



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 11, 2008
For June 26, 2008 Hearing

Albert Elias

TO: Peter M. Gavin
Zoning Examiner

FROM: Albert Elias, AICP
Urban Planning & Design
Director

SUBJECT: REZONING – URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN REPORT
C9-08-06-Historic Depot Area – Toole Avenue, I-1 to OCR-2 (Ward 6)

Issue – This is a request by the City Manager’s Office, on behalf of the City of Tucson, to rezone approximately seven acres of City owned property from I-1 to OCR-2 zoning. The rezoning site is bounded to the north by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and right-of-way, to the south by the diagonal Toole Avenue, to the west by 6th Avenue and to the east by the 4th Avenue underpass (see Case Location Map). The City requests the rezoning to unify the downtown zoning and to create greater flexibility in the allowed land uses for future development.

Department of Urban Planning and Design Recommendation – The Department of Urban Planning and Design recommends approval of OCR-2 zoning, subject to the attached preliminary conditions.

Background Information

Existing Land Use: Undeveloped, Historic Train Depot and future site of the Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) Administration Offices and the Greyhound Bus Depot.

Surrounding Zones and Land Uses:

North: Zoned I-1 and C-3; Southern Pacific railroad tracks, the Sangin and Arizona Electrical Supply buildings, bars, restaurants, the Coronado Hotel and residential.

South: Zoned C-2 and OCR-2; A paved lot, the MacArthur Building (office), Hotel Congress, and parking at the former Greyhound Bus Station.

East: Zoned C-3 and I-1; Undeveloped land and railroad associated use.

West: Zoned I-1 and OCR-2; The 6th Avenue underpass, parking and the warehouse district.

Previous Cases on the Property: None.

Related Cases:

C9-06-25 The Post – Broadway Boulevard, C-1 and C-2 to OCR-2. This was a rezoning request for approximately 0.3 acres of a larger (0.55 acre) property located on the south side of Congress Street between Stone and Scott Avenues, approximately four blocks south of the current rezoning site. The rezoning was requested to allow the development of a six-story, 75-foot tall, mixed-use structure, consisting of retail, restaurant, and office uses and 47 residential condominium units, on 0.55 acres. On December 5, 2006, Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance No. 10356. A subdivision plat was approved on October 10, 2006 and the case was closed on January 1, 2007.

C9-07-23 El Mirador – Franklin Street, I-1, C-3 to OCR-2 and I-2. This was a request to rezone approximately 5.76 acres from I-1 and C-3 to OCR-2 and I-2 zoning to allow a mixed-use development comprised of retail, administrative and professional offices, 150 residential condominium units, a hotel, brewery, restaurants and parking. The rezoning site is located on the northwest corner of Stone Avenue and Franklin Street. On November 27, 2007, the Mayor and Council authorized the rezoning request subject to conditions. No other activity has occurred regarding this case.

Applicant’s Request – The City requests a rezoning of a seven acre parcel from I-1 to OCR-2 to unify the downtown zoning and to create greater flexibility in the allowed land uses for future development.

Planning Considerations

The *El Centro Redevelopment Plan* and the *General Plan* provide relevant policy guidance for the requested rezoning. These *Plans* identify Downtown as a major activity center and encourage the upgrading of this area as a mixed-use activity area to increase transit use; reduce air pollution; improve delivery of public and private services; and create inviting places to live, work, and play.

Both of these *Plans* recommend high quality urban design elements as reflected through appropriate style, scale, and arrangement of structures. The *El Centro Redevelopment Plan* and the *General Plan* policies encourage and support developments that respond to physical characteristics of the site, adjacent land use patterns; enhancing the visual appeal of the streetscape; and incorporating neighborhood recommendations into site planning and design.

The *General Plan* identifies Downtown as an *activity center*, which calls for more intense land uses, i.e. mixed-use developments and densities, and is supported by the prevalent intense zoning pattern within this area. Activity centers promote a planned and integrated combination of commercial, office, entertainment, service, educational, employment, and residential uses within a focused area. This area is identified in the *El Centro Redevelopment Plan*, as a Core Support District, which allows for a wide variety of high intensity land uses. The Core Support District supports adaptive reuse projects that call for a blending of the new with the old, permitting such land uses as business, professional, office, government, retail, entertainment and recreational, restaurant, hotel, high density residential, and parking. Height restrictions in the plan are limited

restaurant, hotel, high density residential, and parking. Height restrictions in the plan are limited to 300 feet, with pedestrian circulation and linkages integral to this area. These uses are consistent with the current surrounding zoning and development pattern.

The *El Centro Redevelopment Plan* cites the City's main role is to assist and facilitate private sector investment in the area. This *Plan* also establishes certain land use and design objectives for the area; developers seeking public assistance will be expected to incorporate these objectives into their projects. It is anticipated that most development activity in the area will be undertaken with private financing.

Residential, restaurants, bars and an electrical supply company and Sargin building are located along the north side of the railroad tracks. The majority of this property is zoned I-1. Parcels located east of Stevens Avenue, between 9th and 10th Street, are zoned C-3. Properties located south of the rezoning site, across Toole Avenue include the T.I.C.E.T transfer station, office, residential, restaurant and hotel uses. The majority of this property is zoned OCR-2, with three parcels zoned C-1 and C-2.

Vehicular access to the rezoning site is proposed from Toole Avenue. Toole Avenue, identified as a collector roadway at its ultimate right-of-way width feet on the *Major Streets and Routes Plan* map, is south of the rezoning site. The *Major Streets and Routes Plan* map also shows the alignment of a future arterial, the Barraza-Aviation Parkway (Downtown Links) immediately north of the property.

Design Considerations

Land Use Compatibility – The City of Tucson currently has no immediate plans to sell the site, rather, it hopes to be proactive in allowing for more flexible options with regards to future land uses. The northwest portion of the parcel has been identified as the City's new Greyhound Bus Depot and the Department of Transportation office building. The renovated and historically significant Southern Pacific Train Depot occupies the central portion of the seven-acre parcel. The site abuts the Fourth Avenue Underpass and trolley extension to the southeast, which connects Downtown with the pedestrian-friendly shopping/retail area of the Fourth Avenue District. It also is adjacent to the Warehouse Arts District, a future art/retail district that is found to the northwest of the site, along Toole Avenue. Rezoning this site from I-1 to OCR-2 would allow a greater opportunity for a mix of residential, retail, and entertainment uses to develop. These land uses are compatible, and in keeping with, the current/future planned redevelopment and reinvestment that is taking place in the eastern portion of Downtown, such as the Hotel Congress, the Martin Luther King Building, the Southern Pacific Depot, and the Rialto Theatre.

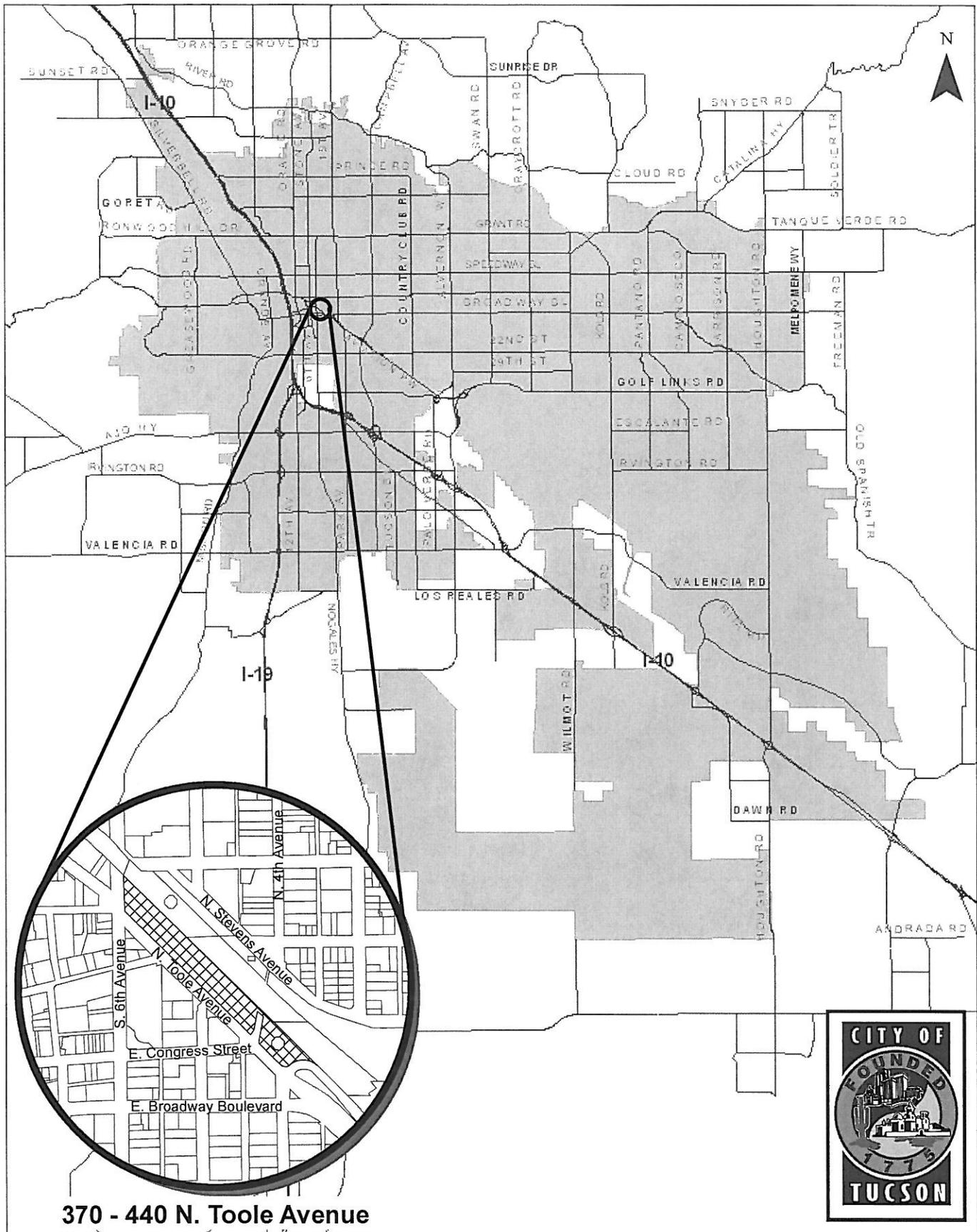
According to the Pima County Cultural Resources Department, the historic Southern Pacific Railroad train depot, designated AZ BB:13:700(ASM), is a Priority Historic Site, as determined by the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP), and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The entire area has a high density of cultural resources and is considered to have high archaeological sensitivity, as defined in the SDCP. As such, buildings and/or modifications that would obstruct the historic use and setting of this significant historic site, would not be allowed.

Drainage/Grading/Vegetation – The property is not within a regulatory watercourse, floodplain, or riparian habitat.

Road Improvements/Vehicular Access/Circulation – There are no plans for road improvements, vehicular access and circulation associated with the requested rezoning.

Conclusion – The *General Plan* and the *El Centro Redevelopment Plan* support the City’s effort to facilitate future private sector investment through this rezoning. The requested OCR-2 zoning is also compatible with the existing zoning in the area and will provide an opportunity for a greater variety of uses, including residential.

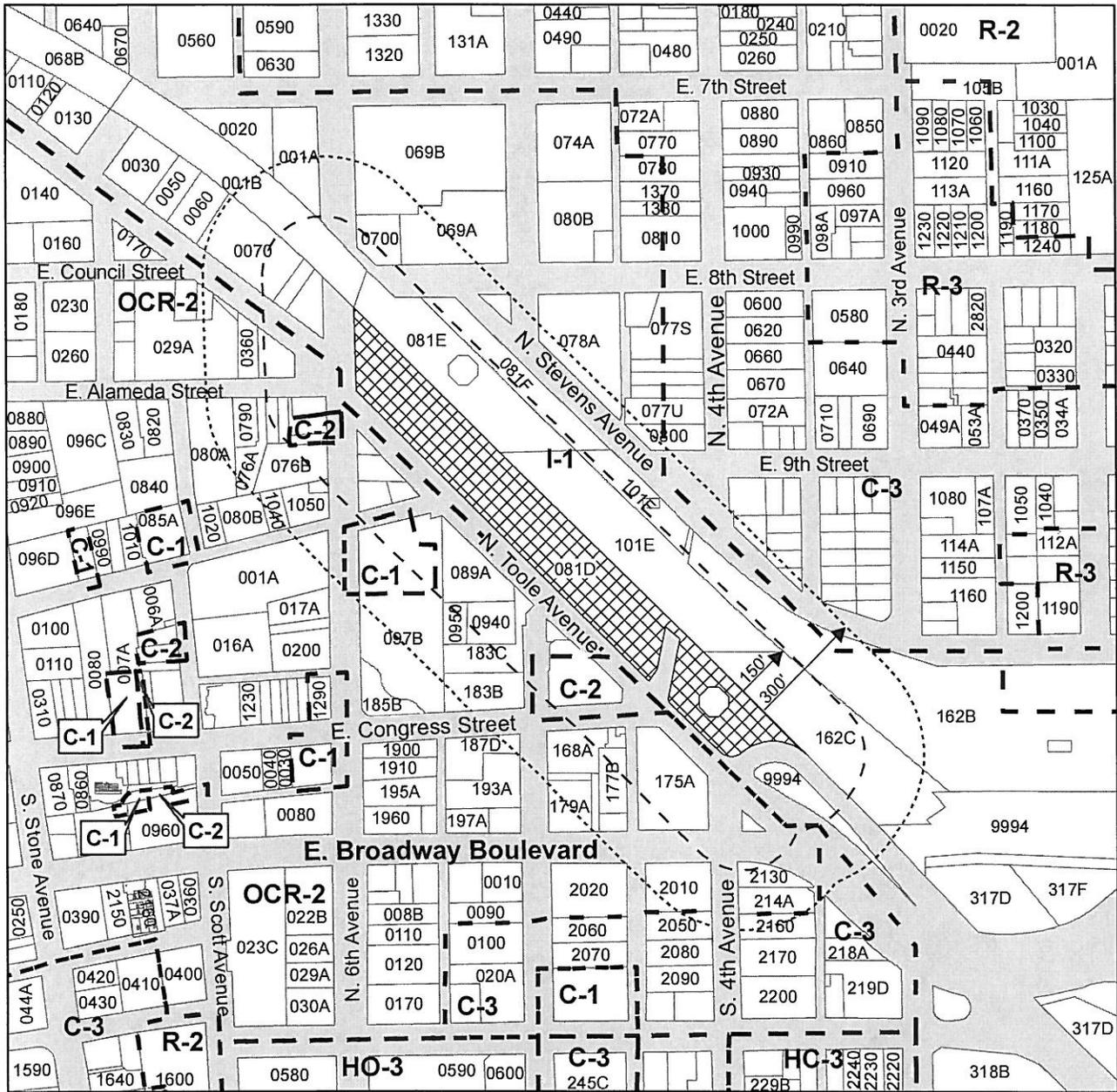
C9-08-06 Historic Area Depot - Toole Avenue



370 - 440 N. Toole Avenue

C9-08-06 Historic Area Depot - Toole Avenue

Rezoning Request: from I-1 to OCR-2



0 200 400 Feet
1 inch equals 400 feet

- Area of Rezoning Request
- Protest Area (150 foot radius)
- Notification Area (300 foot radius)
- Zone Boundaries

Neighborhood, Area Plan(s): El Centro Redevelopment Plan
 Address: 370 - 440 N Toole Ave
 Base Maps: Sec.12 T.14 R.13
 Ward: 6

