REI PROJECT NARRATIVE

I. INTRODUCTION

The proposed amendment is change the Land Use Element of the General Plan from a Cultural/Institutional or Public Use designation to Office for a parcel of approximately 5 acres located at 15522 N.Thompson Peak Parkway.

The Cultural/Institutional or Public Use land use category "includes a variety of public and private facilities including developed open space, government buildings, schools, private and public utilities, and airports. Some areas north of the CAP Canal may include a mixture of recreation, tourism, destination attractions, equestrian facilities, hotels or resorts, and cultural uses serving a large area." The designation of Cultural/Institutional for this area of the city was mainly for the Westworld equestrian facilities to the south and west of this property. It was anticipated that this general area would include a mixture of uses focusing on the equestrian facilities, recreation, and tourism facilities supporting the Westworld complex.

The Office category "could accommodate complementary 2-story office.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Character and Lifestyle:
One of the Goals of this Element is to make sure that all development is consistent and appropriate in terms of community goals, surrounding area's character, and the specific neighborhoods. Another Goal is to identify and preserve the city's historic, archaeological and cultural resources. The Old Verde Canal is one of those identified resources and should be preserved through the development process. The proposed Office use will enable the subject property to be planned and developed in land uses that are similar to the uses abutting to the east, while accomplishing a transition from Westworld. Uses and activities of the Westworld Cultural Center, such as impacts created by large scale special events must be planned for and the Office use will allow for adequate buffering for potential adverse sights and sounds while promoting integration with the adjacent neighborhoods. The proposed amendment to Office enhances and protects neighborhoods and ensures and sustains their quality of life by creating a safe, clean, and visually attractive transition from Westworld. The change to Office positively affects and implements the neighborhood's character by providing a buffer from more intense uses and creating additional opportunities for economic activity. The plan will allow alternate modes of transportation for local residents/employees as well as enhance the landscape and architectural character established by existing residential and non-residential uses. No character area study has been approved, and no neighborhood plans have been proposed or completed for this area. The application site is within the designated ESL area and thus is subject to the accompanying regulations of the overlay regardless of the land use category.

Economic Vitality

Office will provide for office development bringing additional small business opportunities to an attractive location with numerous amenities. The proximity of the office space to desirable living areas has the potential to reduce vehicle travel, and at least some of the employees of these offices are expected to reside within McDowell Mountain Ranch.

Neighborhoods:
The Neighborhoods Element seeks to enhance, preserve, or rehabilitate as may be appropriate. McDowell Mountain Ranch is a relatively new neighborhood that is comparatively diverse, containing a regional (and occasionally national) destination facility at Westworld together with a variety of non-residential uses typically at a small scale and a variety of residential densities. This property, and the areas to the west are designated Cultural/Institutional on the General Plan Land Use Map. The Cultural/Institutional designation was placed in this area specifically to accommodate the Westworld facility and ancillary or support uses. The areas on the north side of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road are designated Suburban Neighborhoods, the property immediately to the east is designated Commercial. The Westworld equestrian center is to the south and west, the McDowell Mountain Ranch master planned community is to the east, and a mix of smaller subdivisions and nonresidential uses (school facilities) are to the north and west. Current zoning for this property is R1-35 ESL. Areas upslope of the Old Verde Canal, subject from time to time to ponding of run -off have the greatest plant density. The vegetation on the property is predominantly naturally occurring and indigenous. With the exception of the Old Verde Canal and perimeter roadways, the site is largely undisturbed and has a natural desert character. The application proposes land uses that will be consistent with approved uses on adjacent properties, allowing for enhanced compatibility.

Open Space The Verde Canal extends several miles northwest and southeast from the site and has been identified by area developers and by the city as both a cultural resource, an environmental asset and as a linear open space feature connecting several neighborhoods, commercial centers and cultural/recreational facilities along its length. While a constraint in some respects, the feature represents a unique opportunity and is both an asset to the property and to the larger community. In order to promote harmony with the natural desert surroundings, the applicant recognizes that the site is within an ESL designated area and provides for certain NAOS requirements.

Sustainability. This is an ideal site for multimodal transportation with established infrastructure of several modes already in place. In addition, the work function proposed here suggests more opportunities for minimizing motor vehicle travel. In a nutshell, there will be more places for people living in McDowell Mountain Ranch to work. Sustainability includes Preservation and Environmental Planning, which will be addressed in more detail with the implementation of the project. However, the site is located within the Lower Desert Landform of the ESL Ordinance and will require the dedication of Natural Area Open Space. Future development of this site should take into account the preservation of the Old Verde Canal, which has been identified as a historical/archeological resource for the City of Scottsdale. This recognition of the Verde Canal has resulted in the preservation of large portions of the Canal feature in the site planning and

development of other properties in the area. A similar response is expected in development of this property. Sustainability also encompasses the Cost of Development. The City of Scottsdale has long held the philosophy that new development should "pay for itself" and not burden existing residents and property owners with the provision of infrastructure and public services and facilities. The developer of the project will be responsible for any necessary infrastructure improvements to accommodate the demand generated by the new uses. The current land use designation of cultural/institutional could provide for a land use of greater intensity that is proposed with this application, and the infrastructure in place or planned will readily accommodate this project, so it is unlikely that any significant additional off-site improvements will be required.

Transportation

The Office use offers predictability in peak use trips with moderate activities throughout the day and limited activity on weekends. Both uses will provide an opportunity for employees/residents to walk or bicycle to and from the site. In addition, equestrian facilities are adjacent and opportunities for hiking are nearby.

III. LAND USE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following table is derived from the City of Scottsdale Land Use Impact Model. Although it reflects increases in comparable categories, it should be noted that the values reflected here are estimates that are not based on actual uses or plans. In reality, the Cultural/Institutional land use category could encompass a broad range of uses whose actual impact could be very different from these values, and the same is true of the proposed Office land use. Accordingly, floor area is not depicted in the table below.

	Existing Cult.Inst.	Proposed Office
Carbon Monoxide	22	80
Floor Area		
Population		
School Children	---	
Water Use	13 Acre Ft/Yr	33 Acre Ft/Yr
Wastewater	3.5 Acre Ft/Yr	13 Acre Ft/Yr
Solid Waste	12 Tons/Yr	1 Ton/Yr
Vehicle Trips	200/Day	732
Employees	24	183

IV. POLICY AND GOALS DISCUSSION

The Land Use designation of Cultural/Institutional is not necessary for the benefit of the city's Westworld facility. Land Use Element Goals speak to integrating the land uses into the surrounding physical and natural environments, the neighborhood setting, and the neighborhood itself. This can be achieved through transitions to help integrate into surrounding neighborhoods, and promoting development patterns and standards that are consistent with the surrounding uses and reinforce the area's character. The location of this property is unique, it is surrounded by a variety of land uses, and it is adjacent to a primary developed equestrian facility, providing amenities for both visitors and residents. It is important to consider the proximity of the McDowell Mountain Ranch subdivision to the north and the east.

The only change that this application proposes is to the land use designation. Instead of continuing the cultural/institutional land use existing to the west of the subject property, a designation that provides for integration with the land uses to the east is appropriate. Unless the City wants to acquire the subject property and expand Westworld, a prospect that is remote at best, this site should be planned in conjunction with or to be compatible with the approved uses to the east. The Office category allows that to happen, while the cultural/institutional designation does not.

Open Space and Vista Corridor goals are will benefit from this application. Although the ESL designation and its required open space apply to any land use designation, and the requirement to preserve the Verde Canal will likely apply to any land use designation, the ability to retain the Canal will be enhanced by a land use designation that allows the subject property to be planned in conjunction with the uses to the east. Transportation would also be enhanced by the appropriate land use category. As noted, the opportunity for a trail along the canal in this area would be improved. In addition, in this area the relationship between the canal, the existing streets, and parcel boundary lines does not provide good vehicle access for some parcels. This site, if designated Office by the land use plan, could potentially benefit from planning in conjunction with the property to the east.

V. NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

This property has been the subject of a previous application for General Plan amendment for Urban Neighborhoods, which was denied. A benefit from this experience is that there has been a great deal of public scrutiny. We know, for example, that multifamily residential at a density of 10-12 units per acre was deemed acceptable by neighbors in the past. Employment use has been replaced by 2-story Office use due to concerns about service bay doors, truck traffic, and the aesthetics of industrial buildings, particularly given the lower elevation of the subject property.

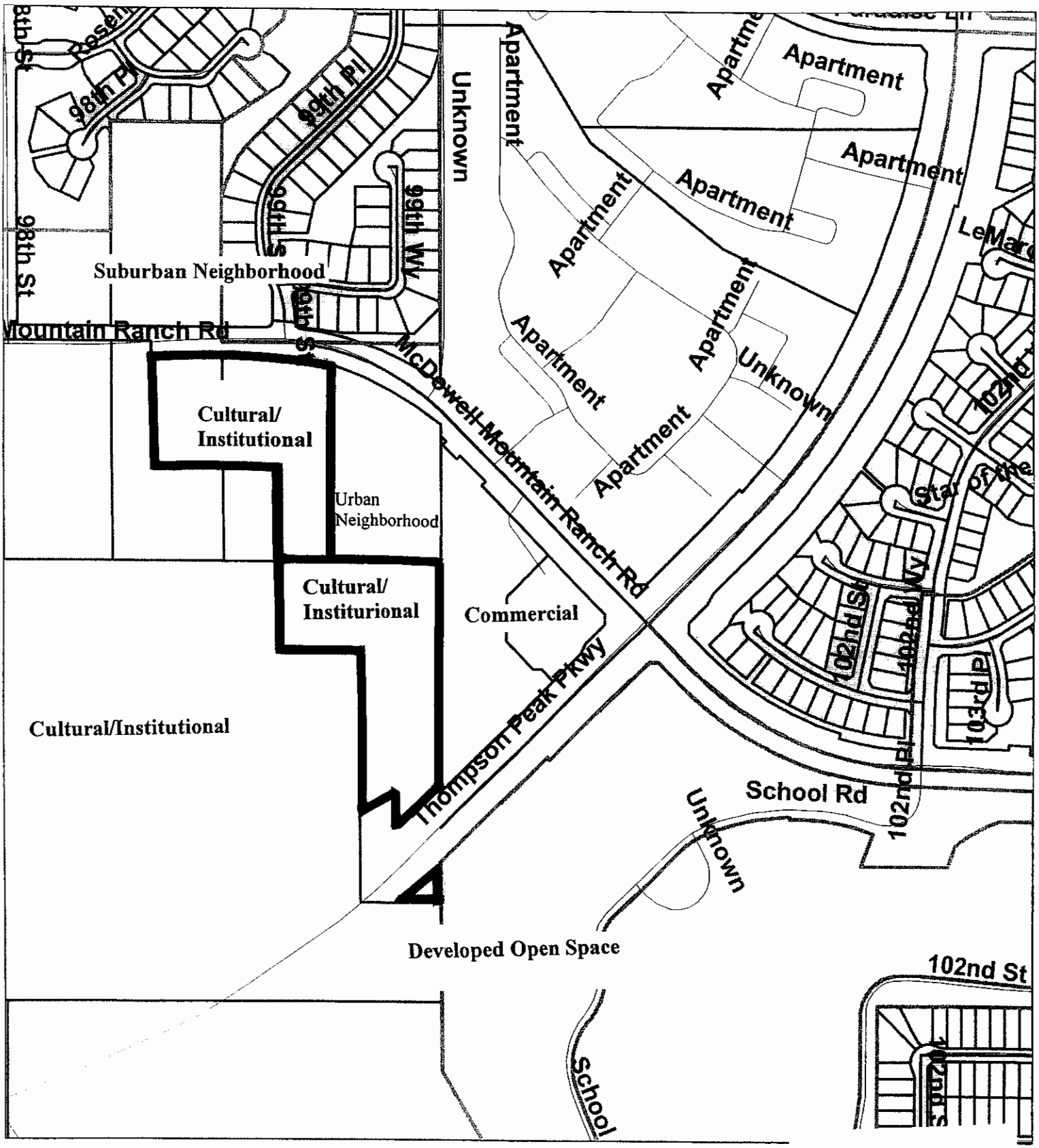
The designation of Cultural/Institutional for this area of the city was established mainly for the Westworld equestrian facilities to the south and west of this property. At the time of the previous applications there was some indication of a possible interest in expanding Westworld to this site, but that possibility ended when the State land was purchased by its current owners.

The applicant has notified neighbors within 750 feet, as well as the appropriate HOA's, and has posted the property and scheduled the necessary Open House meeting. The City will be informed of the neighbor's response throughout the amendment process.

Conclusion

This proposed General Plan amendment is consistent with the character, land use intensity, and goals for future development in this area of the city and, if developed sensitively, will not have a negative impact on surrounding neighborhoods or neighboring land uses. The Westworld complex does not need this area to be maintained as Cultural/Institutional. The proposed Office use will provide an adequate transition and a buffer from the diverse uses and activities of Westworld.

EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATION



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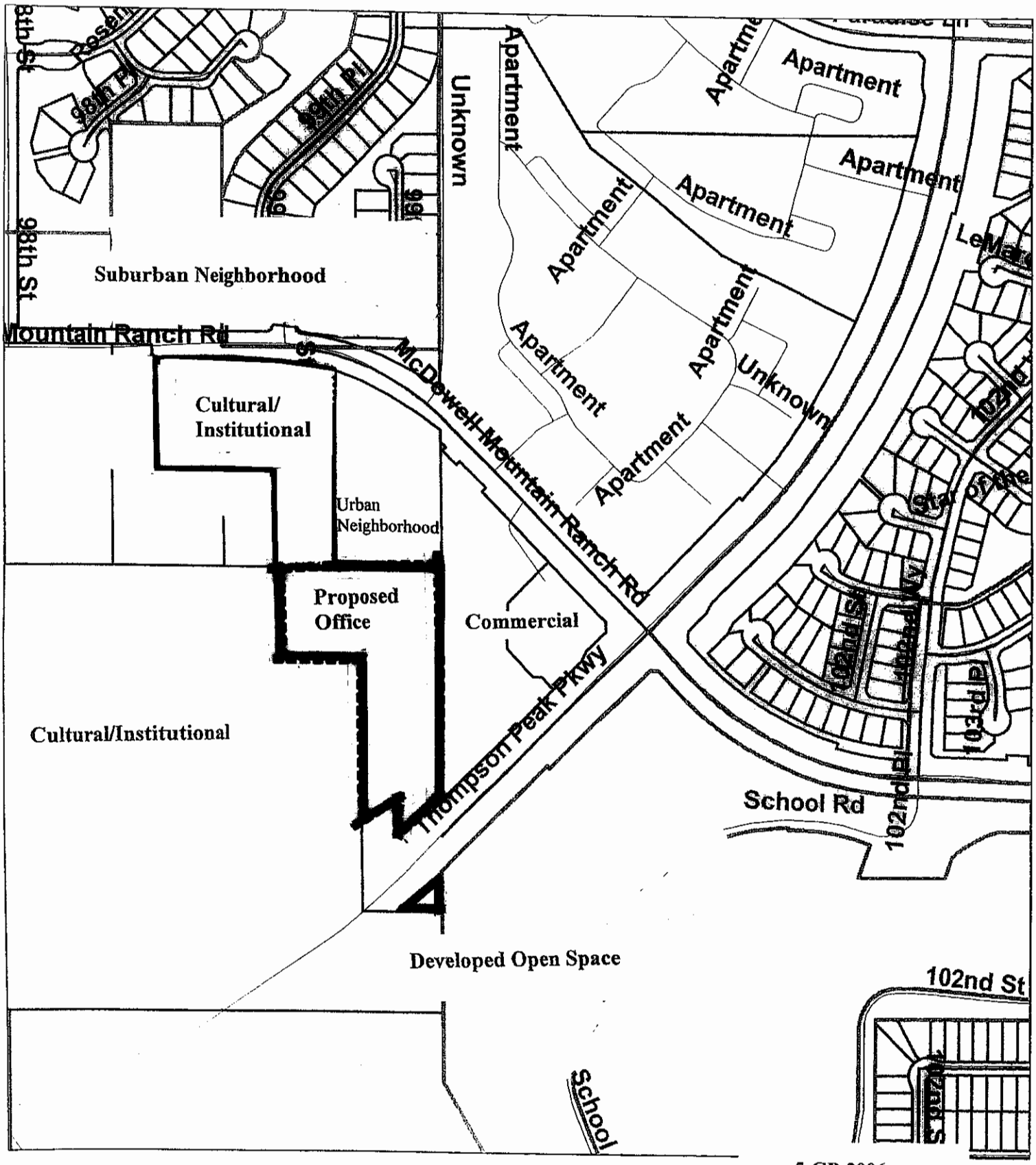
PROPOSED LAND USE DESIGNATION



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