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STAFF REPORT

CASE NUMBERS: GPA23-04 & PAD23-01

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Through: Rodolfo Lopez, Development Services, Director

From: Derek Scheerer, Development Services, Planner II

Meeting Date: December 5, 2023

REQUEST SUMMARY

PUBLIC HEARING: Major General Plan Amendment, GPA23-04 Murphy Park: A request by CVL Consultants on behalf of Maricopa 480 Partners, to amend the General Plan Future Land Use Map for approximately 481 +/- acres from existing Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Master Planned Community (MPC), and Open Space (OS) to Master Planned Community (MPC) for the future development of residential, business park, and employment uses, generally located at the southeast and southwest corners of W. Steen Rd. and N. Murphy Rd. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION.**

PUBLIC HEARING: Planned Area Development, PAD23-01 Murphy Park: A request by CVL Consultants on behalf of Maricopa 480 Partners, to amend the Zoning Map for approximately 481 +/- acres from the existing Eagle Shadow Planned Area Development (PAD) CR-2 Single-Family Residential and CR-3 Single Family Residential to the Murphy Park Planned Area Development (PAD) for the future development of residential, business park, and employment uses, generally located at the southeast and southwest corners of W. Steen Rd. and N. Murphy Rd. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION.**

APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER

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COUNCIL PRIORITIES CONSIDERED

- Quality of Life
- Economic Sustainability
- Managing the Future

PROJECT DATA

Site Gross Acres	481 +/- gross acres
Site Addresses	Unassigned
Existing Site Uses	Vacant and Agricultural
Proposed Site Uses	Residential, Business Park, Employment
Existing General Plan, Land Uses	Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Master Planned Community (MPC), Open Space (OS)

Proposed General Plan, Land Uses
Existing Zoning

Master Planned Community (MPC)
Eagle Shadows Planned Area Development (PAD)

SURROUNDING ZONING/LAND USE

Direction	General Plan Land Use	Existing Zoning	Existing Use
North	Low Density Residential (LDR), Master Planned Community (MPC)	Industrial (CI-2), Murphy and Farrell Planned Area Development (PAD)	Agricultural
East	Master Planned Community (MPC), Low Density Residential (LDR)	Arden Trails Planned Area Development (PAD)	Agricultural
South	N/A (Tribal Lands)	N/A (Tribal Lands)	Industrial
West	Medium Density Residential (MDR), Open Space (OS)	The Sanctuary Planned Area Development (PAD), Industrial (CI-2)	Vacant

ANALYSIS

The city's General Plan is intended to provide a framework for all the interrelated functions of the City of Maricopa. The General Plan is an expression of the preferences of residents and property owners; a statement of City policy designed to achieve the citizen's vision; a framework for future decision making; and a means of enhancing the quality of life of the citizens. The General Plan is not a tool to promote special interests; not a rigid document that is inflexible; not a detailed policy or ordinance for specific properties or areas; not a Capital Improvement Plan; and is not a zoning map. Refer to [Planning Maricopa \(General Plan\)](#) for further information.

The applicant is requesting a Major General Plan Amendment to the Future Land Use Map and a Rezone request. These requests are to convert 481 +/- acres of land designated as Low Density Residential (LDR) (approx. 122 ac.), Medium Density Residential (MDR) (approx. 158 ac.), Master Planned Community (MPC) (approx. 190 ac.), and Open Space (OS) (approx. 10 ac.) to Master Planned Community (MPC) and from Eagle Shadow PAD to Murphy Park PAD. The subject property is located at the southeast and southwest corners of W. Steen Rd. and N. Murphy Rd.

The City of Maricopa General Plan states that the purpose of the Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Master Planned Community (MPC), and Open Space (OS) designations are as follows:

- **Low Density Residential** land use designation accommodates semi-rural large lot development with generous distances to streets and between residential dwelling units and a viable semi-rural character setting. Limited livestock privileges may be a part of this character for areas where lot sizes are a minimum of one acre. Areas in this category are generally larger lots with accessory structures that may be used for animals. The maximum density for this land use category is 2.0 dwelling units per acre (du/ac).
- **Medium Density Residential** designation provides for a suburban lifestyle with planned, single-family residential neighborhoods, which include significant open space, recreation and cultural opportunities, including schools, churches and neighborhood facilities. Medium density residential developments are expected to contribute to off-site infrastructure needs for

which they create a demand including roadways, bridges and grade separated crossings. Medium density residential areas comprise the majority of residential land in the city. The density of this land use category is between 2.0 to 6.0 du/ac.

- **Master Planned Community** designation provides for large-scale (160 acres or more) master planned developments that include a true variety of residential products, including larger lots and smaller, attached housing, along with supporting commercial and employment land uses to meet the daily needs of the residents. Residential areas are to include adequate open space, schools, churches and neighborhood facilities. Overlay zoning in combination with comprehensive site planning provide for supporting infrastructure. MPC developments are expected to provide off-site infrastructure enhancements as necessary to offset development impacts including needed roadway, bridge and overpass capacity. The overall density is flexible to allow appropriate urban design for properties designated for Village Center. Overall densities for all residential dwellings in MPCs without a Village Center designation can range from 3.0 to 10.0 dwelling units per acre.
- **Open Space** land use category designation identifies open-space sites and corridors intended for public recreation and resource conservation. The General Plan Future Land Use map does not locate individual neighborhood park sites. The General Plan recognizes the need for parks, recreational areas and open areas, which add to the attractiveness of the community and to the quality of life of the residents. The need for future parks is addressed in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the General Plan. Larger open space tracts are identified as future preserves and potentially regional parks, including substantial federal land reserves along the western and southern edges of the planning area. The OS designation is consistent with the State's Open Space Planning law when applied to private and State Trust Lands and includes a maximum development intensity of 1 residence per acre.

The proposed request would change 481 +/- acres from Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Master Planned Community, and Open Space, to 481 +/- acres of Master Planned Community. See descriptions of the Master Planned Community designation above.

The considerations for the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment considers the Plan Administration section of the General Plan itself. Criteria include the following:

- **Land Use Criteria**

Staff Analysis: Per the General Plan's Land Use Criteria, any land use change that moves from a Low Density Residential designation to more intense residential or commercial category for 80 acres or more shall result in a Major Amendment to the city's General Plan. As presented, the proposed change of approx. 122 ac. from Low Density Residential to the more intense Master Planned Community designation triggers the requirement for a Major Amendment.

Per the applicant's Narrative (see Exhibit B – Project Narrative) and Land Use Analysis (see Exhibit D), the proposed land use change to Master Planned Community is to allow for an environment that promotes a flexible and dynamic combination of land uses to support the city by creating large scale local employment opportunities and providing diverse and high-quality housing in a portion of Maricopa that lacks housing type diversity. Per the General Plan, residential growth is encouraged for areas of Maricopa east of White and Parker Rd., which includes the subject property. In addition to encouraging housing, the plan also encourages employment opportunities, which is a significant attribute of the applicant's overall development goals for the site. The applicant has justified the requested land-use changes as noted below:

- This development is to allow flexibility in the different land uses (residential, business park, and employment) throughout the 481-acre site.
- This request improves the balance between housing and employment within the City limits by providing the opportunity for employment areas and permitting multiple types of diverse and attainable housing to those looking to live, work and play in the City of Maricopa.
- This proposal identifies a minimum of 80 acres of employment land use.
- Locations and alignments of streets, points of access, trails, walls, amenities and open space areas remain flexible to accommodate multiple land use scenarios within Murphy Park.
- An overall matrix is provided identifying the acreages and general locations for each of the proposed land use categories under the Master Planned Community designation.

Land Use Matrix				
Land Use Category	Min.		Max.	
Employment (South end of property & east of Murphy)	80 acres	17%	401 acres	84%
Business Park (North of Employment or west of Murphy)	0 acres	0%	240 acres	50%
Residential (North of Employment)	80 acres	17%	401 acres	84%
Total	481 acres			

Details of the request:

Murphy Park PAD is a proposed multiphased development that will include varying degrees of residential, business park, and employment developments. The proposal is an innovative and flexible set of land use regulations with the goal of permitting land uses that are adaptable to current and future market conditions. The PAD is intended to utilize zoning flexibility imbedded within its regulations to accommodate and encourage a variety of potential development opportunities while adhering to a cohesive framework that will form an attractive, harmonious development. The Land Use Matrix (see above) demonstrates this by creating minimum and maximum acreages/percentages for ultimate development of the 480 +/- acres of the proposal rather than specifying strict acreages/percentages that would be inflexible to market demands. As an extension to the Land Use Matrix, the applicant additionally proposes a Residential Matrix (see below) specifically addressing the residential acreages/percentages of the proposed PAD site. The Residential Matrix ensures that future residential development with the PAD site will consist of a variety of residential types ranging from single-family, to non-traditional “z” lot or clustered development to multi-family development.

Residential Matrix				
Residential Land Use Category	Min.		Max.	
	80 acres	17%	401 acres	84%
Residential Sub-Category	For < 100 acres		For > 100 acres	
	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.
Multi-family	0%	50%	5%	35%
Alternative housing product (cluster, alley-load, etc.)	0%	75%	5%	50%
Single-family residential (min. 40' wide)	0%	80%	25%	80%

Within the proposed PAD, the request utilizes the Single-Family Residential (RS-5), Medium Density Multi-Family Residential (RM), High-Density Multi-Family Residential (RH), General Commercial (GC), General Office (GO), and Light Industrial (LI) zoning districts of the city's zoning ordinance as base zones for the PAD. The proposal seeks to only deviate from the base RS-5 Development Standards to accomplish the goals for diversified single-family development. The remaining zoning categories follow the Development Standards for their given zone.

The applicant is requesting:

1. A Major General Plan Amendment to the Future Land Use Map from Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Master Planned Community (MPC), and Open Space (OS) to Master Planned Community (MPC).
2. A rezone from Eagle Shadow PAD to Murphy Park PAD. This zone change request will allow the applicant to pursue Preliminary/Final Plat and Development Review Permits (DRP) requiring site plan and architectural reviews to comply with the PAD.

Each request builds upon land use and development entitlements to make the proposal possible. Each approval is dependent upon the subsequent approval. The development proposal cannot move ahead without the rezoning, nor can the rezoning move ahead without the approval of the General Plan Land Use change.

Major General Plan Amendment:

Currently, the site falls under various General Plan Future Land Use designations (as noted above) that do not support the proposed development pattern as described in the PAD Narrative (Exhibit A). As such, an amendment to the General Plan designation is required. Amending the General Plan Land Use Map requires consulting the Plan Administration section of the General Plan. Criteria for approval include the following:

- (1) number of acres for land use change and/or
 - (2) the capital cost burdens to the city when classifying an amendment as either Major or Minor.
1. Proposed land use changes that exceed the thresholds of a Minor Plan Amendment (as defined in Table 1 – Major Plan Amendment Land Use Criteria within City Limits) are defined as Major. This proposal refers to the line for current designation of Low Density Residential (LDR) to the proposed designations of Master Planned Community (MPC) which set the trigger (or threshold) at 80 acres, whereas this proposal exceeds the trigger at 122+ acres.

2. Infrastructure Criteria is also listed as an independent consideration to acreage. The context of the site may require expansion of infrastructure that warrants costly capital improvements. Expansion of infrastructure may include installation of various flood control devices/channels that will be coordinated between the applicant and the city at a later date.

In accordance with these criteria, staff classifies the proposed General Plan Land Use Map Amendment as Major. The application was made with a Public Participation Plan that met state statutes and the standards prescribed within the Zoning Code, as outlined later in this report. The remaining public process includes holding two (2) public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission, a recommendation by the Commission to the City Council, holding a Public Hearing before the City Council, and a decision by City Council. A recommendation should be made as to whether the amendment achieves, on balance, the goals and objectives as defined within the text of the General Plan Elements. A review of the goals and objectives are listed under the GPA23-04 *Major General Plan Amendment Findings* section of this staff report.

Planned Area Development:

With a favorable recommendation for the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment, the Council can consider the concurrent Zoning Map Amendment (rezone). Under Section B. Land Use Elements, subsection D. Land Use Plan – Land Use Designations of the City’s General Plan, future land use designations are listed (as previously noted). The Planned Area Development (PAD) zone is defined within the Zoning Code under Chapter 18.60.010 and states that “the specific purpose of the Planned Area Development (PAD) District is to provide opportunities for creative and flexible development approaches that accommodate, encourage, and promote innovatively designed developments involving a mixture of residential and/or nonresidential land uses not prescribed within the zoning districts of the city.” As presented, the proposed Major General Plan Amendment and rezone fall within the criteria of these code sections.

The proposed PAD seeks to use the several existing zoning categories as base zones for the employment, business park, and residential zones of the project. Of the zones the proposal seeks to apply several variations to its RS-5 zone’s development standards to accomplish the residential goals of the development. Within the PAD Narrative and Booklet, rationale for the changes of land use and the PAD variations are provided.

As noted, the PAD standards proposed by the applicant closely follow the standards of the RS-5 RM, RH, GC, GO, and LI districts with several variations that provide a unique PAD zoning district tailored to the proposed development of the site. Per Section 18.60.060 PAD Design Elements of the Zoning Ordinance, PAD applications requesting variations to the standards of the Zoning Ordinance must provide a certain number of required design elements, as listed under Section 18.60.060(C) PAD Design Elements Table, to offset the requested variations. In accordance with the Design Elements Table, the proposed PAD, as presented, must provide a minimum of score of fifteen (15) elements. As noted in the PAD Booklet, the proposal provides a total of fifteen (15) design elements and meets this requirement.

Density

Under Section 18.60.040.A Residential Unit Densities of the Zoning Code, land use and development regulations for the PAD zone “shall not exceed the maximum number permitted by the general plan density for the total area of the planned area development designated for residential use.” The General Plan does not specify density limitations specifically for PAD zones but restricts density under the Master Planned Community (MPC) land use designation to 3-10 du/ac. The proposed maximum density of the residential portion of the PAD is 10 du/ac, which falls within this allowable range.

Building Height

The proposed PAD does not seek to amend the maximum height restrictions of the any of the zones that the PAD uses as base zones.

Circulation

Access to the site will be from two (2) points along the northern and southern portions of the development area, following N. Murphy Road which bisects the site. Additional access points along W. Steen Road (north) or W. Peters & Nall Road (south) or the site's east and west borders is possible with future development, but is not included in this proposal. The location and appropriateness of future access points will be determined as individual areas of the site seek development proposals. As noted in the PAD Narrative and Booklet N. Murphy Road will serve as the main thoroughfare within the project area and specified treatments for landscape setbacks and screening along it area codified. These treatments will help with ensuring a sence of arrival into the overall PAD area.

Open Space and Amenities

As part of the design criteria offsets to the proposed deviations from base zone standards, the applicant proposes a robust amenity and design package for the PAD. The proposed amenities vary by land use zone and can be found in Section 12 of the PAD Narrative and Booklet. This section, entitled Open Space Amenities, delineates base requirements for overall open space areas for individual development types, as well as minimums for amentizing the open space areas. Amenitization of open space areas is included in the Employment and Business Park areas, which is a unique characteristic not found within the current zoning ordinance.

Architecture

Although currently in the conceptual design phase, the applicant has noted that architectural designs for the various land use types shall comply with city codes. Additionally, the PAD has provided specific design criteria for the various Employment and Business Park developments as well as specific criteria for fencing and screening. On page 59 of the PAD Narrative and Booklet concept imagery for these uses are provided which will assist potential developers and city staff when formulating and assessing various development proposals. These concepts provide context and guidance for the overall development theme of the site. The aesthetic sought by the development's design team emphasizes a modern motif that will meet the city code.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Prior to recommending approval of the General Plan Major Amendment and rezone requests, the applicant provided a public participation plan to demonstrate the materials used to inform surrounding property owners of the proposed General Plan Major Amendment and rezone required per the city's Zoning Code. The Public Participation Plan included two (2) neighborhood meetings that were held at the request of anyone who wished to participate, three (3) rounds of notification letters sent to all property owners within 600 feet of the subject area, public notice signs within the subject area, and two (2) legal notices in the Maricopa Monitor and the Casa Grande Dispatch. Three (3) sets of notices went out, advertising the neighborhood meetings, followed by notices advertising the scheduled Planning and Zoning Public Hearings and City Council date. A timeline of the participation event is shown below (refer to Exhibit E – Citizen Participation Report).

- June 28, 2023 - 1st Notification letters sent
- July 13, 2023 - 1st Neighborhood meeting
- September 8, 2023 - 2nd Notification letters sent
- September 9, 2023 - 1st Newspaper notice published

- September 11, 2023 - Site sign posted
- September 25, 2023 - 1st Planning and Zoning Commission meeting
- October 11, 2023 - Sign posting updated
- October 11, 2023 - 3rd Notification letters sent
- October 26, 2023 - 2nd Neighborhood meeting
- October 28, 2023 - 2nd Newspaper notice published
- November 13, 2023 - 2nd Planning and Zoning Commission meeting
- December 5, 2023 - City Council meeting

Furthermore, the Major General Plan Amendment has state statutes that further enhance the outreach to include neighboring jurisdictions and state agencies. This notification was completed by staff on July 12, 2023, and the City's website has provided up-to-date information, attachments, and public meeting dates regarding the proposal.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At the time of writing this report staff has not received any comment for the request.

GPA23-04 MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FINDINGS

As required by the General Plan, its goals and objectives are of consideration for the proposed request. Refer to Exhibit A – Project Narrative and Exhibit D – Land Use Analysis, for responses from the applicant regarding the listed elements applicable to this request. Through staff review of the project many aspects of this amendment were analyzed. These aspects included surrounding land uses, circulation, as well as impacts on the surrounding areas and region. Staff notes that further analysis of access to the proposed land uses, and future development must be evaluated by City staff and applicants. Infrastructure improvements to support access will be determined in the PAD. Drainage solutions must be coordinated with City's proposed regional CLOMR and other independent CLOMR's submitted by developments east and west of Murphy and Steen Roads. With the future analysis in mind, staff found that the proposed major amendment would have no adverse impact and will meet and fulfill the various goals and objectives stated in the city's adopted General Plan.

Further, the Master Planned Community (MPC) designation, as demonstrated in this report, would enhance the surrounding areas, complement the surrounding residential land uses and carry forth Maricopa's Vision stated within the General Plan. After reviewing the application and the request for a Major Amendment it is staff's opinion that the City of Maricopa General Plan Future Land Use Map be amended to reflect a Master Planned Community (MPC) land use on the proposed site.

As required by the General Plan, the following goals and objectives are of consideration:

Goal B1.4: Minimize conflicts between land uses.

Staff Analysis: The proposal will continue to address land use compatibilities and incompatibilities in its ultimate design, character, and construction. As indicated in the

narrative, all proposed land uses are compatible with, and will not negatively impact the existing adjacent neighboring uses.

Goal B2.2.: Assure the development of a diverse housing stock in both dwelling type and density.

Staff Analysis: The proposed PAD establishes different housing options specific to affordability along with time and market sensitive diversity with the full range of housing opportunities including higher-density residential uses under the integrated flexibility of the companion PAD application.

Objective B1.4.6: Transition all property zoning designations from pre-existing districts to existing zoning districts in a manner that best achieves the goals of this General Plan.

Staff Analysis: The companion PAD rezone request evaluates the goals of the General Plan and provides scope and objectives and includes an analysis of how the proposed zoning helps to achieve the goals of the City's General Plan.

Goal E3.1: Create safe and functional pedestrian ways and bicycle routes as an alternative mode of travel throughout Maricopa.

Staff Analysis: The proposal provides enhanced and safe pedestrian interconnections between the proposed residential and the future commercial development west of the project area. As such, the proposal demonstrates compliance with this goal.

PAD23-01 ZONING MAP AMENDMENT REQUIRED FINDINGS

As required by Sec. 18.175.040 of the City's Zoning Code, the Planning & Zoning Commission made the following findings in their recommendation to the City Council:

1. The amendment is consistent with the General Plan.

***Staff Analysis:** The proposed zone change to PAD adheres to the General Plan's future land use designation, pending approval of the Master Planned Community designation.*

2. Any change in District boundaries is necessary to achieve the balance of land uses desired by the city, consistent with the General Plan, and to increase the inventory of land within a given Zoning District; and

***Staff Analysis:** The zone change amendment will allow for additional residential and employment opportunities in the area.*

3. The amendment will promote the growth of the city in an orderly manner and protect the public health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare.

***Staff Analysis:** The zone change will not impact the health, safety and general welfare of the area and will promote growth in an orderly manner.*

CONCLUSION

On November 13, 2023, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of **case # GPA23-04 Murphy Park**, subject to the conditions of approval stated in this staff report, and as amended by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

On November 13, 2023, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of **case # PAD23-01 Murphy Park**, subject to the conditions of approval stated in this staff report, and as amended by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Each case will require an independent motion by the City Council:

1. The applicant shall continue with the development process of submitting a Development Review Permit as prescribed within the City's Zoning Code.
2. Prior to the City Council approval of the PAD23-01, the applicant shall submit to the city a signed waiver pursuant to Proposition 207, as applicable.
3. Prior to issuance of the final Certificate of Occupancy, the developer must provide all offsite improvements recommended by City's staff and a traffic impact analysis prepared to the City's approved guidelines. Offsite improvements include infrastructure such as construction or improvements of roads, sidewalks, curb/gutter, stripping, signs, streetlights, landscaping and new installation or reconfiguration of existing traffic signals impacted by the development.
4. If the development is to be built and occupied by residents in phases, a phasing plan must be submitted to the City for review and approval. Construction of offsite improvements shall be included with first phase of construction unless approved by City Engineer to be built with future phases.
5. Access to the development is subject to review and approval by City Engineer. Interaction with future developments and their accesses must be analyzed by the applicant's traffic engineer and City Staff.
6. Any amendments to the PAD District shall be processed in accordance with Section 18.180.060 of the City's Zoning Code.
7. All zoning and development standards not expressly enumerated within this PAD shall comply with the applicable standards delineated in the City's Zoning Code.

ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit A: PAD23-01 Narrative and Booklet

Exhibit B: GPA23-04 Narrative and Exhibits

Exhibit C: Site Context Study

Exhibit D: Land Use Analysis

Exhibit E: Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit F: Zoning Maps

Exhibit G: General Plan Land Use Maps

Exhibit H: Legal Description

-- End of staff report --