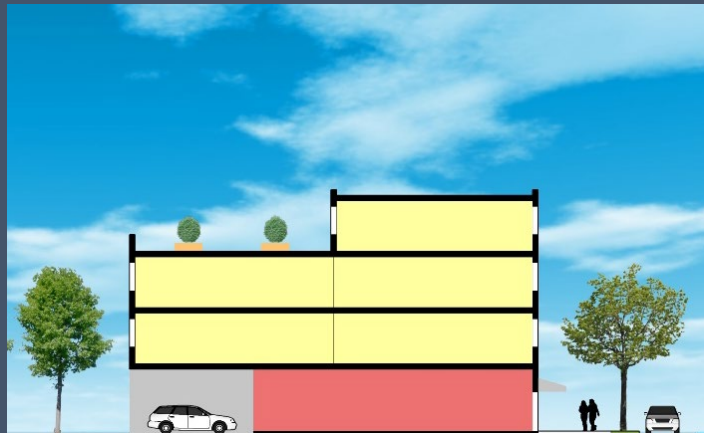


City Of Benicia EASTERN GATEWAY STUDY



City Council Study Session
March 16, 2021

Project Purpose and Origins

- City received SB2 Grant for planning activities that will streamline housing approvals and accelerate housing production
- Benicia is using its SB2 funds for the Eastern Gateway Study, which focuses on approximately 13.5 acres near the intersection of Military East and East Fifth Street
- The Eastern Gateway Study will culminate in the creation of a new mixed-use zone district that includes increased opportunity for housing development that is consistent with new objective zoning and design standards



- Primary Study Area
- ⋯⋯ Secondary Study Area



Study Area

Project Process and Schedule

- Task 1: Project Initiation (September 2020)
- Task 2: Issues and Options (March 2021)
- Task 3: Draft Amendments (June 2021)
- Task 4: Environmental Review (July 2021)
- Task 5: Final Amendments (January 2022)

Stakeholder Meetings

- Help ensure the project reflects community goals, needs, and priorities
- Three meetings :
 - August 2020: Existing conditions maps and preliminary issues list
 - November 2020: Issues and options
 - April 2021: Draft General Plan and Zoning Code amendments
- Summary notes on project website

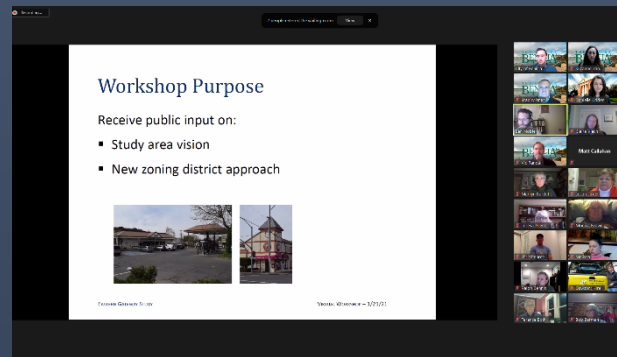
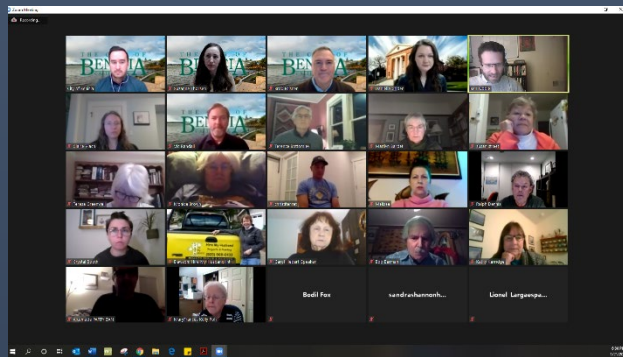
Walking Tour

- September 23, 2020
- Public Input
 - Completed Walking Tour Brochures
 - Open Town Hall Comments
 - Emails to City Staff



Virtual Workshop

- January 21, 2021
- 41 participants
- Breakout room discussions
- Feedback on vision and zoning district approach



Planning Commission Study Session

- February 11, 2021
- Received public comment and provided input on the study area vision statement and recommended zoning district approach

Study Area Vision

- Reflects public input from walking tour and stakeholder meetings
- Describes desired outcomes of the new mixed-use zoning district
- General support for vision statement at virtual workshop and Planning Commission study session
- Staff will revise vision statement to emphasize affordable housing and adequate parking

Study Area Vision

- Mix of housing, stores, and businesses
- Variety of housing types
- Additional housing enhances Benicia's unique sense of place
- Development fits into and complements surrounding neighborhood
- Varied architectural styles consistent with Benicia's historic identity
- Attractive and welcoming gateway into Benicia
- All modes of travel safely accommodated

Zoning District Approach

- A new mixed-use zoning district will implement the study area vision
- The zoning district will contain new rules for allowed land uses, development/design standards, and required permits
- The new zoning district could also be applied to other areas in the city

Zoning District Approach

Four issues:

1. Allowed Land Uses
2. Building Height
3. Project Approvals
4. Parking



1. Allowed Land Use

Issue Summary:

- Multifamily uses are not currently allowed in most of the study area
- Questions:
 - Where to allow multifamily uses?
 - Should we permit purely residential projects?
 - Should we require ground floor commercial uses in certain locations?

1. Allowed Land Use

Workshop Feedback:

- Support for multifamily and mixed-use residential uses in study area
- Other ideas:
 - Identify locations where ground-floor commercial uses are required
 - Limit new residential-only development in primary study area
 - Limit new multifamily uses in Secondary Study Area to smaller-scale multifamily housing types

1. Allowed Land Use

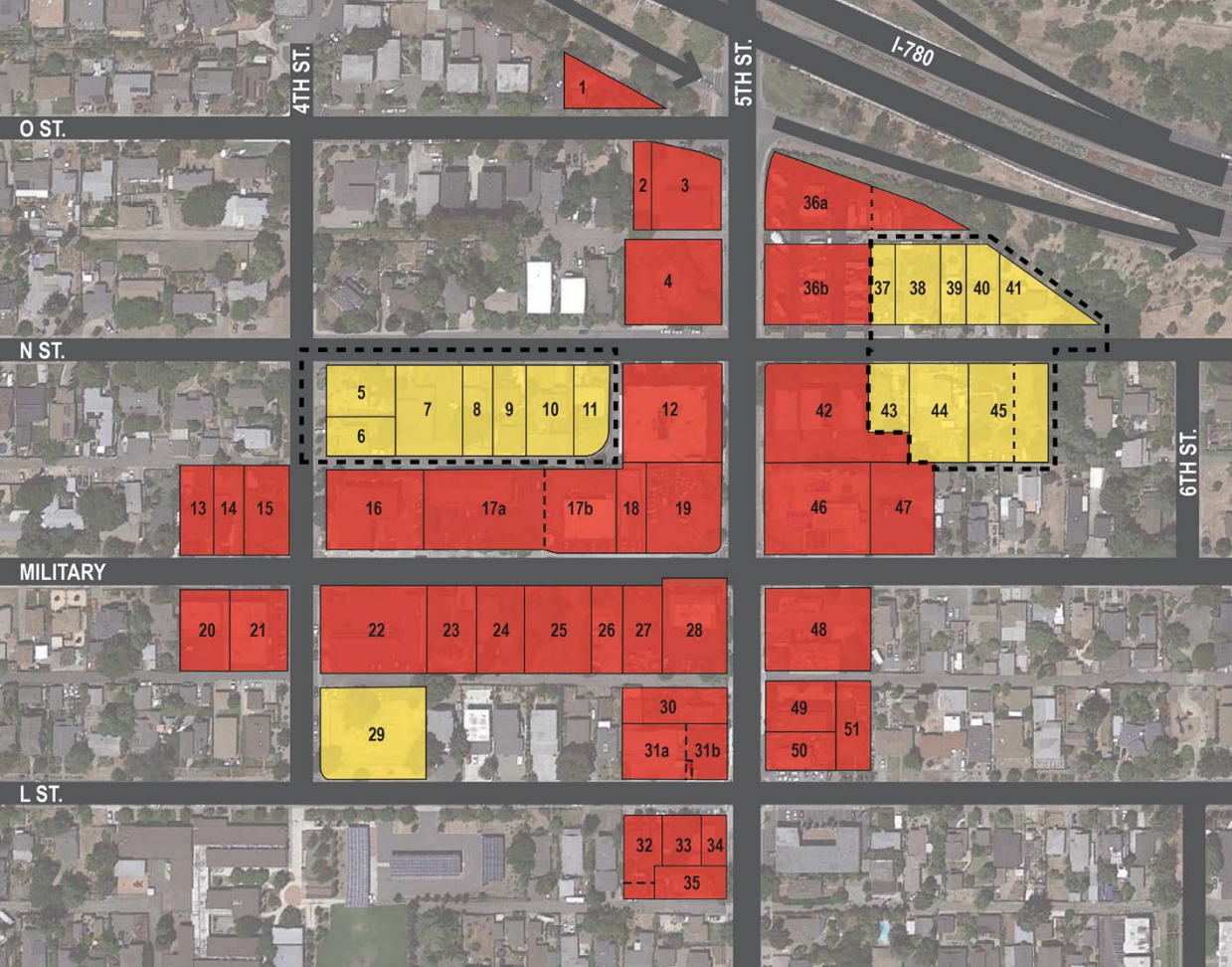
Planning Commission Input:

- Mixed opinions on this question
- General support for flexibility to meet local needs and site constraints
- Support for neighborhood-serving commercial and service uses

1. Allowed Land Use

Recommended Approach:

- Add multifamily as an allowed use in Primary and Secondary Study Areas
- Require a Use Permit for street-facing ground floor residential uses in certain locations within Primary Study Area
- In other locations, allow multifamily as a principally permitted use with no Use Permit required



Allowed Land Use Recommendation

- Area A: Multifamily, Mixed Use, and Commercial allowed
- Area B: Single-Family, Multifamily allowed

	Area A	Area B
New Single-family Homes	Not allowed	Allowed
Multifamily (no commercial on lot)	Allowed	Allowed
Mixed Use (residential above commercial)	Allowed	Not allowed
Commercial (no residential on lot)	Allowed	Not allowed

1. Allowed Land Use

Recommended Approach:

- In Primary Study area, encourage mixed-use residential development with development incentives
- Limit size and type of multifamily in Secondary Study Area to fit into single-family character
- Allow flexibility in development and land use to accommodate changing market conditions and ensure a balance of land uses over time

1. Allowed Land Use

Other Options:

1. Allow purely residential projects in all locations without a Use Permit
2. Always require ground floor commercial in certain locations with no opportunity to waive requirement
3. Require that a certain amount or percentage of commercial floor area be maintained in the study area

2. Building Height

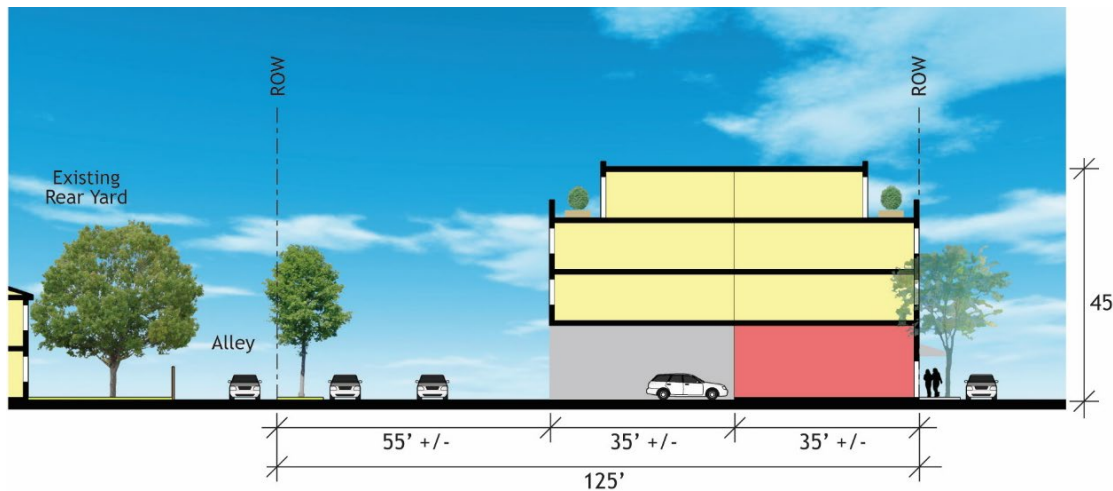
Issue Summary:

- Maximum building height is currently 40 feet in most of the Primary Study Area, allowing up to three stories
- The City may wish to allow additional height to incentivize multifamily and mixed-use residential development



Development Summary

- 6,000 sf lot
- 10 units (920 sf average)
- 1,700 sf commercial
- 1.8 FAR
- 11 parking spaces (1.1/du)
- Commercial parking on street





Development Summary

18,750 sf lot

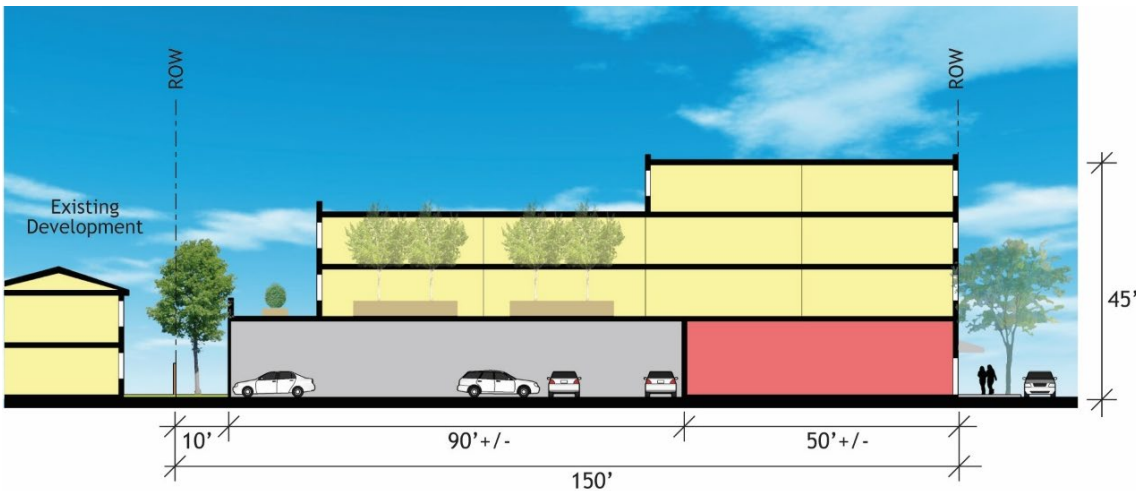
30 units (925 sf average)

6,000 sf commercial

1.8 FAR

34 parking spaces (1.1/du)

Commercial parking on street



2. Building Height

Workshop Feedback: Range of opinions

- Three stories or less to maintain small-town feel
- Limited number of four-story buildings in certain locations might be acceptable
- More than four stories to maximize new housing development

2. Building Height

Planning Commission Input:

- Consensus support for four stories with discretionary review and/or community benefit
- Emphasis on quality design and landscape/open space features
- One Commissioner suggested five stories near freeway

2. Building Height

Recommended Approach

- In the Primary Study Area, allow up to four stories for multifamily and mixed-use residential projects
- For four-story buildings, require discretionary review and/or incorporation of a defined community benefit

2. Building Height

Recommended Approach

- Require compliance with new objective design standards to increase neighborhood compatibility, avoid the appearance of monolithic blocks, and complement Benicia's existing character
- Maintain existing height limits in the Secondary Study Area

2. Building Height

Other Options:

1. Maintain existing allowed heights (40 feet in Primary Study Area; 30/35 feet in Secondary Study Area)
2. Allow four stories in Primary Study Area only in certain locations
3. Allow five or more stories in Primary Study Area

3. Project Approvals

Issue Summary:

- New development (excluding single-family homes) currently requires Design Review approval by the Historic Preservation Revision Commission
- The City may wish to streamline approval of multifamily and mixed-use residential development to promote increased housing production

3. Project Approvals

Workshop Feedback:

- A lot of concern with by-right approvals
- Concerns included loss of public hearings, neighbors unaware of pending development, impact of new development to the neighborhood, type of new development
- The meaning of by-right approvals unclear to some participants

3. Project Approvals

Planning Commission Input:

- Consensus support for streamlined review of certain projects (e.g., smaller scale; affordable, senior or artist housing)
- Concern for infill compatibility, recognition of public input

3. Project Approvals

Recommended Approach:

- Provide streamlined approval for certain types of projects, including projects of a smaller scale.
- Consider streamlined approval for projects that provide a community benefit:
 - Affordable units
 - Senior housing
 - Live/work for artists
 - Co-op housing
 - Green building
 - Publicly-available parking



Google Earth
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3. Project Approvals

Recommended Approach:

- Approaches to streamlined review could include ministerial permitting, staff-level design review, or limited processing timelines
- Continue to require Design Review for all other types of projects

3. Project Approvals

Other Options:

1. Provide streamlined project approvals for all multifamily and mixed-use projects that comply with objective standards
2. Continue to require Design Review approval for all projects

4. Parking

Issue Summary:

- Topic of considerable community interest
- Concerns about existing parking shortages, the amount of on-site parking for new development, design of new on-site parking facilities
- Study area vision could be difficult to achieve with existing parking requirements

4. Parking

Workshop Feedback:

- Concerns about existing parking problems and potential for new development to exacerbate these problems
- Some desire to reduce on-site parking requirements to facilitate infill development

4. Parking

Planning Commission Feedback:

- Consider creative approaches to meet parking needs; keep all options on the table
- Allow parking reduction with site-specific analysis
- Consider allowing additional height as incentive to provide public parking
- Consider a future with less reliance on cars

4. Parking

Recommended Approach:

Explore new parking regulations and tools that support the study area vision while minimizing adverse parking impacts on neighborhood residents



4. Parking

Possible strategies:

- Creating new on-street parking spaces
- Limiting loss of existing on-street parking spaces
- Increasing use of tandem parking spaces, parking lifts, and valet parking
- Increasing use of small-car parking spaces

4. Parking

Possible strategies:

- Encouraging shared and joint use of existing off-street parking
- Allowing reduction of off-street parking with parking study
- Allowing reduction of off-street parking for projects with TDM measures



Excess Right-of-Way

ROW

4. Parking

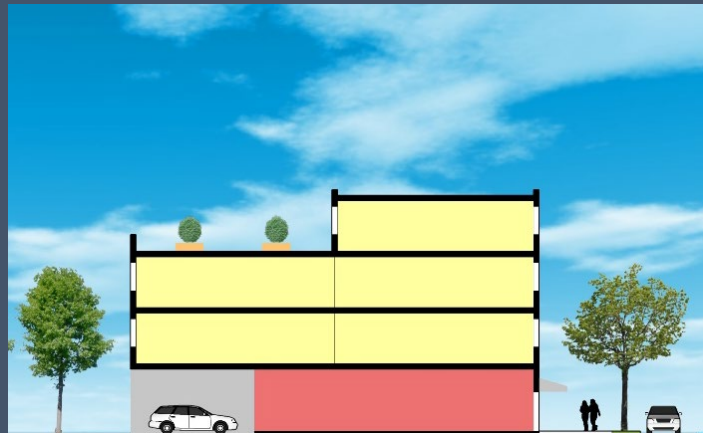
Other Options:

1. Maintain all existing off-street parking requirements
2. Reduce off-street parking requirements for all multifamily uses
3. Waive on-site parking requirements for commercial uses in a mixed-use residential project

Next Steps

- Draft the zoning text and general plan amendments
- Planning Commission and City Council study sessions in summer 2021
- Public hearings in fall 2021
- Adoption by January 2022

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