



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 18-0631, Version: 1

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Proposed Project: General Plan Amendment Initiation to consider amending the Lawrence Station Area Plan (LSAP) to expand the boundary of the plan area to include 932 and 950 Kifer Road (APNs 205-49-005 and 205-49-012).

File #: 2018-7447

Locations: 932 Kifer Road (APN 205-49-005); 950 Kifer Road (APN 205-49-012); 945 Kifer Road (APN 205-40-002); and 955 Kifer Road (APN 205-40-001).

Applicant/Owner: Intuitive Surgical, Inc.

Environmental Review: The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 (a).

Project Planner: George Schroeder, (408) 730-7443, gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission considered this item on July 9, 2018. No members of the public spoke on the item; the meeting minutes can be found in Attachment 7.

The Planning Commission voted 5-0 (two absent) to recommend approval of Alternative 1: Initiate the General Plan Amendment to add the properties at 932, 950, 945-955 Kifer Road in the Lawrence Station Area Plan boundaries and direct staff to include these amendments in the LSAP residential study currently underway.

The motion also included the following modifications beyond the staff recommendation:

- a. Coordinate the study with a unified bicycle and pedestrian plan for the connection to the Caltrain station as well as Countywide networks that converge on the area; and
- b. The study shall analyze methods to maximize the existing tree canopy, preserve the existing trees, and maintain the open space within the 945-955 Kifer Road property.

The Planning Commission was supportive of studying an expansion of the LSAP boundary to include the three Intuitive Surgical (ISI) properties. Most of the discussion about including the ISI properties centered on preserving the existing open space and mature tree canopy on the 945-955 Kifer Road property. Staff notes that the LSAP amendments could include policies to address this point.

The Planning Commission recommended to coordinate the LSAP bicycle and pedestrian plan to a larger city-wide plan, similar to the recommendation added by the Commission at the May 14, 2018 LSAP residential study hearing. Staff is supportive of that review, but considers this level of analysis to be more appropriately evaluated in conjunction with an update to the Citywide pedestrian and bicycle plan. Staff is supportive of the latter portion of the recommendation to study a bicycle and pedestrian connection from these sites to the Caltrain station, similar to the recommended study at the eastern end of the LSAP, as part of the LSAP Sense of Place Plan.

Consideration of Additional Properties

Following the Planning Commission hearing, the property owner of 818-824 Kifer Road (APN 205-49-004) immediately west of the western-most ISI site at 932 Kifer Road expressed interest in including their parcel in the study to expand the LSAP boundary, with the intention of future redevelopment to higher intensity office/R&D floor area ratio (FAR). See Attachment 8 for the property owner's letter of interest. The property has frontages on both Kifer Road and San Lucar Court, which is a small cul-de-sac on the south side of Kifer Road, approximately 450 feet to the east of Wolfe Road.

Inclusion of this property would warrant consideration of including the other three properties along San Lucar Court, which would bring the LSAP boundary to Wolfe Road. As stated in the Planning Commission staff report (Attachment 1), staff does not support including these properties because they are further away from the Caltrain station (0.9 miles at furthest point) and relate more to San Lucar Court than the neighboring parcels on Kifer Road and the LSAP boundary. Additionally, including these parcels in the LSAP may encourage higher intensity uses and/or parcel consolidation to a larger corporate campus, which may not be desirable if these parcels are envisioned for smaller companies or start-ups.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website. Staff also sent e-mail notifications to interested parties.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Initiate the General Plan Amendment study to add the properties at 932, 950, 945-955 Kifer Road in the Lawrence Station Area Plan boundaries and direct staff to include these amendments in the LSAP residential study currently underway.
 - a. Study a pedestrian/bicycle route from the subject properties to the Lawrence Caltrain Station (*Recommended by Planning Commission*).
 - b. The study shall analyze methods to maximize the existing tree canopy, preserve the existing trees, and maintain the open space within the 945-955 Kifer Road property (*Recommended by Planning Commission*).
2. Initiate the General Plan Amendment study as stated in Alternative 1 with modifications (such as fewer properties, expanded boundaries, additional floor area) and direct staff to include these amendments in the LSAP residential study currently underway.
3. Do not initiate the General Plan Amendment study to add the 932, 950, 945-955 Kifer Road GPI properties in the Lawrence Station Area Plan boundaries, which would retain the current General Plan designation as Industrial and zoning as M-3 and M-S.
4. Initiate the General Plan Amendment study as stated in Alternative 1 with the following additional Planning Commission recommendation:
 - a. Coordinate the study with a unified bicycle and pedestrian plan for the connection to the Caltrain station as well as Countywide networks that converge on the area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Initiate the General Plan Amendment study to add the properties at 932, 950, 945- 955 Kifer Road in the Lawrence Station Area plan boundaries and direct staff to include these amendments in the LSAP residential study currently underway.

- a. Study a pedestrian/bicycle route from the subject properties to the Lawrence Caltrain Station (*Recommended by Planning Commission*).
- b. The study shall analyze methods to maximize the existing tree canopy, preserve the existing trees, and maintain the open space within the 945-955 Kifer Road property (*Recommended by Planning Commission*).

Staff finds that studying amendments to the LSAP boundaries to include the subject sites could lead to a more coordinated approach to planning for this area. The applicant owns several parcels in the LSAP boundaries, and inclusion of these additional sites would provide the applicant the opportunity to meet their business expansion needs in the City consistent with the LSAP. The GPI area adjoins the current western boundary of the LSAP, and is in closer proximity to the train station than the current eastern boundary. If more housing potential is allowed because of the concurrent LSAP Housing Study, these subject sites could help with the land use balance as future development would be restricted to industrial, office, or R&D. The existing LSAP office/R&D development capacity could accommodate higher intensity development on these sites. Higher intensity development would also be subject to the LSAP incentive program, which could provide needed community benefits to the area. Staff is not recommending an increase to the LSAP-wide office/R&D capacity nor inclusion of additional properties beyond the GPI request.

The timing of the GPI application with the selection of the LSAP Housing Study preferred alternative permits the City to combine both amendments into an efficient review process with coordinated land use and environmental analysis. Additionally, the applicant would be responsible for their share of the consultant costs associated with amending the boundary to include their sites. Also, inclusion of the ISI properties would allow the environmental impacts to be considered for all future development on the ISI sites, which would be more efficient and provide a more comprehensive review of the possible impacts from the increased residential and expanded boundaries.

Prepared by: George Schroeder, Senior Planner

Reviewed by: Amber Blizinski, Principal Planner

Reviewed by: Andrew Miner, Assistant Director of Community Development

Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Director of Community Development

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Report to Planning Commission 18-0557, July 9, 2018 (without attachments)
2. Map of Intuitive Surgical Properties in LSAP
3. Key Goals and Policies from the General Plan and LSAP
4. Applicant's GPI Request Letter and Map
5. General Plan and Zoning Maps of the Vicinity
6. Noticing Map

Additional Attachments for Report to Council

7. Excerpt of Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of July 9, 2018
8. Letter from Property Owner of 818-824 Kifer Road