



PLANNING COMMISSION

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

DATE: July 20, 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 Public Hearing (Ward 6)*

Issue: – This application represents a proposed plan amendment by Kelly Lee of the Planning Center to amend the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan (AAAP)* on behalf of the owner, the Tucson Unified School District, to allow office, commercial and high density residential land use designation on 19.48 acres. The amendment site is the former Townsend Middle School located at 2120 N. Beverly Avenue, located approximately 600 feet south of the Grant Road and Beverly Avenue intersection. The applicant is seeking to amend the *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map, which restricts the site to low/medium density residential land use. As proposed by the applicant, plan amendment to the *AAAP* would allow office, commercial and high density residential land uses.

If the plan amendment is adopted by Mayor and Council, the applicant intends to apply for a rezoning to OCR-1 (Office/Commercial/Residential) zone to repurpose the existing school building for a postsecondary educational institute and construct new buildings along the eastern half of the amendment site fronting Craycroft Road, with up to four stories in height for office/medical outpatient, commercial and/or retail land uses, as permitted in the OCR-1 zone.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Planning Commission forward the proposed amendment to Mayor and Council with a recommendation to amend the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan*, Conceptual Land Use Map to allow office, commercial, and high density residential land use, on the proposed amendment site (see Attachment - E).

Planning Commission Action: On June 1, 2016, the Planning Commission held a study session on the plan amendment request. The Planning Commission recommended that this case be set for public hearing on July 20, 2016. The Planning Commission asked that the applicant address the following at the upcoming public hearing; discuss applicable polices and guidelines in the *AAAP* to help the neighbors gauge the proposed amendment, address parking area to see if it can be reduced and possibly create additional landscape areas, consider transit options such as bus pull out(s) turning lane onto site from Craycroft Road, mitigate potential traffic increase onto Beverly Avenue, and mitigate on-site lighting to protect adjacent residential neighborhood.

Public Contact: The applicant held the official neighborhood meeting on: March 29, 2016, with approximately 21 attendees. Issues discussed during the meeting included; number of employees and students for Pima Medical Institute (PMI), traffic impact generated by site development, veterinary curriculum exclusion of animal kennels within PMI building, PMI building square footage, who will construct and phasing of new office/retail area, building heights to include up to three stories and building setbacks from residential neighborhood, trash bin locations, outdoor lighting, access points, Ferguson Road connection, consider parking area creativity an example given was the Tucson Medical Center (TMC) perimeter walking path, and area residents expressed they want to be involved and have the opportunity to give input at the time of public hearings.

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

Applicant's Request: The applicant's amendment request is to modify the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan*, Conceptual Land Use Map on the amendment site from low/medium density residential land use designation to office, commercial and high density residential land use designation.

The applicant proposes to repurpose the Townsend Middle School for Pima Medical Institute (PMI), using the existing school building with approximately 70,000 square feet, and construct approximately 100,000 square feet of new building space in multiple buildings with up to four story in height, for office/outpatient, commercial, and/or retail use. PMI is a postsecondary educational institute with approximately 60 employees, having three school shifts (morning, mid-day, and night), with a total of 700 hundred students. Peak attendance occurs in the morning shift with up to 350 students from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with 200 to 300 vehicles during the same morning school shift. Applicant notes night students can be directed to park north of the existing school building, away from the residential homes to the south. Primary access for PMI redevelopment project will be onto Craycroft Road and as previously with Townsend Middle School a public school complex a secondary onto Beverly Avenue, which was the main access for the prior public school complex.

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 Tucson Medical Center – PAD-16, a Plan Area Development, 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, to the south is R-1 zoning a low density residential neighborhood with single-family one story detached homes located in the 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 – *Plan Tucson (PT)* was ratified by voters at the November 5, 2013 General Election and became effective on November 13, 2013 (Resolution #22160). *Plan Tucson* identifies the amendment site on the Future Growth Scenario map as “Neighborhood Centers,” which are neighborhoods with potential for a mix of small businesses surrounded by housing and accessed internally and from nearby neighborhoods by pedestrian and bike friendly streets, and public transit. *PT* supports infill and redevelopment which 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* supports locating housing, employment, retail, and services in proximity to each other to allow easy access between uses and reduce dependency on the car. *PT* supports projects that reflect sensitivity to site and neighborhood conditions, which may include other residential, mixed-use infill and appropriate nonresidential uses. The following *PT* 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 – The *AAAP* provides applicable policy direction for the amendment site and includes the *AAAP* Conceptual Land Use Map, which identifies the amendment site with Low/Medium Density Residential land use designation. In general, the *AAAP* policy direction supports office, commercial, medium and high density residential uses as 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 existing policies are designed to be used in conjunction with the General Design Guidelines.

Conclusion: The applicant’s request is to amend the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan* Conceptual Land Use Map to support Office/Commercial/High Density Residential land use designation. The amendment site is identified on the Conceptual Land Use Map as Low/Medium Density Residential land use designation. The request to amend the *AAAP* is to allow any future reinvestment and redevelopment of the site to be compatible with the surrounding Grant Road commercial corridor land uses. The office and medical services surrounding the amendment site are associated with the Tucson Medical Center a regional hospital, recently rezoned (PAD) and currently under redevelopment. The change of land use direction on the amendment site will allow commercial development extending from the Grant Road and Craycroft Road intersection to expand and also strengthened the exiting boundary separating the commercial corridor along Grant Road from the interior low density residential

neighborhood located to the south of the amendment site. *Plan Tucson* and the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan* both support commercial development at arterial street intersections.

Both *Plans* provide policy direction for appropriate design elements, buffering techniques and compatibility of scale with adjacent uses, especially single-family residential uses by addressing transition of building heights downward from the arterial street frontage toward adjacent residential uses to be compatible with adjacent buildings. The applicant will need to demonstrate at the time of rezoning compliance with applicable policies and design guidelines to address potential mitigating issues such as hours of operation, lighting, building height, setbacks, privacy of adjacent residential development, landscape buffers, and parking layout at the time of rezoning. Area residents will have an opportunity to attend at the time of a future rezoning request, a neighborhood meeting held by the applicant to give input on a more concrete site design with building footprints, parking layouts, landscape borders and land uses, followed by a public hearing before the Zoning Examiner and a public meeting before Mayor and Council in which they will have an opportunity to provide input on a rezoning and development proposal on this amendment site.

It is recommended that the Planning Commission forward this item to Mayor and Council with a recommendation to amend the *Arcadia – Alamo Area Plan*, Conceptual Land Use Map, on the amendment site from a Low/Medium Density Residential land use designation to Office/Commercial/High Density Residential land use designation. Based on the findings below:

Findings:

- *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.

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