



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: June 4, 2008
AGENDA DATE: June 12, 2008
PROJECT ADDRESS: 600-800 Blocks of Milpas Street (MST2008- 00228)

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner
 Peter Lawson, Associate Planner

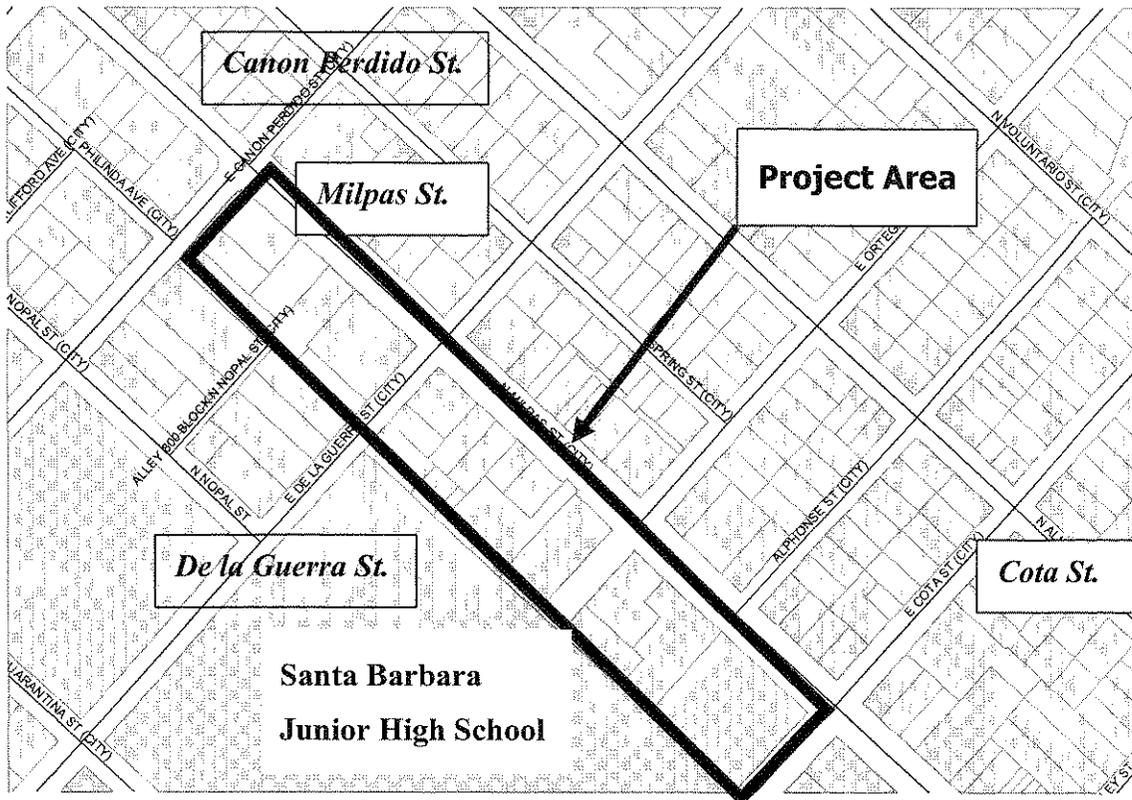
I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Staff is proposing that the City initiate a General Plan Amendment from Residential (12 units/acre) to General Commerce for 25 lots abutting the westerly side of three blocks of Milpas Street between Cota and Canon Perdido Streets. Specifically, the lots that would be part of the General Plan Amendment are mostly contiguous to Milpas Street and all are within the C-2 Zone District. At this time, the discretionary application required for this project is a General Plan Amendment. The purpose of the Staff report is to provide a brief summary of the proposal and a discussion of related issues, and recommend that the Planning Commission initiate the General Plan Amendment.

II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission initiate the requested General Plan Map amendment for purposes of environmental review. **This initiation does not imply any approval of, or formal position on a future General Plan Amendment other than acknowledging that the proposed change can proceed for further study and environmental review.**

Vicinity Map



III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The proposed project is being considered as a result of reviewing development applications for commercial and mixed use condominiums within the project area. The zone district within the project area is C-2 and the General Plan designation is Residential (12units/acre). One of the findings for a tentative map requires that a project shall be found consistent with the General Plan. A commercial or mixed use condominium would not be consistent with a General Plan designation of Residential, due to residential designation not allowing commercial use. However, the entire project area is zoned C-2 and 18 out of 25 parcels within the project area are commercial uses that were established many years ago. All 18 commercially developed parcels are located on Milpas Street and the remaining seven residentially developed lots are behind these commercial uses and accessed from streets that intersect Milpas Street.

If the land use change is initiated, the discretionary application required for this project is the following:

A General Plan Map Amendment to change the General Plan Land Use Element and Map for the designated area from Residential, 12 units/acre, to General Commerce (SBMC §28.07).

IV. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

A. SITE INFORMATION

The commercial development within the project area along the three blocks on the westerly side of Milpas Street include retail commercial ranging from building supplies to auto sales to a fast food restaurant. To the west of the Milpas Street parcels, the land use transitions into residential use to the north-west and a public junior high school to the south-west. The topography of the area slopes approximately 2-5% to the south. The following chart describes the land use of each lot within the project area, beginning at Cota Street, ending at Canon Perdido Street to the North:

North of Cota Street				
Street Address/APN	Lot Area	General Plan	Zoning:	Existing Use
031-181-011 605 N Milpas St.	47,916 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial – Grocery
031-181-012 621 N Milpas St.	23,086 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial – Multiple retail
031-181-009 826 E Ortega St.	14,810 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial -
031-181-001 820 E. Ortega St.	10,454 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
North of Ortega Street				
Parcel Number	Lot Area	General Plan	Zoning:	Existing Use
031-121-014 701 N. Milpas St.	19,166 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-022 711 N. Milpas St.	1,742 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial - Access alley
031-121-021 711 N. Milpas St.	19,166 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-019 713 N Milpas St.	6,534 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-011 No Address	3,484 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial - Access alley

031-121-017 717 N. Milpas St.	4,791 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-016 No Address	6,969 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-023 725 N Milpas St.	6,969 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-024 725 ½ N Milpas St.	4,356 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial
031-121-018 735 N Milpas St.	9,147 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial – Auto Sales
031-121-002 826 E De la Guerra	4,791 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential
031-121-001 820 E De la Guerra	8,712 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential

North of De la Guerra Street				
Parcel Number	Lot Area	General Plan	Zoning:	Existing Use
031-042-028 803 N Milpas St.	22,215 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Vacant - Former gas station
031-042-013 832 E De la Guerra	7,420 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential (apt.)
031-042-023 817 E De la Guerra	10,890 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential (apt.)
031-042-022 817 E De la Guerra	13,503 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial – Office/storage
031-042-027 821 N Milpas St	10,890 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial – Fast food
031-042-025 833 N Milpas St.	13,068 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Commercial - Retail
031-042-007 822 E Canon Perdido	8,276 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential (apt.)

031-042-006 822 E Canon Perdido	11,325 s.f.	Residential	C-2	Residential (apt.)
031-042-029 820 E Canon Perdido	22,651	Residential	C-2/R-3	Residential (apt.)

V. ISSUES

A. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The subject parcels are in the Milpas Area as described in the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The boundaries of the Milpas Area include Canon Perdido Street to the north, Highway 101 to the south, and the rear of the commercial establishments on each side of Milpas Street. The Milpas Area is described in the General Plan as being developed into a solid strip of commercial activity along both sides of the street, which is consistent with present C-2 Zone District uses. However, the Land Use Element also describes the western side of Milpas from Cota Street to Anapamu Street as Residential.

The C-2 Zone District is on both sides of Milpas Street and extends from south of Highway 101 north to Carrillo Street on the west side and Canon Perdido Street on the east side. The General Plan designation on the easterly side of Milpas Street is General Commerce and extends from US Highway 101 to Canon Perdido Street. On the west side of Milpas Street the General Plan designation is Industrial from US Highway 101 to Cota Street, then transitions into Residential (12 units/acre), which continues to Anapamu Street.

After a General Plan Amendment for a large part of the City was approved in the mid 1970's, staff at the time proposed additional General Plan Amendments that included a designation of General Commerce on the west side of Milpas. This proposal for Milpas Street was the result of a survey that revealed that the majority of the land uses on and just behind Milpas were commercial oriented, consistent with the Commercial zone district of C-1. However, given the concerns of all of the other General Plan Amendments in other neighborhoods that were also proposed at the time, the proposal was never pursued.

The General Plan Map amendment would encompass an area of three blocks along the westerly side of Milpas Street, between Cota and Canon Perdido Streets (Exhibit A). As described in the background section of this staff report, the majority of the existing development is commercial. The residential usage within the project area is located off of Milpas Street and transitions into the residentially zoned area to the west. Therefore, the proposed General Plan Amendment would be appropriate since the General Commerce designation would more accurately reflect the current development of this area, the current zone district and would mirror the current General Plan designation along the easterly side of Milpas Street.

Finally, the proposed General Plan Amendment would not change the development currently allowed in this area, but could allow commercial and mixed use condominiums. Currently, commercial and mixed use condominiums would be inconsistent with the Tentative Subdivision Map General Plan consistency requirement. They would be consistent with other findings under the Act. These findings would include the development being physically suited

for the site and that it is consistent with the vision for this neighborhood of the General Plan, given the above description of the Milpas area.

VI. CONCLUSION

The proposed General Plan Amendment (GPA) would not cause an intensification of use, eliminate existing housing or otherwise impact existing or future housing. The project area of the GPA includes only the C-2 Zone District, and the majority of the lots within the project area have always included commercial development. While the GPA would allow commercial condominiums, all aspects of the current General Plan policies and Municipal Code would continue to apply. This would include, providing the required parking, consistency with the Pedestrian Master Plan, consistency with the Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), and consistency with all applicable setbacks, to name a few. If the GPA is not initiated, commercial development would continue to be allowed under other permit applications (Development Plans, Design Review, etc.), since only the tentative map process includes findings that the development is consistent with the both the General Plan and the Municipal Code.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan

Overall Site Plan

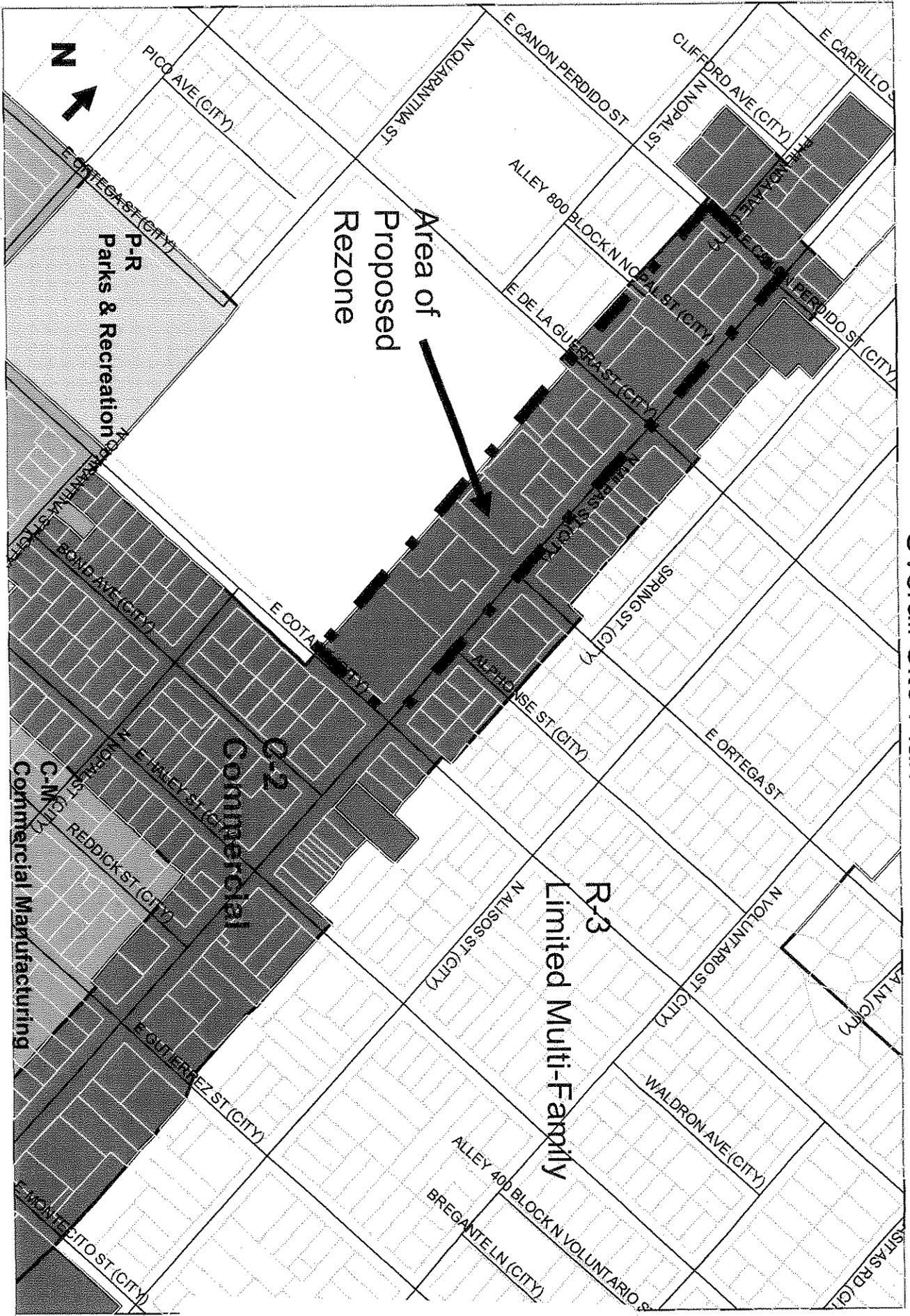
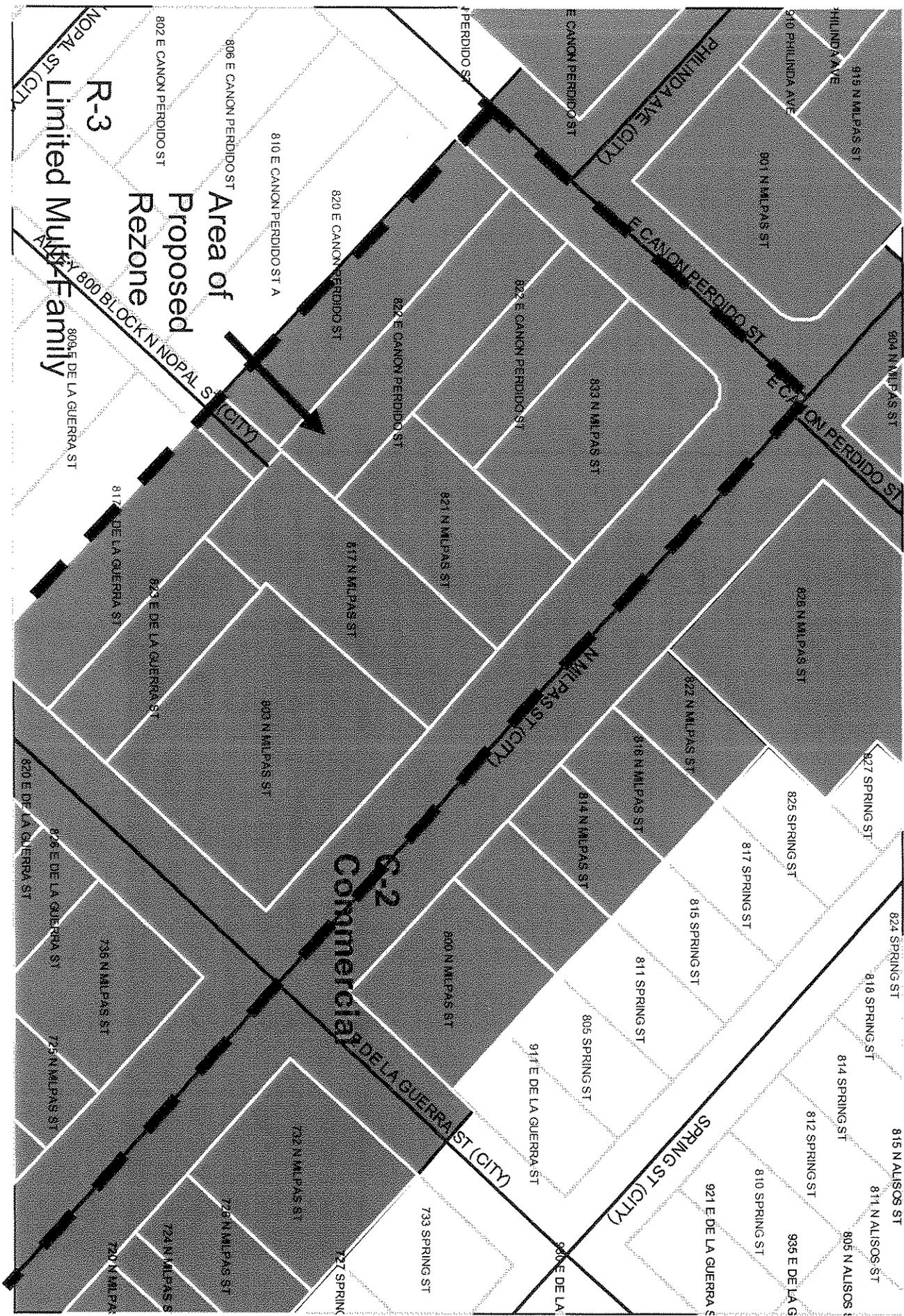
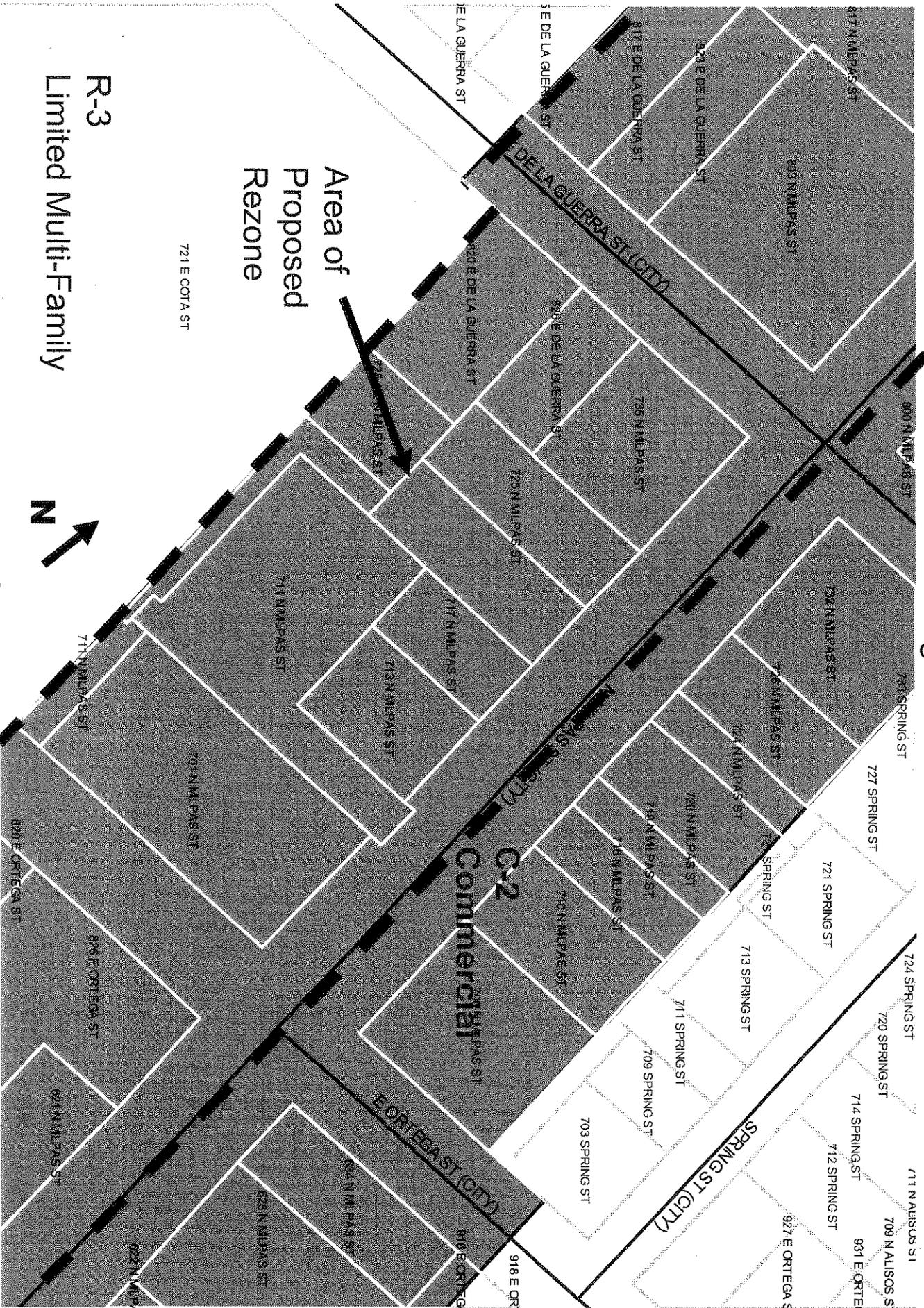


EXHIBIT A

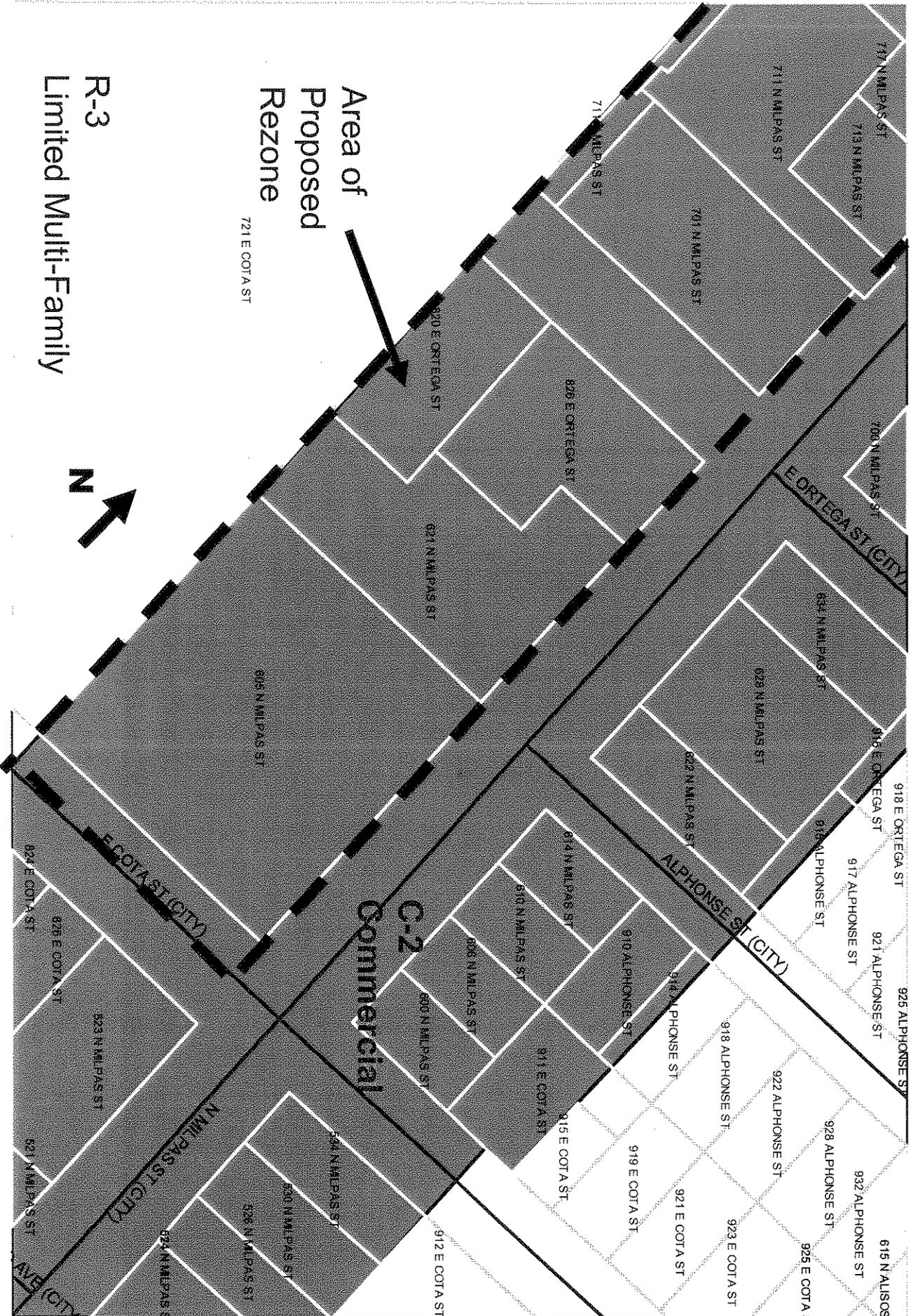
E. De la Guerra St. to E. Canon Perdido St.



E. Ortega St. to E. De la Guerra St.



E. Cota St. to E. Ortega St.



Area of
Proposed
Rezone

R-3
Limited Multi-Family

