

SECTION IV. REASONS FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENT

1. Location and General Nature of Request

Catalina Foothills Center, GP is seeking a comprehensive plan amendment for its approximately 50-acre holdings located generally at the northeast corner of Oracle Road and Genematas Drive. Oracle Road is a four-lane, divided arterial that is under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) as State Route 77. Genematas Drive is a two-lane paved public street. The property also has direct access to Oracle Road by way of Yvon Drive, a two-lane public street. Pima County is presently proceeding with an abandonment request of Yvon Drive through the subject property. As such, this right-of-way will ultimately become part of this project's holdings and so is included as a part of this amendment request.

From a land use perspective, the site is located within an urbanized context and a major transportation corridor. The only departure from this general statement is the properties located to the adjacent east, these being established, single-family



residential lots with CR-1 zoning (minimum lot size of 36,000 SF). To the north is the Quail Valley Tennis Club and the Quail Canyon Golf Course. To the west, across Oracle Road, is a mix of numerous professional office complexes, the Pueblo Vista Townhomes, and several established

restaurants (the U-Like Buffet, Red Lobster). To the south is the existing River Village Shopping Center and, south of River Road, a Circle K and the Friendly Village of the Catalinas mobile home park.

Further out from this immediate context, the trend towards urbanization is clear. The Oracle Road corridor represents an intensive and expanding mix of commercial and retail uses, professional & medical offices, and higher-density residential. The City of Tucson city limits fall just south of the subject property, and the intensity of land use increases accordingly therein, including the presence of a major regional mall. The zoning districts surrounding the site feature everything from CR-1 (for the single-family residences to the east), to CR-4 and CR-5 residential zoning (for the various townhome and patio home projects), to TR (Transitional) zoning for the various professional and medical offices, and finally to CB-1 commercial zoning for the many retail establishments throughout the Oracle Road corridor. Within the City portion of the surroundings, zoning ranges from RX-1 to O-3 (Office) to the C-1 & C-3 commercial districts.

This comprehensive plan amendment request is driven by the owner's desire to proceed with the complete masterplanning and redevelopment of its property. It presently contains a mix of rental casitas, apartments, and single-family residences. While these are still wholly functional and occupied, they are somewhat dated and, in the bigger picture, no longer the most appropriate or best use for an intensifying major transportation corridor.

It is the owner's vision and intent to redevelop the property to feature a commercial activity center node together with complimentary residential uses. The activity center requires the *Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)* comprehensive plan designation and is intended to feature a higher-end boutique hotel with spa and other resort-style amenities. Complimenting the hotel will be a specialty retail/shopping, restaurant and entertainment district. This district is intended to feature a line-up of specialized retailers and restaurants that have heretofore not been present in the Tucson market, thus providing a unique shopping and dining experience for both hotel visitors and the public at large.

The anticipated residential uses on the property will likely include patio homes and townhomes, thereby necessitating the requested *Medium Intensity Urban (MIU)* comprehensive plan designation. Another potential use within the *MIU* district is an assisted-living facility, which is viewed as a viable and attractive possibility for elderly individuals wishing to live in close proximity to the proposed retail/shopping/restaurant district while still receiving the appropriate level of on-going care and services that the assisted-living environment provides.

With all of the above in mind, the subject property represents an appropriate mixed-use, infill development that is appropriate for -- and will be designed to fit well within -- the established urbanized context and the major transportation corridor that abuts it. Specialized and enhanced buffering will be intelligently integrated into the project design so to appropriately respect and protect the existing lower-density single family residences which lie adjacent to the east. In addition, vehicular traffic will be controlled so as to insure no spill-over occurs into these adjacent lower-density residential areas.

2. Requested Comprehensive Plan Designation

As already alluded to, the requested comprehensive plan designations for this property are *Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)* and *Medium Intensity Urban (MIU)*, which will accommodate the envisioned uses described immediately above. The subject property already contains a large portion of *MIU*, so this request represents an expansion of that designation in conjunction with the new *NAC* designation. A portion of the property is also categorized as *Resource Transition (RT)*. This *RT* area recognizes the existing Pima Wash; the *RT* designation will, by-and-large, be left as-is.

3. Reasons for Plan Amendment Request

As mentioned above, the site is envisioned as ultimately being developed as masterplanned, mixed-use project featuring commercial, retail, restaurant, and complimentary residential uses. This land use mix is justified in light of the established and expanding urbanized context that typifies the area and the Oracle Road transportation corridor.

a. Implementation of Growing Smarter Act

The proposed plan amendment is consistent with, or furthers, several of the Smart Growth Principles as identified by the Smart Growth Network (SGN). These are individually discussed below:

Mix of Land Uses

Given the established and expanding urbanization within the Oracle Road transportation corridor, the site is best developed as a mixed-use development featuring commercial, retail, restaurant, and supporting/complimentary residential districts. With proper design, a project of this intensity can recognize, respect and protect its existing lower-density residential neighbors to the east.

Take Advantage of Compact Building Designs

The project will promote commercial components and higher-density residential uses that can be effectively clustered in a compact spatial arrangement that protects and preserves important on-site natural topographic and drainage/habitat features, while also affording the efficient design of on-site infrastructure. Preserved natural features, such as the Xeroriparian "C" and Important Riparian Area (IRA) on the site, will be incorporated as an open space amenity and greenway corridor.

Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities

The establishment of a new commercial/retail node, together with higher-density residential development on the site will contribute significantly to larger regional opportunities for multi-modal transportation within the Oracle Road corridor.

Rational Infrastructure Expansion and Improvements

The proposed plan amendment clearly advances this principle. It will build off of the established, project-convenient public utility and transportation infrastructure that is already in place immediately adjacent to the subject property. Expansion of this infrastructure to serve the actual

on-site development will be accomplished at developer cost, together with fair-share contributions toward larger regional needs as required by Pima County's routine impact fee requirements.

Conservation of Natural Resources

The Pima Wash traverses the northwest portion of the plan amendment site and is designated as *Important Riparian Area (IRA)* by the Conservation Lands System (CLS). It is the intent of the proposed masterplan to treat this designated IRA in accordance with CLS guidelines, which allow for no more than 5% disturbance of the identified area.

Going forward, the site's final development program will be promulgated in consultation with Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation staff, as well as key private stakeholders, so as to achieve a development concept that satisfies the property owner's objectives while also recognizing applicable CLS policies. In the event that more than the 5% threshold disturbance allowed is necessary, the additionally disturbed area will be suitably mitigated through other on-site set-asides or through a combination of on-site and off-site mitigation acceptable to the Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation.

The CLS topic is mentioned further below in Section 3.b (Open Space Element, Environmental Element) and Section 3.f (Compatibility with Conservation Lands System).

b. Implementation of Comprehensive Plan Policies, etc.

This proposed plan amendment complies with or furthers the County's Regional Plan ("RP") policies as discussed below. The pertinent RP policies are contained in the following elements: Land Use, Public Services and Facilities, Solar Energy Systems, Circulation, Water Resources, Growth Area, and Environmental. All are discussed below.

Land Use Element

Cultural Heritage (RP 1.B; p. 4). There are no significant cultural resources or heritage elements located in the immediate area. All future on-the-ground development and construction activity will, of course, proceed in full accordance with all applicable cultural resource procedures, inventory requirements, and mitigation parameters in force at the time of future rezoning activity and subsequent site disturbance.

Site Design and Housing. With respect to site planning, the Project will provide appropriately enhanced buffering and screening and be of a human scale that respects and visually integrates into the established residential

neighborhoods to the east (RP 1.C.1.a, b & c, p.15). The final design and particulars of such buffering will be developed through coordination, meetings and discussions with the adjacent neighborhood leadership and residents during the rezoning process.

The entire project will be designed as a contained, mixed-use project with a consistent architectural theme and style, as well as consistent thematic elements and design features used throughout the development. Formal design guidelines will be developed to insure the on-going advancement and enforcement of this principle. As such, it will create a unique, project-specific sense of place and make a positive contribution to the quality of the surrounding built environment (RP 1.C.1.d, p.15).

With respect to compact development, the Project will promote higher intensity commercial and higher-density residential mixed-use infill within a major transportation corridor and will do so by clustering it in appropriate nodes and development sectors on the site while preserving significant on-site topographic and drainage features (RP 1.C.2, p.15). As already mentioned above, a primary element of the project will also be providing adequate and respectful buffering of the existing lower-density residential use to the immediate east of the site.

Public Services and Facilities

Wastewater Policies. With respect to sewer line infrastructure, the Project will connect to existing wastewater conveyance infrastructure already in place. Extensions of the public system onto and through the subject property will be funded exclusively on a private basis and meet all applicable design, access, and construction parameters of the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department. Concurrency and capacity will be suitably verified at the time of future rezonings (RP 1.D.1, p.16).

Flood Control Policies. All surface drainage and hydrologic design will proceed in full conformance and coordination with the Pima County Regional Flood Control District (PCRFCDD). The Pima Wash traverses the northwest portion of the property; preservation of riparian habitat associated with the Pima Wash, and as designated by the Conservation Lands System, will proceed in coordination and cooperation with all applicable RFCD and CLS guidelines (RP 1.D.2.a, p.17).

Solar Energy Systems

Structure and Site Design. East-west building orientation will be an objective, together with the placement of long-axis building frontages in arrangements that will optimize their beneficial solar exposure during winter months and limit their summertime exposure. Alternative, cost-

effective roof treatments and coatings will be evaluated to maximize reflectance, temperature control, and interior energy efficiency (RP 1.E.1, p.19).

Subdivision/Development Design. The planned residential component will be designed in compact units so as to minimize large paved areas. Landscape elements will be clustered into grouped tree plantings, as opposed to systematically rowed in “orchard” fashion, so as to enhance pavement shading and reduce surface heating. Landscape and pedestrian amenity areas will emphasize the provision of shaded areas to create usable outdoor spaces and to provide highly usable pedestrian linkages between the residential and commercial components of the project (RP 1.E.2.a & b, p.20).

Circulation Element

Timing/Concurrency. Transportation infrastructure necessary to serve the plan amendment is in place. Oracle Road is a full-improved four-lane divided facility, while Genematas Drive is an uncurbed street. Concurrency requirements for the proposed development will be evaluated in detail at the time of rezoning. Off-site improvements as necessary to serve the specific needs of the proposed development will be completed at developer expense (RP 2.A, p.22). Any such project-specific improvements will be coordinated with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT) and any improvements resulting in capacity enhancements to the regional transportation system will be evaluated for potential impact fee credits.

Yvon Drive is an existing public street that currently bisects the project. The portion of Yvon Drive through the subject property is currently being abandoned by Pima County and will become part of the project’s private holdings. From that point forward, Yvon Drive will be managed so as to physically preclude any private vehicular pass-through traffic from the subject property to the adjacent residential neighborhood to the east. Fire and emergency vehicles will, of course, be an exception to this fact and will still be allowed to pass through the site and utilize Yvon Drive as they may see fit to serve both the subject property and the existing off-site residents further to the east.

As part of future masterplanning activities, the current Yvon Drive roadway will be realigned on-site to best facilitate the proposed masterplan and the planned commercial/residential sectors. The prohibition of any private vehicular access to the adjacent neighborhood to the east (with the exception of fire & emergency access) will be maintained.

Neighborhoods. A guiding intent of the proposed redevelopment will be to route and manage vehicular traffic so that it moves to and from the Oracle Road corridor. No new traffic generated by the proposed plan amendment

site will be routed to or from – or in any way be allowed to bleed into -- the established residential neighborhood to the east (*RP 2.C, p.22*). In order to satisfy applicable fire & emergency requirements, secondary access will be required to the subject property from its Genematas Drive frontage, but this vehicular traffic will, once again, be intended to traverse Genematas Drive only as required to derive access to and from Oracle Road.

Density and Land Use. As encouraged by the regional plan policies, the project will promote a higher-intensity commercial use and higher-density residential along an established and major transportation arterial (*RP 2.F, p.22*). This policy furthers the regional desire and smart-growth principle that fosters the establishment of multi-modal transportation opportunities within such established corridors.

Bikeways. Public bikeways do not exist along Oracle Road. As mentioned earlier, Oracle Road is State Highway 77 as administered by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). Future improvements to Oracle Road may include continuous bikelane improvements at the discretion of ADOT (*RP 2.K, p.23*).

Water Resources Element

The proposed plan amendment site will be suitably evaluated by PCRFCDD staff for current and projected groundwater depth and other pertinent factors (*RP 3.B, p.22*). A Preliminary Integrated Water Management Plan (PIWMP) will be developed in conjunction with PCRFCDD staff at the time of rezoning, which will be developed into a Final Integrated Water Management Plan (FIWMP) at the time of Development Plan or subdivision plat submittal. Both plans will detail the project's water demand and specific conservation measures being employed on the project, including water-harvesting and run-off containment, grey-water systems, and specific site-planning and building construction measures (*RP 3.C, p.26*).

Open Space Element

The proposed plan amendment site will be evaluated for its value within the larger regional open space equation for Pima County (*RP 4, p.32*). This evaluation, in conjunction with the application of the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (CLS) policies, will ultimately lead to an appropriate treatment of the site in terms of suitable open space set-aside areas. The Pima Wash traverses the northwest portion of the site and is targeted for preservation in accordance with the applicable RFCD and CLS guidelines.

Growth Area Element

Increase Mix of Land Uses. This development furthers the established policy objective of encouraging mixed-use planning in designated growth areas (RP 5.A, p.33). This proposal constitutes an infill development, within a designated growth area, that will help further create a mix of uses that will be beneficial toward encouraging multi-modal transportation opportunities (RP 5.B, p.33). The project will increase the mix of uses in the surrounding region by providing hospitality, specialty-retail, restaurant and complimentary residential components, thereby contributing significantly to future demand for multimodal transportation within the Oracle Road corridor. As such, the residential component will be of a higher target density than that which presently exists, and will potentially include an assisted-living facility to further complement the on-site resort amenities, shopping/retail and restaurant uses (RP 5.C & F, p.33).

The project will also further the established policy objective that development proposals be designed to add architectural attractiveness to the area (RP 5.E, p.33). The development will be masterplanned as a contained project with a consistent architectural theme and style, as well as consistent thematic elements and design features employed throughout the development. It is envisioned as featuring a higher-end hospitality/resort-hotel operator, specialty retailers, and restaurateurs, all which demand a high level of aesthetics. Formal architectural design guidelines will be developed to insure the on-going advancement and enforcement of a consistent architectural and visual quality throughout the project.

Environmental Element

Natural Resources. The project will recognize and help implement the goals and intent of the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (MMBCLS).

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Going forward, the site's final development program will be promulgated in consultation with Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation staff, as well as key private stakeholders, so as to achieve a development concept that satisfies the property owner's objectives while also recognizing applicable CLS policies. In the event that more than the 5% threshold

disturbance allowed is necessary, the additionally disturbed area will be suitably mitigated through other on-site set-asides or through a combination of on-site and off-site mitigation acceptable to the Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation.

c. Existing Relevant/Applicable Special-Area Policies.

At the time of this submittal, no Special-Area or Rezoning Policies are proposed for the subject plan amendment. On-going discussions with staff and stakeholders will occur throughout the amendment process, which may result in such Policies be promulgated and refined as conditions of any approved comprehensive plan amendment that may be granted by the Board of Supervisors.

d. Existing Relevant/Applicable Rezoning Policies.

There are no adopted rezoning policies that apply to this specific plan-amendment site.

e. Potential/Proposed Special-Area or Rezoning Policies

At the time of this submittal, no Special-Area or Rezoning Policies are proposed for the subject plan amendment. On-going discussions with staff and stakeholders will occur throughout the amendment process, which may result in such Policies be promulgated and refined as conditions of any approved comprehensive plan amendment that may be granted by the Board of Supervisors.

f. Compatibility with Conservation Lands System (CLS)

The Pima Wash traverses the northwest portion of the plan amendment site and is designated as *Important Riparian Area (IRA)* by the Conservation Lands System (CLS). It is the intent of the proposed masterplan to treat this designated *IRA* in full accordance with CLS guidelines, which allow for no more than 5% disturbance of the identified area.

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g. Impact on Existing Land Uses in the Surrounding Area

Development of the proposed plan amendment site as a mixed-use project featuring hospitality, commercial/retail, restaurant, and higher-density residential uses will be consistent with the existing urbanized Oracle Road corridor. That being said, special care must be given to the treatment of project perimeters so as to appropriately recognize, respect, and buffer the existing lower-density residential uses to the immediate east. It is envisioned that these goals can be suitably met with intelligent, thoughtful design and in conjunction with on-going meetings and discussions with adjacent neighborhood leadership and residents throughout the future rezoning process.