



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 20, 2017
For October 5, 2017 Hearing

TO: Zoning Examiner

FROM: 
Scott Clark
Planning & Development Services
Director

SUBJECT: REZONING
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
C9-17-10 TCC PAD Amendment - Hotel
Major Change to PAD (Ward 6)

Issue – This is a request by Mark L. Collins, on behalf of the property owner, Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District (RN), requesting a major amendment to the TCC PAD to expand the allowed land uses in Development Area D to include a hotel, and to clarify the sports activity use by amending the “Community Center Facilities” definition and adding sports activities to the uses in Development Area D.

Planning & Development Services Recommendation – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of the requested PAD amendment for the hotel use and the sports activity clarification.

Background Information

Existing Land Use: Vacant Land

Zoning Description:

The purpose of the Planned Area Development (PAD) zone is to enable and encourage comprehensively planned development in accordance with adopted plans and policies.

The PAD is a zoning classification which provides for the establishment of zoning districts with distinct standards. A PAD may have land use regulations different from the zoning regulations in the UDC, any other PAD District, or other zoning districts.

Surrounding Zones and Land Uses:

North: Zoned OCR-2; La Placita Village Commercial Center

South: Zoned C-1, C-3, HR-2, HR-3, HC-3 and HO-3; Historic Residential, Office, Residential and Commercial

East: Zoned C-3, O-3; Tucson Police Department and MOMA

West: Zoned C-3; Vacant Parcels and Federal Courthouse

Previous Cases on the Property: C9-09-12 PAD-5 Major Amendment to allow a 525-room hotel in Development Area A, was approved by the Mayor and Council on December 15, 2009. That hotel proposal was abandoned for financial reasons, however a hotel use remains in Development Area A, and is not precluded by the current request.

TCC PAD-5 was originally adopted on August 3, 1987 as a Specific Plan (SP) District. The SP Districts were converted to Planned Area Development (PAD) Districts by Ordinance 9374, which was adopted by Mayor and Council on April 10, 2000. At the time, the zoning designation of the TCC changed from SP-5 to PAD-5.

Related Cases: None

Applicant's Request – Amend the TCC PAD to allow for the development of a hotel in Development Area D, and to clarify the sports activity use by amending the “Community Center Facilities” definition and adding sports activities to the uses in Development Area D. The proposed hotel site is located adjacent to the new east entrance to the Tucson Convention Center (TCC) (see Conceptual Site Map). RN is proposing a 125-room, approximately six (6) story, limited services hotel.

Planning Considerations – The *Plan Tucson* policies, and the goals of the *Tucson Community Center PAD*, provide relevant guidance for the proposal. These documents support the viability and sustainability of the Tucson Community Center as a major component of Downtown revitalization. *Plan Tucson* policies support a downtown activity center that integrates a mix of private and public uses, including entertainment, recreation, retail, restaurants, office, libraries, hotels, public meeting facilities, child care, transit facilities, and other services into activity nodes.

The *Plan Tucson* recognizes that a downtown activity center can greatly impact the general economy of the City and, therefore, includes policies that support the redevelopment of the Tucson Community Center site to foster private sector development throughout the downtown area. Policies recognize that to remain competitive, to support tourism, and to increase convention trade, facilities will require periodic expansions and enhancements.

The Tucson Community Center PAD-5 is located on the southwest edge of downtown and is part of a commercial node that abuts a historical residential neighborhood located to the south. It is a major downtown activity center with direct access, through arterial and collector streets, to Interstate-10. Congress Street (120 foot-wide right-of-way (ROW) arterial) provides direct access from Interstate 10 to the west. Granada Avenue (120-foot ROW collector) offers access on the west side of the TCC complex. Cushing Street (64-foot ROW collector) serves the south side of the property and Church Street (85-foot ROW arterial serves the east side of the TCC. Under the current proposal, the Church Street access will be enhanced to serve as the primary access for the hotel. No additional curb cuts or access points will be pursued along Cushing Street, thereby limiting hotel traffic impacts on Cushing Street and the Barrio to the south. A future Modern Street Car stop will be developed adjacent to the TCC along Cushing Street, offering patrons of the TCC and hotel a transportation alternative.

Design Considerations

Land Use Compatibility – The proposed amendment requests a change to the Alternate Permitted Uses in Development Area D to allow for a 125-room, limited services hotel. No modifications are being proposed to any of the development standards in Area D.

The maximum height allowed in Area D is 75 feet. The hotel is proposed to be six (6) stories tall, and less than 75 feet in height.

The development standards currently require a “Transitional Buffer” along Cushing Street with a maximum 25 foot building height and a minimum 30 foot building setback. The proposal will be compatible these requirements. A coffee shop/café use is planned for the height-restricted area which will be on the south side of the proposed hotel. The applicant states that scale, architectural materials and other design elements will be considered to provide an appropriate transition to the Barrio neighborhood south of Cushing Street. This use is envisioned to serve not only the hotel and TCC visitors, but also the occupants of the residential and office uses to the south. The Design Compatibility Report states the owner and developer are working with the Barrio leadership to, “...discourage vehicular traffic along Cushing Street and encourage stronger pedestrian connections and amenities along the southern border” ...of the TCC.

The sports activity clarification was recently resolved administratively by staff through a clarification letter. As part of that clarification, staff recommended the applicant include the sports activity clarification in the major amendment request so that the PAD document, itself, will be revised to reflect the clarification. This way the revised PAD document will be available for the public, without having to also obtain the clarification letter.

The TCC has historically held sporting events throughout the years since its inception as a community center, with sports originally included as a permitted alternate use within Development Area D when the Specific Plan was initially adopted in 1987.

Sporting activities/practices and sports spectator events are permitted under the definition of “Community Center Facilities”, which is defined as, [a] public gathering place where conventions, consumer trade shows, meetings and banquets, catering, alcoholic beverage service, community activities, indoor/outdoor public assemblies and entertainment can occur. The phrase “indoor/outdoor public assemblies and entertainment” includes sporting events and spectator events. Those activities are entertainment and the crowds are the public assembly. Practice activities, whether for a traveling show, or for a hockey team, are accessory to the actual entertainment. The language of the PAD does not attempt to list every type of entertainment, rather it relies on the broad definition.

Drainage/Grading/Vegetation – Any drainage or grading issues will be identified and resolved with the submittal of the Development Package, prior to construction. The existing landscaping requirements for Area D will remain the same – no changes are proposed. A concern was raised about the potential impacts of the hotel development on two existing berms associated with the Eckbo Plaza’s historic landscape, located along Church Avenue, within Area D. The owner and developer

are working with representatives of the historic preservation community to identify ways to mitigate any impacts to the berms. The mitigation solutions will be incorporated into the Development Package submittal and review.

Road Improvements/Vehicular Access/Circulation – The overall issue of parking has been identified by property owners, residents and occupants surrounding the TCC. RN acknowledges the issue. The 125-room hotel, per the PAD parking guidelines, will require 75 additional parking spaces, and the design compatibility report has modifications to the existing parking areas which will create 95 additional parking spaces, on site, for a net gain of 20 spaces. Approximately one-third of the newly identified spaces can be considered to be in close proximity to the proposed hotel. The remainder of the spaces a dispersed across the TCC site, providing useful spaces for the TCC complex. (See the Overall Site Plan, attached).

Conclusion – Approval of the requested amendments to the TCC PAD-5 document are appropriate.