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PLANNING AND BUILDING
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May 20, 2002

Law and Legislation Committee
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: An Ordinance Amending Sections 17.16.010 and 17.60.030 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code Relating to Underground Parking Facilities and the Calculation of Gross Square Footage in Various Zones Throughout the City (M02-025)

LOCATION: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Law and Legislation Committee discuss the policy considerations associated with the proposed underground parking facility ordinance and forward their recommendations to the City Council.

CONTACT PERSON: Joy Patterson, Senior Planner, 264-5607
Lindsey Alagozian, Assistant Planner, 264-2659

FOR MEETING OF: June 4, 2002

SUMMARY: Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code sets forth parameters for the calculation of gross square footage for new development. Within the ordinance, the total gross square footage of development includes the square footage of all parking structures. The current ordinance, however, does not distinguish between parking structures above grade and those located underground. The proposed ordinance amendment would exclude the square footage of underground parking facilities from counting toward the total gross square footage of a project and provide a definition for underground parking facilities.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:

On April 25, 2002 the Planning Commission recommended approval and adoption of the attached zoning ordinance amendment to the City Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Currently within the Multi-Family (R-4) zone, Residential Mixed Use (RMX) zone, Residential-Office (RO) zone, Office (OB) zone, Limited Commercial (C-1) zone, General Commercial (C-2) zone, Central Business District (C-3) zone, Shopping Center (SC) zone, Highway Commercial (HC) zone, Heavy Commercial (C-4) zone, Light Industrial (M-1) zone, Heavy Industrial (M-2) zone, and Hospital (H) zone, lot coverage requirements for the General and Central City vary from 40% to 70% depending on the zone. However, a special permit is required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed seventy-five thousand (75,000) square feet of gross floor area in the R-4, RMX, R-O, HC, SC, C-3, and H zone within the Central City.
- A special permit is also required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed 40,000 square feet within the OB, C-1, and C-2 zones within the Central City. Outside the Central City, a special permit is required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed forty thousand (40,000) square feet of gross floor area in the C-2 zone, and twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in the C-1 and C-2(NC) zones. Lastly, within the C-4, M1, M1-S, M2, and M2-S zones throughout the Central City, a special permit is required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed seventy-five thousand (75,000) square feet of gross floor area.
- Within various zones throughout the city, a special permit is required for any building to be constructed that exceeds either 20,000, 40,000, or 75,000 square feet of gross floor area depending upon the zone in which it is located. Currently, the City Zoning Ordinance requires all parking structures to be calculated toward the total gross square footage of a project, unless the parking facility is an uncovered surface parking lot. Should the overall project including the parking facility exceed the sizes indicated above, Planning Commission entitlements and additional fees are required. The current Zoning Ordinance does not distinguish between parking facilities located underground and those above grade in which underground facilities are more desirable and less of an impact to the streetscape.
- The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment will encourage the development of underground facilities and discourage above grade parking structures by excluding the square footage of an underground parking facility from counting toward the overall square footage of the project. Underground parking facilities are highly desirable because they do not negatively impact visually upon the streetscape and encourage full utilization of the site. The proposed amendment does not affect above grade parking structures, in which the

floor area would still be calculated toward the total gross floor area. Uncovered surface parking lots are not affected by this amendment, in which the square footage does not count toward the total square footage of a project.

- The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment will also add a precise definition for underground parking facilities. The proposed definition for underground parking facilities stipulates that an underground parking facility must incorporate at least two thirds of the total height of the facility below the finished grade. To ensure that the majority of the parking structure is located below grade, a maximum of three feet may project above finished grade and still be considered an underground facility. The parking facility must be incorporated into or located beneath a commercial, residential, or mixed-use building, thus a detached parking structure could not be considered an underground parking facility. The definition will ensure that underground parking facilities are truly located underground. Furthermore, the three-foot maximum height limit above grade will ensure the streetscape impact will be minimal and allow for proper incorporation into the overall building design.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This report has no fiscal implications.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to State EIR Guidelines (CEQA Section 15378). The proposed amendments do not allow development by right, additional environmental evaluation will be prepared on a project by project basis.


POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed ordinance amendment will assist project proponents to provide underground parking facilities in their development plans to build residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects. Locating parking facilities underground as opposed to above ground will positively affect the appearance of the streetscape. The ordinance amendment is consistent with the City's strategic plan goal to enhance and preserve the neighborhoods in which development in new growth and developed areas shall be consistent with Smart Growth principles.


E/SBD CONSIDERATIONS:

No goods or services are being purchased under this report.

Respectfully submitted,


GARY L. STONEHOUSE
Planning Director

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:


BETTY MASUOKA
Assistant City Manager

Attachment

Attachment A: Ordinance amending Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code Relating to
Underground Parking Facilities and the Calculation of Total Gross Square Footage

ORDINANCE NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL

ON DATE OF _____

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 17.16.010 AND
17.60.030 OF TITLE 17 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE
RELATING TO UNDERGROUND PARKING FACILITIES
AND THE CALCULATION OF TOTAL GROSS SQUARE
FOOTAGE IN VARIOUS ZONES THROUGHOUT THE CITY.**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1.

Section 17.16.010 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to add, in alphabetical order, a definition of the term "Underground Parking Facility" to read as follows:

"Underground Parking Facility" means a parking facility that is located below finished grade and integrated into or located beneath a commercial and/or residential building. To be considered an underground parking facility, a minimum of two-thirds (2/3) of the total height of the entire parking facility must be below finished grade and no more than three (3) feet of the facility may project above finished grade. Detached parking structures shall not be considered underground parking facilities.

SECTION 2.

Section 17.60.030, footnote 9, of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

9. Maximum Lot Coverage and Building Size Threshold Within the Central City. The maximum lot coverage shall be the same as that specified outside the central city, provided, however, that a special permit shall be required for any

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DATE ADOPTED: _____

building to be constructed or expanded to exceed seventy-five thousand (75,000) square feet of gross floor area (forty thousand (40,000) square feet of gross floor area in the OB, C-1 and C-2 zones). A special permit shall not be required for any building for which the downtown and regional enterprise department has entered into a contract with the developer, whose contract governs the requirements for development of the building and the parcel or parcels upon which it is to be located. The gross square footage shall include parking structures, but not underground parking facilities and uncovered surface parking lots.

SECTION 3.

Section 17.60.030, footnote 15, of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15. Maximum Lot Coverage and Building Size Threshold in the C-1 and C-2 zones. Outside the central city, a special permit shall be required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed forty thousand (40,000) square feet of gross floor area in the C-2 zone, and twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in the C-1 and C-2(NC) zones. The gross square footage shall include parking structures, but not underground parking facilities and uncovered surface parking lots.

SECTION 4.

Section 17.60.030, footnote 18, subparagraph (a)(ii)(A), of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

- (A) General Rule. Within the central city, the maximum lot coverage shall be the same as that specified outside the central city, provided, however, that a special permit shall be required for any building to be constructed or expanded to exceed seventy-five (75,000) square feet of gross floor area, except that a special permit shall not be required for any building for which the downtown and regional enterprise department has entered into a contract with the developer whose contract governs the requirements for development of the building and the parcel or parcels upon which it is to be located. The gross square footage shall include parking structures, but not

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underground parking facilities and uncovered surface parking lots.

DATE PASSED FOR PUBLICATION:

DATE ENACTED:

DATE EFFECTIVE:

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

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