

Old truck stop site to get major overhaul

The commercial infill development market is shaping up and there is strong interest in retail development. Here is a glimpse at some projects coming down the pipeline that might be pretty interesting.

Probably the biggest story in the commercial development sector is the old “truck stop” site on Suisun Valley Road. The developers have submitted to the City for review a major regional/community shopping center with over 450,000 square feet in shop, restaurant, and retail space. The site plans show six majors, restaurants, and smaller retail shops.

The final “deals” for the anchor stores have not been inked, but the plans show one very large (170,000 square foot +) anchor and a second sizable (90,000 square foot +) space. Given the visibility of this center, the City will be looking very closely at the site plan and architecture.

This site is probably the last major, large scale commercial site in Fairfield with freeway frontage. Thus, the property owners (and the City) are looking for large users that will serve a city-wide (or regional) market.

Infill redevelopment is also looking up in central Fairfield. Watch for a sprucing up of the shopping center on the southeast corner of East Tabor Avenue and North Texas Street. The owners are planning a brand new façade for this aging strip mall, currently occupied by restaurants, mini-markets, and a furniture store.

One concept discussed at the City’s retail summit last year: creating an International Marketplace. If you look at the tenant mix already in place along this section of North Texas Street (particularly the Mexico Meat Market supermarket), this might make sense. A makeover incorporating colorful signage, enhanced landscaping, new facades, and smaller scale tenant spaces could be suitable for new entrepre-

neurs. It would certainly “clean up” a center that has been undergoing some problems with vacancies and building conditions.

Other commercial districts may see changes as well. On Holiday Lane next to the health club, the current site of a small metal building could see redevelopment with multi-tenant retail center that would complement Pier One and other retail spaces along the corridor.

Just down the road, look for a new tenant to occupy the former Yardbirds building in Fairfield Corners Shopping Center (Travis Boulevard at Oliver Road). And we hear that a downtown taqueria is relocating to the Fairfield Corners Shopping Center to open a stylish Mexican eatery. Even small scale projects can help improve a neighborhood—look for a new coffee stand on West Texas Street near Second Street.

Finally, in the longer term, planning for the re-configured parcels created by the new North Texas Street/Manuel Campos Parkway/I-80 interchange is well underway. Forrar Williams Architects are assisting the City with preliminary site design concepts. This new interchange improvement (and development nearby) may also inspire interest in the old Howard Johnson’s site at the northern end of Nelson Road.

As the above nuggets of development activity demonstrate, there is certainly no slow down of commercial retail infill development in the Fairfield marketplace.

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