

Shape Our Fremont

Developers Target Mission San Jose

The list of developers who want to build more houses in the heart of Mission San Jose is growing larger, and so is the number of houses. At the last count, there are four proposals to add 324 new housing units in the Town Center. These units would range from apartments to custom homes in two-, three-, and even four-story buildings -- all within a few hundred yards of the historic Mission.

The Four Proposals

The largest proposal is from Ohlone College, which has signed a 99-year land lease with SteelWave LLC to build 275 two-story rental apartment/townhouse units and 6,500 square feet of commercial space across the frontage on Mission Boulevard. As the first step, the college has submitted a General Plan Amendment Screening Request asking Fremont to consider changing the land use designation from Public Facility to a mix of Residential and Commercial. The Fremont Planning Commission has deferred hearing that request until an independent Mission San Jose Commercial Study is complete and has been presented in May. In the meantime, residents are encouraged to email their comments on the Ohlone Frontage proposal to City Staff Planner Bill Roth at broth@fremont.gov

The second proposal is Mission Paradise from Green Globe, which wants to build a mixed-use project with 14 townhouses, 6 flats, and 5,470 square feet of commercial space in several three-story buildings on the southwest corner of Washington Boulevard and Ellsworth Street. All the existing buildings on the site would be demolished. This proposal has gone through a Preliminary Review Procedure by the Fremont Planning Department, and is now going through a more detailed review as a Formal Application. Public input is welcome. To express your comments and questions about the Mission Paradise proposal, contact City Staff Planner Mark Hungerford at mhungerford@fremont.gov.

The third proposal is Ellsworth Villas from WRD Green Inc, which recently submitted a request to build 18 townhouses, 5 flats, and 3,465 square feet of commercial space in several three- and four-story buildings on the property occupied by the vacant McIvors Hardware store on Ellsworth Street. The store and parking lots would be demolished, but the two existing properties on Mission Boulevard would remain, as would the open plaza area between them. This proposal is currently undergoing a Preliminary Review Procedure by the Fremont Planning Department, and public input is welcome. To express your comments and questions about the Ellsworth Villas proposal, contact City Staff Planner Terry Wong at twong@fremont.gov.

Finally, the smallest of the four proposals would subdivide several parcels on Witherley Lane into eight lots. Two existing houses would remain on a portion of their lots, and the remainder of the land would be divided to form six additional lots for custom single-family homes. This proposal has undergone a Preliminary Review Procedure. Public input is still welcome. To express your comments and questions about the Wang Lot Subdivision proposal, contact City Staff Planner Mark Hungerford at mhungerford@fremont.gov.

Get Involved

Before any of these proposals is presented for a final decision, Fremont residents need to get involved. Will more homes mean more benefits to the community, or will they just mean

more problems? What will the impacts be on traffic, schools, businesses, and the quality of life in the area? Are mixed-use projects, with a little commercial space surrounded by a lot of residential space, an appropriate fit for the Mission San Jose business district? And do three- and four-story townhouses really belong anywhere in the Mission San Jose Historic Overlay District?

Residents often have unique experiences and perspectives that apply to specific developments, and their comments are every bit as valuable in the decision process as those from professional consultants and staff. Individual emails on each separate proposal are the most effective way to communicate comments and concerns. All correspondence will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council to consider in making their decisions.

To learn more about these proposals and other housing developments in Fremont, go to **www.ShapeOurFremont.com**