

**Planning Commission  
Work Session Staff Report**

May 28, 2008  
Item 6.a.

**SUBJECT:** Pleasanton Gateway Bernal Property  
PSPA-02, PUD-02-07M, and PCUP-210

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Pleasanton Gateway, L. L. C. (Scott Trobbe).

**PURPOSE:** Application for an amendment to the Bernal Property Phase One Specific Plan, a major modification to the approved PUD development plan, and a conditional use permit for a commercial/office development on an approximately 39.22-acre property.

**GENERAL  
PLAN:** Bernal Property Specific Plan (Commercial/Office)

**ZONING:** PUD - C (Planned Unit Development - Commercial)

**LOCATION:** Southeast Corner of Bernal Avenue and Valley Avenue between Valley Avenue and I-680.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Exhibit "B", Discussion Items, dated May 28, 2008.
2. Exhibit "A", dated "Received May 14, 2008" including Master Site Plan; Building Floor Plans and Elevations – Office Buildings 1 through 7, Retail Shops 1 through 7, and the Safeway Grocery Store and Fuel Station; Bernal Avenue Street Elevation; and Landscape Plans.
3. Exhibit "C", Location Map
4. Exhibit "D", Previously approved office development plan including site plan, building floor plans and elevations, and landscape plan.
5. Exhibit "E", Excerpts from Bernal Property Specific Plan and PUD development plan pertaining to the subject property.
6. Exhibit "F", "Pleasanton Gateway – Potential Uses" prepared by the applicant.

## I. BACKGROUND

### Proposal

The applicant, Pleasanton Gateway, proposes to modify the office-only approval of their property in the Bernal Property Specific Plan to allow a mixed-use development that would include business and professional offices and retail uses, including a Safeway grocery store and a self-serve gasoline station, and personal services. The Pleasanton Gateway proposal represents the first major change to the land use plan of the Bernal Property Specific Plan since its adoption by the City Council nearly eight years ago.

The proposed project is presented to the Planning Commission as a work session for the Commission's review and to provide direction.

### Background

In August 2000, the City Council approved the Bernal Property Specific Plan, PUD Development Plan, Final Environmental Impact Report, and Development Agreement. The 39.22-acre project area is generally defined by Bernal Avenue to the north, Valley Avenue to the east, City parkland to the south, and the I-680/Bernal Avenue exit ramp to the west. The City has started construction on the first phase of the Bernal Community Park with its completion anticipated for the summer of 2009.

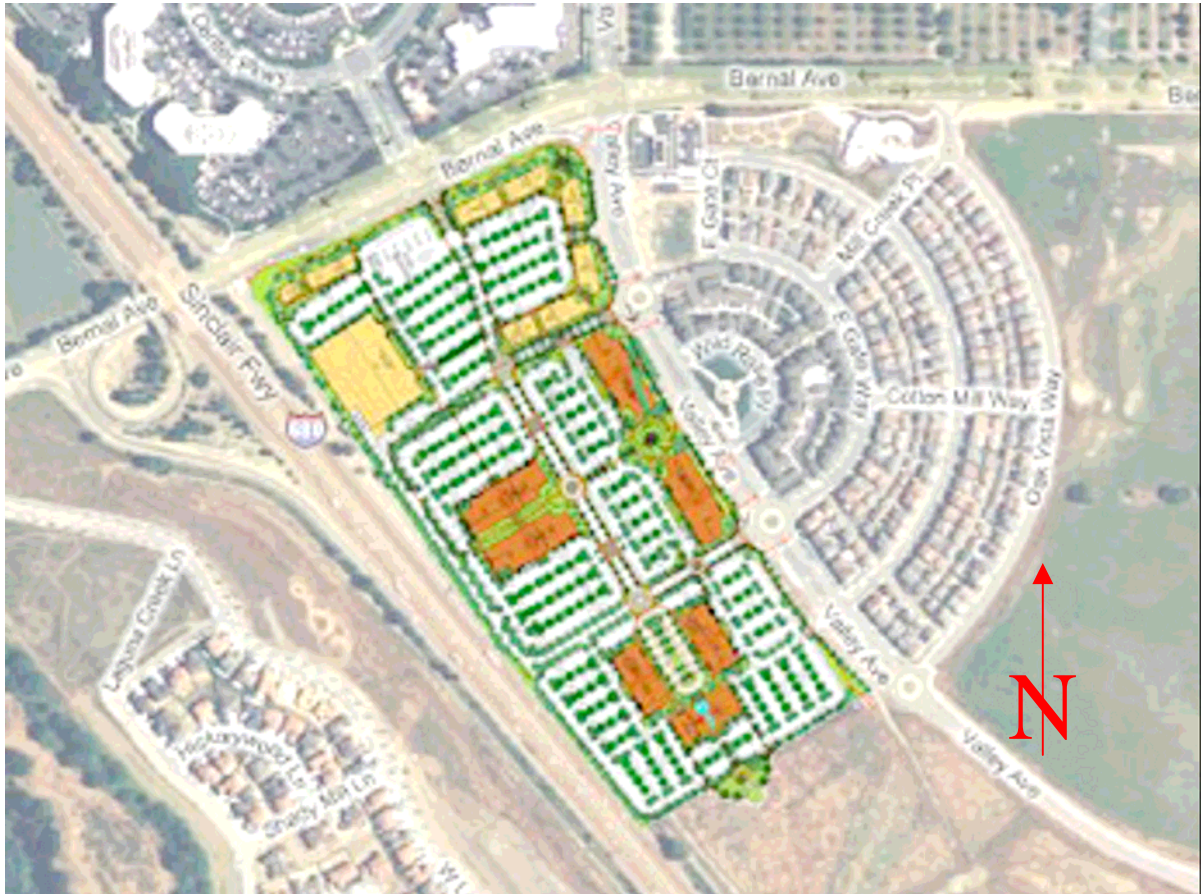
## II. SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property is a flat, vacant site with its primary frontage and orientation towards Bernal Avenue and Valley Avenue. The primary public street access is from Valley Avenue. The applicant proposes one entry from Bernal Avenue, generally aligned with Koll Center Parkway, to provide right-turn-in/out only of the development. Surrounding land uses are described in Table 1, below:

**Table 1: Surrounding Uses**

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Land Use</b>
North	Office and commercial uses
East	Self-serve gasoline station with convenience market and carwash, vacant land, apartments, public park, and small-lot single-family homes.
South	Bernal Property community park site and bio-retention ponds.
West	I-680 and the Bernal Avenue off-ramp.

Figure 1, below, shows the proposed project superimposed on the site and the surrounding developments and uses.



**Figure 1: Aerial Photograph/Location Map of the Proposed Development and Surrounding Land Uses**

### **III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Figures 2 and 3, on the following page, are, respectively, the site plans for the approved development and the proposed development. The proposed development revises the previously approved plan by replacing the two office buildings at the north end of the site with proposed retail and by replacing the two office buildings at the south end of the site with three smaller office buildings as well as revising the location of the central four buildings allowing a pedestrian and vehicular north/south and east/west axis. The revised site plan also provides parking in closer proximity to Buildings #1 and #2 of the office portion and reduces the visual impacts of parking areas to the freeway.

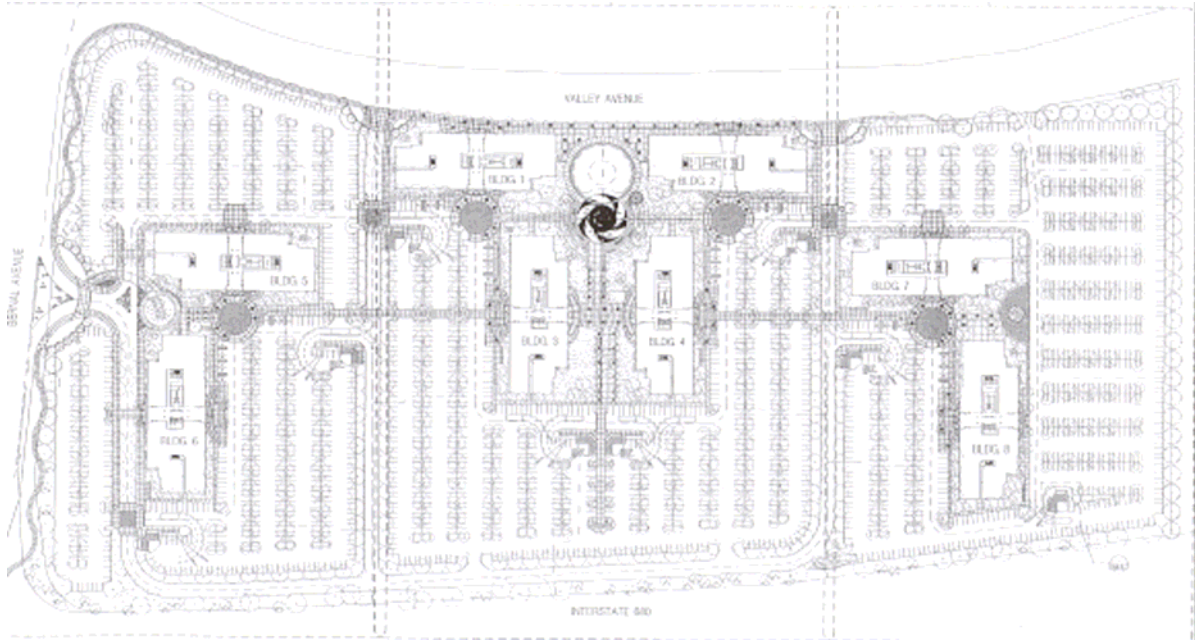


Figure 2: Existing Site Plan



Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan

The Pleasanton Gateway Bernal Property development includes the following:

- General office uses on 26.87 acres totaling 588,500 square feet of floor area in seven, four-story tall buildings including business, professional, medical, and administrative offices.

The buildings would be 66 feet in height. The building design would follow the design theme and style of the previous approval with minor modifications to incorporate green building measures and updated building code requirements.

- A Safeway grocery store with 65,000 square feet of floor area. Its loading/service area would face the I-680/Bernal Avenue off-ramp and would be screened by landscaping from the view of the freeway. The building height will vary from 26-feet at the freeway to 38-feet at the entrance. Staff has been working with the applicant to achieve four-sided architecture.

Safeway proposes to operate a self-service gasoline station with 10 fuel dispensers and an 880-square-foot employees/equipment building but no convenience market or carwash. The applicants have stated to staff that the service station would be the only drive-through use proposed with this application. The building heights would vary from 23 feet for the building to 26 feet for the canopy.

Safeway has stated that this development proposal reflects their new store model as a “lifestyle” store. The grocery store and the service station would operate 24 hours per day.

- Seven satellite retail buildings would provide 59,506 square feet of building floor area. The applicants anticipate that the tenants in these stores would follow the permitted uses of the City’s C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) and C-C (Central Commercial) Districts. Staff notes that fast food restaurants would be allowed as sit-down restaurants only. The applicant has agreed to a future condition to not allow convenience markets, drive-through restaurants, and other types of drive-through uses.

The proposed building heights for these buildings would vary from 19 feet to 26 feet. The applicants have designed these buildings to be complimentary with the surrounding architecture by incorporating standing seam metal roofs, granite/brick wainscots, wood trellises, awnings, and dark aluminum storefront window systems. The building facades facing Bernal and Valley Avenues would have clear windows.

- A total of 2,467 parking spaces would be provided – 651 parking spaces for the commercial area and 2,467 parking spaces for the office area.
- A pedestrian plaza area is proposed on the Bernal Community Park property directly adjoining the site’s south side.
- The applicant proposes to install pedestrian amenities including seating, shade structures, landscaping, fountains, etc., throughout the development.
- The applicant requests a five-year extension of the existing Development Agreement, which will currently expire in 2010, to 2015.

The proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) would be 41.7 percent for the overall development based on 713,006 square feet of building area. The commercial and office FARs would be, respectively, 22.9 percent for 124,506 square feet and 50.5 percent for 588,500 square feet. (These numbers correct the 41.6-percent number stated on the “Master Site Plan” of

Exhibit “A”). The amount and distribution of building, landscape, and hardscape areas is described in Table 2, below.

**Table 2: Land Uses and Coverage**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Land Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Site Area</b>
Building area (not including pump island canopy)	285,855 sq. ft.	16.7%
Parking and Driveways	815,430 sq. ft.	47.8%
Landscape and walkways	607,224 sq. ft.	35.5%
Total		100%

**Entitlements**

The applicant is requesting the following entitlements:

- a modification to the Bernal Property Specific Plan,
- a modification to the Bernal Property PUD development plan for the building and site design,
- a modification of the Development Agreement, and
- a Conditional Use Permit for the operation of the Safeway supermarket and service station.

**IV. DISCUSSION**

The proposal was peer reviewed by Larry Cannon of the Cannon Design Group, the City’s architectural peer review consultant. Mr. Cannon’s comments focused primarily upon the pedestrian linkages between the office and retail portions of the development and between the development and the residential areas to the west and to the City’s community park to the south. Mr. Cannon also commented briefly on a few details for the commercial structures to improve their pedestrian scale, architectural detailing, and the landscape planter layout of the parking areas. The plans for review have been revised to reflect the peer review comments.

**Bernal Property Specific Plan**

Maximum and Mid-Point Density

The proposed project’s overall floor area ratio (FAR) is 41.7 percent. The Bernal Property Specific Plan does not define the maximum and midpoint FAR’s for this property. For comparison, the Retail/Highway/Service Commercial, Business, and Professional Offices land use designation of the Pleasanton General Plan, which staff considers applicable to this development, states a maximum and midpoint FAR of 60 percent and 35 percent, respectively. Where a development proposal exceeds the midpoint density of the Land Use designation of the General Plan, amenities are then required to offset the higher density.

The applicant has designed the site and landscape plans with pedestrian pathways and linkages – shown as heavy dotted lines on the “Master Site Plan” – to Bernal and Valley Avenues, to the residential uses across Bernal Avenue to the east, and to the Bernal Com-

munity Park to the south. Noteworthy, in staff's opinion, is the development's proposed interface with the Bernal Community Park. Staff considers the applicant's overall proposal to successfully fulfill the amenity requirement of the Pleasanton General Plan.

#### Applicable Specific Plan Policies

The Specific Plan addresses the review of subsequent land use proposals for the Bernal Property development as follows:

*"In reviewing subsequent land use proposals, (the) City shall seek to minimize potential conflicts associated with the approved Phase I Land Use Diagram and the future Phase II uses (as they may be established), such as noise, light and glare, and other such nuisances between: (i) adjoining land uses within the project, and (ii) land uses within the project as n those adjoining it."*

An overall land use goal of the Specific Plan is that the individual developments of the Specific Plan should work together visually and physically as an integrated whole.

The Bernal Property Specific Plan sets forth general design criteria for this site, including its frontage onto Bernal Avenue and Valley Avenue and its relationship to the surrounding residential and open space areas of the Specific Plan. A summary of the design criteria follows:

- The overall design should result in a pedestrian-friendly activity place.
- The buildings along Bernal Avenue and Valley Avenue should be located so that the majority of their frontage directly faces the public street.
- The parking spaces along Bernal Avenue and Valley Avenue should be located to the side or rear of the buildings.
- Street trees should be provided along driveways, drive aisles, and pedestrian connections.
- The development should create a community focal point and gathering place.
- The development should encourage the reduction of vehicle trips by fostering pedestrian access through its integration with residential uses.
- The development should provide convenient pedestrian routes to adjacent residential areas encouraging residents to walk, rather than drive, to the stores and offices.

#### *Discussion Points:*

1. *Does the Planning Commission believe that the proposed project implements the applicable goals and policies of the Bernal Property Specific Plan for this proposed project?*

#### Uses

The applicant's preliminary list of uses for the commercial project, "Pleasanton Gateway – Potential Uses", is attached.

The Bernal Property PUD (Ordinance No. 1814) allows the permitted and conditionally permitted uses of the O (Office) District, the I-P (Industrial Park) District, and the C-C (Central Commercial) District. The uses for the retail portion of the Pleasanton Gateway development are addressed in the Specific Plan as follows:

“neighborhood-serving retail/service uses” and “community retail uses” for the non-office uses in the commercial/office portions of the Bernal Property Specific Plan. In addition, “non-retail uses such as medical and dental offices, banks, travel agencies, etc., and other community-serving public and institutional-type uses such as child-care centers, meeting rooms, etc., are also encouraged” by the Specific Plan.

Staff, however, suggests the following modifications to this proposal:

- Remove the fuel island component of the proposed project.
- Combine selected permitted and limited conditional uses of the City’s C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) and C-C (Central Commercial) Districts.
- Restrict convenience markets from being allowed.
- Medical facilities including doctors’ offices, chiropractor offices, clinics, etc., may be limited to the office development. Staff is currently analyzing the potential parking demand.
- Game arcades would not be allowed.

A final list of uses would be developed and provided to the Planning Commission as the project review concentrates on what these uses may be.

*Discussion Points:*

2. *Does the Planning Commission wish to comment on the type uses that would be allowed for the commercial and office portions of this development?*

**Site Plan**

Site Design

The site plan is designed to emphasize pedestrian links, sight lines, and walkways between the development’s commercial and office areas, between the individual buildings within each area, and between the site and the surrounding uses and developments. These visual/physical linkages would include:

- The north/south axis/driveway linking the office/retail areas together.
- The east/west axis created between the open spaces of the public park on the east side of Valley Avenue terminating at the westerly portion of the site development.
- A landscape transition between the development’s south property line and the adjoining Bernal Park areas.
- Plaza areas with pedestrian amenities.



- A location for public art on the plaza.

Setbacks

The Bernal Property PUD development plan did not specify minimum development standards for this site. Table 3, below, describes the proposed landscape and building setbacks from the property line.

**Table 3: Proposed Building and Landscape Setbacks**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Building Setback</b>	<b>Landscape Setback</b>
North Property Line (Bernal Avenue)	41 feet to 48 feet. 52 feet to 63 feet to the street curb.	41 feet to 48 feet. 52 feet to 63 feet to the street curb.
East Property Line (Valley Avenue)	25 feet to 27 feet from Shops Buildings #4 and #5, respectively. 22 feet from Office Buildings #4 and #5.	25 feet to 27 feet from Shops Buildings #4 and #5, respectively. 22 feet from Office Buildings #4 and #5. 12 feet from the bus "pull-out" to 22 feet to 74 feet from the parking spaces.
South Property Line (Bernal Community Park)	148 feet from Office Building #4.	14 feet from the parking spaces.
West Property Line (I-680 Exit Ramp)	124 feet to 134 feet from Office Buildings #6 and #7, respectively. 26 feet to 28 feet from the Safeway building. 156 feet to 166 feet from Office Buildings #6 and #7, respectively, and 58 feet to 32 feet from the Safeway building to pavement.	20 feet to 23 feet from the parking spaces. 64 feet to 92 feet.

*Discussion Points:*

3. *Is the Planning Commission satisfied with the measures shown on the plans to screen/buffer the view of the Safeway service area from the Bernal Avenue off-ramp?*

Service Station

The proposed project includes a self-service station owned and operated by Safeway. It would face Bernal Avenue and would have five pump islands with fuel dispensers and a small building for employees and equipment but would not include a carwash or convenience market. The canopy and building are designed to compliment the architectural style of the Safeway and the commercial structures and are screened by a berm and landscaping.

Staff believes that the service station compromises the critical gateway effect at this location and that it is unnecessary to assure the development's success. The Bernal Avenue/Valley Avenue intersection is considered a major gateway into the City from the I-680 freeway going towards the Alameda County Fairgrounds, the Pleasanton City Hall cam-

pus, the Pleasanton downtown, etc. The Community Care Element of the Pleasanton General Plan states:

*“City entries affect the way visitors see the community and are the “welcome home” points for returning residents.”*

This aspect of the proposal, therefore, raises the following land use issue for the Planning Commission’s consideration: are two service stations appropriate at such an important gateway intersection, and would these land uses support the Community Care Element of the Pleasanton General Plan? Staff believes that the combined intensity of two service stations may be considered too great a concentration.

*Discussion Points:*

4. *Does the Planning Commission support a second service station at this gateway intersection?*

**Building Design**

The proposed project necessitates high quality building design. The building designs were peer-reviewed by Mr. Cannon early in the project’s review process.

- The commercial/office buildings appear to be designed with an overall architectural theme that provides common design elements of materials, design details, and forms that would visually link the individual buildings while at the same time achieving the individual buildings’ design identity.
- The proposed office buildings follow the previously approved design themes established by the building designs of the previous approval.
- The building designs provide significant articulation and variation of building volumes.
- The buildings are designed with four-sided architectural design with design massing and detailing distributed to all building sides, and with design details and elements that establish a “pedestrian scale” to the overall building designs.

*Discussion Points:*

5. *Is the Planning Commission satisfied with the overall architectural design of the office and retail buildings?*

**Landscaping**

A conceptual landscape plan is provided. The proposed plan would incorporate plant species having low watering requirements as well as being an attractive asset to Bernal Avenue and to the Walnut Hills development. The proposed project’s landscape treatments would also be designed to require relatively low maintenance. These features include:

- Limited turf areas would be provided only in the public use areas in the western area of the site.

- Predominantly low water use plant species would be used.

*Discussion Points:*

6. *Does the Planning Commission support the design of the site utilizing low water use plant materials that support the water efficiency standards?*

**Signage**

Signage is shown for the Safeway store and the project entrance from Bernal Avenue. Although the applicant has stated that there will be monument identification signs facing Bernal Avenue, Valley Avenue, and the I-680 frontage, the design details for these signs are not part of this plan set. No sign design details are shown for the commercial tenants.

Staff directs the Commission's attention to the height of the building sign on the Safeway building – 5 feet for "Safeway" and 6 feet, 8 inches for the Safeway logo. The heights of the recently approved Safeway building signs at the Amador Shopping Center are 4 feet for the "Safeway" letters and 5-feet, 4-inches for the "S" logo. Staff believes very strongly that the heights of the proposed signs should be significantly reduced.

Regarding monument signs, the City follows a policy of monument signs no taller than 6 feet, although sites adjacent to freeways may be increased to 12 feet.

*Discussion Points:*

7. *Regarding monument signs, would the Planning Commission prefer to see photo montages for a 6-, 8-, and 12-foot tall proposal?*

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public notices were sent to the property owners, business owners, and business tenants within a 1,000-foot radius for the property and to all residents in the Laguna Oaks development and the Bernal Specific Plan area. A public notice was also sent to the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, the Pleasanton Downtown Association, and to the owners and managers of Pleasanton supermarkets/grocery stores including Safeway, Lucky's, Nob Hill Foods, Gene's Fine Foods, Raley's, and Cole's Market.

As of the writing of this staff report, staff has received verbal comments from the owners of the Pleasanton Corners service station and the Gene's Fine Foods grocery store indicating their opposition to the proposal based upon the potential impacts to their businesses.

**V. RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Planning Commission review the proposal, hear all public testimony, and provide comment to the applicant.

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