



PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning & Development Services Department • 201 N. Stone Ave. • Tucson, AZ 85701

DATE: June 1, 2016

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Nicole Ewing Gavin
Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: *Arcadia - Alamo Area Plan Amendment PA-16-01, 2120 N. Beverly Avenue Office, Commercial, and High Density Residential Study Session (Ward 6)*

Issue: – This is a request from Kelly Lee of the Planning Center on behalf of the Tucson Unified School District to amend the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan (AAAP)* to allow an office, commercial and high density residential land use designation. The amendment site is located at 2120 N. Beverly Avenue, approximately 600 feet south of the Grant Road and Beverly Avenue intersection, the site of the former Townsend Middle School. The *AAAP* supports low-density residential use, as defined on the *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map. An *AAAP* plan amendment is required to allow office, commercial and high density residential land uses at 2120 N. Beverly Avenue.

If the plan amendment is adopted by Mayor and Council, the applicant intends to apply for a rezoning on the amendment site to allow Office/Commercial/Residential (OCR-1).

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission set this item for public hearing for July 20, 2016.

Applicant's Request: The applicant's request is to change the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan*, Conceptual Land Use Map, and amend the map from low-density residential to office, commercial and high density residential designation.

The applicant's proposal is to repurpose the Townsend Middle School for Pima Medical Institute using the existing school building with approximately 70,000 square feet, and construct new buildings totaling approximately 100,000 square feet of building space for office/outpatient, commercial, and/or retail use. Pima Medical Institute (PMI) is a postsecondary educational institute and will have 60 employees and projected to have approximately 350 students during peak class schedules and no more than 200 to 300 vehicles on-site during peak night class schedule and night class students can park north of the existing school building, away from the residential homes to the south. New buildings will be on the eastern half of the site for office/medical outpatient, commercial/retail uses with 1 and 3 story buildings setback greater than 100 feet from the residential neighborhood to the south. Primary access for the site will be from Craycroft Road with secondary access from Beverly Avenue.

Existing Zoning and Land Uses: The amendment site is zoned R-1 a low-density residential zone and currently is a vacant Tucson Unified School District school site. The properties to the north and west are zoned OCR-2, which allows up to 300 feet of building height, but currently developed with one and two story medical office/outpatient and multi-family residential land use, further north across Grant Road (600 feet from amendment site) is the Planned Area Development Tucson Medical Center – PAD-16, a medical campus surrounded by off-site outpatient medical services creating a regional employment center; to the east and northeast across Craycroft Road is zoned C-1 commercial with a mix of commercial, retail, financial institutes, and child day care services and O-3 Office zone, developed with rehabilitation centers and medical office/outpatient land use. And to the south is R-1 zoning a low density residential developed with single-family one story detached homes located in Pima Verde and Pima Verde Annex subdivisions.

Land Use Policy Direction: *Plan Tucson* and the *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan (AAAP)* provide policy direction for the amendment site.

Plan Tucson (PT) 2013 – Provides land use direction with proposed plan amendment site identified in the *Plan Tucson* as being within an “Neighborhood Center” category, which feature a mix of small businesses surrounded by housing and accessed internally and from nearby neighborhoods by pedestrian and bike friendly streets, and public transit. *Plan Tucson* supports infill and redevelopment projects that reflect sensitivity to site and neighborhood conditions, which may include other residential, mixed-use infill and appropriate nonresidential uses. These polices also promote quality with safety in design and adequate buffering of surrounding development, the planting and management of healthy and attractive urban vegetation, as outlined in *PT* polices and guidelines; LT1, LT6, LT7, LT28.1.1, LT28.2.5, LT28.2.8, LT28.2.13, and LT28.2.14,

Arcadia - Alamo Area Plan (AAAP) 1992 Provides land use direction with the *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map identifies the amendment site for low density residential land use. The *AAAP* calls out that office, commercial, medium and high density residential uses are generally appropriate along arterial streets and ensuring that new development enhances existing land uses through compatible scale, density, and character as outlined in the *AAAP* General Design Guidelines. The *AAAP* non-residential policies are intended to encourage office and commercial development at locations within the plan area that are most suited to handle the intensity of such land uses in terms of traffic generated and buffering potential impacts on adjacent low-density residential land uses. These policies are designed to be used in conjunction with the General Design Guidelines.

Public Contact: The applicant held the required neighborhood meeting on March 29, 2016, and had 21 attendees. Issues discussed during the meeting included; timeframe for development, new building height and setback from neighborhood, square footage of buildings, pedestrian accessibility to neighborhood, number of projected Pima Medical Institute students, exclusion of kennels for veterinary classes, traffic impact to neighborhood,

access priority, and ability for neighbors to be part of the plan amendment and rezoning process.

To date, staff has not received letters of protest or letters of support for the proposed plan amendment to the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan*.

Conclusion: The applicant's request is to amend the *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map from low-density residential to office, commercial and high density residential land use.

The amendment site is the vacated Townsend Middle School, a Tucson Unified School District site that was developed in 1985. The Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan was adopted seven years later on December 14, 1992. The *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map identifies the Townsend Middle School site as an established school. Future closure of the school was not considered as schools were often grouped with residential zones. The proposed *AAAP* amendment is supported by the following:

- *AAAP* amendment site has primary access onto Craycroft Road, an arterial street as identified on the City's *Major Streets and Route Map*, with a secondary access from Beverly Avenue;
- The proposed land uses are consistent with surrounding one and two story medical office/outpatient and multi-family land uses;
- Amendment will allow Pima Medical Institute to consolidate its operations through infill and repurposing a vacant school site, while reducing costs by use of existing infrastructure;
- Amendment site is of a size and configuration which affords allowance for site design compatibility with low density residential development to the south; and,
- Proposed land use compliments and contributes to the regional medical services anchored by Tucson Medical Center Hospital at the intersection of Craycroft Road and Grant Road.

If the *AAAP* amendment is approved by Mayor and Council, a subsequent rezoning review will consider the repurposing of the vacated school site. Site specific design will be addressed during the rezoning process to consider setbacks, parking, building mass scale and height, privacy of residential neighborhood to the south. The applicant has indicated that during the rezoning process, they would request a change of zone from R-1 to OCR-1, an office, commercial, and low density residential zone, to permit the repurposing of the existing school facility into a postsecondary educational center for Pima Medical Institute, and in addition, new development for office, commercial and/or retail use on east half of the amendment site fronting Craycroft Road.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission set this item for a public hearing on July 24, 2016. Staff will continue to review this proposal relative to existing and planned land uses, as well as other relevant information.

Attachments:

A: Context Map

B: Zoning Map

C: Application and Materials

D: *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan* Conceptual Land Use Map

E: Proposed Changes to *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan Conceptual Land Use Map*

F: Land Use Plan Policies

G: Applicant's Conceptual Site Plan