



PLANNING COMMISSION

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

DATE: July 17, 2024

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Kristina Swallow, Director, Planning and Development Services
Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: **TP-AMD-0324-00003** – Concurrent Plan Amendment and Rezoning:
Houghton East Neighborhood Plan Amendment, Mister Car Wash,
Southeast Corner of Houghton Rd & Broadway Bl – Community
Commercial Land Use – Public Hearing (Ward 2)

Applicant’s Request – This is a public hearing on an application by The Planning Center, on behalf of Mister Car Wash, to amend the *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan (HENP)*, Nonresidential Development Policy 1.2.D, to increase building height from 20 feet to a maximum building height of 30 feet. The application for the plan amendment applies to the subject parcel specifically and does not amend this requirement for other parcels.

The applicant is using the concurrent plan amendment (TP-AMD-0324-00003) / rezoning (TP-ENT-0324-00008) process in which an application for a plan amendment and rezoning are reviewed concurrently. In addition to the proposed plan amendment, the applicant requests that the site be rezoned to a C-2 commercial zone. While Automotive: Minor Service and Repair is a permitted use in a C-1 zone, the use is subject to use-specific standard UDC 4.9.4.F.1, which stipulates that “Auto washing is prohibited.” The applicant held a combined neighborhood meeting for both the plan amendment and rezoning request. The concurrent process includes review of the plan amendment request by the Planning Commission, including the required public hearing, as well as a review of the zoning request and public hearing by the Zoning Examiner. Each of these bodies reviews the application subject to their purview. Mayor and Council will then consider both requests at the same meeting.

If the concurrent process request is successful, the applicant will seek to develop a car wash facility for a one-acre parcel at the southeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard.

Issue – The applicant proposes the construction of a Mister Car Wash express car wash facility on a one-acre vacant property at the southeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard. The preliminary development plan (PDP) proposes a 5,204 square-foot, one-story building, with a building height of 30 feet.

The *HENP*’s Policy Concepts Map and Nonresidential Development Policy 1.A allow for non-residential uses at the intersection of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard. However, Nonresidential Development Policy 2.D restricts nonresidential uses to 20 feet in height, except at the northeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard on the northeast corner, where the maximum height allowed is 28 feet (Nonresidential Development Policy 2.E), when

a minimum of 60 percent of the combined frontage along Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard is maintained as a view corridor and is not used for building purposes; heights of up to 35 feet are allowed further northeast of the intersection when it can be demonstrated that the impacts from an increase in height on view corridors and viewsheds can be mitigated through site and building design.

The *Major Streets and Routes (MS&R)* Plan designates Houghton Road as a Scenic Arterial Street and Broadway Boulevard as an Arterial Street. The applicant will need to demonstrate through the Development Package review process that the proposal meets Scenic Corridor Zone (SCZ) requirements, as specified in Section 5.3 of the Unified Development Code (UDC). UDC Section [5.3.5.A.2](#) limits the height of nonresidential structures to thirty (30) feet in the SCZ. UDC Section [6.4.4.A.3](#), indicates the height of a building in the SCZ is measured from design grade, at all points within the building footprint, to the highest point on a roof. Any wall extending above the roof, such as a parapet wall or a fire wall, is considered part of the roof for purposes of measuring height.

Recommendation – Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward this item to Mayor and Council to approve an amendment to the *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan*, Nonresidential Policy:

2.F. Allow nonresidential buildings on the one-acre parcel (identified by APN 133-38-005F) located at the southeast corner of the Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard intersection to have a maximum building height of 30 feet.

Public Contact – The applicant held the required neighborhood meeting on February 12, 2024 to discuss the concurrent amendment and rezoning for the proposed Mister Car Wash. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom, and one member of the public attended. The meeting was noticed at least 30 days in advance per the UDC using the mailing labels provided by the City of Tucson Planning and Development Services (PDS). The meeting also included staff from PDS to help answer any questions about the *HENP* and the process for a concurrent amendment and a rezoning.

Planning Commission Action – Planning Commission held a study session on June 5, 2024 in which a recommendation was voted on (7-0) in favor to set this item for a public hearing on July 17, 2024. Chair Wellott recused herself due to a conflict of interest. Commissioner Chris Ortiz y Pino served as acting chair for this item in the study session.

Additional Information Relating to Planning Commission Discussion – The Planning Commissioners had some questions and comments regarding the proposed site plan. A question was raised about the proposed vehicular use area along the western portion of the site, and if an additional 10-foot landscape border was required. Staff has followed up with PDS Zoning and Landscaping which confirmed that the buffer area along Houghton Road is in lieu of the

landscape border required along street frontages under UDC Section 7.6, landscaping and screening standards.

There was a question as to where the proposed architectural embellishment / tower would be located on the proposed building. The applicant responded that it would be located on the northern most portion of the building towards Broadway Boulevard. All building heights will meet UDC setback requirements. However, the applicant has since removed the architectural embellishment / tower from the building design, with the additional height allowance of up to 35 feet no longer needed.

Another question asked what the *HENP* amendment in 2016 was for and why that amendment was needed. Staff responded that the applicant at the time was proposing a Fry's grocery store in which a minimum building height of 26 feet was required for the project as the *HENP* restricted maximum building heights for nonresidential uses to 20-feet. There was a follow up question as to what the allowed building heights are for C-1 and C-2, which are C-1 at 30-feet and C-2 at 40-feet.

There was a comment that providing viewshed elevations might be helpful too. However, with the tower no longer part of the design the applicant will meet the required building height and setback as outlined in the UDC.

Existing Zoning and Land Uses – The proposed amendment site is currently zoned C-1 and is vacant. The surrounding properties are also zoned C-1. The site is part of an existing commercial shopping center with commercial and retail uses, including a grocery store and movie theater.

Background – The *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan (HENP)* was adopted by Mayor and Council on November 12, 1985 (Resolution #13400). The *HENP* has been amended twice to increase building heights for nonresidential uses at the intersections of Houghton and Broadway and Houghton and 22nd.

The *HENP* was amended January 22, 1990, Resolution #15017 to allow nonresidential heights ranging between 28 feet and 35 feet at the northeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard. These heights were subject to demonstrating that impacts to viewsheds could be mitigated through site design, setbacks, site configuration, height transitions from major streets, varied roof lines and landscaping.

The *HENP* was amended on March 8, 2016, Resolution #22541, to allow at the northeast corner of Houghton Road and 22nd Street a maximum height of 26 feet.

Land Use Policy Direction: - Policy direction is provided by *Plan Tucson, the City of Tucson General and Sustainability Plan*, and the *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan (HENP)*.

Plan Tucson supports appropriate locations for commercial uses, with priority for development within existing urbanized areas. The Future Growth Scenario Map designates the site as part of the Neighborhoods of Greater Infill Potential building block. This building block includes a mix of commercial and residential uses with a variety of housing types, grocery stores and other retail and services, public schools, parks and recreational facilities, and multi-modal transportation choices.

Plan Tucson supports community commercial uses located at the intersections of arterial streets and encourages infill development of vacant properties adjacent to existing commercial uses. It encourages development that is sensitive to the intensity and scale of surrounding development. Policies related to Job & Workforce Development and Tucson’s Business Climate support locally-owned commercial uses that provide jobs as well as locally produced goods and services. The proposed plan amendment would align with the Future Growth Scenario Map’s vision as well as policies within *Plan Tucson*.

The Houghton East Neighborhood Plan (HENP) has the purpose of guiding future development to protect the natural amenities of the area and to enhance existing neighborhoods, with the goal of encouraging a well-designed, nonresidential development to serve neighborhood needs. Nonresidential Policy 1A supports nonresidential uses only at the intersections of Houghton Road with Broadway Boulevard and 22nd Street. However, Nonresidential Development Policy 2.D restricts nonresidential uses to 20 feet in height, except 1) at the northeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard on the northeast corner, where the maximum height allowed is 28 feet (Nonresidential Development Policy 2.E), when a minimum of 60 percent of the combined frontage along Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard is maintained as a view corridor and is not used for building purposes; heights of up to 35 feet are allowed further northeast of the intersection when it can be demonstrated that the impacts from an increase in height on view corridors and viewsheds can be mitigated through site and building design; and 2) at northeast corner of Houghton and 22nd where maximum height allowed is 26 feet.

Proposed HENP Amendment: - Specific to this request to amend the *HENP*, the proposed amendment language to the Nonresidential Policies are in red and bold below:

- 2.D: Restrict nonresidential uses to 20 feet in height except at the intersection of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard on the northeast ***and southeast*** corner (see Nonresidential Policy 2.E ***and 2.F.***) or at the northeast corner of Houghton Road and 22nd Street where maximum height allowed is 26 feet.*
- 2.E: Allow nonresidential building heights to 28 feet within “Area A” (see Site Plan Illustration 7) when a minimum of 60 percent of the combined frontage along Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard is maintained as a view corridor and is not used for building purposes. Building exposures will be measured to the closest

road frontage to calculate the view corridor percentage. Allow nonresidential building heights of up to 35 feet on the remaining area (see Site Plan Illustration 7), when it can be demonstrated that the impacts from an increase in height on view corridors and viewsheds can be mitigated through the utilization of existing site features, such as site size and configuration, slope, and the location of Coronado Ridge Wash, and project design features, such as greater building setbacks and spacing, height transitions from major streets, varied roof lines, and landscaping.

2.F. Allow nonresidential buildings on the one-acre parcel (identified by APN 133-38-005F) located at the southeast corner of the Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard intersection to have a maximum building height of 30 feet.

Findings – The goal of the *HENP* is to guide future development within the area, and more specifically, to promote nonresidential development in appropriate locations where similar uses exist. *HENP* calls to locate commercial uses at the intersections of major streets. Mister Car Wash is proposing a car wash facility on a vacant site at the southeast corner of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard, both major roadways. The site was previously developed with a Chevron gas station and convenience store. The gas station had plans to incorporate a future car wash in the second phase of development. However, the plans for a car wash never materialized, and the gas station and convenience store were demolished in 2016.

The amendment site is at the northwest corner of the Silverado Plaza commercial center with a mix of commercial and retail businesses, including a grocery store. The shopping center was developed with the plaza having one story buildings at approximately 30 feet in height. The amendment site is surrounded by existing commercial/retail uses that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

The *HENP* has been amended twice to refine and increase building heights at the intersections of Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard, and Houghton Road and 22nd Street, with design elements that encourage quality-designed and architecturally compatible commercial development that maintains Houghton Road as a scenic corridor.

The applicant proposes a new express car wash facility with a maximum building height of 30 feet. It should be noted that Houghton Road is a designated Scenic Route, and any development plans will need to demonstrate compliance with applicable requirements of the Scenic Corridor Zone (SCZ) during the Development Package review process. The SCZ restricts building heights to 30 feet.

The site will feature a single-tunnel car wash, a canopy covering payment kiosks, a parking/vacuum stall area, and two small enclosures that house vacuum equipment. Drought-tolerant vegetation and rainwater harvesting basins will be integrated throughout the site in

parking and landscaping areas as well as within the proposed landscape borders along Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard. The single tunnel car wash will be designed with a varied roofline that slopes in several locations to differentiate the visual plane and direct stormwater runoff towards rainwater harvesting basins.

The amendment site sits lower in elevation compared to the adjacent Silverado Plaza property, effectively stepping the building height down closer at the intersection. The one-story building height is compatible and consistent with the commercial buildings within the Silverado Plaza and on the corners of the Broadway-Houghton intersection. The proposed car wash site is approximately 383 feet from residential development to the south of the Silverado Plaza; and approximately 371 feet from residential development to the east of the Silverado Plaza.

The proposed amendment to the *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan* is consistent with both Plan Tucson and the *Houghton East Neighborhood Plan* policy direction and is compatible with the other land uses at the existing major arterial intersection at Houghton Road and Broadway Boulevard, including compatibility with and providing services for the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Attachments:

- A. Location and Aerial Maps
- B. Design Compatibility Report
- C. Preliminary Development Plan dated July 1, 2024
- D. Proposed Amendment to *HENP*
- E. Neighborhood Meeting Summary
- F. Land Use Policies