

DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

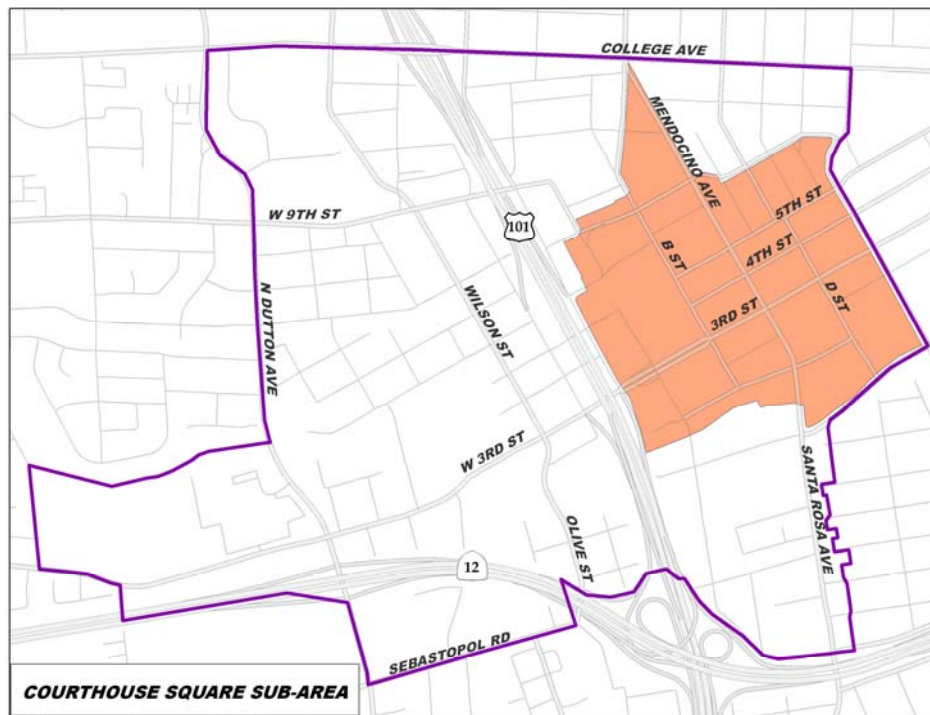
ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES CONSISTENCY AMENDMENTS

COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUB-AREA

DATE: OCTOBER 2009

TO: PROPERTY AND BUSINESS OWNERS, COMMUNITY INTEREST GROUPS, AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES CONSISTENCY AMENDMENTS IN THE COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUB-AREA



The Courthouse Square sub-area is the commercial core of Santa Rosa, and extends from Highway 101 east to E Street, and from College Avenue south to Sonoma Avenue.

Zoning Code Amendments

The following is a summary of potential Zoning Code amendments that would implement the Specific Plan in the Courthouse Square sub-area:

a. New Combining District

The Specific Plan identifies numerous streets and corridors that play a larger role in the daily functioning and traffic patterns of the area than others. Because of their distinctive role, the Specific Plan created specific development guidelines and streetscape standards that would enhance and reinforce unique characteristics and create environments that are comfortable to walk in.

To implement the Street Type and Corridor Type standards outlined in the Specific Plan, staff is recommending that the Zoning Code be amended to add a new Street Type (-ST) Combining District.

Staff is recommending that all properties that have frontage along the street segments listed in the chart below, or border Santa Rosa Creek, be rezoned to add the -ST combining district.

The requirements for the new combining district are outlined below:

- New construction on properties that border Santa Rosa Creek will be required to include entry level doors and windows visible from the Creek. Activity generating uses will be encouraged. This means that new construction will need to provide a building entry that faces the creek area, as well as windows along the portion of the building that faces the creek, as opposed to a solid, blank wall. The reason for this is to help provide “eyes” on the creek to create a safe environment.

Fences and walls along the Creek will be strongly discouraged, and, where necessary, will have a minimum requirement of 50% transparency. Again, this is to help keep “eyes” on the creek, rather than a solid fence that would block off the creek. This will apply to new fencing only; existing fencing will not need to be removed.

- Certain segments of B Street, 1st Street, 3rd Street, 4th Street, 6th / A / 7th Street Corridor, Santa Rosa Avenue, Mendocino Avenue and Healdsburg Avenue will have new land use and building placement requirements, as illustrated in the chart below:

COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUB-AREA									
Street	Segment	Development Standards							
		Building Height (stories)	Stepback Minimum 6 ft (at x floor)	Ground Floor Ceiling Height	Ground Floor Use	Ground Floor Transparency	Entries Facing Street Frontage	Parking	Building Placement
Urban Center Street Type									
3rd Street	Hwy. 101 to E Street	2-10	above 5th	min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	50% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
B Street	7th Street to 1st Street	2-10	above 5th	min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	50% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
Santa Rosa Avenue	Sonoma Avenue to 3rd Street	2-10	above 5th	min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	50% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
1st Street	B Street to Santa Rosa Avenue	2-10	above 5th	min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	50% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
Shop Front Street Type									
4th Street	Hwy. 101 to E Street	2-10	above 3rd	non-residential uses min. 12 ft	Retail	80% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
Mendocino Avenue	College Avenue to 4th Street	2-10	above 3rd	non-residential uses min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	80% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
6th / A / 7th Street Corridor	Hwy. 101 to Humboldt Street	2-7	above 3rd	non-residential uses min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	80% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
Entryway Street Type									
B Street	Healdsburg Avenue to 7th Street	2-5	above 3rd	non-residential uses min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	25% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line
Healdsburg Avenue	College Avenue to B Street	2-5	above 3rd	non-residential uses min. 12 ft	Retail, Residential or mix of both	25% or more	Yes	none within 20 ft of back of sidewalk	property line

In addition to the Development Standards listed in the cart above, the Specific Plan also includes “special considerations” for development in each street type. Below are the special considerations within the Courthouse Square sub-area (please note that not every street type has special considerations for every sub-area):

Urban Center Street Type

- (1) Courthouse Square. Properties facing directly into Courthouse Square should be developed with fairly consistent building heights. Ground floor uses should be retail.
- (2) Right-of-way and setbacks. Require right-of-way dedications or require building setbacks along 3rd Street and B Street to provide additional space for pedestrian facilities and planting of street trees where needed.
- (3) City Hall site. New development on the existing City Hall site may be set back from the build-to line (property line) at the discretion of the Design Review Board.
- (4) City-owned parking facilities. Future development of City-owned parking facilities should result in no net loss of public parking spaces, and should include increases in the supply of public parking spaces.

Shop Front Street Type

- (1) Courthouse Square. Properties facing directly onto Courthouse Square should be developed with consistent building heights. Ground floor uses should be retail.
- (2) 4th Street connection. Reconnect 4th Street between Railroad Square and Courthouse Square through the Santa Rosa Plaza.
- (3) 4th Street. Properties fronting on 4th Street in Courthouse Square and Railroad Square should have at least one retail use at the ground floor level.
- (4) City-owned parking facilities. Future development of existing City-owned parking facilities should result in no net loss of public parking spaces, and should include increases in the supply of public parking spaces.

Entryway Street Type

- (1) Height and scale. New development adjacent to the St. Rose and West End historic neighborhoods should be compatible in height and scale with existing structures.
- (2) Retain single-family residences. Allow replacement of existing single-story single-family detached homes when located in a historic preservation district.

b. Historic Combining District

The Specific Plan contains repeated references to the importance of the City's existing Preservation Districts and preserving the unique historic context that exists within downtown Santa Rosa and the boundaries of the Specific Plan. Consistent with this direction, staff is recommending modifications to the Historic Combining District to strengthen the unique historic context of each of the existing Preservation Districts.

Proposed modifications to the Historic Combining District (-H) within the Zoning Code would include general guidelines for process and procedure within all of the designated preservation districts, with reference to The Processing Review Procedures, Design Guidelines, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The current height limitations would remain for all properties with the -H designation.

Setbacks for properties with the -H designation would be flexible to fit within the surrounding historic context of each neighborhood and would be allowed through the applicable Landmark Alteration and/or Design Review process.

The most significant change to the Historic Combining District language would be specific information for each of the City's eight preservation districts. For each preservation district the combining district would contain the following elements:

- (1) District Designation
- (2) District Boundaries
- (3) Context Statement
- (4) Period of Significance
- (5) Character Defining Elements

No changes would be made to which properties have the -H designation. Modifications are limited to expanding the level of applicable detail for Santa Rosa's existing preservation districts.

c. Individual Parcel Rezoning

Staff is recommending rezoning of existing Planned Development (PD) zoning districts to more fully implement the vision of the Specific Plan and clarify zoning requirements for properties within this sub area.

The majority of the St. Rose neighborhood is zoned under the Historic St. Rose Neighborhood Planned Community District. All properties within the boundaries of the current Historic St. Rose Neighborhood Planned Community District will be recommended for rezoning to a standard zoning district that is consistent with existing land use designations.

The area fronting on A Street between Sixth and Seventh Streets, as well as the north side of Seventh Street between B Street and A Street is designated a combination of Medium Density and Retail and Business Services in the General Plan. Current land uses include a variety of commercial and public institutional uses. Staff is recommending that this area be rezoned to Neighborhood Commercial - Historic (CN-H) to be consistent with the existing land use designation as well as current land uses. The properties along the east side of B Street are currently designated Retail and Business Services in the General Plan. Staff is recommending that this area be rezoned to Downtown Commercial - Historic (CD-5-H), consistent with the surrounding properties in the CD-5 zone.

d. Parking

The Parking requirements within the Courthouse Square sub-area will not change as illustrated in the chart below:

PARKING REQUIREMENTS: COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUB-AREA		
Land Use	Existing Zoning Code Parking Requirements	Proposed Specific Plan Parking Requirements
Attached, Multi-Family Residential	1 space per unit.	1 reserved space.
Non-Residential	None. <i>(This area is in the Central Services Parking Facilities District, which exempts non-residential parking requirements.)</i>	None. Except a minimum of 600 shared parking spaces are required for the future City Hall-Performing Arts Center.

Please see the “General Changes to All Sub-Areas” document for additional general amendments to the Parking section of the Zoning Code, such as language that may help to provide findings for parking requirement reductions.