

Transportation Advisory Commission Recommendation on “Net Zero Increase in Car Trips”

At the November 1, 2004 Council meeting, there were comments on the Transportation Advisory Commission’s (TAC) recommendation on “net new trips”. Attached are 2 pages from the TAC recommendations on net zero increase in car trips. As indicated in the attachment, TAC did recommend that there be a net zero increase in car trips; however, if that goal could not be achieved, then the developer should be required to pay a “fair share” traffic mitigation fee. Appendix D of the Mobility Element, Supplemental Information on the Implementation Program, includes a work task to “conduct a Nexus Study for a transportation impact fee on new development that will be used to reduce off site car trips and protect neighborhoods from increased car trips.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
GENERAL PLAN LAND USE & MOBILITY ELEMENT,
CENTRAL DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN AND ZONING CODE REVISION
(DEIR)**

**Transportation Advisory Commission
Comments, Recommendations and Questions
July 30, 2004**

Policy Statement

A guiding principle of our General Plan is that "growth will be targeted to serve community need and enhance the quality of life." Pasadena will target the type and location of new growth to add needed jobs and housing "without increasing traffic or intruding on neighborhood quality of life."¹ Another guiding principle is that Pasadena "will be a city where people can circulate without cars." Toward this end, Pasadena will "encourage transit-oriented development and stress non-automotive modes of travel."

The Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) believes that the City of Pasadena should employ the strategies set forth in the General Plan Mobility Element, together with state-of-the art "smart growth" strategies, in order to ensure that all new development in Pasadena is self-mitigating in terms of its impact on traffic and encourages non-auto modes of transportation. TAC has reviewed the DEIR and underlying draft planning documents with these guiding principles in mind.

Because the General Plan calls on the City to protect neighborhoods from traffic, TAC believes that it would be ill-advised for the City Council to certify an EIR that requires a "statement of overriding consideration" in terms of automobile traffic impact. In other words, the DEIR's conclusion that the underlying planning documents would create "significant and unavoidable project-level and cumulative impacts" is in direct conflict with the City's goal that Pasadena will target new growth "without increasing traffic or intruding on neighborhood quality of life."

The objective of the City should be that there is a net zero increase in car trips caused by new development permitted under the new Land Use Element, Central District Specific Plan and Zoning Code. This objective can be achieved through a combination of self-mitigating traffic strategies and the requirement of a "fair share" traffic mitigation fee for commercial and residential developments of all sizes permitted after the adoption of the General Plan. New projects approved in Pasadena should employ "smart growth"

¹ DEIR page 11, Item 1., second paragraph

strategies in order to be “self-mitigating”. Alternatively, if not all car trips can be self-mitigated, then the developer should be required to pay a “fair share” traffic mitigation fee for off-site trip reduction measures to be implemented at the City’s discretion so that there is still a possibility of net zero car trip impact. Accordingly, TAC recommends that no project in the EIR be certified if it requires a “statement of overriding consideration” in regards to auto trips.

TAC further recommends that all the neighborhood protection principles embodied in the 1994 Mobility Element should be carried forward into the new Mobility Element, including de-emphasized streets and environmental capacity (see the attached Appendix A.)

Mobility Element Implementation Plan

TAC recommends that the City develop a Mobility Element Implementation Plan (MEIP) to guide the strategies set forth in the Mobility Element. The MEIP would be an appendix to the Mobility Element and would include specific recommendations for traffic mitigation and performance guidelines that would serve as an annual “report card” of how the City is doing in managing auto traffic congestion. New projects would be monitored on an annual basis to determine whether mitigation efforts, including the trip reduction ordinance, have been effective in mitigating the cumulative traffic impacts of such projects. The MEIP also would include a strong link and cross-references to the City’s Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP), so that the City Council has the necessary tools to ensure that new commercial and housing developments of all sizes pay their fair share of traffic mitigation “to strengthen the linkage between the Mobility Element and development projects.”² This concept which bridges the gap between city policies and what actually happens on the ground, was recommended in the report to City Council on June 7, 2004 “Review of the City of Pasadena’s Approach to Cumulative traffic Impact Analysis.”

TAC Recommendations:

- Develop a Mobility Element Implementation Plan as an appendix to the Mobility Element with specific links to the City of Pasadena Capitol Improvement Plan.
- Develop an annual “report card” to measure the effectiveness of traffic mitigation measures and the trip reduction ordinance.
- Develop a “fair share” traffic mitigation fee paid by commercial and residential developments of all sizes.

² Report presented to City Council June 7, 2004 “Review of the City of Pasadena’s Approach to Cumulative Traffic Impact Analysis” dated June 1, 2004, Page 12 and 13, Item 4 “Recommendations”

Environmental Impact Report – What are the objectives of the project? Do any of the alternatives meet the objectives of the project?

The Environmental Impact Report for the 2004 Land Use and Mobility Elements, Zoning Code Revisions, and the Central District Specific Plan (EIR) analyzes a variety of alternatives to see if they can achieve the same objectives as the Plans with fewer environmental impacts.

Each of the Plans include goals and policies that define the objectives:

2004 Land Use Element

- Growth will be targeted to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.
- Change will be harmonized to preserve Pasadena's historic character and environment.
- Economic vitality will be promoted to provide jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.
- Pasadena will be promoted as a healthy family community.
- Pasadena will be a city where people can circulate without cars.
- Pasadena will be promoted as a cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment, and educational center for the region.
- Community participation will be a permanent part of achieving a greater city.

2004 Mobility Element

- Livable and economically strong community will be promoted.
- Non-auto travel will be encouraged.
- Neighborhoods will be protected by discouraging traffic from intruding into community neighborhoods.
- Multi-modal corridors will be managed to promote and improve citywide transportation services.

Central District Specific Plan

- Central District will function as Pasadena's vibrant urban core with a distinctive character.
- Downtown will provide a diversity of economic, residential, and cultural opportunities.
- Downtown will be a place to live, work, shop, and play.
- Downtown will provide a convenient access by foot, bicycle, and transit, as well as by car.
- Physical and economic growth will be harmonized to enhance existing businesses, respect neighborhoods, and respect the numerous resources of historical and cultural significance that contribute to Downtown's unique identity.

The EIR tested each of the thirteen alternatives against these Plan objectives and found that the only alternative that fully meets the objectives is Alternative 3A – 100% Growth with the Extension of the Gold Line. This does not mean that the City Council would be precluded from selecting a different alternative. The City Council could do so if it found that another alternative provided benefits that outweighed the goal of meeting project objectives. The rationale for such a selection should be outlined in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

AN OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS IN THE CITY OF PALO ALTO

The City of Palo Alto is actively engaged in implementing transportation programs focused on improving mobility, reducing dependence on the use of automobiles, and protecting neighborhoods from traffic intrusion. Transportation matters are the responsibility of the Planning and Transportation Commission, which is comprised of seven members serving a four-year term of office. Following are highlights of Palo Alto's program:

- The Palo Alto General Plan Transportation Element was adopted in July, 1998.
- A Strategic Implementation program was adopted in September 2003. That document identifies implementation priorities, project funding and performance measures. Eight measures were identified to assess the performance of the transportation system. Work is underway by the Transportation Division to conduct studies and assemble the necessary reporting data.
- Traffic impact fees were established in March 2002 for two areas: the Stanford Research Park/El Camino Real CS Zone traffic fee is \$8,51 per sq. ft. for commercial development (residential development is exempted from this fee); the San Antonia/Bayshore area fee is \$1.75 per sq. ft.
- An in-lieu parking fee was adopted for the Downtown Assessment District was established in March 2002. The fee is \$52,994 per parking space.
- In April 2003 The City Council considered a proposed citywide transportation impact fee. The proposed fee for a single-family house is \$2,316. The proposed fee per PM peak hour trip is \$2,293. These proposed fees include consideration of life cycle projected cost. The fee is based on a Transportation Impact Fee Nexus Study Final Draft Report, dated April 2004. Action on the fee was deferred to provide the City Council with information on the economic impact of cumulative development fees. Action on the transportation impact fee is expected in January 2005. An exemption is provided for residential housing, either for sale or rental, which by recordable means, is permanently obligated to be 100% affordable.
- Level of service thresholds for intersections and residential areas include volume increases of 25% or more on local, collector or residential arterial streets with increases of 375 vehicles per day (vpd) for local street, 1250 vpd for collector streets, and 5,000 vpd for residential arterial streets. An increase of 150 vpd is acceptable in all instances up to the maximum. A limit of 2500 vpd is permitted on local streets. Standards for pedestrian and bicycling are also included in the criteria.
- A Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan is conducted in neighborhoods experiencing traffic problems. A Community Handbook is available for this program.

- In 2002 the Transportation Division collected speed data on the freeways, expressways, arterials, and many collector streets throughout the City using GPS technology. Plots of the speed data were prepared to represent the maximum speed that a single test vehicle, equipped with GPS transceivers, achieved along a street segment at any point in its test run. The Transportation Division hopes to conduct this test annually to observe trends, locate bottlenecks, and segments of excessive speed. The data will assist development of Residential Traffic Calming Programs.
- The Neighborhood Pace Car Program is a citizen-based initiative that promised to slow traffic and reduce car use. City resident motorists are asked to sign a pledge and implement safe speed driving into their lifestyle. A bumper sticker is then sent to each participant that identifies the participant as a pace car driver. Pace car drivers set a prudent speed for the drivers behind them. If they drive within the speed limit, the cars behind them will do the same.
- A study of the commute shed for the Stanford Research Park was conducted to assess travel patterns of employees, their travel preferences and use of non-auto modes of travel.
- Palo Alto provides free shuttle service on weekdays. Three routes provide service to the community.
- The City operates an Employee Commute Program that offers incentives for employees who ride transit or are in a carpool. A taxable monthly incentive of \$30 is provided to City employees who carpool and \$20 for employees who walk or bike to work. Companies are recognized for their accomplishments. For example Genecor has raised awareness and commitment among its employees as demonstrated by its 33 percent participation rate via public transportation and received a Certificate of Recognition.
- Palo Alto High School charges students \$100 annually for a parking permit. The Police Department monitors parking lots and issues citations to violators.

What heights does the Central District Specific Plan propose for the areas currently zoned CD-7 and CD-7A?

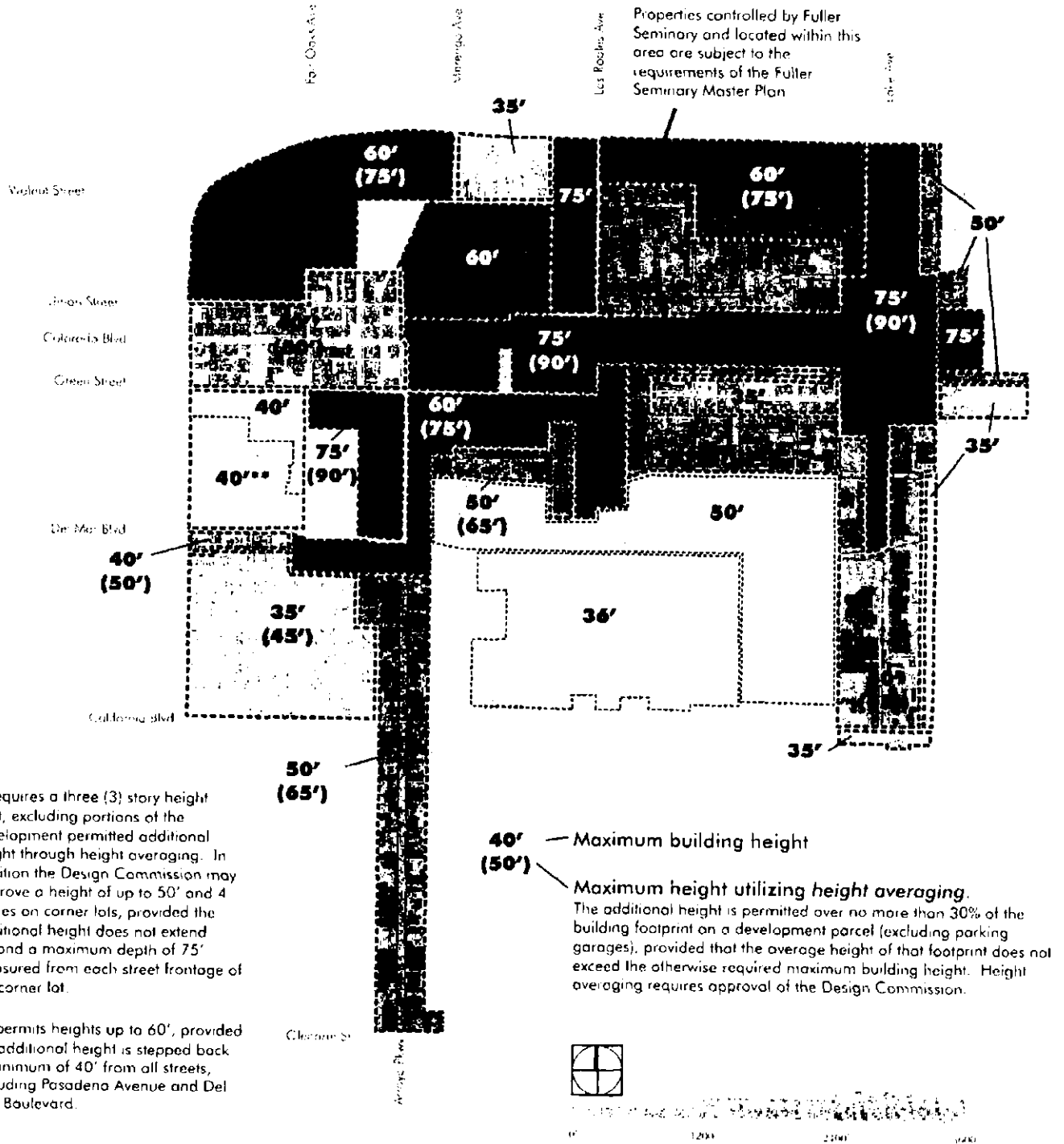
The attached map (District-wide Map 25: Maximum Height Concept) from the Central District Specific Plan illustrates the proposed height limits in the Central District. The next map (District-wide Map 27: Recommended Zoning Districts) shows the proposed zoning for the different areas of the Central District.

The areas that are currently zoned CD-7A are proposed to be designated RM-32 under the Central District Specific Plan and will have a height limit of 36'. Areas that currently have CD-7 zoning and are north of Del Mar will be designated RM-48 with a height limit of 50', areas of CD-7 zoning south of Del Mar will be designated RM-32 with a height limit of 36'.

Two maps from the existing Zoning Code are also attached. Central District (CD) District and Subdistrict Map shows the boundaries of the CD-7 and CD-7A districts. Central District (CD) Height District Map shows the existing heights. The existing height in the CD-7 area north of Del Mar is 60' and south of Del Mar is 36'. The existing height in the CD-7A area is 30'.

Section 6 DISTRICT-WIDE URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

District-wide Map 25: Maximum Height Concept



* requires a three (3) story height limit, excluding portions of the development permitted additional height through height averaging. In addition the Design Commission may approve a height of up to 50' and 4 stories on corner lots, provided the additional height does not extend beyond a maximum depth of 75' measured from each street frontage of the corner lot.

** permits heights up to 60', provided the additional height is stepped back a minimum of 40' from all streets, excluding Pasadena Avenue and Del Mar Boulevard.

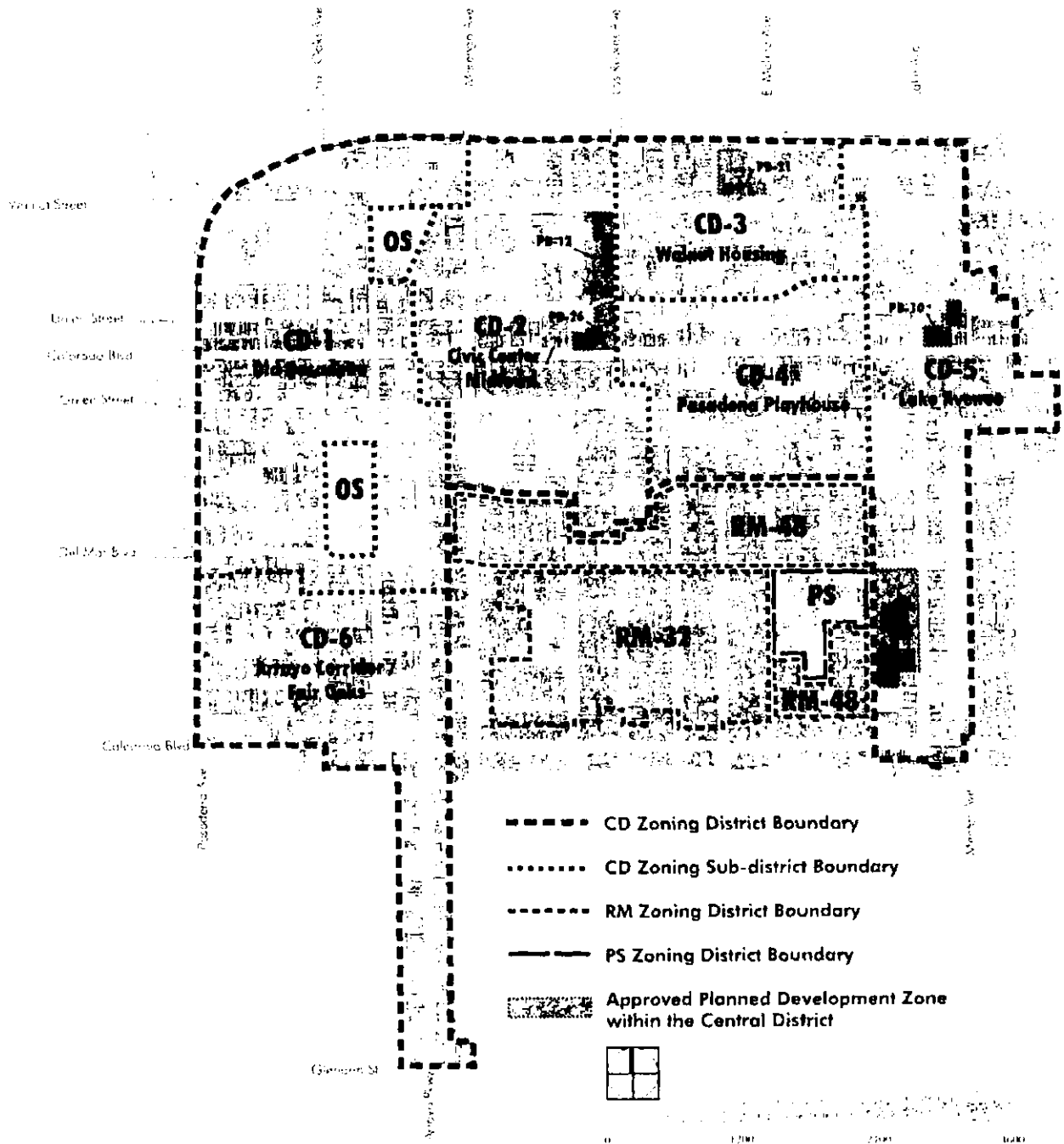
40' (50') — Maximum building height

40' (50') — Maximum height utilizing *height averaging*. The additional height is permitted over no more than 30% of the building footprint on a development parcel (excluding parking garages), provided that the average height of that footprint does not exceed the otherwise required maximum building height. Height averaging requires approval of the Design Commission.



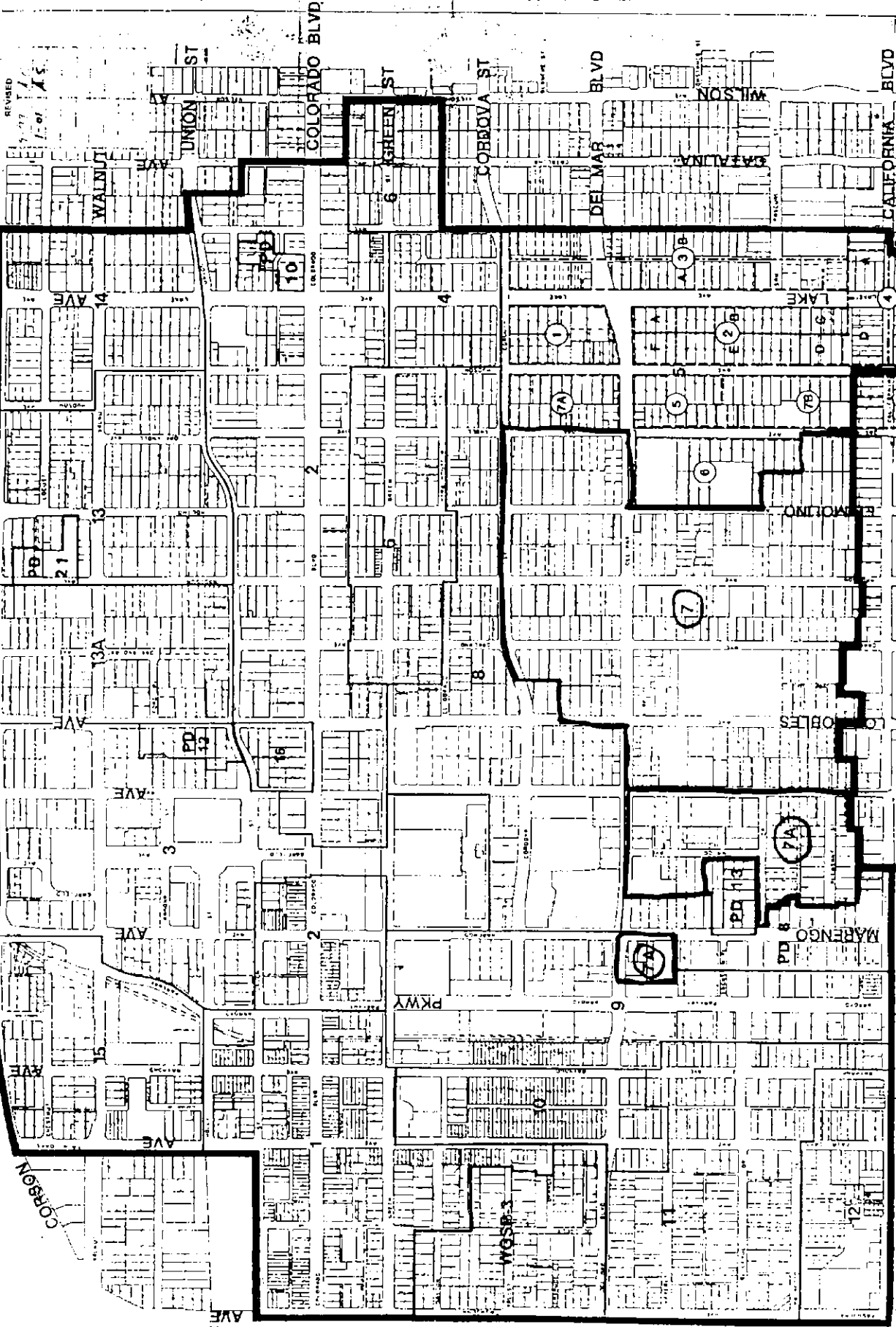
Section 11 **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

District-wide Map 27: Recommended Zoning Districts



CENTRAL DISTRICT (CD) DISTRICT AND SUBDISTRICT MAP

MARCH 1984



CITY OF PASADENA
Planning Department



SCALE IN FEET
0 200 400 800

DISTRICT LINE
SUBDISTRICT LINE

LEGEND

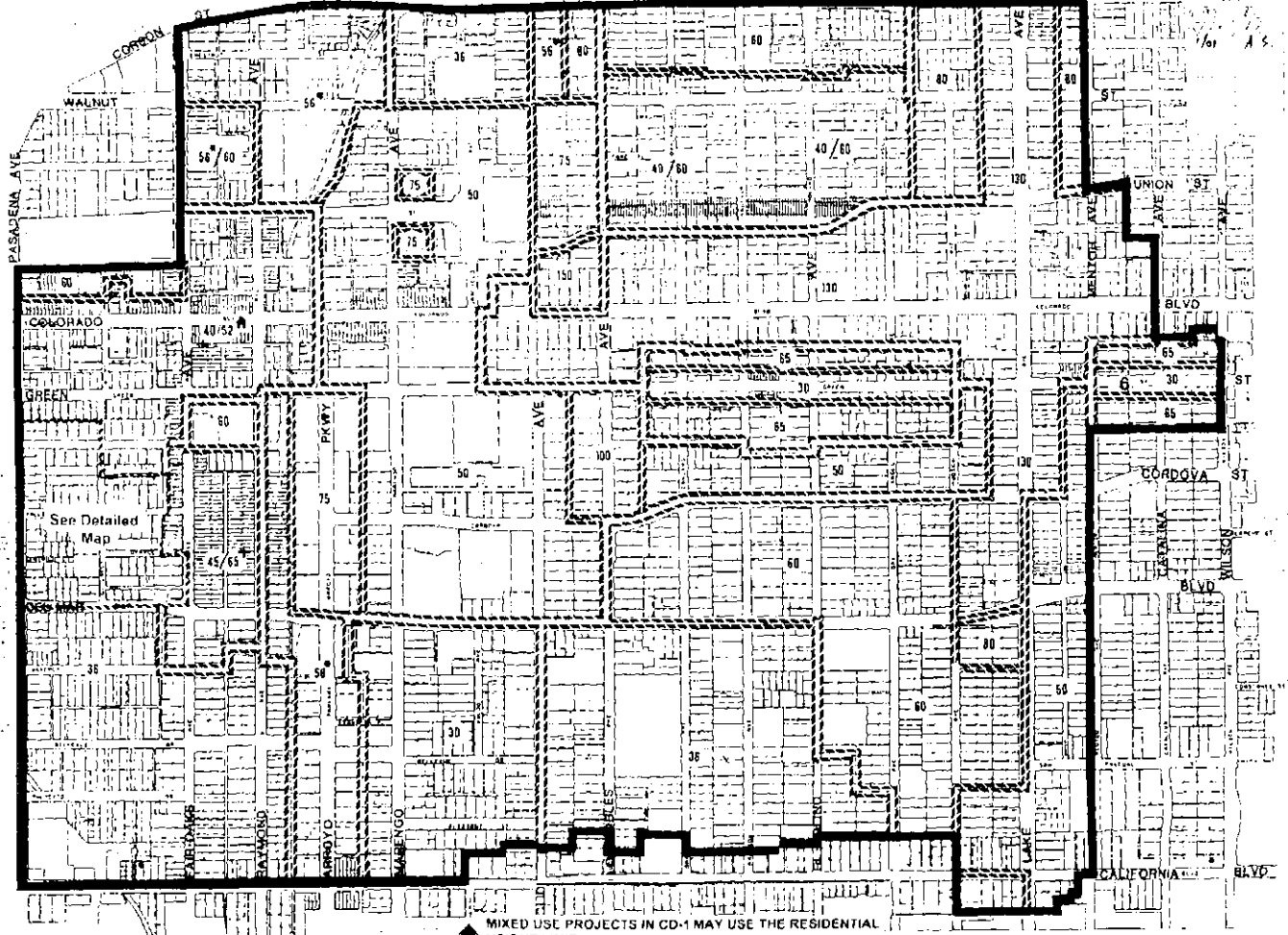
NOTE: WHERE A STREET IS THE BOUNDARY OF A SUBDISTRICT,
THE CENTERLINE OF THIS STREET SHALL BE THE
BOUNDARY LINE.

PASADENA
FAIR OAKS
RAYMOND
ARROYO
EUCLID
MARENCO
COBLES
BLANCKING
LAKESIDE
WILSON

CENTRAL DISTRICT (CD) HEIGHT DISTRICT MAP


MARCH 1984

BUILDING HEIGHT NOT TO EXCEED 6 STORIES



LEGEND

- + EXCLUDES PARK
- ▨ VIEW CORRIDOR
- INDICATES COMMERCIAL HEIGHT LIMIT
- 40/80
- INDICATES RESIDENTIAL HEIGHT LIMIT
- ▲ MIXED USE PROJECTS IN CD-1 MAY USE THE RESIDENTIAL HEIGHT LIMIT
- HEIGHT DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- * NOT TO EXCEED FOUR (4)



 0 200 400 800 FEET

CITY OF PASADENA
 Planning Department

Interchangeability Issue:
How does the 1,000 square foot number relate to current projects?

Staff reviewed the average unit sizes of recently completed downtown residential projects. Four development projects with rental units and three projects providing ownership units were included in the evaluation. The average size of the units was as follows:

Rental: Average unit size of recently completed projects is in the range of 850-900 s.f.

Ownership: Living unit sizes range from approximately 800 s.f. to approximately 1,400 s.f. Approximate average for projects surveyed is 1,100 s.f.

**Recent Office Development Activity in the Pasadena/Glendale/Burbank
Sub-market Which Includes Subterranean Parking**

Staff contacted area brokers familiar with the Pasadena/Glendale/Burbank sub-market regarding office projects in the past three years that have included subterranean parking. The following were identified:

Glendale:

- 655 N. Central; 530,000 s.f.; 1 level below, 1 level at grade, 4 levels above grade
- 400-450 N. Brand; 400,000 s.f.; 1 level below, 1 level at grade, 2 levels above

Burbank:

- Pinnacle Development; 425,000 s.f.; 2 levels below, 1 level at grade, 2 levels above.
- Pinnacle Development (2nd phase under construction); 225,000 s.f.; 2 levels below, 1 level at grade, 2 levels above.

**NEW CORRESPONDENCE
FOR
NOVEMBER 8, 2004
COUNCIL MEETING**

Rodriguez, Jane

From: Robert Wittry [wittry@datast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 03, 2004 7:42 AM
To: Bill Bogaard; Jane Rodriguez
Cc: Cynthia Kurtz
Subject: FAR for parking structures

Dear Bill & City Council,

At Monday night's Council meeting 11/1/04, you asked about how many floors of "above grade" parking should be considered as counting toward "floor area ratio" in the Central District, and what the Planning Commission recommendation was. Specifically, you asked if the "ground floor" level was to count.

Probably the question should have been, should the "roof level" count. Roof area never is considered part of the floor area, as it is "open", thus a structure with 3 levels of parking above grade is only "2 stories" (unless the building is built above it). We also should note that parking structures tend to have lower "slab to slab" height than other building structures, thus should only be counted at a rate of about 75%.

I would also recommend that we give a "bonus" of not counting an additional 25% if the ground floor has commercial for all faces, an additional 25% if completely screened to not look like parking & modulated to not look like a "box", and a final 25% if the parking is made available to the public for the area rather than just the specific use.

Also, for lots less than 60 feet wide, the parking should be "OFF SITE", preferably in "shared parking" arrangements similar to Old Pasadena.

- Robert Wittry
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