



CITY OF CHANDLER



RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION

POLICY

JULY 1989

I, INTRODUCTION

- A. Obsolete subdivision laws administered prior to 1976 allowed single family homes to be built with direct frontage, and access to arterial roads, a situation which has been compounded by increased traffic volumes and road widening. Resulting problems associated with noise and safety have created pressure to convert affected homes to commercial land uses. Since 1983, the City has approved several warranted and successful residential conversions. Unsuccessful proposals have also been made to convert homes despite insufficient site area, parking, neighborhood buffers, and other improvements necessary for the project to be suitable for the site as well as immediate area. Consequently, the RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION POLICY was adopted in 1989 to establish criteria and standards needed to properly accommodate the conversion of single family homes to professional offices or like business uses.

II. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- A. This policy has been designed to accomplish the following:
1. Establish suitable criteria for successful residential conversions, respecting General Plan principles and guidelines, to include but not be limited to:
 - a. Site and improvement standards for parking, driveways, building setbacks, architectural modifications, buffers, and off-site improvements.
 - b. Identification of permitted land uses.
 - c. Conformance with all applicable City and Building Codes.
 2. Provide standards by which eligible properties can easily be determined.
 3. Create a program for planning which places the primary design, planning, and improvement responsibilities with the applicant/property owner.
 4. Discourage residential property speculation or "paper" commitments which create uncertainty in the neighborhood; instead, promote and support only those proposals which provide assurance that the conversion will follow an established and timely program for project implementation.
 5. Assure neighborhood compatibility - establish procedures which take into account neighborhood objectives and sentiments.
 6. Provide economically viable residential conversions.
 7. Identify and document a set of application requirements and procedures which clearly outline the responsibilities of both the applicant and the City, assure complete neighborhood communication, and provide for timely enforcement of stipulated or required operating restrictions, improvements, or other conditions of approval.

III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A. Eligibility

Under this policy, eligible (for consideration) properties are single family homes built with frontage on an arterial street together with vehicular/driveway access from the arterial street.

Single family homes having either only frontage or direct access along an arterial road **will** be considered in accordance with the spirit of this policy. If project circumstances weigh heavily in favor of such a proposal, the Zoning Administrator shall accept and process the application.

Conversion properties may utilize vacant, undeveloped, adjoining properties only when said addition in itself would qualify under the eligibility requirements. If the addition improves the quality of the project, and the extension/addition does not involve or unnecessarily encroach upon property suitable for single-family residential land use, all of which are subject to the findings of the approval of the City Council.

2. Commercial office development which involves redevelopment of residential areas, demolition of structures required for site improvements or new buildings. or development of offices on vacant land will not be considered under this policy -, rather, these projects will be processed under the PCO or PAD categories in accordance with General Plan Policies.

NOTE: ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION APPLIES ONLY TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF AN APPLICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS AND DOES NOT SATISFY THE ADDITIONAL FINDINGS REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY FOR SUPPORT.

B. Land Use

Professional, executive, or business offices (excluding medical) are eligible for consideration. General services or retail and uses involving public/private assembly are not permitted or eligible for consideration. In general, permitted uses include:

1. Office uses for administrative, executive, or professional occupations in which goods are not created, exchanged or stored.
2. A residence in conjunction with the office.
3. One tenant/company for each one thousand square feet of floor area - not to exceed three users.
4. Where there exists sufficient room for parking, vehicular movement to/from and within the site area, area for outdoor activity (if needed), and the proposal meets or exceeds all requirements for improvements, setbacks, or additional buffer, as determined by the Directors of Planning and Development and Public Works, the following uses may be considered:

- a. Day-care, private school, or like use.
- b. Studio for fine arts, dance, music, photography, drama, including instruction, or like uses.

IV: SITE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

A. Basic design, engineering, and improvement standards shall conform to applicable City Codes as a minimum. The Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council may require additional improvements to the property as they deem applicable to provide for a more harmonious design and transition to adjacent residential properties. Specific requirements for the number, location, and configuration of parking areas shall be determined by balancing the particular needs of a proposal with the interests of surrounding properties; however, the following guidelines should be considered:

1. One space for each employee plus one space for each 500 sq. ft. of floor area.

B. PARKING DESIGN

1. Shall be consistent with a residential scale.
2. Designed to maximize compatibility with surrounding uses.
3. Designed to preserve front yard/streetscape setting of home.
4. Common parking to serve more than one conversion property only permissible if approved as part of a larger masterplan.
5. Parking lot/area setbacks shall be 20'(front)10'(rear and sides) from property lines.
6. Paved surface area (including access drive coverage) shall not exceed 25% of the gross lot area.
7. All paved surface for parking or access drive shall be setback at least six feet from the primary building.

C. PROJECT LANDSCAPING

1. To be reviewed individually with each application. Existing landscaping may fulfill this requirement if determined to be adequate.
2. Mature plants shall be preserved to the extent possible.
3. Additional landscaping may be required along or within parking areas, access points, driveways.
4. All unimproved surfaces shall be fully landscaped.

D. BUILDING FEATURES

1. Interior modifications shall conform with applicable codes. Remodeling permitted to accommodate the approved use.
2. No exterior alterations or additions shall occur unless expressly approved as part of the proposal, together with the finding that said changes enhance or upgrade the property.
3. Garages may be converted into occupiable space, subject to all provisions and review procedures herein. The City may require in such case that the driveway be removed. If the conversion is viewed as temporary or includes a residence, the garage may not be altered absent provision for additional covered parking, as required for the residential use itself.
4. No signage shall be placed on the house or any other structure except approved nameplate signs or undercanopy hanging signs, not to exceed one sign per user. The sign area shall not exceed eight square feet. Lighted, canister, or pan-channel letter signs are prohibited.
5. One architectural monument sign for project identification not to exceed three feet in height or five feet in width may be approved, subject to the finding that the freestanding sign does not detract from the residential scale of the conversion, but instead contributes to the overall quality of project; however, the approval of a free-standing sign precludes signage from being approved or placed on the structure. Minimum setback from R.O.W. shall be 10 feet.

E. SCREENING BUFFERS - PROJECT DETAILS

1. Approved solid screening, berms and or landscaped strips shall be provided where activity areas; parking spaces, driveways, or other areas of the subject property affect or impact the residential character of adjoining properties.
2. Where residential alleys are approved for access, the required screening or approved alternative may be required to extend the entire length of the traveled alley. This requirement could apply to both sides, including the replacement of existing walls where said replacement is necessary to preserve the qualities of the proposal or minimize the impacts of additional commercial traffic.

F. DRIVEWAYS/ACCESSPOINTS

1. No driveway, parking surface, or traveled area shall be placed closer than ten feet from any adjoining residential property, except as approved as part of a multiple conversion masterplan.
2. The Public Works Director may require additional improvements within public rights-of-way, as determined by applicable codes, traffic safety warrants, or other factors leading to the need for improvements or modifications.
3. There shall be no backing up movement into sidewalk or street areas.

G. AREA REQUIREMENTS MINIMUMS

- 1 - There is no absolute minimum. In general, conversion proposals involving lot parcel areas less than 15,000 sq. ft. encounter serious constraints with minimum design or improvement requirements.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION

- A. The Use Permit application requirements, procedures, public hearing and notice requirements shall apply. In addition, the following will be required to accompany the submittal.
 1. Each application will be preceded by an informal pre-application meeting with the Planning and Development Staff in order to ascertain the eligibility status as well as other initial findings.
 2. The minimum application materials shall include at the time of submittal to the City:
 - a. Completed application form together with **\$75.00**.
 - b. Cover letter outlining all aspects of the proposal, i.e., proposed use, improvements, project timing, justification, etc.
 - c. Site plan with all building dimensions, setbacks, and location. Details of all improvements, access points, screening.
 - d. Self-stick mailing labels with names and addresses of all property owners within 300 ft. of the subject property, or any additional radius judged by the Zoning Administrator to be necessary for sufficient notice.
 3. Upon review of the submitted materials, the Planning and Development Staff will determine whether additional materials are needed to evaluate the conversion request. Some of these actions may be the responsibility of the City Staff such as:
 - a. Courtesy inspections on-site. Written report of findings related to City Codes.
 - b. Arrangements and reservation of space for neighborhood meeting.
 4. The applicant may be required to furnish additional information concerning the project, including but not limited to:
 - a. Real estate or market study.
 - b. Site access study (may be conducted by City Personnel).
 - c. Program for project timing - site improvements.
 - d. Representations from user or developer which demonstrate or confirm project commitment and timing.
 - e. A streetscape and/or landscape plan.

VI. NEIGHBORHOOD RECONNAISSANCE

- A. In most cases, the applicant shall be responsible for conducting much of the neighborhood communication needed to determine concerns, issues, and general level of support. Together with staff, the applicant shall cooperate with neighborhood interests to the extent which is reasonable. The City may elect to conduct additional neighborhood meetings, as warranted. All communication will be documented and verified by the City Staff.

VII. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- A. The Council may attach any condition or project use, design, methods of operation, or any other aspect needed to support the general welfare, as well as the spirit of this policy. Approval may also be conditional upon a one year time period, subject to renewal by Council upon review of the projects performance and compliance.
- B. In order to discourage or regulate indiscriminate speculation of residential properties, the Council may impose specific timing or scheduling conditions designed to implement the project as proposed. Normally, conversion will be required to occur within one (1) year of Council approval.

VIII. MULTIPLE CONVERSIONS

- A. For proposals involving multiple properties - or where a single conversion requires coordinated or shared improvements with other residential properties - or where other conditions of a proposed conversion impact the development pattern of a neighborhood or wider area, the applicant will be required to submit a conversion area or "district" study/strategy that accounts for the future disposition of the area. The study shall contain but not necessarily be limited to:
1. Layout, schedule, and funding method for all physical improvements.
 2. Identification and evaluation of any other potential conversion property in the affected area - shall include plan of coordinated improvements, if required or proposed.
 3. Establishment of a key neighborhood contact person or committee.
 4. Program of neighborhood objectives, meetings, and consensus.
 5. Approval of all affected property owners.
 6. A PAD overlay may be required to effect a conversion district plan, as determined at the time of the application submittal or any other time it is decided that a PAD zoning overlay better fulfills the objectives of this policy.