

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

REQUEST: REZONING OF PROPERTY AT 519, 525 AND 601 6th STREET FROM RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY (RM) WITH SINGLE FAMILY CONSERVATION OVERLAY (O-SFC) TO RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY (RM)

BACKGROUND:

In July 2014, the City acquired three properties at 519, 525, and 601 6th Street (formerly the Ames Community Pre-school) with Community Development Block Grant funds. The three subject properties total approximately 27,000 square feet and are currently zoned Residential Medium Density with the Single Family Conservation Overlay District (RM with O-FSC) (Attachment A). The site has frontage along 6th Street and access from a rear alley. City Council initiated rezoning the property to RM in May of 2015 along with issuing a request for proposals to develop up to 10 affordable housing units on the site.

The O-SFC district was created in response to a disruptive redevelopment pattern of building apartment buildings in place of single-family homes. The purpose of the O-SFC district “is intended to conserve the existing single-family residential character of areas identified as O-SFC adjacent to downtown” and to “protect single family neighborhoods while guiding the transition to higher density and compatibility with the surrounding uses where intensification is permitted”. The O-SFC applies to residential properties generally between Grand and Duff and 6th Street and 13th Street.

Under the regulations of the O-SFC district, individual lots may not be consolidated to allow for intensification of housing density. For the City’s three properties, the maximum density for each property currently is limited to only one duplex structure per lot for a total of 6 affordable housing units on the three properties. The combined sites maximum density without the O-SFC is 12 apartment dwellings or 10 attached single family dwellings. Attached single family is the Zoning Ordinance term for townhouse or row house buildings on individual lots. Development of the site would still require compliance with parking and other site design standards for the lots. The RM District allows for both Single Family Attached and Apartment style housing as an administrative minor site plan approval. Subdivision of the lots would be required for a true single family attached residential housing type that have units on individual narrow lots.

The LUPP map (Attachment B) designates the properties as Downtown Service Center. The LUPP plan notes this block (from 6th to 7th Street between Grand and Clark Avenue) specifically as being within the residential area adjacent to downtown and does not identify this as a core part of Downtown. LUPP Goals 5 and 6 and their objectives support providing for additional housing opportunities and for integration of infill

development within existing neighborhoods. In planning for the residential areas surrounding the downtown, the LUPP discusses the desire to conserve the older residential areas but also notes that the zoning in some surrounding residential areas would indicate that “intensification is likely” but that the change should be both “selective and limited.” **Staff has determined that a LUPP Amendment is not necessary to remove the overlay district zoning of the site since the base zone of RM and its allowed uses of residential would not change with removal of the overlay.**

A request for proposals (RFP) for redevelopment of these three lots includes requirements that the project develop at a maximum intensity of 10 units for the combined site. The RFP described project is a mix of affordable rental housing units with a minimum of 80% of the units as three bedroom units. The development shall be of townhomes or having the appearance of individual townhomes units with front entries oriented to 6th Street, rather than a single apartment building. Proposed projects will also be required to have brick as the primary exterior building material for the front and side facades. Parking will be accessed from the existing alley north of the properties and is expected to be provided at a rate of two spaces per unit. Even though the rezoning request seeks to remove the O-SFC district from the property, staff has included the Single Family Conservation Overlay District design guidelines within the RFP in order to keep the project design cohesive with the surrounding neighborhood that is still within the conservation district.

Staff held an outreach meeting in March with the neighboring property owner to the west and the church to the east. Staff explained the concept of townhome housing and intent for rental affordable housing. The discussion covered topics of the density of development, access to the site, use of the alley and church parking lots, need for housing, and use of the site.

Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation: At its public hearing on July 1, 2015, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted 6-0 to recommend that the City Council rezone the subject properties from Residential Medium Density (RM) with the Single Family Conservation Overlay District (O-SFC) to Residential Medium Density (RM). A resident from the neighborhood spoke in regards to the rezoning petition noting concern for more than 6 units on the three lots and the effect more units will have regarding traffic in the alley. No others comments in favor or opposition to the rezoning were received.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the request for rezoning of the properties at 519, 525, and 601 6th Street from Residential Medium Density (RM) with a Single Family Conservation Overlay District (O-FSC) to Residential Medium Density (RM), based upon staff’s findings and conclusions as found in the addendum.
2. The City Council can deny the request for rezoning of the properties at 519, 525, and 601 6th Street from Residential Medium Density (RM) with a Single Family

Conservation Overlay District (O-FSC) to Residential Medium Density (RM) if it finds that the City's regulations and policies are not met.

3. The City Council can defer action on this request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The City has a need for more affordable housing opportunities and the subject site is an opportunity to maximize this opportunity in a context sensitive manner. The subject sites are a great example of a transition area from downtown to other residential neighborhoods to the north as there are residential structures only to the west and north edges of the site. Development of the site with medium density townhomes would be compatible within a transition area that is not part of a substantially residential neighborhood.

Because the rezoning of these properties will facilitate the City Council's goal to increase the availability of affordable housing, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council accept Alternative # 1 as described above.

ADDENDUM

REZONING BACKGROUND:

Existing Land Use Policy Plan. The LUPP Map designates the three properties as Downtown Service Center. Based on the LUPP Map this designation applies to the entire area generally lying from the railroad tracks north to 7th Street between Grand Avenue and Duff Avenue. The LUPP text identifies the boundaries of the Downtown for planning purposes as “6th Street on the north; Duff Avenue on the east; South 3rd Street on the south; and Grand Avenue on the west.” It further identifies this block (from 6th to 7th Streets between Grand and Clark Avenue) specifically within the residential area adjacent to downtown. Therefore, it is believed that maintaining the existing residential base zoning of the property is consistent with the LUPP.

Existing Zoning. In line with the text of the LUPP, the current zoning boundary for the Downtown Service Center (DSC) District is 6th Street on the north. The Neighborhood Commercial (NC) District encompasses the area between 6th and 7th Streets from Clark Avenue to Duff Avenue. This is the general area of commercial properties north of 6th Street. The use of the block between Grand Avenue and Clark Avenue is still strictly residential uses north of 6th Street. Therefore, the intent of this rezoning request is not to change the current base zone of the subject properties. It is the intent of the City to maintain the Residential Medium Density (RM) base zone, but to remove the current Single Family Conservation Overlay District to allow for an increase in the number of units available for affordable housing and also to allow for flexibility in subdivision of the lots on the buffer area between the Commercial and Residential Zoning Districts.

Existing Uses of Land. Land uses that occupy the subject property and other surrounding properties are described in the following table:

Direction from Subject Property	Existing Land Uses
Subject Property	Vacant
North	Owner/Rental Occupied Housing
East	First Community Christian Church and Parking Lot
South	Ames City Hall and Parking Lot
West	Owner Occupied Housing

Infrastructure. The site is fully served by City infrastructure. Sanitary sewer and water are available, as is electric services. Additional easements may be needed to accommodate the proposed location of the future residential building(s) which will be determined at the time of Site Plan review.

Access. Vehicular access is provided to the site from Grand and 7th Street through the existing alley along the north side of the properties. No traffic improvements are anticipated. The church has expressed concern that increased use of the alley may result in people driving the wrong direction through their parking lot as a cut-through to

6th street. This issue may be considered at the time of site plan review rather than rezoning.

Applicant's Statements. This is a City initiated request for the redevelopment of the site. City Council initiated the rezoning request at its meeting in February of 2015.

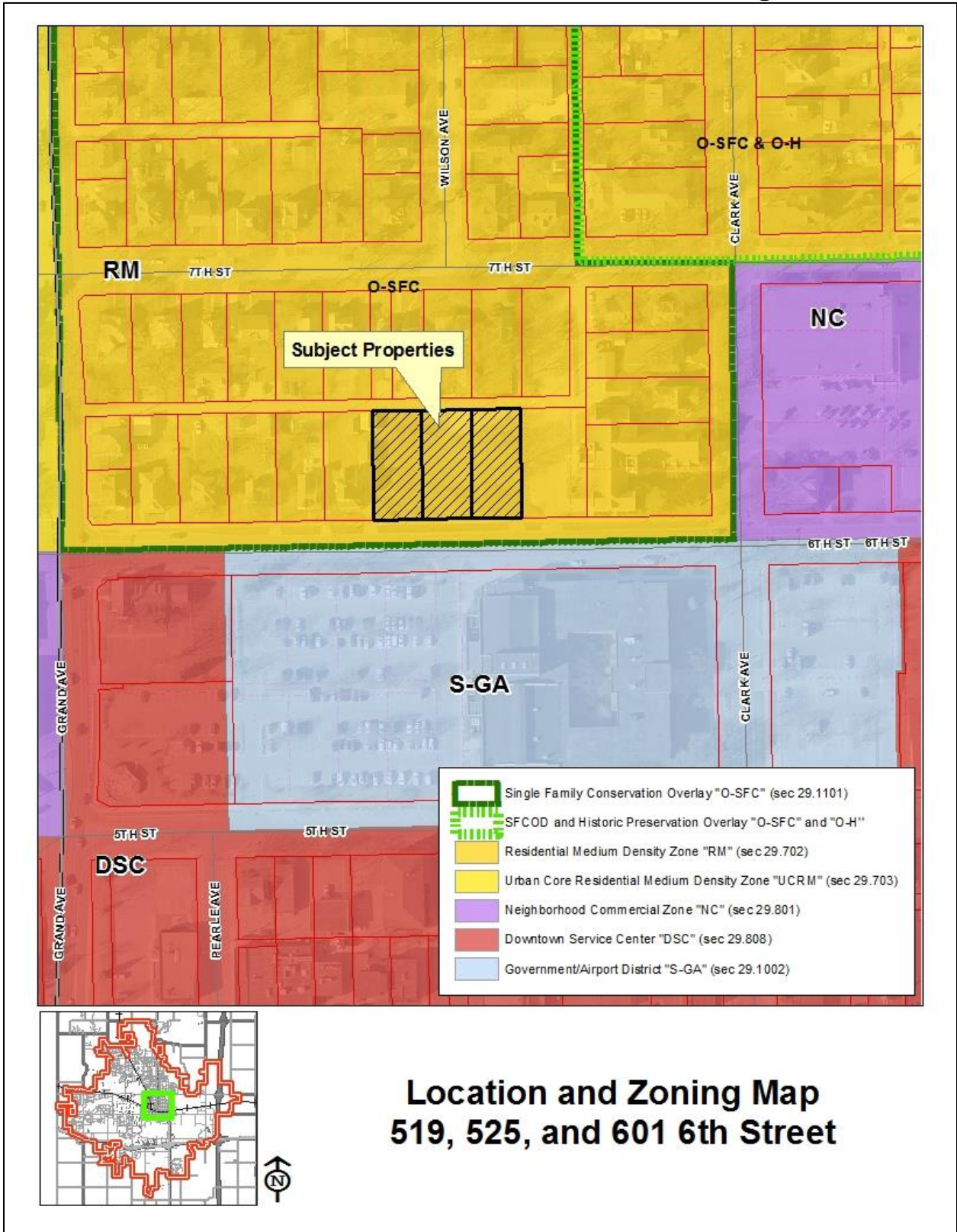
Findings of Fact. Based upon an analysis of the proposed rezoning and laws pertinent to the applicant's request, staff makes the following findings of fact:

1. *Ames Municipal Code Section 29.1507(1)* allows for City Council to initiate the amendment, supplement, or change the regulations, districts, or Official Zoning Map of the City.
2. The subject property has been designated on the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Future Land Use Map as "Downtown Services Center."
3. The LUPP text identifies the boundaries of the Downtown for planning purposes as "6th Street on the north; Duff Avenue on the east; South 3rd Street on the south; and Grand Avenue on the west." It further identifies the block encompassing the subject properties (6th to 7th Streets between Grand and Clark Avenue) specifically as within the residential area adjacent to downtown. Maintaining the RM base zoning district for the subject properties is in line with the goals of the LUPP to maintain residential infill uses surrounding the downtown service center area and allowing for areas of intensification, where appropriate, as a transition to the surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Infrastructure is adequate to serve the site. Necessary easements for service line connections to the site will be determined at the Site Plan review stage.
5. Existing access to this site will remain from the alley north of the properties accessed from Grand and 7th Street.

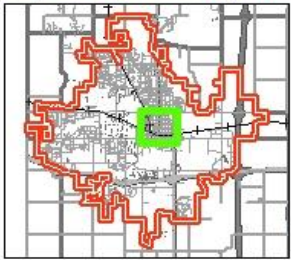
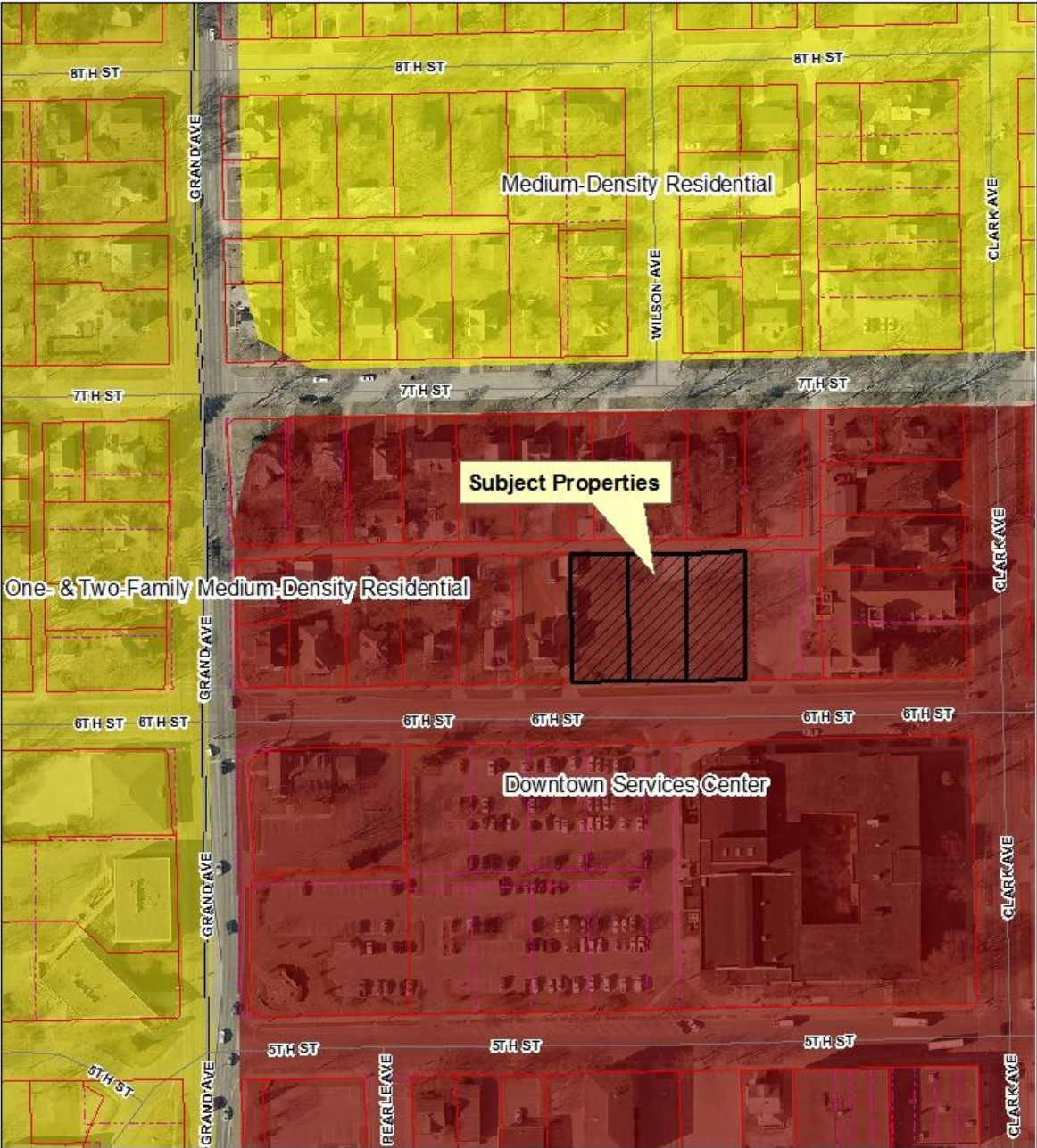
Public Notice. Notice was mailed to property owners within 200 feet of the subject site and a sign was posted on the subject property. As of this writing, no comments have been received.

Conclusions. Based upon the analysis in this report, staff concludes that the proposed rezoning of the subject property is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, as well as the Goals and Objectives of the City of Ames Land Use Policy Plan.

Attachment A: Location and Current Zoning



Attachment B: Land Use Policy Plan Map [Excerpt]



**Land Use Policy Plan Map
519, 525, and 601 6th Street**

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, AS PROVIDED FOR IN SECTION 29.301 OF THE *MUNICIPAL CODE* OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY CHANGING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED AND SHOWN ON SAID MAP AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 29.1507 OF THE *MUNICIPAL CODE* OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Ames, Iowa;

Section 1: The Official Zoning Map of the City of Ames, Iowa, as provided for in Section 29.301 of the *Municipal Code* of the City of Ames, Iowa, is amended by changing the boundaries of the districts established and shown on said Map in the manner authorized by Section 29.1507 of the *Municipal Code* of the City of Ames, Iowa, as follows: That the real estate, generally located at 519, 525, and 601 6th Street, is rezoned from Residential Medium Density (RM) with Single-Family Conservation Overlay District (O-SFC) to Residential Medium Density (RM).

Real Estate Description: Lot 17, Lot 18, and Lot 19, Well's Subdivision of Block 43 in Blair's Third Addition to Ames, Story County, Iowa.

Section 2: All other ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 3: This ordinance is in full force and effect from and after its adoption and publication as provided by law.

ADOPTED THIS _____ day of _____, _____.