 100% office, subject to granting of a Special Permit. A rezone to Residential Office would retain the option of use as a residential unit in the future. Also, a rezone to RO, as opposed to commercial zoning (C-1 or C-2) would avoid the possibility of the site being converted to other commercial uses which might be less compatible with adjacent residential uses. Considering that the site is bounded by office use (OB zoning) to the north, and commercial uses (C-2 and RO zoning) to the west, RO zoning of this site would provide a transition between these commercial uses and the low density residential to the south and east of the site.

2. Special Permit for 100% office in the RO[SPD] zone

The Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District Ordinance specifies that, subject to a Zoning Administrators Special Permit, an architecturally significant structure of any size may be converted entirely into offices to help preserve the structure. The Ordinance specifically states that the intent of this provision is to assist in defraying costs for structural repair and interior modification and ensure the community's continued benefit from the preservation of the architectural features. Although the structure is not currently listed in the City's Official Register, it is architecturally distinctive, and is in fact under consideration for listing in the City's

Historic Structure Survey, currently in progress. As such, the project meets the intent of this Ordinance.

An alternative exception in the Ordinance also specifies that for lots less than 6400 square feet, development of 100% office is allowed in the RO zone, with the granting of a Special Permit, subject to the following provisions:

- a. An open space element is provided such as fountains, public art along with landscaping, and rest areas with seating.
- b. The maximum height is 35 feet.
- c. The maximum intensity of office use allowed is 20,000 square feet per net acre.

The project site meets the lot size, height limit, and intensity limit of this ordinance provision. The project does not propose fountains, public art or outdoor seating. However, it is staff's position that this is acceptable, for the following reasons: 1) The structure on the site could be interpreted as architecturally significant, and therefore not be subject to the open space element requirement, and 2) the objective of this project should be to maintain the residential character of this site, in order to achieve a smooth transition between commercial and residential uses. Public art, fountains, or outdoor seating would tend to give the site a more public/commercial ambience. As an alternative open space element, staff is recommending that the project provide enhanced landscaping as a condition of approval of the project.

3. Special Permit to waive one required parking space

The proposed project would require 3 parking spaces, per the City's Zoning Ordinance. The existing site provides 2 parking spaces, therefore the applicant is seeking the entitlement to waive one required space. Staff supports this request, for the following reasons: 1) the project will relocate 4 existing administrative employees from the Sacramento Food Co-op to the site, with no net increase in parking demand; 2) The site is less than 660 feet from the 29th Street LRT station, so transit is readily accessible; 3) staff is recommending a condition for the installation of bicycle racks to accommodate at least 2 bicycles.

4. Variance for Tandem Parking

The existing site provides room for 2 tandem parking spaces. Due to the constraints of the existing development on the site, there is no feasible alternative means of providing two parking spaces, without tandem parking, while still maintaining the residential character of the site. Since, from staff's perspective,

maintaining the residential character of the site is the main objective for the project, staff supports the variance for tandem parking.

5. Variance to Waive the Required Masonry Wall

The City's Zoning Ordinance requires the construction of a 6 foot masonry wall when a non-residential use is established adjacent to residential uses or residentially zoned land. The applicant seeks instead to maintain the existing 6 foot wood fence located on the property line between the project site and the residence to the east. Since the proposed project proposes a low intensity office use for the site, there will be little impact (noise, etc.) from which to shield surrounding uses. Additionally, maintaining the wood fence would be more in keeping with the goal of preserving the residential character of the project site. Therefore, staff supports the variance request.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

A. Environmental Determination

The Environmental Services Manager has determined the project, as proposed, will not have a significant impact to the environment; therefore, a Negative Declaration, without mitigation measures, has been prepared in compliance with Section 15070(B)1 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines.

B. Public/Neighborhood/Business Association Comments

The proposed project application packet was sent to the East Sacramento Improvement Association, the McKinley Elvas Neighborhood Alliance, the Central City Alliance of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Association Advisory Group. Land owners within a 500 foot radius of the project site were also notified of the proposed project. The East Sacramento Improvement Association provided a written response supporting the project as proposed, stating that "ESIA recognizes that the viability of a sole residence in a primarily commercial stretch has proven unsatisfactory housing stock, and a more productive use is warranted". The McKinley Elvas Neighborhood Alliance responded to the notification, but had no comments. The Central City Alliance of Neighborhoods responded, saying that they do not take formal positions on projects, but rather defer to, and usually agree with, the neighborhood association closest to the point of impact of a given project.

C. Summary of Agency Comments

The proposal was routed to several City departments and other agencies. The

following summarizes the comments received:

1. Police

The project as proposed, does not create a potential problem for law enforcement. It is strongly recommended that the building be equipped with a security system.

2. Building Division

This building is not on the City of Sacramento Official Historic Structures List, and must comply as a change of occupancy from an R-3 to a B (Office) use.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS:

The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny the requested Special Permit and Variances. The decision of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Ratify the Negative Declaration
- B. Recommend Approval of the Central City Community Plan Amendment of 0.079_± developed acres from "Commercial" to "Residential Office" for an office conversion.
- C. Recommend approval of the Rezone of 0.079 developed acres from "Single Family Residential" (R-1[SPD]) to "Residential-Office" (RO[SPD]) to convert a 1,382 square foot residential unit into an office building.
- D. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the Special Permit to allow 100% office use in the Residential Office (RO[SPD]) zone.
- E. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the Special Permit to waive one required parking space.
- F. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the

Variance to waive the required masonry wall on the east side of the project.

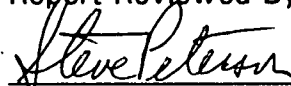
- G. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the Variance to provide tandem parking.

Report Prepared By:



Mark Kraft, Associate Planner

Report Reviewed By:



Steve Peterson, Senior Planner

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A

Exhibit A-1

Exhibit A-2

Exhibit A-3

Attachment B

Attachment C

Attachment D

Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact

Site Plan

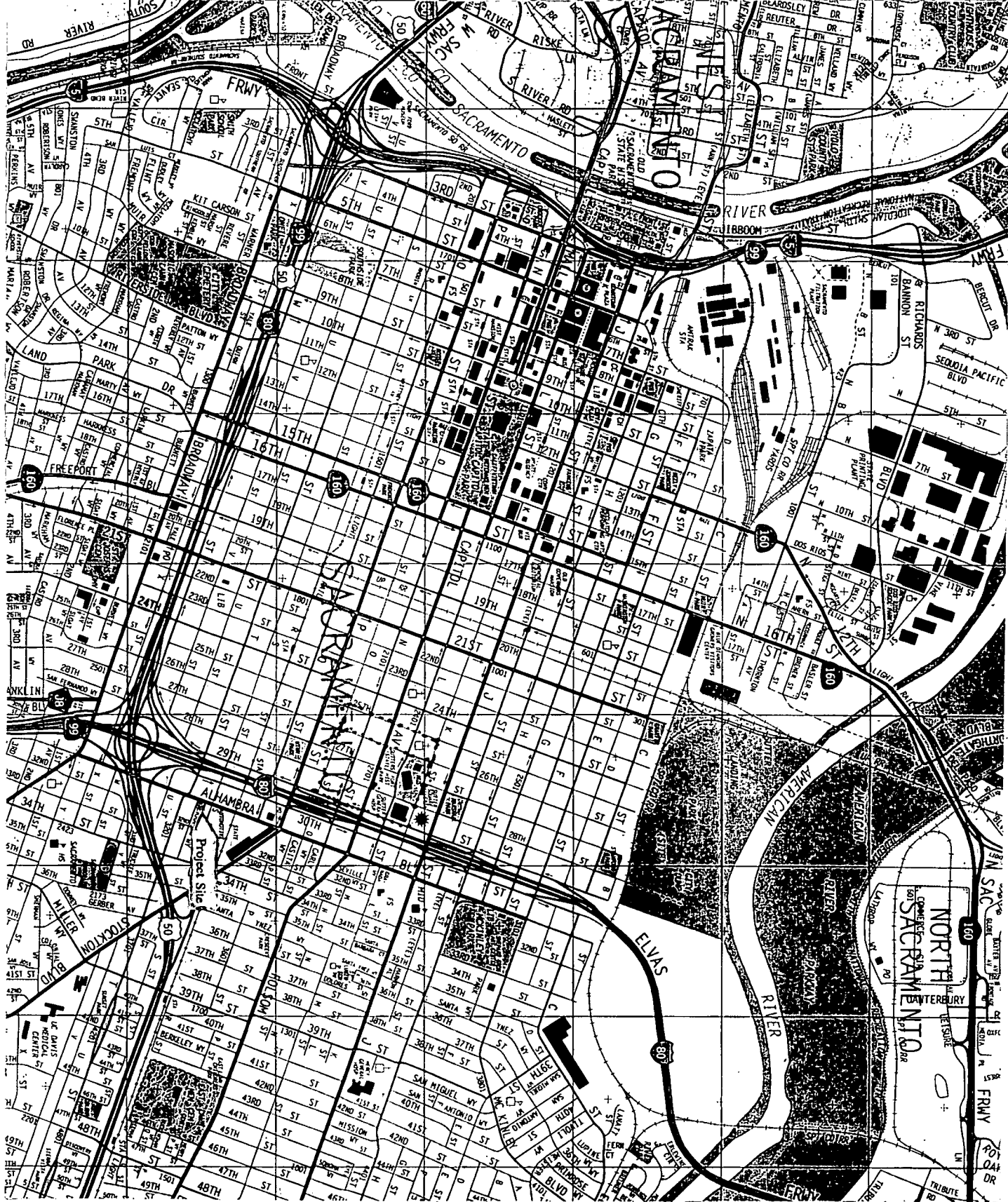
Floor Plans

Elevations

Vicinity Map

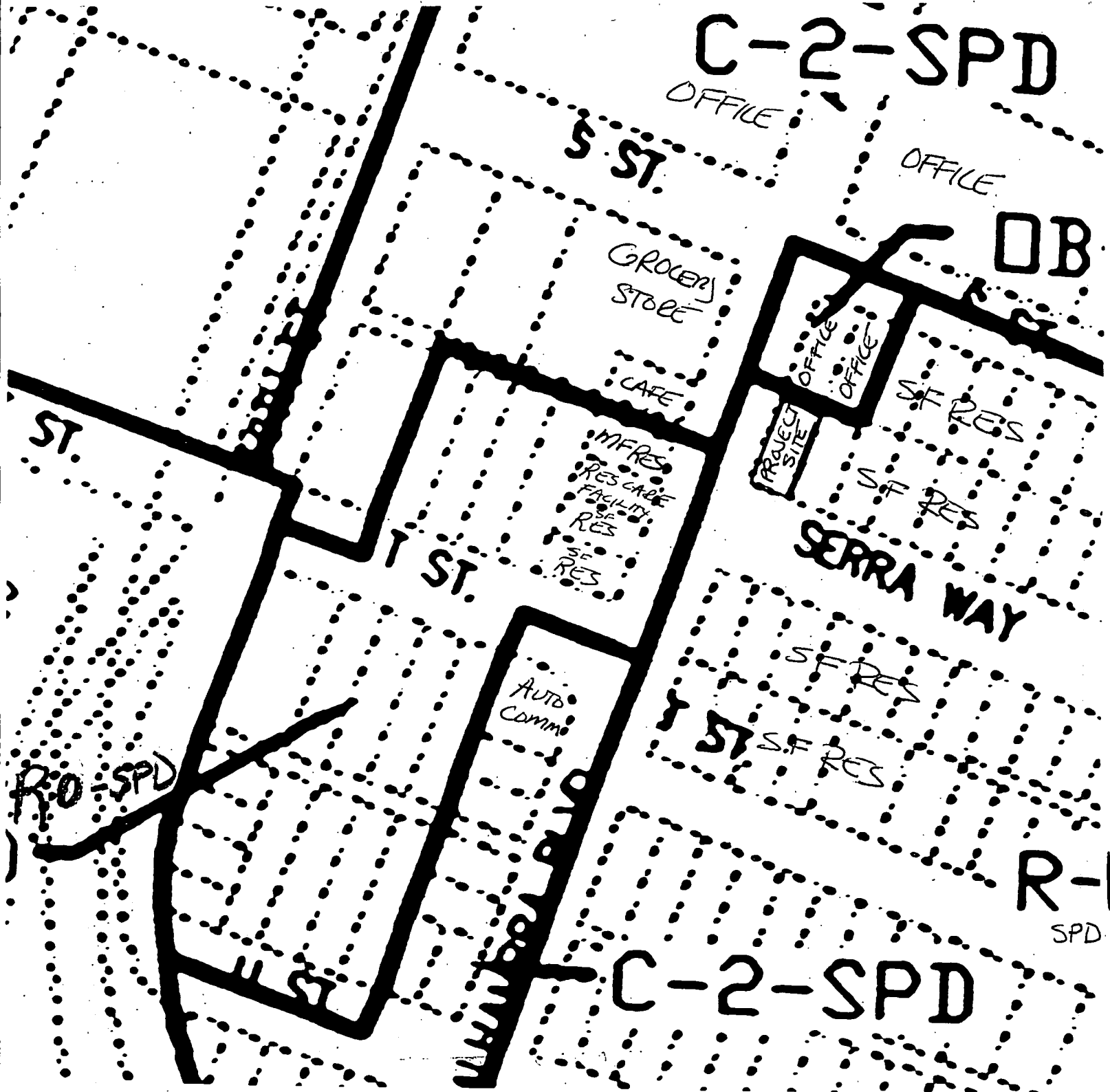
Land Use and Zoning Map

Letters from Neighborhood Associations



Attachment B
Vicinity Map

Attachment C
Land Use and Zoning Map





EAST SACRAMENTO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Neighbors helping neighbors since 1958

CITY PLANNING DIVISION
1231 I STREET RM.200
SACRAMENTO, CA

Mark Kraft, Project Manager

The East Sacramento Improvement Association, ESIA, does not oppose the proposed rezoning of property at 1919 Alhambra Blvd. providing the following conditions exist as per the application. The property will be rezoned from R-1 to R-O and will adhere to the provisions of the Alhambra Corridor Guidelines. The property shall be occupied by one tenant as per application. ESIA recognizes that the viability of a sole residence in a primarily commercial stretch has proven unsatisfactory housing stock, and a more productive use is warranted.

Linda Cook
Board Member,
East Sacramento Improvement Assn.
(916) 453-8996

RECEIVED APR 14 1997

EARLY PROJECT NOTIFICATION RECEIPT

Project Manager Mark Kratt File Number P97-016

PLEASE CHECK AND RETURN BY: 3/27/94

- We have reviewed this application and have no comments.
- We have reviewed this application and will need until _____ (date) to complete our review of this project.

We have reviewed this application and our comments are below or attached: CCAN DOES NOT TAKE FORMAL POSITIONS ON PROJECTS
~~WE DO HOWEVER WE DO DEFER TO & USUALLY AGREE (AS INDIVIDUALS~~
~~OR ASSOCIATIONS) WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC. POSITION~~
CLOSEST TO THE POINT OF IMPACT BY A GIVEN PROJECT

ASSOCIATION NAME: CCAN
PLEASE PRINT

ASSOCIATION CONTACT: DALIA KOOPMAN
PLEASE PRINT

PHONE NUMBER: 443-5543
PLEASE PRINT