



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 27, 2018
For July 12, 2018 Hearing

TO: Zoning Examiner

FROM: Scott Clark
Planning & Development Services
Director

Lyne Britton for

SUBJECT: REZONING
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
C9-18-13 Grant Road Investment District, an Urban Overlay District
R-2, R-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, I-1 to Urban Overlay District (Ward 3)

Issue – This is a request by Daniel Bursuck, on behalf of the City of Tucson, to establish the Grant Road Investment District (GRID), an Urban Overlay District (UOD). The UOD includes parcels north and south of Grant Road, extending from west of West 14th Avenue, east to North Park Avenue (See Location Maps). The application proposes the establishment of an Urban Overlay District, an optional zoning tool, offering regulatory flexibility for those projects that meet certain requirements of this segment of the *Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Corridor Vision: Oracle Road to Swan Road*.

This report will refer to the UOD by its name: Grant Road Investment District (GRID).

Planning & Development Services Recommendation – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of the Grant Road Investment District Urban Overlay District.

Background Information

Existing Land Use: Commercial Services, Retail, Food Service, Personal Storage, Light Industrial

Zoning Description:

The Unified Development Code (UDC), Section 5.13, states the purpose of an Urban Overlay District is to encourage:

- A. Comprehensively planned pedestrian and transit-oriented, urban infill, and mixed use areas;
- B. Site planning and architectural solutions consistent with the ambience of Tucson;
- C. Safe urban neighborhoods;
- D. Urban design features that include sustainable solutions and can accommodate both historical and contemporary design;
- E. Transitions that are beneficial to new and existing developments; and,

- F. Responsive development review processes that address flexible solutions for obsolete standards and accommodate desired urban trends.

A UOD is initiated by the Mayor and Council and The Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) processes the application. The UOD boundaries may include rights-of-way within and adjacent to the proposed UOD. The overlay is established in accordance with Section 3.5, *Rezoning (Change of Zoning) Procedure*. Subsequent rezoning shall require Mayor and Council approval and adoption of a rezoning ordinance for an affected area. Each UOD shall be in compliance with the adopted General Plan and applicable sub-regional, area, and neighborhood plans.

Upon establishment, the UOD shall be identified on the City Zoning Map as a shaded area. When the UOD is effectuated on a specific property(ies), the prefix “U” followed by a sequential UOD number. For the GRID, if adopted, the assigned zoning designation, e.g., C-3 becomes U2C-3, shall be identified on the City Zoning Map (the GRID would be the second UOD to be adopted). The UDC provides that the UOD may also be given a descriptive name associated with the subject area, e.g., Grant Road Investment District (GRID).

Related Cases:

C9-12-01 Main Gate District (MGD), Optional Urban Overlay District This was a request by the City of Tucson to rezone properties within the West University Neighborhood Plan’s Transition Area to an Urban Overlay District (UOD), which would allow all properties within the district a zoning option to develop transit-oriented development in support of the future streetcar line planned for this area. The OUD is bounded by Speedway Boulevard on the north, Park Avenue on the east, Sixth Street on the south, and Euclid Avenue on the west, covering an area of approximately 54 acres. On February 28, 2012, Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance No. 10968 which became effective in 30 days.

Applicant’s Request – Establish the Grant Road Investment District, an Urban Overlay District.

Planning Considerations – The UDC requires all rezonings to conform to the *General Plan (Plan Tucson)* and applicable land use plans.

Plan Compliance – Policy direction is provided by *Plan Tucson, Unit 6 Neighborhood Plan, Cragin-Keeling Area Plan, Jefferson Park Neighborhood Plan* and the *University Area Plan*.

Plan Tucson (PT) – The area of the proposed GRID on Grant Road from west of Oracle Road to east of Stone Avenue is identified on the *Plan Tucson* Future Growth Scenario Map as a Mixed-Use Center. Mixed-Use Centers combine a variety of housing options, retail, services, office, and public gathering places, located close to each other, providing occupants of the center and the residents and workers in the surrounding neighborhoods with local access to goods and services. Public transit, bicycles, and walking will get priority in these areas although cars will still play an important role. The area of the proposed GRID in the vicinity of the Grant Road and

1st Avenue intersection is classified as a Mixed-Use Corridor on the *PT* Future Growth Scenario Map. Mixed-Use Corridors provide a higher-intensity mix of jobs, services, and housing along major streets. The businesses and residences within these corridors will be served by a mix of high-frequency transit options, as well as pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Other areas within the GRID are identified in *PT* as Existing Neighborhoods. Policy supports environmentally sensitive design that protects the integrity of Existing Neighborhoods, complements adjacent land uses, and enhances the overall function and visual quality of the street, adjacent properties, and the community. *PT* policy supports infill and redevelopment projects that reflect sensitivity to site and neighborhood conditions and adhere to relevant site and architectural design guidelines. *PT* policy protects established residential neighborhoods by supporting compatible development, which may include other residential, mixed-use infill and appropriate nonresidential uses.

Unit 6 Neighborhood Plan – The primary objective of the *Unit 6 Neighborhood Plan* is to stabilize the balance of residential, commercial, and industrial uses and remove some of the circulation conflicts experienced by area residents. *Plan* policy states that any zoning change should allow maximum adjacent resident participation and safeguard to ensure a project remains compatible with neighboring residential development.

Cragin-Keeling Area Plan – The *Cragin-Keeling Area Plan* is intended to guide future development while protecting and improving existing neighborhoods, and encourage office and commercial development at appropriate locations within the Cragin-Keeling area. Land uses along the street frontages of Stone Avenue and First Avenue in the area of the proposed GRID are predominately office and commercial.

Jefferson Park Neighborhood Plan (JPNP) – The *JPNP* identifies the southeast corner of Euclid and Grant as a commercial destination. The *JPNP* calls for edge treatment within the existing right-of-way along Euclid and Grant that better protects properties from the impact of traffic; and, to ensure commercial uses do not displace existing residential uses.

University Area Plan (UAP) – The *UAP* supports new development on the perimeter of residential areas which serves to protect and enhance the quality of life for neighborhood residents. Development should demonstrate sensitivity to surrounding uses in the design, location, orientation, landscaping, screening, and transportation planning of new development, as outlined in the General Design Guidelines (Section 8). The *UAP* identifies the Grant Road corridor, from Stone Avenue to 4th Avenue as Industrial Area 1 and the appropriateness of office/commercial uses. Policies also support the consideration of consider the conversion of residential uses on arterial streets to commercial uses under the guidance of the General Design Guidelines (Section 8) and through the analysis of the characteristics outlined in Office/Commercial Development Policy 3, and in conformance with the following criteria:

Adjacent uses and zoning are commercial; Sufficient lot depth exists to provide adequate buffering, landscaping, and on-site circulation and parking in compliance with City of Tucson standards; and Vehicular access is provided to an arterial or collector street, and vehicular traffic is directed away from the interior of residential areas.

Plan Compliance Assessment: The proposed GRID is supported by the policies and goals of *Plan Tucson, Unit 6 Neighborhood Plan, Cragin-Keeling Area Plan, and the University Area Plan*. No plan amendments are required.

GRID Overview – Grant Road is an existing High-Capacity Transit (HCT) route and a future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route. One of the goals of the *Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Corridor Vision (Vision)* is to promote transit-oriented development and multi-modal transportation options. Transit related development refers to a mixed-use residential and commercial area designed to maximize access to public transportation and to have features that encourage transit ridership.

The GRID zoning option allows a property owner to choose to develop with additional uses and flexible development requirement in exchange for transit-oriented design of buildings and sites. An owner choosing the GRID zoning option cannot revert to the underlying zoning standards without applying for a modification of zoning requirements or pursuing a separate rezoning. The GRID does not preclude a property owner from pursuing a rezoning for their property.

The GRID overlays an area in which significant public investment has already been made in transit, utility and other infrastructure improvements. The area encompasses Phases 1 and 2 of the Grant Road Improvement Project, which is part of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) plan.

The purpose of the GRID is to:

- Balance residential, commercial and industrial uses along the Grant Road corridor to meet economic revitalization and community character goals for Grant Road;
- Guide future development while protecting and improving existing neighborhoods;
- Recognize distinct neighborhoods along Grant Road from Oracle Road to First Avenue;
- Protect historic architectural styles along Grant Road and ensure development is compatible with adjacent residential areas;
- Guide new development in harmony with community-wide planning objectives;
- Recognize that office, commercial and high-density residential development are located primarily along major streets; and,
- Identify locations appropriate for new development.

Historic Preservation – The areas surrounding the GRID may be eligible to seek a historic status in the future. Therefore, many of the protections for historic districts have been included in the GRID in case this happens. The GRID discourages demolition of historic properties and encourages historic preservation by offering additional uses compatible with restoration of historic properties and/or incorporation of historic buildings into redevelopment proposals.

The Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission (TPCHC) Plans Review Subcommittee reviews all projects that are proposing alterations or additions to an existing eligible or

contributing historic structure using the GRID zoning option. Such projects must meet the Secretary of Interior's historic preservation standards and cannot cause the delisting of a property, or render a property ineligible for listing. The Plans Review Subcommittee also reviews new development using the GRID zoning option that is adjacent to a structure listed or eligible to be listed in the National or Arizona Register of Historic Places, individually or as a contributing property, as well as properties designated as City Landmarks.

Project Review – The GRID establishes the GRID Design Review Board (GRID DRB), which is composed of the existing members of the City of Tucson DRB and adds the City Design Professional, and one member representing all neighborhood associations within the GRID. The GRID DRB may include one or more ad-hoc members, such as a member of the neighborhood association in which the project is located, or if there is no neighborhood association in area of the project, an ad-hoc member can be appointed by an association within 300 feet of the site.

The GRID DRB reviews all projects using the GRID zoning option, to ensure compliance with the GRID standards and requirements. The GRID DRB may also comment on other aspects of the projects. Applicants must meet with the Design Professional prior to the full GRID DRB meeting. The Design Professional then provides a written report to the applicant, GRID DRB and the PSDS Director. Projects proposing group dwellings are approved through the Mayor and Council Special Exception Procedure.

The GRID DRB and the Design Professional's recommendations are advisory to the PSDS Director, who shall make the final decision. Appeals of the PSDS Director's decision are heard by the Board of Adjustment. Prior to the issuance of a building permit for development under the GRID zoning option, the Design Professional is required to review the development package and the building plans to ensure compliance with the approved GRID plan. Amendments or revisions to an approved GRID plan are subject to the same procedure as the original approval.

Urban Design Best Practices – To accommodate creative solutions to design and development issues, the PSDS Director may approve alternatives to the development regulations as determined by the director to be consistent with "urban design best practices". For the purposes of the GRID, urban design best practices include: design studies approved for the City of Tucson; adopted urban design standards for a downtown area or a similar corridor redevelopment in an American city of comparable size; books written by urban design experts or endorsed by a professional organization, such as the American Institute of Architects or the American Planning Association, addressing downtown or corridor redevelopment; or, any comparable report, study or standards recommended by the City Design Professional and approved by the PSDS Director.

GRID Design Standards – The GRID establishes design standards for all projects using the GRID zoning option. Every project must demonstrate compliance with the design standards. The Streetscape Design Standards require a pedestrian-orientation through building orientation and design, sidewalk construction and maintenance, provisions for shade, and assurances that

developments will not interfere with transit or transit stops, or pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from the right-of-way (ROW).

Development Transition Standards are established to mitigate excessive visual, noise, odor, vibration intrusion, and other similar health and safety impacts on nearby residential properties. Transition Standards address mitigation of taller structures, building bulk reduction and mitigation of service areas, such as loading zones. Mitigation of parking area impacts is also provided.

Land uses are also regulated by the GRID. Uses are limited to those that are permitted in the underlying zone and are included in the Permitted/Allowed Land Use Types Under the GRID Zoning Option table. Other than Automotive Service and Repair uses, which are prohibited, uses permitted in the underlying zone, and not listed in the Table may be allowed, provided the PDSD Director finds the use to be compatible with the GRID Purpose Statement A-3.

The GRID provides additional standards for screening, landscaping, on-site storm water management, lighting and hardscape materials. A special provision is made for Environmentally Conscious Design Practices. Each project must include at least three (3) practices from a menu of 14 items. Such separate practices include extra shade for parking areas, pedestrian areas, or short-term bicycle parking areas, direct access connections from a transit stop, LED lighting of less than 3600 kelvin, 100% desert-adapted plant species, solar panels, green roof, low-e glass in buildings, adaptive reuse of existing structure, innovate environmental design practices, use of reclaimed water for landscaping. Priority is given to adaptive reuse of existing structures, which counts as two practices toward the three required.

Development Standard Modifications – The GRID provides for modification of development standards cited in Article 6 of the Unified Development Code (UDC). With some exceptions, development standards can be modified up to 25% to encourage innovative designs or to accommodate parcels impacted by the Grant Road Improvement Project. Notable exceptions to the modifications are the number accessible parking spaces, number of parking spaces associated with alcoholic beverage or food services uses, bicycle parking requirements and the Native Plant Preservation requirements of the UDC. Off-street loading, solid waste collection, landscaping and screening may be modified provided no safety issues are created. Alternative pedestrian access may be provided, subject to conformance with the accessibility standards of the City’s adopted Building Code.

Conclusion – The GRID offers regulatory flexibility for those projects that meet certain requirements of this segment of the *Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Corridor Vision: Oracle Road to Swan Road*. In return for that flexibility, projects must demonstrate compliance with GRID design standards and Development Transition Standards, and incorporate Environmentally Conscious Design Practices. GRID flexibility also provides for applying Urban Design Best Practices and alternative compliance options, as approved by the PDSD Director.

As proposed, the GRID is in compliance with and supported by *Plan Tucson, Unit 6 Neighborhood Plan, Cragin-Keeling Area Plan, Jefferson Park Neighborhood Plan* and the *University Area Plan*. Approval of the Grant Road Investment District Urban Overlay District is appropriate.

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