

Planning Commission Staff Report

September 15, 2010

Item 6.a.

SUBJECT: PUD-80-16-13M

APPLICANT: LBA Reality (Paul Thometz)

PROPERTY OWNER: LBA Reality (Paul Thometz)

PURPOSE: Application for a modification to an approved Planned Unit Development for an approximately 65,000-square-foot, two-story research and development building with an enclosed outdoor service yard on the northwest corner of a developed 26.15-acre site.

GENERAL PLAN: Business Park (Industrial/Commercial and Office).

ZONING: PUD – I/C-O (Planned Unit Development – Industrial/Commercial and Office) District.

LOCATION: 4900 to 5040 Johnson Drive.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit A, Draft Conditions of Approval, September 15, 2010.
2. Exhibit B, Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, September 1, 2010.
3. Exhibit C, dated "Received August 23, 2010" including Building Floor Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Roof Plan; Building and Site Sections; Site Orientation Plan, Campus Site Plan, and Project Site Plan; Perspective Viewpoints and Renderings; and, Demolition Plan, Grading and Drainage Plan, Landscape Plan, and Topographic Survey.
4. Exhibit D, PUD-80-16-07M, Development Plan for the existing five-building campus.
5. Exhibit E, Ordinance 1477 for PUD-80-16-03M.
6. Exhibit F, Location Map.
7. Exhibit G, Noticing Map.

I. BACKGROUND

Background

The applicant, LBA Reality, L.L.C., (Paul Thometz), proposes to modify the five-building development plan of the former Washington Mutual campus to allow a new 64,474-square-foot, two-story tall research and development building. The proposal will accommodate the business plan of a specific tenant that has not been identified to staff.

The City Council has approved a similar use for the Thoratec Company – manufacturer of medical devices including artificial heart pumps – located southeasterly of the proposal on the south side of Johnson Drive at 6101 Stoneridge Drive and 6035 Stoneridge Drive.

Signature Center Business Park

The project site is zoned PUD – I/C-O (Planned Unit Development – Industrial/Commercial and Office). In July 1990, the City Council approved PUD-80-16-03M, the PUD development plan and Initial Study for the Signature Center Business Park – Pactel Properties, the applicant – that including 885,170 square feet of office, industrial, and research and development uses, generally located on the northwest corner of Hopyard Road and Stoneridge Drive. Approximately 70,631 square feet of building floor area of the previous PUD approval was not built and, therefore, may be used to accommodate the floor area of the proposed building.

Prior to Pactel's ownership of the Signature Center Business Park, the development was known as the Meyer Business Park approved under PUD-80-16 and PUD-80-16-1M and PUD-80-16-2M. When PUD-80-16-03M was approved, five buildings of the former Meyer Business Park had been constructed including the four- and five-story office buildings at 4900 Hopyard Road and 5000 Hopyard Road, respectively, the Bank of America bank branch at 6005 Stoneridge Drive, and two research and development buildings on 5020 Franklin Drive and 5064 Franklin Drive.

Providian BankCorps/Washington Mutual

The City Council approved the existing five-building campus under PUD-80-16-07M and PUD-80-16-11D for Providian BankCorps. Providian used the facility for its credit card call center. With its action, the City Council:

- Abandoned Morse Drive from Johnson Drive to Franklin Drive, enabling the Providian site to be developed as a single, contiguous property;
- Approved a "bowed" building design concept that architecturally tied the five buildings together as a single design theme;
- Approved the locations for public art;
- Approved the installation of a public sidewalk on the east and south sides of the existing Franklin Drive for use by the public;
- Approved a central plaza area for Providian staff;

- Approved a parking ratio of one parking space per 140 square feet of floor area to accommodate Providian's employee density; and,
- Approved special TSM measures for Providian including a dedicated BART shuttle bus and scheduling work hours to avoid the a.m./p.m. peak hour traffic.

Figure 2, below, is a copy of the approved five-building development plan.

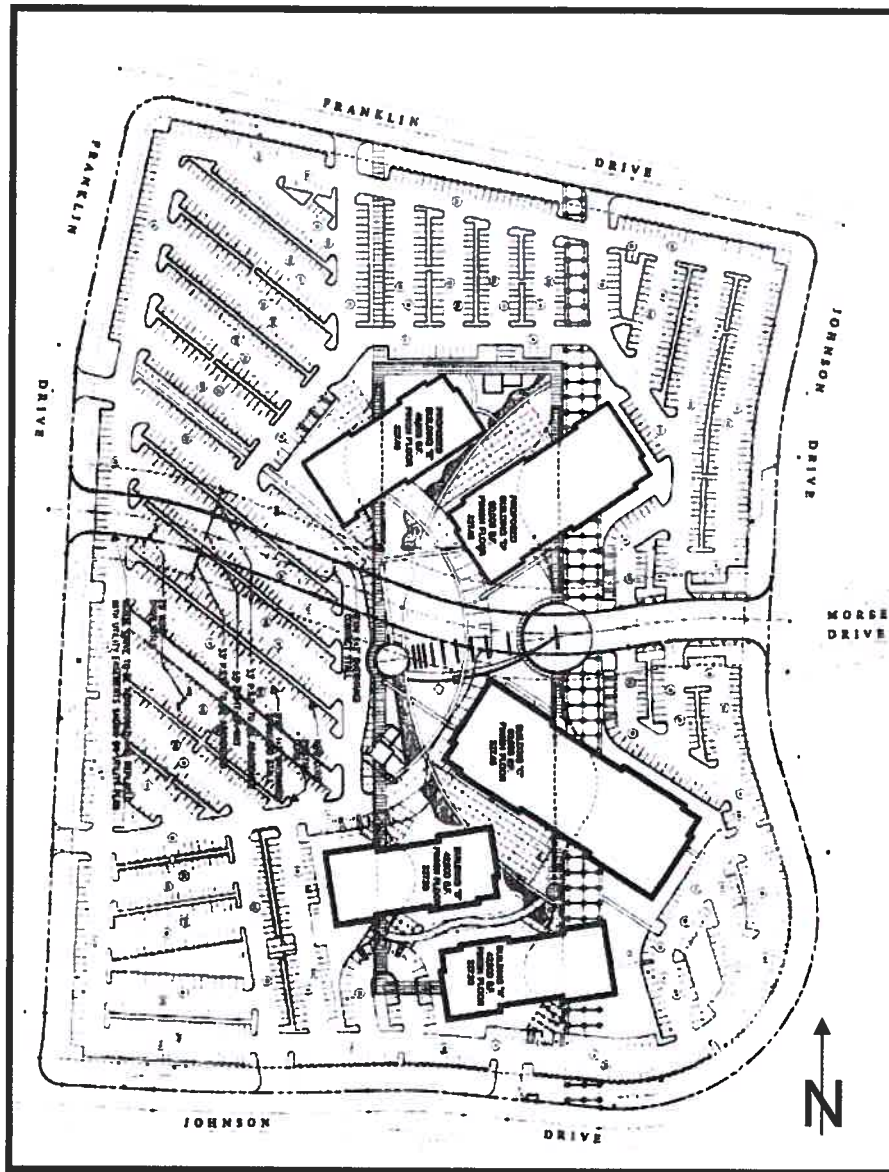


Figure 2, Five-Building Former Providian Campus

Providian BankCorps was purchased by Washington Mutual and was occupied by Washington Mutual until they were absorbed by Wells Fargo. Although operations have stopped and the buildings and site have lain vacant, the entire site is being well-maintained.

II. SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

Project Location

The proposed project will be constructed on a 3.0-acre portion of the 26.15-acre former Washington Mutual development defined by Franklin Drive and Johnson Drive. The project site is presently developed with parking and driveways and parking area landscaping for the five-building development.

Figure 3, below, is the location map/aerial photograph showing the project site, five-building Washington Mutual campus, and the former Signature Center Business Park. The properties on the north and west sides of Franklin Drive were owned by the Unum Life Insurance Company but may have been purchased by other parties.



Figure 3, Location Map and Aerial Photograph

The proposal will be the sixth building added to the existing five building office research and development campus.

Figure 4, on the following page, is the developed five-building site with the proposed project.

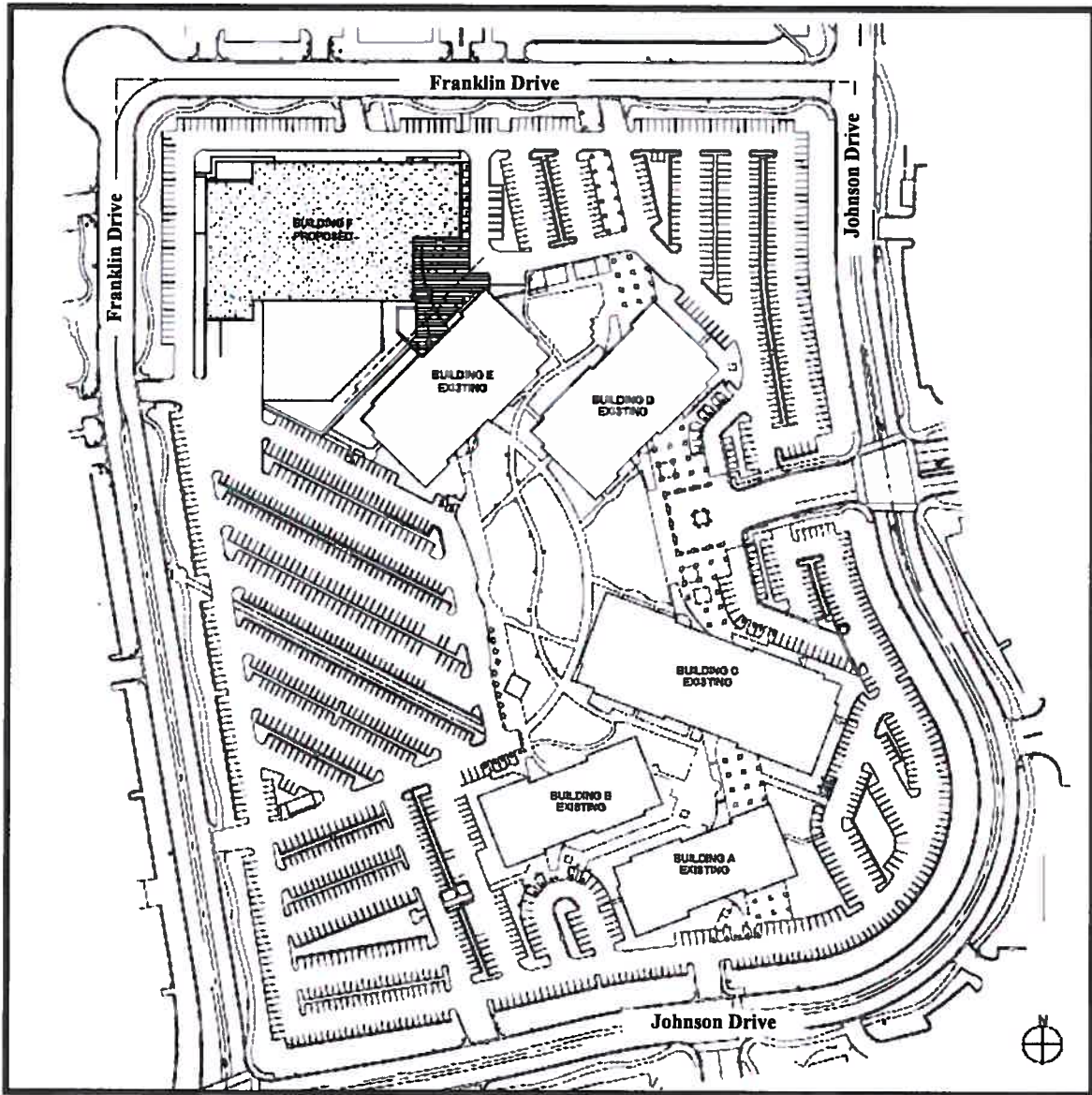


Figure 4, Five-Building Campus with Proposal

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The project site is a relatively flat site, developed with parking and landscaping, with its primary frontage and orientation towards Franklin Drive. It is surrounded on all four sides by office, industrial, and research and development uses. Primary public street access is from south and east sides of Franklin Drive and Johnson Drive. Johnson Drive in turn connects the site to Hopyard Road and Stoneridge Drive major City arterial streets to, respectively, the I-580 and I-680 freeways. Surrounding properties screen the Franklin Drive site from the view of Hopyard Road and Stoneridge Drive.

Figure 5 and Figure 6, on the following page, are photographs of the project site.



Figure 5, Westerly View of Project Site with Franklin Drive in Background.



Figure 6, Southwest View of Project Site with Franklin Drive in Background.

Figure 7 and Figure 8, below, are photographs of the nearby Franklin Drive buildings.



Figure 7, 6100 Franklin Drive, Northwesterly of the Project Site.



Figure 8, 5200 Franklin Drive, Northeasterly of the Project Site.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed PUD development plan modification will allow one, 64,474-square-foot building and will allow research and development and office uses; a maximum building height of 55 feet; and will include the proposed building and site design.

The proposed project will increase the overall building floor area on this 26.15-acre site from 287,967 square feet to 352,441 square feet and the overall floor area ratio from 25.3 percent to 30.9 percent. After this sixth building is constructed, the overall parking for the six-building facility will be 1,477 parking spaces equaling an overall parking ratio of one parking space per 238 square feet of floor area. Stormwater will be pre-treated on site by a combination of vegetative filter swales and artificial filter devices before entering the City's stormdrain systems.

Figure 9, below, is the site plan.

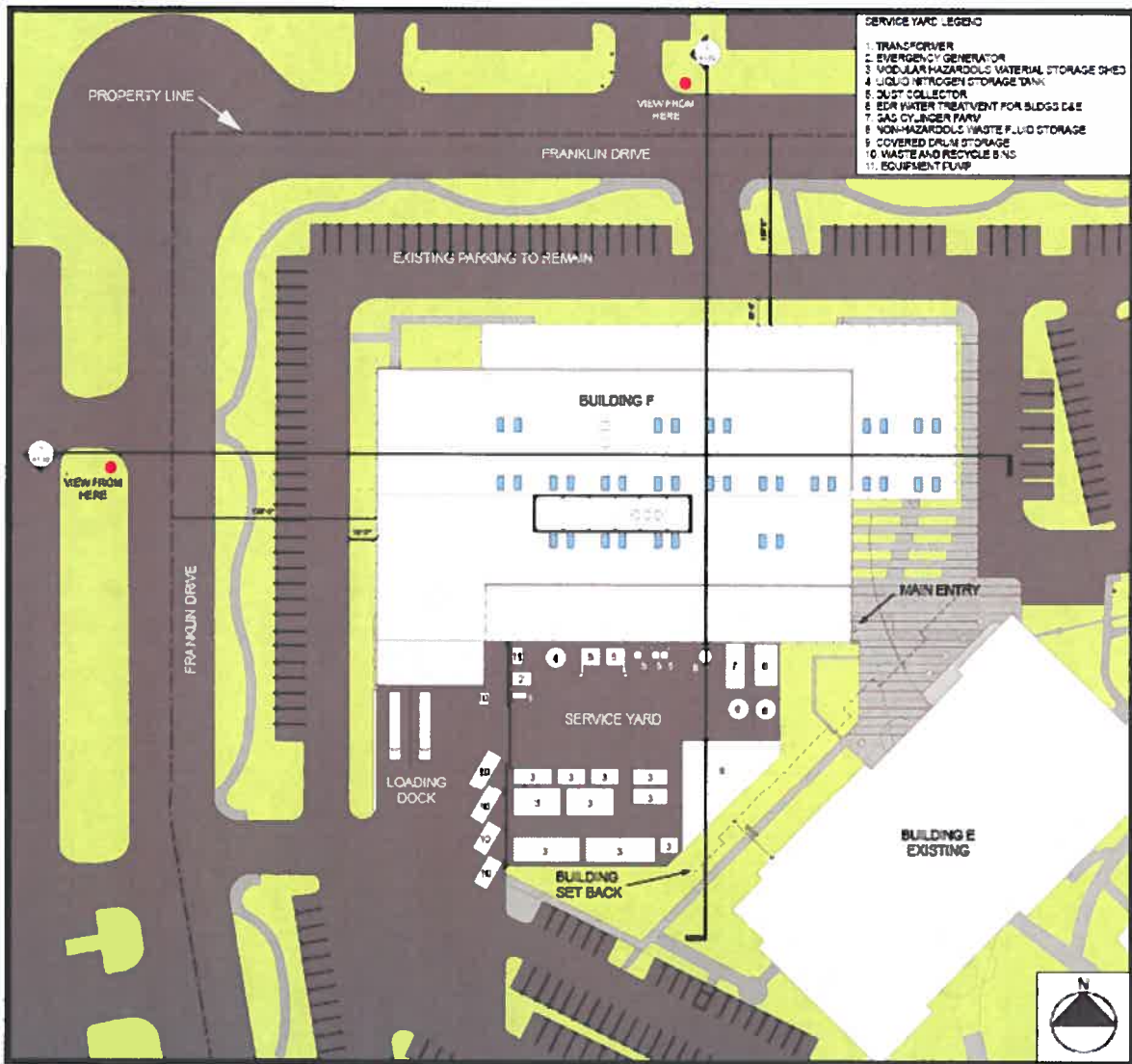


Figure 9, Proposed Site Plan for Building F.

The proposed building height will be 39 feet from grade to the building parapet wall and, as measured by staff, 50 feet from grade to the roof-mounted equipment screens. The proposed building's interior area will include a second-floor mezzanine. The applicant anticipates a permanent occupancy of 40 employees for Building F equaling an employee density of one employee per 1/1,611 square feet.

The proposed building is designed to complement the surrounding architecture with a combination of curvilinear building elements matching the "bowed" building elements of the five-building campus, building wall trim detailing comparable to the detailing used throughout the Signature Center Business Park and on surrounding buildings, and the building wall and trim colors. The loading area will be screened by a wall matching the building design and colors. The service yard will be screened from view by a 12-foot to 14-foot tall solid metal fence matching the material used on the curved building element shown on the east elevation, below.

Figure 10a, below, and Figure 10b, on the following page, are the proposed building elevations.

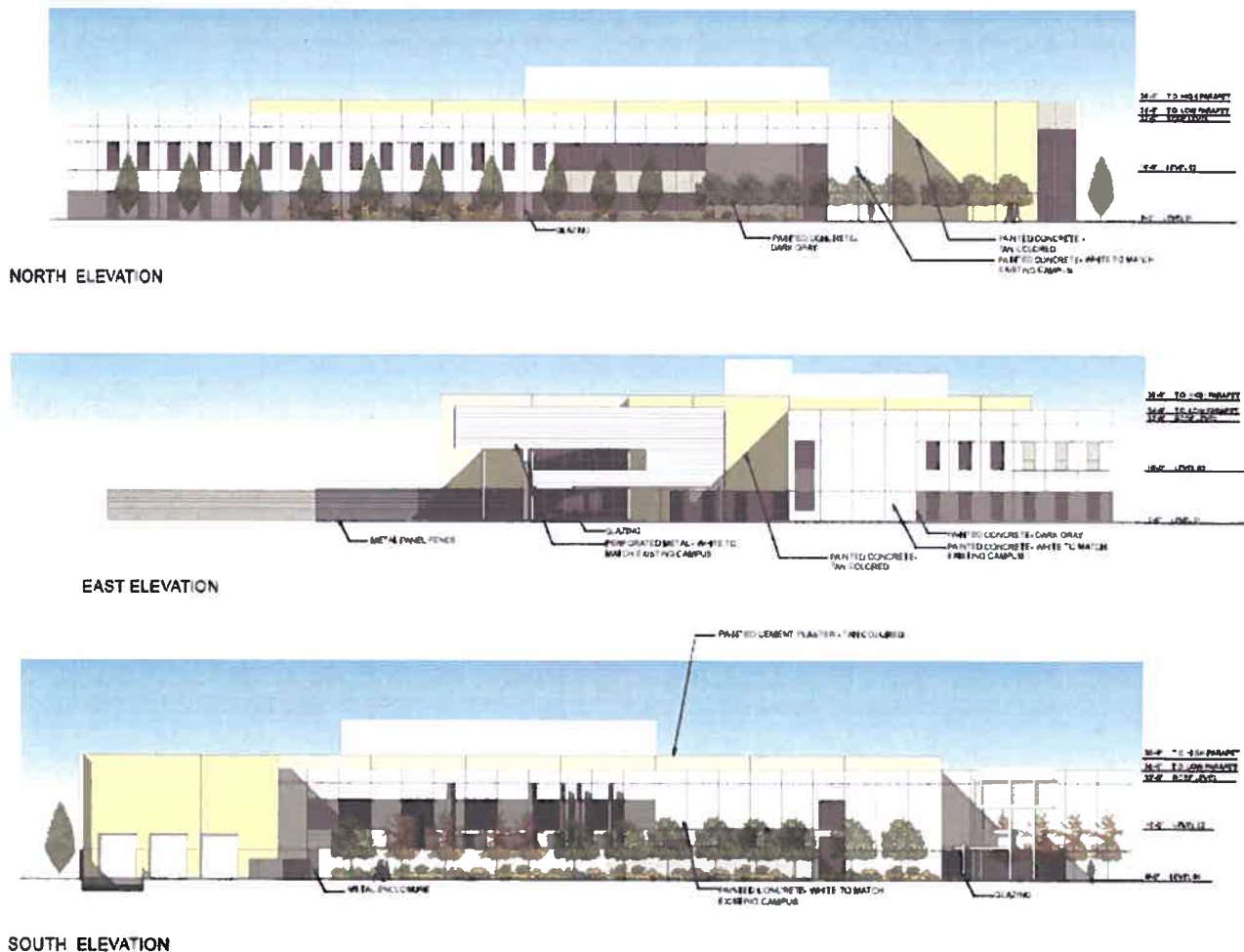
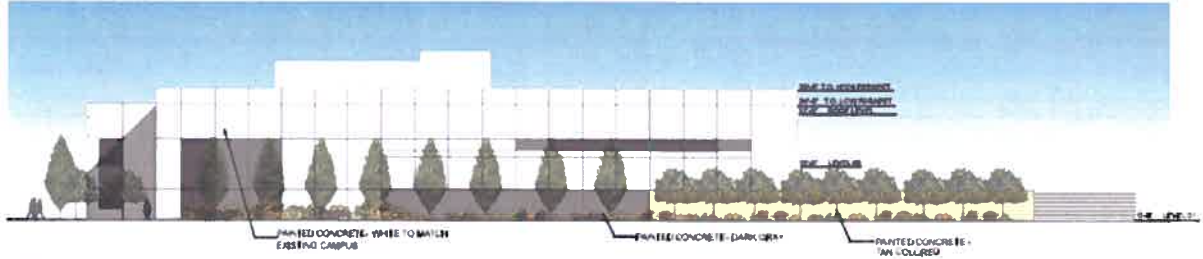


Figure 10a, Proposed North, East, and South Building Elevations.



WEST ELEVATION

Figure 10b, Proposed West Building Elevation.

Figure 11, below, is the proposed building perspective of the main entrance from the plaza area between Building E and Building F.



Figure 11, Building F Perspective of the Main Entrance from the Plaza.

Figure 12, on the following page, is the proposed building perspective of the entire building from the southeast corner of Franklin Drive.



Figure 12, Building F Perspective from Franklin Drives.

Figure 13, below, is the aerial photograph of the existing five-building campus with the proposed building.



Figure 13, Aerial Photograph/Rendering of the Project Site and Proposal.

V. ANALYSIS

Pleasanton General Plan

The 2005 – 2025 General Plan Land Map of the Pleasanton General Plan designates the Pleasanton Gateway property for Business Park (Industrial/Commercial and Office) with a maximum and midpoint Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 60 percent and 32 percent, respectively. With construction of the proposed project, the total floor area for the 26.15-acre campus will be increased from 287,967 square feet to 352,441 square feet with an equal increase of the overall campus FAR from 25.3 percent to 30.9 percent, respectively.

As conditioned, the applicant will implement the following best management programs of the Pleasanton General Plan for the proposed building and for the five existing buildings as feasible:

- Install water conservation devices in the proposed building and landscape areas. (Pleasanton General Plan, Program 1.7).
- Install Energy Star appliances and/or systems. (Air Quality/Climate Change Element, Program 6.3, Best Management Practice #2).
- Install white cool roofs on the buildings designed to reflect the heat of the sun away from the building, thus reducing its cooling load. (Air Quality/Climate Change Element, Program 6.3, Best Management Practice #9).
- Prepare a waste diversion plan that includes a discussion of the waste diversion strategies and measures. (Pleasanton General Plan, Program 26.18).
- Extend electrical conduits and pull strings to the parking spaces closest to the main entrance of the building for electrically powered commute vehicles. (Air Quality/Climate Change Element, Program 6.3, Best Management Practice #6).
- Allow for the future installation of a roof-mounted photovoltaic system. (Air Quality/Climate Change Element, Program 6.3, Best Management Practice #3).

Zoning/Uses

The development plan will be modified to accommodate the proposed building including floor area at 64,474 square feet in a first floor/second level mezzanine configuration, a maximum employee density of approximately 40 employees.

Approximately 70,631 square feet of building floor area of the previous PUD approval was not built and, therefore, will be used to accommodate the proposed building's floor area. As conditioned, future requests to add floor area, such as a seventh building or converting the subject building from the proposed first floor/second floor mezzanine to two complete floors. An increase in permanent employee density may be allowed without a modification of the development plan based upon a negligible-impact determination to surrounding streets and intersections levels-of-service made by the City Traffic Engineer. The applicant concurs with this condition.

Surrounding developments permit a mix of research and development, office, and industrial type uses including pilot plants and manufacturing. The proposed project will allow comparable uses for the proposed building with the storage and use of hazardous materials subject to the City's Hazardous Materials Use and Storage Ordinance. A summary of the proposed uses follow:

- The industrial uses, activities, and processes allowed by right in the I-P (Industrial Park) District of the Pleasanton Municipal Code, Section 18.48.140, including the ancillary use and indoor/outdoor storage of hazardous materials with a hazardous materials use and storage permit issued by the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department.
- Industrial support and service facilities limited to the activities serving the primary uses allowed on this site including, but not limited to, repair and maintenance of equipment, appliances, and components and component parts, tooling, and testing.
- General offices such as administrative headquarters and executive offices, business service and consulting service offices, and design, engineering, and research profession offices.

Site Plan

The site plan integrates Building F with Building E of the five-building campus with a plaza area, walkways, and landscaping. The main entrances to Building E and Building F face the plaza providing for pedestrian use in this area. A curved metal building element is constructed on Building F that continues the "bowed" building feature on Building E. Building F is set back 83 feet and 92 feet from the north and west sides of Franklin Drive, respectively, and are comparable to the building setbacks on the west and north sides of Franklin Drive. (The building setbacks shown on the site plan were taken from the centerline of Franklin Drive.) A ten-foot landscape separation is provided between the building and the edge of the adjoining driveway aisles on the north and west sides. Staff considers the proposed building location and layout to be successfully integrated with the five-building campus and consistent with the Franklin Drive development pattern.

The proposed service yard and truck loading/unloading dock face the east side of Franklin Drive. The service yard will be screened from view by a 12-foot to 14-foot tall metal fence matching the metal material used on the curved building element. Except for the loading dock and four trash/recycle enclosures, all storage containers and enclosures will be placed behind and screened from view by the service yard fence. A liquid nitrogen storage tank and exhaust stacks will be visible above the fence line, will be painted to match the building, and, as conditioned, will be screened by evergreen trees planted in the landscape area adjoining Franklin Drive.

To screen the opening to the service yard, staff has also conditioned the planting of additional evergreen shrubs that will form a hedge-like screen. The applicant concurs with these conditions. Staff considers this to be the optimal location for the proposed service yard: it is set 164 feet from Franklin Drive, is screened from view, does not face heavily traveled City streets, and enables the building and main entrance to be integrated with the existing buildings and plaza areas.

Building Design

The proposed building design complements the design of the five-building campus and the design of the Franklin Drive buildings. The architectural theme combines design elements of the surrounding area, such as, the white building wall color, curved metal building feature, gray and warmed tone trim color, the "half-round" wall detailing featured on 4900 and 5000 Hopyard Road and varied on the designs of the other business park structures. The common design elements of colors, materials, and details visually link the individual buildings. The building form is articulated and varied and achieves a "four-sided" appearance. Staff supports the proposed building design.

The proposed project is compatible in height, scale, and materials and colors to the adjoining office/industrial/office developments of the nearby area. The proposed building height will be 40 feet to the parapet wall and 50 feet to the roof screens. The screen height is predicated on the expected height of the roof-mounted equipment and venting that the applicant expects to use with this facility. Staff notes that the lines-of-sight analyses provided with the development plans show that the central location of the roof equipment with the height of the proposed building will screen the roof equipment from view of Franklin Drive including the line-of-sight view from the northwest corner of Franklin Drive and Johnson Drive.

Staff recommends additional detailing of the west building elevation for visual interest and to relieve the flat appearance of this elevation. Means to achieve this goal include additional spandrel glass areas applied to this elevation plus the installation of a decorative metal architectural detail. An example of a similar detail is shown on Figure 14, on the following page.



Figure 14, Example of a Decorative Architectural Element for the West Building Elevation.

Building and exterior site lighting will be designed and controlled to be low wattage and luminosity so as not to add to "night sky" pollution. The interior building lighting will be controlled by timers so that the buildings will be "dark" at night. Building and landscaping up-lighting will be prohibited.

Traffic, Parking, and Off-/On-Site Circulation

The applicant anticipates 40 employees for Building F – the proposed employee density will have a negligible impact on the surrounding streets, intersections, and levels-of-service. The development will contribute its share of traffic impact fees that will pay for the construction of City-wide street and intersection improvements to ensure conformance to Pleasanton General Plan LOS D standards. The traffic patterns to the site are consistent with the traffic patterns to the area's commercial/industrial developments.

With construction of the proposed project, totaling six buildings or 352,441 square feet for the 26.15-acre industrial/office development, 1,477 parking spaces will be provided for a parking ratio of one parking space per 238 square feet. For comparison, the Pleasanton Municipal Code requires a minimum parking ratio of one parking space per 300 feet equaling 1,174 parking spaces.

As conditioned, entire six building development will have a TSM program of alternative transportation measures designed to achieve a 15 percent trip reduction within five years of opening and then a 25 percent reduction within 10 years compared to "business as usual". The program shall be submitted to the Planning Division and the City's TSM Coordinator with the building permit application for review and approval before issuance of the first occupancy permit. Bicycle racks are conditioned to be provided with this development.

Landscape Design

Preliminary landscape plans are provided. The site includes a 25-foot and a 33-foot landscaped area on the south and east sides of Franklin Drive, respectively. The proposed plan will incorporate plant species consistent with the area's landscape pattern as well as having low watering requirements. These features include the following:

- The applicant shall arrange the plantings along the Franklin Drive project frontages in clusters and groupings that achieve a varied appearance in terms of heights and density. The landscape treatments will frame and enhance the building's appearance to Franklin Drive and will screen the service yard from the view of streets and adjoining developments.
- The applicant will preserve the existing landscaping in Franklin Drive and will augment the landscaping with new plantings including trees and shrubs. Parking and driveway separates the Franklin Drive frontages from the construction site; therefore, no temporary fencing or other protection measures will be required.
- The project applicant or developer shall comply with the State of California's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

Green Building Measures

The applicant will implement the following Green Building measures for the proposed development:

- Implement the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC), "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)" 3.0 rating system to achieve a "certified level" in the design, construction, and operation of any proposed building over 20,000 square feet, including all future tenant improvements." The State of California's Green Building Standards Code, "CALGreen", may apply depending on when design plans are submitted.
- The applicant shall extend electrical conduits and pull strings to the parking spaces closest to the main entrance of the building for electrically powered commute vehicles. Upon demand by the Planning Division, the building owner(s) will have 30-days to install the charging equipment for some or all of the spaces, and shall provide evidence to the Planning Division that the installation is complete. The applicant will install signs with the Phase II buildings stating, "Electrical Vehicle Chargers Shall Be Provided Upon Request to the Pleasanton Planning Division."
- The building shall be constructed to allow for the future installation of a photovoltaic system in the roof areas.

Grading and Urban Storm Water Runoff

The project site will be graded and constructed to drain its stormwater runoff from the landscape areas on the north and south sides of the building through a combination of vegetative filter swales, augmented with "filterra" control systems in compliance with the NPDES standards of the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board. All on-site drainage, treatment, and control measures will be reviewed by the City Engineer with the building permits. The service yard will be designed and graded to contain any spills so as not to drain to City storm lines.

The project will be required through the building permit and construction process to incorporate best management practices for discharges resulting from this development. The proposed project shall be subject to the most recent requirements of the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and to the requirements of the Alameda County NPDES Permit.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public notices were sent to the property owners, business owners, and business tenants within a 1,000-foot radius for the property. The noticing area is provided as Exhibit H. As of the writing of this staff report, staff has not received any verbal or written comments pertaining to this proposal.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Environmental review for the proposed project is covered by the attached Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). Staff believes that the project-related impacts are mitigated, with the mitigation measures incorporated in the project's design or referenced with conditions of approval, and that there would be no significant or unmitigated environmental impact. Staff, therefore, believes that the Mitigated Negative Declaration can be issued in conformance with the standards of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). If the Planning Commission concurs with this environmental assessment, it must make the finding that the Mitigated Negative Declaration is appropriate prior to recommending approval of the proposed project.

The IS/MND was completed on September 1, 2010. The CEQA-mandated 20-day review period of the IS/MND will end on September 21, 2010, extending beyond the Planning Commission's hearing. CEQA Guidelines enables the Planning Commission to make its recommendation before the review period ends.

Environmental Analysis

On June 2, 2010, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) adopted new thresholds of significance for analyzing air quality and greenhouse gas emission impacts and published a June 2010 version of Guidelines with the adopted thresholds. The proposed project is within these thresholds: the building at 64,474 square feet is less than 65,000 square feet in floor area; will have 40 employees and, therefore, a very low employee density; is located on a developed site of less than 553,000 square feet and less than 61 acres in area; and is served by existing infrastructure including streets, utilities, and public transportation.

Hazardous Materials Use and Storage

The use, handling, storage, and transport of hazardous materials are highly regulated by the City of Pleasanton, the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Fed/OSHA), the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA), and by the Federal Department of Transportation (DOT). The use, handling, and storage of hazardous materials will be subject to the City's review and approval of a Hazardous Materials Use and Storage Permit and a Hazardous Materials Management Plan administered by the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department. This will occur prior to issuance of a building permit and an occupancy permit. The transport, use and disposal of hazardous materials are regulated by Federal, California state and local regulations. This project will require disclosure of any hazardous materials, the amounts anticipated and where those materials will be stored or used.

VIII. PUD DEVELOPMENT PLAN MODIFICATION FINDINGS

The Pleasanton Municipal Code sets forth the purposes of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) District and the considerations to be addressed in reviewing a PUD development plan proposal. These findings also apply to development plan modifications. The Planning Commission must make the following findings that the proposed PUD

development plan modification conforms to the purposes of the PUD District, before making its recommendation.

1. Whether the proposed development plan modification is in the best interests of the public health, safety, and general welfare:

- The proposed development plan modification will allow one new, 64,474 square foot research and development building, on a developed five-building site, served by existing infrastructure. The proposed development will enhance the City's employment and revenue base.
- The proposal also includes the use of hazardous materials within the proposed building and the storage of hazardous materials and waste products in an outdoor service yard. All hazardous materials storage and use will be conducted in compliance with the City's Hazardous Materials Ordinance and with applicable Federal and California state standards.
- The project will include Green Building measures; will provide for the future addition of photovoltaic electrical panels and charging stations for electrical vehicles; and will provide for the on-site pre-treatment of stormwater runoff in vegetative swales before discharge into the City's storm drain system.

Staff, therefore, believes that this finding can be made.

2. Whether the proposed development plan modification is compatible with previously developed properties located in the vicinity of the plan:

- The proposed development including uses is compatible with the developed research and development uses surrounding the property. The employment opportunities provided by the proposal will augment the City's tax base.
- There are no nearby residential areas. The development allowed by this modification is consistent with the development pattern of the area.
- Accesses to Franklin Drive and on-site circulation are consistent with City standards and will provide adequate development access and emergency vehicle access.

Staff, therefore, believes that this finding can be made.

3. Whether the proposed development plan modification is compatible with the natural, topographic features of the site:

- The site is flat and will accommodate the proposed development with standard City practices for drainage flows and stormwater runoff treatment.
- The site is designed to drain to on-site vegetative swales designed to pretreat stormwater runoff.

Therefore, staff believes that this finding can be made.

4. Whether grading in conjunction with the proposed development plan modification takes into account environmental characteristics and is designed in keeping with the best engineering practices to avoid erosion, slides, or flooding, and to have as minimal an effect upon the environment as possible.

- The site is flat. Grading is limited to site preparation to accommodate the proposed development.
- Requirements of the California Building Code implemented by the City at the Building Permit review will ensure that building foundations and private street/on-site parking/driveway areas are constructed on satisfactorily compacted fill.
- Erosion control and dust suppression measures will be documented in the building permit and will be administered by the City's Building and Engineering Divisions.

Therefore, staff believes that this finding can be made.

5. Whether adequate public safety measures have been incorporated into the design of the proposed development plan modification:

- All uses and their tenancies will be designed and operated to meet the requirements of the California Building Code, the City's Fire Codes, other applicable City codes, and State of California mandated noise, energy, and accessibility requirements.
- The project site adjoins existing public streets with adequate emergency vehicle access and proposed parking areas to serve these uses. All streets, accesses, and driveway aisles meet City standards and are adequate to handle anticipated traffic volumes.
- Adequate access is provided to all structures for police, fire, and other emergency vehicles.

Staff, therefore, believes that this finding can be made.

6. Whether the proposed development plan modification conforms to the purposes of the PUD District:

The proposed PUD development plan modification implements the purposes of the City's PUD Ordinance by augmenting the permitted office and research and development and industrial uses of the site and area thereby enhancing the City's employment opportunities and revenue base. The proposed development in terms of site design, building design, and uses implement the land use designations and policies of the Pleasanton General Plan and are consistent with the development pattern of the area.

Staff, therefore, believes that this finding can be made.

IX. CONCLUSION

The proposed project is an infill development in a developed commercial/industrial area of the City. Its operations will enhance the City's revenue base and provide employment opportunities in the City. Uses and activities are compatible with the area and will be conducted in compliance with the applicable City, California state, and Federal standards and permits. Hence, the uses and operations are not anticipated to cause substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly or on the environment. The project has been designed to meet the general development standards required by the City of Pleasanton, and will incorporate conditions of approval to meet local codes and regulations.

X. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward Case PUD-80-16-13M to the City Council with a recommendation of approval by taking the following actions:

1. Find that the proposed project will not have a significant environmental impact and that the Mitigated Negative Declaration is appropriate and adopt a resolution recommending approval of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Exhibit B; and,
2. Make the PUD Development Plan Findings 1 through 6 as stated in the staff report and adopt a resolution recommending approval of Case PUD-80-16-13M subject to Exhibit A, the Draft Conditions of approval

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