

March 22, 2011

MEMO

TO: Bruce D. Glasscock, City Manager
Frank F. Turner, Deputy City Manager

FROM: Phyllis M. Jarrell, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Recommendations for New Housing Units and Commercial Space near the Proposed 12th Street DART Rail Station

At the February 14th City Council meeting, I presented several recommended additional planning activities related to the potential for two new rail stations in Plano on the Cotton Belt rail line. One of the recommendations was to determine general goals for new housing and commercial uses near the proposed 12th Street Station near K Avenue and 12th Street. Staff's initial recommendation was to promote the development of 800-1000 housing units and 100,000 square feet of commercial space. City Council asked that the Planning & Zoning Commission have an opportunity to review this issue and to make a recommendation.

The Commission discussed this topic at its March 7th meeting, and agreed with the basic recommendations made by staff. Staff had used a density of 60 dwelling units per acre to estimate the number of potential new multi-family units. The Commission thought that the area might ultimately develop at higher densities, more comparable to the 80-100 units per acre seen in Downtown Plano, and that the number of residential units could ultimately exceed 1000. They encouraged a mix of housing types in the area, including multi-family, infill single-family, condominiums and townhouses.

The Commission believed that an additional 100,000 square feet of new commercial space might be somewhat excessive, but thought it was appropriate to start with that number with the understanding that it could be adjusted in the future. Additionally, the Commission commented that the city should move forward with rezoning efforts in the station area after a plan is developed and adopted. The Commission also commented that if someone proposes a zoning change within the station area prior to the city adopting a plan, that the zoning change should be considered.

I have attached a copy of the staff report reviewed by the Commission, which outlines the importance of establishing goals for new housing and commercial space in the station area. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

XC: Tina Firgens, Planning Manager

CITY OF PLANO

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

March 7, 2011

Agenda No. 12

Discussion and Direction Regarding Goals for New Housing and Commercial Space near the Proposed DART Rail Station at 12th Street and K Avenue

DESCRIPTION:

Discussion and direction regarding goals for new housing and commercial space near the proposed DART rail station at 12th Street and K Avenue.

REMARKS:

At the February 14th City Council meeting, staff presented several recommendations concerning additional planning activities related to the potential for two new rail stations in Plano on the Cotton Belt rail line. The two proposed station locations would be at 12th Street near K Avenue and near the intersection of Shiloh Road and the rail line in the Research Technology Center district.

The Council directed staff to move forward with several initiatives, including the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan which are also being considered by the Planning & Zoning Commission on this agenda. One of the proposed activities is to determine general goals for new housing and commercial uses within proximity to the 12th Street Station during the next 10-15 years. Staff had recommended to Council 800-1000 new housing units and 100,000 square feet of commercial space. However, before deciding on specific numbers, the City Council asked that the Commission also provide further guidance regarding this topic.

ISSUES:

Transit Oriented Development

Transit oriented development near train stations maximizes the benefits of the city's access to rail service and increases rail ridership. It is a tool to provide new housing and development and to encourage redevelopment and revitalization, with improvements to property values and area neighborhoods and businesses. Transit oriented development has proved to be a useful strategy for downtown Plano to revitalize as an urban activity center and to provide wider variety of living arrangements

in the city. A new rail station at 12th Street will build on the success of downtown Plano and expand the area's potential for revitalization.

To be successful, a transit oriented development requires a certain minimum level of mass, density, activity and a variety of land uses. Only one new multi-family development or one new retail store is not sufficient to create the synergy needed for uses to support and complement each other. Additional residential units are needed to help support area businesses and services. Setting goals for a specific number of new housing units and new commercial space for the 12th Street Station will help to address these requirements, and also provides a framework for the city in making decisions on zoning, infrastructure investments, public/private partnerships and incentive programs.

Goals for New Residential Development

For the 12th Street Station area, staff's recommendations of 800-1000 new residential units is based on several factors, including the amount of vacant and underutilized land within ¼ mile of the rail station location and our experience with the urban multi-family developments in downtown Plano. Approximately 106 acres of land, both developed and undeveloped, lie within a ¼ mile distance from the proposed station location (this figure does not include land within the Douglass neighborhood). Staff has identified 18 acres of properties that might ultimately be available for new residential development or redevelopment in close proximity to the station. Using a density of 60 units per acre, approximately 1000 new units could be built. It is likely that the 12th Street station area may develop at lower densities than has occurred in Downtown Plano, where densities for multi-family development are in the 80-100 units per acre range. The city's goals should not focus exclusively on multi-family development; a variety of housing types should be encouraged, including infill single-family homes in the adjacent neighborhoods as well as townhouses and condominiums.

Goals for New Commercial Development

The 12th Street Station area has the potential to attract more new commercial space than Downtown Plano, since it lies in a busy commercial corridor with high traffic counts on both K Avenue and Municipal Drive. There are also larger tracts of land in the station area that would be appropriate for new commercial development. Staff's recommendation of 100,000 square feet reflects the opportunities for a wider diversity of commercial service uses in this area, in addition to the retail, restaurant and office uses that have located in downtown Plano. To provide a number for comparison, the office/restaurant development presently under construction at the corner of 14th Street and J Avenue will contain 32,000 square feet of new commercial space in a 4 story building on 0.33 acres.

Comparison to Downtown Plano

The city determined specific goals for development within proximity to the Downtown Plano Station as part of the Downtown Plano Transit Village Plan in 1998. The plan recommended 1000 new housing units and 50,000 square feet of new commercial

space within a ¼ mile radius of the Downtown Plan rail platform. To date, 45,000 square feet of new commercial space has been added in the two Eastside Village developments, with an additional 15,000 square feet planned for the Southern Land project at 15th Street and L Avenue. The number of residential units either built or planned in the downtown Plano area since 1998 is approaching 950 units.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff seeks the Commission's direction and recommendations on goals for new residential units and commercial space in the 12th Street Station area.