

DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST

- 1. Provide a general, but thorough, narrative that describes the requested change and the reason for the request. Provide supporting data, including calculation of acreage and projected number of dwelling units for residential and proposed square footage of commercial/retail in each proposed land use category.**

The purpose of the proposed Major General Plan Amendment is to allow for Medium Density (4.1-8 du/ac) Residential for the +/- 80 acre parcel located at the northeast corner of Litchfield Road and Camelback Road. Specifically, this Major General Plan amendment seeks to change the existing Commercial land use designation to allow for single-family homes. A companion rezoning request will also be filed in order to allow the property the opportunity to develop residential uses which will support the area's need for commercial growth within the context of the area's character and the site's proximity to adjacent single-family homes along the north and east property lines.

The proposed land use for the subject +/- 80-acre property will generate the necessary demand for the commercial uses which are currently being proposed at the northwest corner of Litchfield and Camelback Rd by Sun Health Services. This application offers a unique opportunity to provide additional housing options which will support the local businesses and employers. Additionally, this proposal will provide hundreds of new customers who will help sustain the viability of the nearby existing and future commercial retail and/or other service-orientated establishments. Furthermore, the community's residents will become retail customers who will not only potentially work, but will also live in this area on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis which will generate considerable ongoing revenues from the spending activity of the future residents. The addition of quality housing in this area will also allow existing and future employers to attract and sustain employees who choose to live nearby without the need to commute from other locations in the Valley.

The experts that we have employed to analyze the commercial market for this immediate area are of the opinion that in the last several years the commercial real estate market has changed and as a result, there has been a reduction of stores expanding. Further, several large retail shopping centers have been left vacant in need to be reoccupied and/or rebuilt. The types of common big-box users that were once envisioned for this site are no longer due to the fact that many have either scaled back in expanding their presence in various areas or they have already located in other parts of the City and along the I-10 Freeway corridor. It is for these reasons that we believe that a Major General Amendment and future rezoning of the subject property is the best land use solution for this property.

- 2. If map amendment, indicate the existing and the proposed General Plan Land Use designation(s).**

The purpose of the proposed Major General Plan Land Use Map Amendment seeks to change the existing to Commercial land use to Medium Density (4.1 – 8 du/ac) Residential for the +/- 80 acre parcel located at the northeast corner of Litchfield Road and Camelback Road.

3. **In what way does the existing plan inadequately provide suitable alternatives for this request?**

Retail surrounding this site and general area has suffered enormously during the past few years. The current Commercial land use designation does not create the demand needed to support the area's existing retail uses, the City's Village Center mixed use plan and/or the proposed commercial for the La Loma campus site. This application offers a singularly unique opportunity to provide a major housing component within the City which will not negatively impact the characteristics of the adjacent single-family homes to the north and west of the site. This proposal will provide a significant source of new customers for the nearby retail establishments. Additional residential uses help to stimulate job creation which in turns means considerable ongoing revenue sources from the spending activity of the future residents.

4. **How will this amendment affect property values and neighborhood stability? Provide supporting data and/or case studies.**

There will be a positive effect on the property values in the area as the site is currently vacant and does not contribute in any way to the benefit of the community and the City. An economic study evaluating the benefits of the proposal will be provided to the City in the near future for review.

5. **How will this amendment contribute to compatible neighborhood development patterns? Discuss in detail adjacent land uses, existing residential densities (if abutting existing/proposed residential development), and how the proposal will be compatible. Provide supporting data.**

The proposal for Medium Density residential land use will have positive impact to neighborhood development patterns because the site is contiguous to single-family homes along the northern and eastern property borders. The proposal is an appropriate land use transition and compatible with the area's character due to the site's proximity between residential homes and major arterial roadways. Based upon the site's size and maximum density allowed under the proposed Medium Density land use category, the request could generate approximately 500 new single-family homes. The subject request responds to the City's goals of promoting quality development and will infuse the area with customers needed to support the mix of retail, dining, and entertainment activities within walking distance and those that are accessible from the major arterial thoroughfares and regional transportation systems (i.e. I-10 Fwy., Loop 101 Fwy. and Loop 303 Fwy.) The request will accommodate a distinct and unified living environment in proximity to a variety of employment opportunities and other types of business to provide economic stability to the community and allow residents to live close to work and abundant recreational activities.

6. **How will this amendment contribute to an increased tax base, economic development and employment opportunities? Provide supporting data. If the request seeks to change the land use designation from a commercial to a non-commercial land use designation, provide the estimate decrease in future annual sales tax revenues to the City of Litchfield Park. Provide supporting data.**

Given the companion Commercial land use request for approximately 60 acres of land on the northwest corner of Litchfield Road and Camelback Road, the proposed Medium Density land use for the subject site will support the City's ability to increase the tax base and further employment opportunities. The property owners of these two sites have partnered together in order to ensure

that there is a proper balance of commercial land use as well as additional housing opportunities in order to support the retail demand now and in the future. This proposal to relocate the existing Commercial land use to the northwest corner which is owned and operated by Sun Health Services will introduce a flexible mixed, land use approach to ensure Litchfield Park's competitive position in the market place. An economic study evaluating the how will this amendment contribute to an increased tax base, economic development and employment opportunities of the proposal will be provided to the City in the near future for review.

7. How will this amendment contribute to maintaining the City's Community Character as described in the City's General Plan?

The subject proposal is in accord with the City's Community Character which is defined by a variety of residential densities, recreational amenities for outdoor enjoyment, as well as upholding citizens' values and desires for privacy within the community. Future residents will support community activities and other types of organizations that have been established to contribute to the City's quality of life and sense of "small-town" community. Clearly, developing this vacant parcel will generate additional sources of revenue to the City and will better serve the existing area's residents and those who are new to the community.

8. How will this amendment fulfill the intent of the Discussion section of the Land Use Element: "Specific attention should be given to preserving property values, creating revenue sources, and adding higher paying jobs to support the City's fiscal well-being"?

The subject proposal is the best candidate for this site considering its accessibility to a variety of local and regional transportation systems and the surrounding single-family homes. Further, with the adjacent residential developments and the transfer of commercial land use from this parcel to the northwest corner, property values will be preserved. This in turn, endorses the area's ability to maintain and create additional revenue sources as well as encourage a variety of higher paying jobs to the City.

Due to reinvestment goals and market-driven factors that encourage the clustering of large retail users in more appropriate freeway-orientated locations, the existing presence of the primary major retailers who have already located away from the subject site as well as a sluggish commercial economy, there is virtually no realistic opportunity for the entire site to be utilized as another big box /commercial retail development in the future. In order to support the area and the +/- 60 acres of proposed commercial across the street, this new residential population will generate both immediate and significant economic benefits including revenues for City/State, construction related spending and employment, long-term employment to support the new community and other related benefits from residents shopping, dining and working nearby.

By creating additional commercial demand (i.e. single-family residential) on the northeast corner of Litchfield and Camelback Rd., higher paying employers and a progressive breed of commercial tenants will be attracted to the area which will sustain the area's long-term viability and the City's economy. In sum, this proposal creates a welcoming environment for a healthy competitive business market in order to support the City's fiscal well-being.

9. **How will this amendment affect existing infrastructure of the area, specifically street systems/traffic, water, drainage, flood control, and wastewater?**

Once a residential site plan has been determined which proposes a specific range of density, a more structured analysis of how this amendment will affect the City's systems, utilities and services will be made clearer. We believe that designing communities that are environmentally responsive and allow residents to live close to their jobs, shopping and services reduces the land, resources and energy our cities consume.

10. **How will this amendment affect existing City provided and contracted services, including police, fire, and emergency services protection? Provide supporting data and estimated increases/decreases in the annual cost of these services by service type, to the City of Litchfield Park.**

Again, once a residential site plan has been determined which proposes a specific range of density, a more structured analysis of how this amendment will affect the City's systems, utilities and services will be made clearer.

11. **If this amendment is a request to increase the acreage of residentially designated land or overall residential density, how will the impact on the spaciousness of the community be mitigated and how will the impact on outdoor venues or recreational facilities be addressed with this increase in population?**

As mentioned, once a residential site plan has been determined which proposes a specific range of density, a more structured analysis of how this amendment will affect the spaciousness of the community and/or outdoor venues or recreational facilities will be made clearer. However, it is important to note that reinvesting in our communities as the economic and land use environment continues to evolve is an important element to sustaining long-term success.

12. **Specifically, what Elements, Goals, Objectives and Policies of the General Plan will be impacted, both positively and negatively?**

There are no known negative impacts of the subject proposal however, the proposed Medium Density land use request meets the following General Plan Elements, goals, objectives and policies:

Land Use Element:

Guiding Principle: "As the City approaches build-out, land use decision should embrace and enhance the original vision of the community..."

"Decisions pertaining to future development should center on existing land use patterns and provide for a compatible, balanced mix of community activities. Specific attention should be given to preserving property values, creating revenue sources and adding higher paying jobs to support the City's fiscal well-being."

Circulation:

Guiding Principle: “The City’s small size provides a unique opportunity to free residents from dependence on another automobile in the household and to walk, bike...”

“Planned future development shall promote convenient access by these alternate modes of transportation. Street layout should also discourage use of neighborhood streets by non-residents.”

Open Space:

Guiding Principle: “The City of Litchfield Park prides itself as an example of livability that is the envy of many cities...It is the City’s intent to provide exemplary efforts to continue providing its residents with this sense of pride and quality of life...”

Objectives: “Pursue partnership opportunities presented by the development of the Sun Health La Loma campus...to create a community focal point for demonstration gardens, community use facilities,...”

Growth & Development:

Discussion: “Commercial development may occur at arterial road intersections for accommodating employment or shopping needs, but path connection and mixed land uses should still be planned into these sites...”

Objectives: “Routinely initiate discussion with owners of vacant retail/commercial properties to determine development potential and timing...”

CONCLUSION:

In summary, the property owners of the northeast and northwest corners of Litchfield and Camelback have partnered together in order to ensure that there is a proper balance of commercial land use as well as additional housing opportunities in order to support the retail demand now and in the future. This proposal to allow for residential land use while relocating the existing Commercial component to the northwest corner that is owned by Sun Health Services will ensure Litchfield Park’s competitive position in the market place. Further, the request adheres to the guiding principles of the General Plan which states that the community’s prevailing residential density average (average 4 dwellings per acre) demonstrates an economical allocation of lot sizes. Also, master planning principles contribute to the City’s relative housing affordability. Lastly, future development that is near residential areas should be compatible with existing uses and consistent with adopted plans.

13. How will this amendment support the overall intent and/or constitute an overall improvement to the General Plan?

The proposed land use designation along with the future companion-rezoning request supports the intent of the General Plan. Sustaining manageable growth has been an important goal for the City of Litchfield Park for many years. The majority of regional and national tenants who seek curb

appeal and competitive rental rates within sites that are located near major freeways have already been chosen their location in other areas. However, there is a significant opportunity with this proposal to generate considerable on-going demand to support future destination type retail/service employers which will constitute an overall improvement to the General Plan. As the population continues to grow, it is foreseeable that the proposal would cater to working professionals, young families and others who will support the existing and proposed commercial/employment in this area. It is also necessary to provide economic incentives (including shedding a long commute to work) for those working and living near the area due to increases in living costs. The adjacent arterial roadways connect to significant employment and retail corridors of regional importance and this proposal will encourage residents to work, shop and enjoy recreational activities within the area. This request will effectively manage the growth needed for quality development which meets the needs of existing and future residents and businesses.

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