

P99-141 - METRO CENTER PUD PARKING SPACES

- REQUEST:
- A. **Environmental Determination:** Categorical Exemption [Section 15301].
 - B. **Special Permit** to modify a previously approved PUD Special Permit.
 - C. **Special Permit** to exceed the maximum allowed parking by 77 spaces.

LOCATION: 2700-2720 Gateway Oaks Drive
APN:225-0230-077
South Natomas Community Plan
Natomas Unified School District
Council District 1

APPLICANT: RREEF America REIT II, Corp B, Attn: Nola Montgomery
2710 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 125
Sacramento, CA 95833
(916) 925-8965

OWNER: same

APPLIC. FILED: 11/16/99

STAFF CONTACT: Scot Mende 264-5894

SUMMARY: RREEF (a Real Estate Investment Trust) has submitted an application to the City of Sacramento requesting the necessary entitlements to increase the number of vehicle parking spaces for an existing 3 Office Building complex in the Metro-Center PUD.

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends approval of the project. The proposed project does not include any significant alterations to the buildings, site layout, or landscaping. The applicant has proposed an additional 77 parking stalls in order to accommodate the increased needs of a primary tenant (Providian Financial).

PROJECT INFORMATION :

General Plan Designation: Regional Commercial & Offices
Community Plan Designation: Office/Office Park
Existing Zoning of Site: Office Building (Planned Unit Development), OB(PUD)
Existing Land Use of Site: Office Use

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: Office, OB(PUD) .
South: Commercial, SC-PUD
East: Freeway/Open Space
West: Multi-Family, R-2B-PUD

Property Area: 20.5 acres
Square Footage of Building: 267,235 sqft.(Gross)
Existing Parking Spaces: 1,052 spaces
Proposed Parking Spaces: 1,129 spaces
Existing Parking Ratio: 1:254.0 sqft.
Proposed PUD Parking Ratio: 1:237 sqft.
Required PUD Parking Ratio
 minimum 1 space/275 sqft.
 maximum 1 space/350 sqft.
Topography: Flat
Street Improvements: Existing
Utilities: Existing

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED:

In addition to the entitlements requested, the applicant will also need to obtain the following permits or approvals, including, but not limited to:

<u>Permit</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Construction Permit	Building Division

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: On April 25, 1985, the City Planning Commission approved the development of a 3-office building complex consisting of 267,235 gross square feet in the Metro Center PUD (P85-108). As part of the condition of approval, the applicant was required to submit a transportation management plan which complies with the City's Trip Reduction Ordinance prior to the issuance of building permit. At the time of the special permit approval, the PUD Guidelines required at least 1 parking space per 250 square feet of office area.

Effective December 13, 1990, the City Council adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance which significantly reduced the amount of required parking, and set a maximum

parking ratio for office projects in PUDs. New projects, beginning in 1991, have been limited to 1 parking space per 275 square feet of office space. Any parking above the maximum parking ratio is subject to a special permit to exceed the parking ratio. The purpose of the zoning ordinance amendment in 1991 was to control the supply of parking in order to affect the demand for alternative commute modes (e.g., to encourage transit, carpools, etc.).

On January 21, 1999, the City Planning Commission approved (P98-118) a special permit modification of the original 3-building complex, and approved a special permit to exceed by 46 parking stalls the maximum allowed parking spaces for the 3-building complex. The increase in 46 parking stalls was to have been accomplished by removing some landscaping and paving new parking area.

The current application is requesting to *set aside* the previous approval and to accomplish the parking stall increase **solely through re-striping a number of stalls from standard spaces to compact spaces**. This requires a modification to the existing and approved PUD Special Permit for the development and a special permit to exceed the required parking allowable within the PUD.

These modifications are requested in order to accommodate an expanding tenant -- Providian Financial. Providian operates a call-center operation at this site. This type of operation has a high employee intensity and thus requires more parking than a typical office tenant.

The tenant expects to be scheduling employees to work on shift-basis in order to minimize site over-load, parking area congestion and inconvenience for other tenants. The tenant has a total of approximately 1000 employees and anticipates adding another 100 employees within the next 30-45 days. The majority of the employees work Tuesday through Saturdays. According to the applicant, the first shift of the day is from 6.00am to 2:30pm with an approximate total of 100 employees involved. The second shift, with the approximately 850-900 remaining employees, starts from 12 noon to 8:30pm, although the starting time & ending time are earlier on Thursdays (11:00 am - 7:30 pm) & Fridays (10:00 am - 6:30 pm). Thus, between the hours of noon (or earlier) and 2.30pm, an approximate total of 950-1000 employees will be on site for 2½+ hours.

STAFF EVALUATION: Staff has the following comments:

A. Policy Considerations

The General Plan currently designates the project site for Regional Commercial and Offices. The South Natomas Community Plan designates the site as Office/ Office

Park. The existing Office development is consistent with both the General Plan and the South Natomas Community Plan policies and land use designations, and the Metro Center PUD Development Guidelines. The proposal does not include any change to the existing Office structures or landscaping area.

The City of Sacramento, in the General Plan, has a policy for attracting and retaining major office users inside the City. As part of this policy, the City should:

- *Assist public and private interests in developing strategies for attracting and retaining major offices users inside the City of Sacramento.*

Parking Policies

It has been argued by some office developers that the City of Sacramento is not competitive within the region because other jurisdictions have not followed the City's lead in furthering air quality / congestion objectives. Indeed, in areas such as Rancho Cordova, there are not upper limits on parking provided. As a result, the City has had difficulty attracting employee-intensive uses. From an economic development perspective, the City should be allowing more parking.

Staff asserts that the air quality & congestion objectives are valid. The environmental community values the City's leadership and has expressed strong disappointment at the County's lack of initiative relative to air quality. Therefore, staff recommends that the City not abandon its leadership role and not allow increases in parking unless special circumstances are present. The mere threat of moving a business to Rancho Cordova should not dictate City policy.

The Zoning Ordinance Chapter 3, Section 2-B-2 sets forth a limit of one parking space for every 275 gross square feet of office area. According to Section Chapter 3, Section 2-A-2-c of the City Zoning Ordinance, the maximum parking ratio for office projects may be exceeded contingent upon meeting at least one of the following criteria:

- On-site TSM measures are infeasible
- Residential neighborhoods would be impacted because no mitigation (other than additional parking) is feasible; or
- Unique characteristics of the proposed use requires parking greater than that which is otherwise allowed.

The proposed tenancy for the 3 building complex is Providian Financial. The tenant operates a call center from this location, which has a higher occupancy than a standard office use. From a policy standpoint, the difficulty in granting the special permit based on the third criteria is that the unique characteristics of a specific tenant are subject to

change. In other words, the Providian Financial may cease or scale back its call center operation. In such case, the parking supply will have increased and be out of balance with the demand for parking; thus reducing the incentives to participate in TSM measures. The challenge, therefore, is to:

- approve a smaller increase in allowed parking than the applicant might have preferred;
- ensure aggressive use of TSM measures;
- monitor the employment levels for the office park; and
- affect a parking reduction if the employment level subsequently drops significantly.

Staff supports the proposed parking development in that:

- 1) The proposed parking spaces development does not have any significant impact to the on-site traffic circulation;
- 2) The tenant participates actively in the South Natomas Transportation Management Association;
- 3) The applicant shall notify staff of any significant change in tenancy;
- 4) If the tenant mix in the office complex changes to be less employee intensive, then the parking lot can be re-stripped to reduce the total number of parking spaces.

B. Site Plan Design/Zoning Requirements

1. Site Plan: The PUD Guidelines require a minimum of 25 percent landscaping on each office development site. The existing and previously approved landscape ratio/percentage for the development is 26.5%.
2. Setbacks: The proposal does not affect the existing building or landscape setbacks.
3. Parking/Circulation: The existing number of parking provided is 1,052 parking spaces at a ratio of 1:254. The number of parking provided by the current application is 1,129 at a ratio of 1:237 sqft.

The Zoning Ordinance also requires one bicycle parking space for every 20 parking spaces, or 56 bicycle parking spaces. Fifty percent of the bicycle parking spaces must meet Class I standards as defined in Chapter 1 Section

4 of the Zoning Ordinance. Parking location preference must be given to carpool, vanpool, and bicycle parking.

4. Transportation Management Plan: As a condition of approval for the existing Office use (P85-108), Staff recommended that a bus shelter on the east side of Gateway Oaks Drive, north of West El Camino Avenue with bus turn-out lane be constructed at a location agreed to by the Regional Transit. Staff also recommended shower and locker facilities in each building to facilitate bicycle commuting.

According to the South Natomas Transportation Management Association (SNTMA) Coordinator, the tenant is the largest user of the transit program and has been a member of the SNTMA since March 1998. Additionally, the Coordinator mentioned that the TMA has experienced a 400% increase in transit usage.

The total parking stalls, proposed with this request if approved, is 1,129 parking spaces. The tenant currently occupies the office building. There are 2 other office buildings on the site with about 524 employees bringing the overall number of employees in the 3 office buildings to 1,440 workers. The application does not indicate whether the current number of employees is their ceiling for this site.

With the operation of the call center on a shift basis and the active involvement of the tenant in the SNTMA, applicant has demonstrated efforts at minimizing congestion. Staff is of the opinion that future addition to the number of employees may trigger an impact to on-site circulation and the general traffic flow in the area. Thus, tenant's increased involvement in the SNTMA and exploring other transit options (van pooling, car pooling, among others) is very necessary.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

- A. Environmental Determination: The Environmental Services Manager has determined that the project, as proposed, will not have a significant impact on the environment and shall, therefore, be exempt from the provisions of CEQA. Findings have been made in compliance with Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, that the modification being requested is not significant.
- B. Public/Neighborhood/Business Association Comments: The proposed project application packet was sent to the surrounding land owners within a 500 foot radius of the project site and to the Natomas Community Association. The Association

supports the proposal provided that all reasonable TSM measures be exhausted (bike lockers, bus shelters) if none already exists.

C. Summary of Agency Comments: The proposal was routed to the City of Sacramento Neighborhood Services Office, Public Works Department (Engineering Transportation Section), Building Division, the Utility Department, the Fire Department and the Police Department. The following summarizes the comments received:

1. **Public Works**: No traffic study is needed for this project. The existing parking lot shall be modified as necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act in all respects.
2. **Building Inspections**
 - A. Required accessible parking stalls shall not be less than 23 based on 2% of the total parking spaces provided (1,129 spaces);
 - B. One in every eight required accessible spaces shall be served by an access aisle 96 inches wide minimum and shall be designated as "van accessible;"
 - C. Disabled parking stalls shall be so located on the shortest route of travel from adjacent parking to the accessible entrances;
 - D. Surface of the parking spaces and access aisles shall not exceed 1:50 gradient (2%) in any direction.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS:

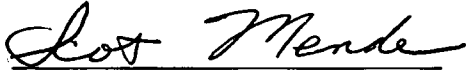
The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny the Special Permit. The Planning Commission action may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action:

- B. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision approving the Special Permit to modify a previously approved PUD Special Permit;
- C. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision approving the Special Permit to exceed the maximum allowed parking by 77 spaces for a total of 1,129 spaces.

Report Prepared By,

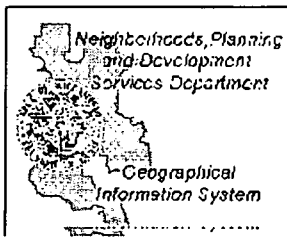
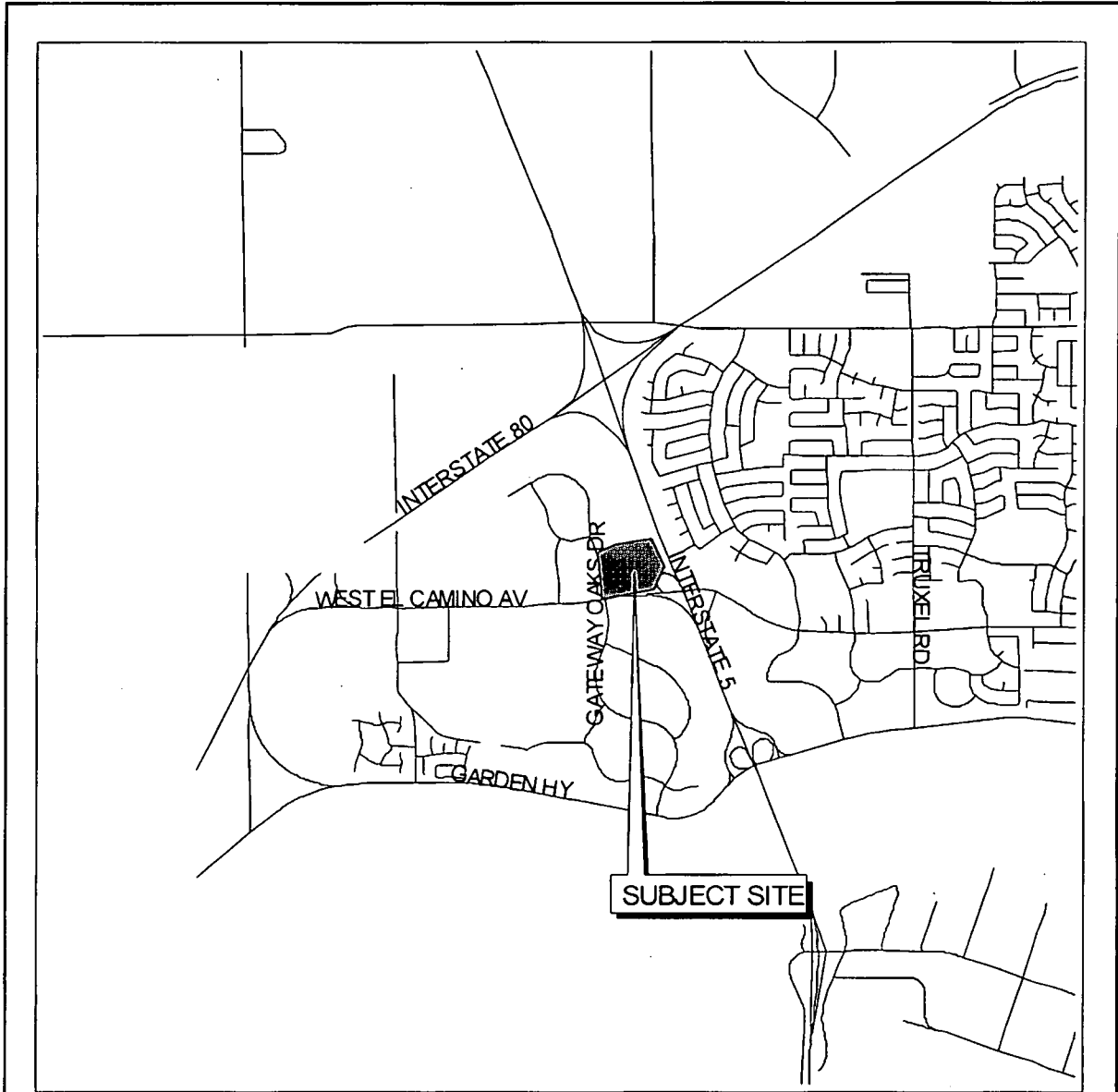


Scot Mende
Senior Planner

Attachments

Attachment 1	Vicinity Map
Attachment 2	Land Use and Zoning Map
Attachment 3	Notice of Decision and Findings of Facts
Exhibit 3-A	Site Plan

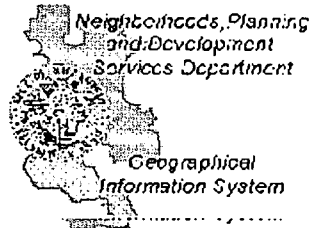
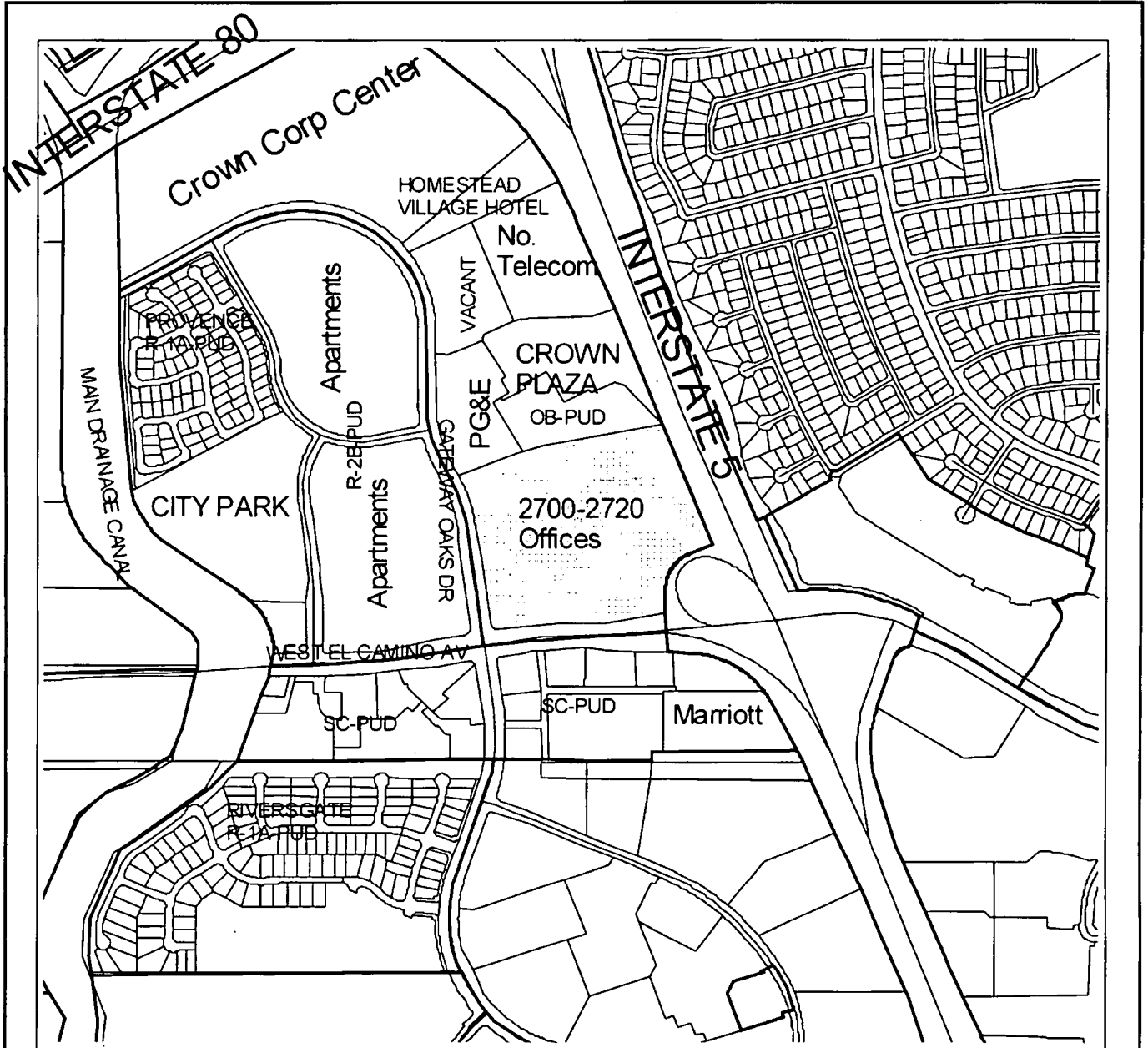
**ATTACHMENT 1
VICINITY MAP**



**VICINITY MAP
P99-141**



**ATTACHMENT 2
LAND USE & ZONING MAP**



LAND USE & ZONING
P99-141
APN: 225-0230-077



ATTACHMENT 3**NOTICE OF DECISION AND FINDINGS OF FACTS**
**NOTICE OF DECISION AND FINDINGS OF FACT FOR 2700-2720 GATEWAY OAKS
DRIVE ADDITIONAL PARKING SPACES FOR THE OFFICE BUILDING LOCATED
NORTHWEST CORNER OF WEST EL-CAMINO AVENUE AND GATEWAY OAKS
DRIVE WITHIN THE METRO-CENTER PUD IN THE SOUTH NATOMAS COMMUNITY
PLAN AREA.**

At the regular meeting of December 9, 1999, the City Planning Commission heard and considered evidence in the above entitled matter. Based on verbal and documentary evidence at said hearing, the Planning Commission took the following actions for the location listed above:

- A. Determined that the project, as proposed, will not have a significant impact on the environment and shall, therefore, be exempt from the provisions of CEQA;
- B. Approved the Special Permit to modify the previously approved PUD Special Permit (P85-108);
- C. Approved the Special Permit to exceed the maximum allowable parking and allow an additional 77 spaces, for a total of 1,129 parking spaces.

These actions were made based upon the following findings of fact and subject to the following conditions:

FINDINGS OF FACT

B&C. **Special Permit** : The Special Permit to modify the previously approved PUD Special Permit and to exceed the maximum allowed parking is approved based upon the following findings of fact:

- 1. The project is based upon sound principles of land use in that:
 - a. Adequate landscaping, vehicle circulation, maneuvering, parking and site design is provided in the new parking area.
- 2. The project, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the public welfare nor result in the creation of a public nuisance in that:
 - a. The design of the parking area is compatible with the area,

- b. The design of the parking area will not impede access to or exit from the overall parking lot,
 - c. The design and location of the parking area will not create a nuisance for other tenants and adjacent properties, in that participation in the South Natomas Transportation Management Association (SNTMA) and operation of the center on work shift-basis will minimize congestion;
 - d. The proposed project is in keeping with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance that calls for parking area modification for uses with unique characteristics in the Office Building PUD (OB-PUD) zone.
3. The project is consistent with some policies in the General Plan and South Natomas Community Plan.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

B & C. The Special Permit to re-stripe the existing parking area to create 77 additional parking stalls (for a total of 1,129 spaces) is hereby approved subject to the following conditions of approval:

1. **Parking and Circulation**

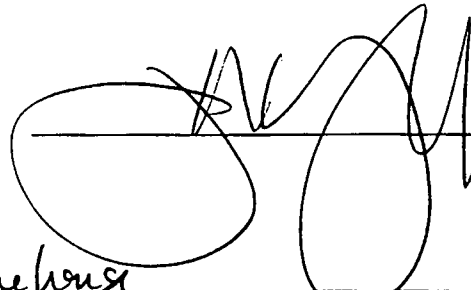
- a. All parking spaces shall meet City standards and handicap spaces shall comply with A.D.A. requirements. Required accessible parking stalls shall not be less than 23 based on 2% of the total parking spaces provided (1,129 spaces). One in every eight required accessible spaces shall be served by an access aisle 96 inches wide minimum and shall be designated as "van accessible." Disabled parking stalls shall be so located on the shortest route of travel from adjacent parking to the accessible entrances;
- b. The developer shall comply with the City's Tree Shading Ordinance that requires that a minimum of fifty percent of the parking lot and circulation lanes shall be shaded within fifteen years.
- c. Applicant shall provide a minimum of 56 bicycle parking spaces on the site. The Zoning Ordinance requires 1 bicycle parking space for every 20 on-site vehicle parking spaces. Fifty percent of the bicycle parking spaces must meet Class I standards as defined in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
- d. Surface of the parking spaces and access aisles shall not exceed 1:50 gradient (2%) in any direction.

2. **Site Plan**

- a. The developer shall obtain all necessary construction permits prior to construction.

- b. The developer shall inform, in writing, Planning Staff within 90 days (3 months) after tenant vacates the site. An on-site parking analysis, paid for by project owner, shall be performed by the City and project owner to evaluate existing parking conditions. If the proposed use no longer meets the "unique characteristics" requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, the parking lot shall be re-stripped to **1,052 spaces**.

3. The previous special permit (P98-118) is hereby set aside.



CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



SECRETARY TO PLANNING COMMISSION
P99-141

EXHIBIT 3-A

SITE PLAN

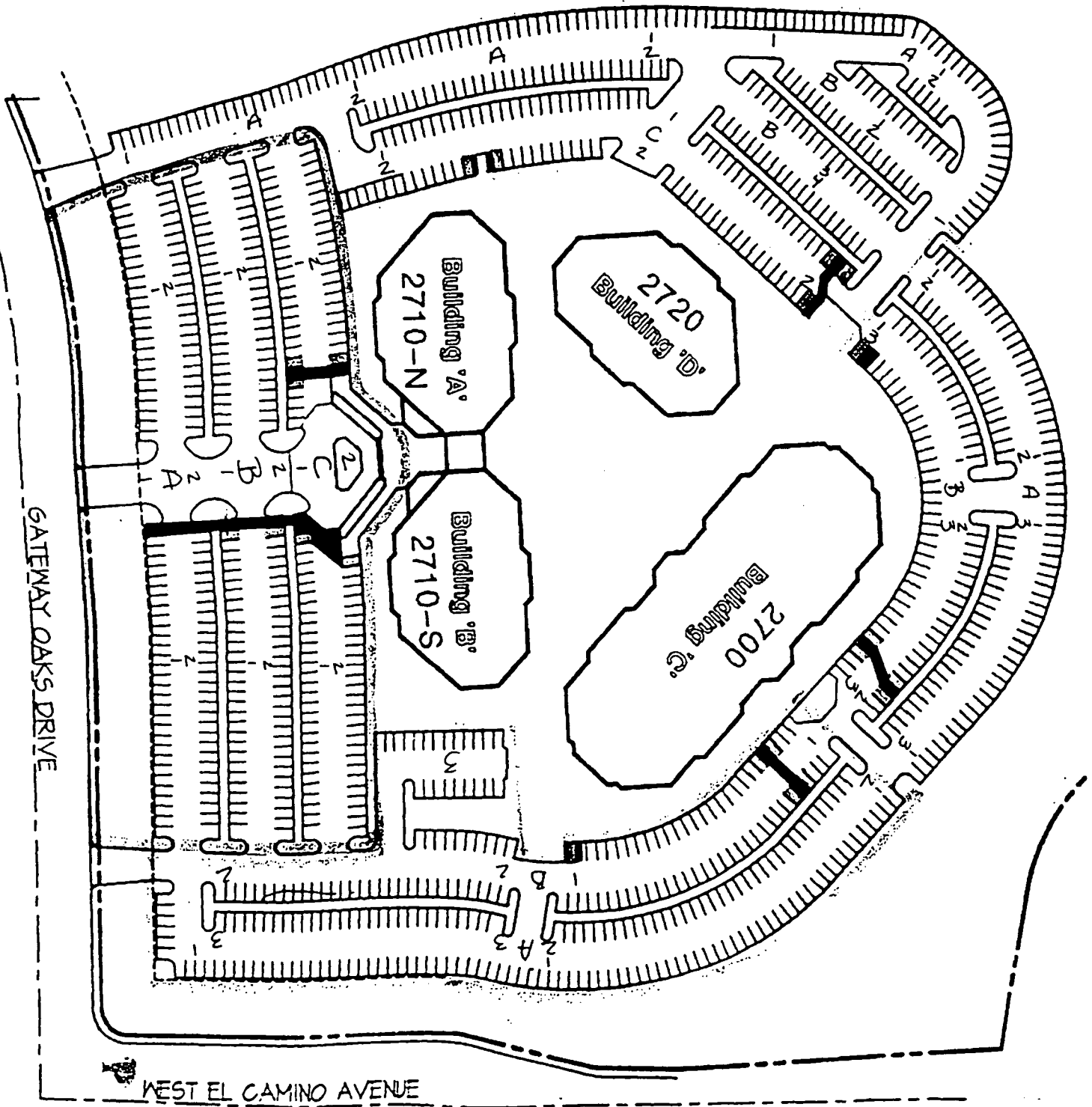
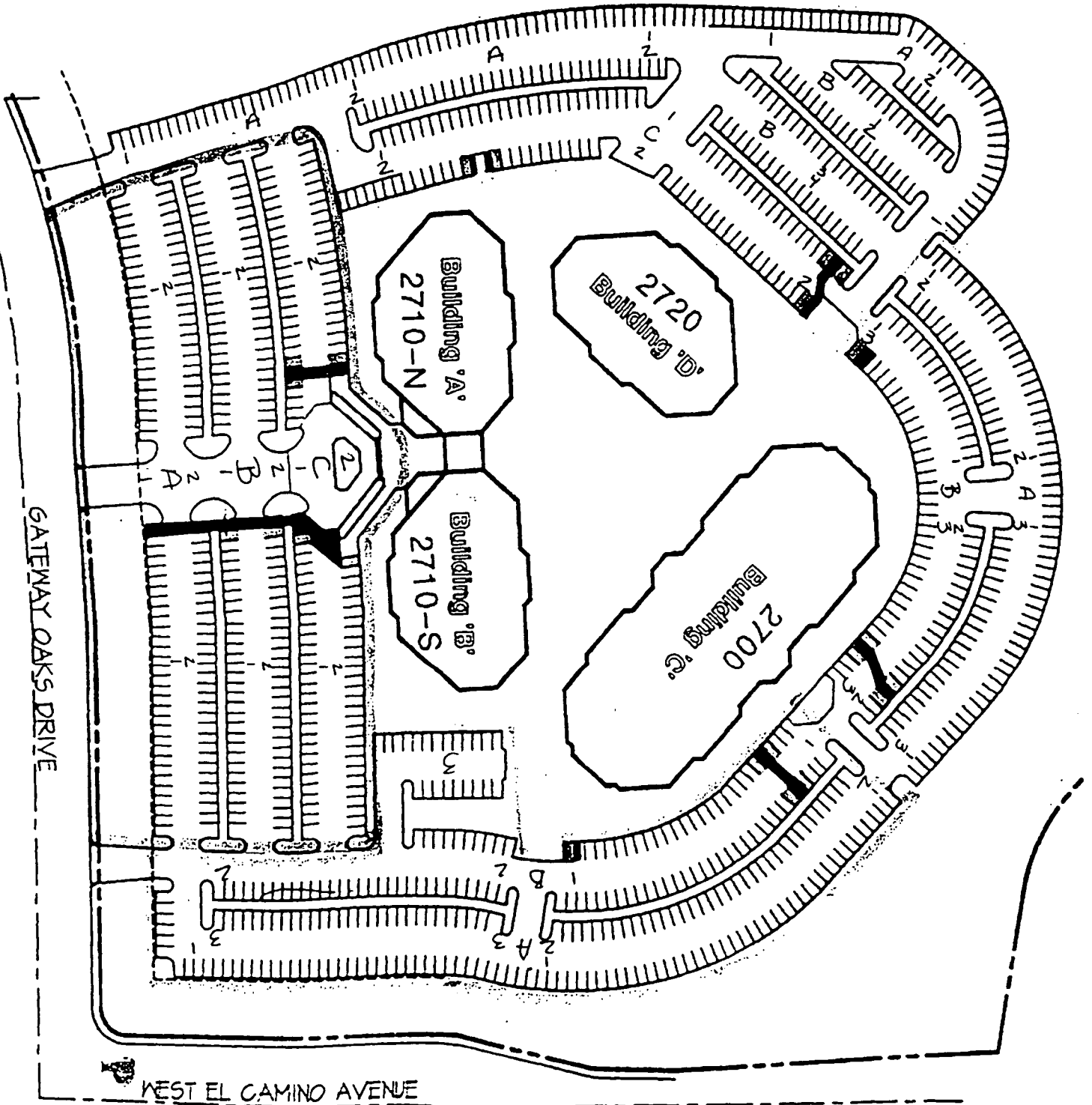


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ATTACHMENT 3**NOTICE OF DECISION AND FINDINGS OF FACTS****NOTICE OF DECISION AND FINDINGS OF FACT FOR 2700-2720 GATEWAY OAKS DRIVE ADDITIONAL PARKING SPACES FOR THE OFFICE BUILDING LOCATED NORTHWEST CORNER OF WEST EL-CAMINO AVENUE AND GATEWAY OAKS DRIVE WITHIN THE METRO-CENTER PUD IN THE SOUTH NATOMAS COMMUNITY PLAN AREA.**

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 - d. The proposed project is in keeping with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance that calls for parking area modification for uses with unique characteristics in the Office Building PUD (OB-PUD) zone.
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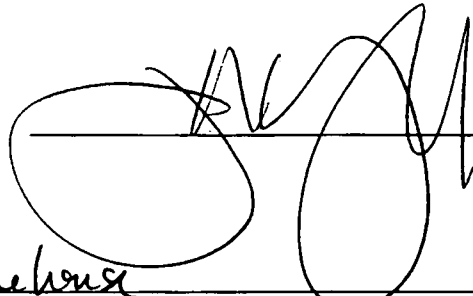
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3. The previous special permit (P98-118) is hereby set aside.



CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

Guy L. Stonehouse
SECRETARY TO PLANNING COMMISSION

P99-141

EXHIBIT 3-A

SITE PLAN

