

Project Narrative NWC of Pima & Dynamite

Conditional Use Permit Narrative Report

Request for a Conditional Use Permit
for
Rural Neighborhood Support Services

Prepared for:
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I. Overview

This request is for a Conditional Use Permit for rural neighborhood support services on approximately 10+/- gross acres located at the northwest corner of Pima Road and Dynamite Boulevard (the "Property").

The applicant intends to create a very unique environmentally sustainable demonstration project in the upper Sonoran Desert, which will become a model for truly mixed-use sustainable design and development. The owner's long-term commitment to entitle, develop, construct and manage the Property provides a special opportunity to highlight the latest principles and practices of sustainability and green building design. The uses envisioned for the Property embrace the Desert Foothills Character Plan and support the area's rural and rustic lifestyle.

The applicant is committed to developing a design expression that takes its clues from authentic design features and conditions that are true to the aspirations expressed in both the General Plan and the Desert Foothills Character Plan. This unique project will focus on a rural and authentic design theme that will blend within the context of the surrounding desert setting.

II. Context

This distinctive small-scale environmentally sensitive rural neighborhood support service opportunity provides an excellent transition between intense arterial streets, non-residential land uses (such as churches and large scale horse properties) and single-family residential development. It is important to consider the character of the land use patterns that have developed near and adjacent to the Property. To the north along Pima Road, is a 25-acre church property known as the Dream Center. West along Dynamite, is a large ranch facility with a series of large-scale metal stables and active riding facilities. The Property is adjacent to a major utility corridor with towers reaching approximately 140 feet in height, as well as two regional arterial roads (Pima and Dynamite) that serve as two of the highest capacity roadways north of the Loop 101 providing vehicular connectivity from the 101 to Carefree and from Phoenix to Fountain Hills. The circulation patterns of these two roads make the site ideal for rural neighborhood support services in contrast to the retail development at the corner of Alma School (a minor collector) and Dynamite which lacks connectivity to the north as a result of the Preserve. The Property is further constrained by two 100-foot wide Scenic Corridors adjacent to the arterial roads and natural wash corridors that traverse the Property leaving a little more than half of the original 10 acres to be developed. Clearly, the area already includes a variety of more intense uses than traditionally found in rural residential neighborhoods. Consequently, the land use market realities of large lot single family homes being developed on the subject Property indicates that the current R1-190 development regulations are antiquated and necessitate modification to the text of the Zoning Ordinance to allow more realistic development to occur on the Property and to address the needs of area residents, tourists and visitors.

The following images depict the character of the area and surrounding land uses.



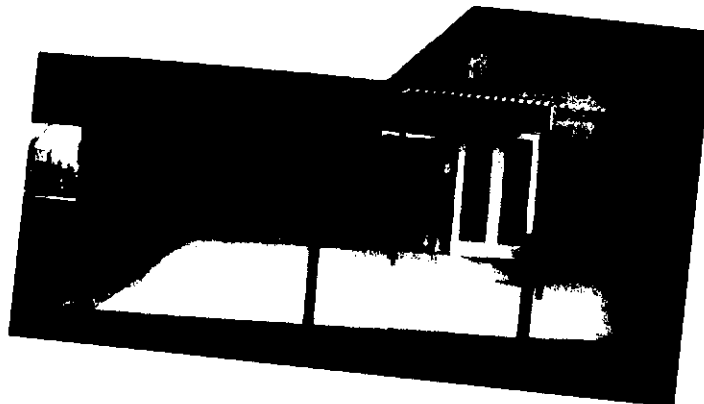
Adjacent Ranch Facility - View North



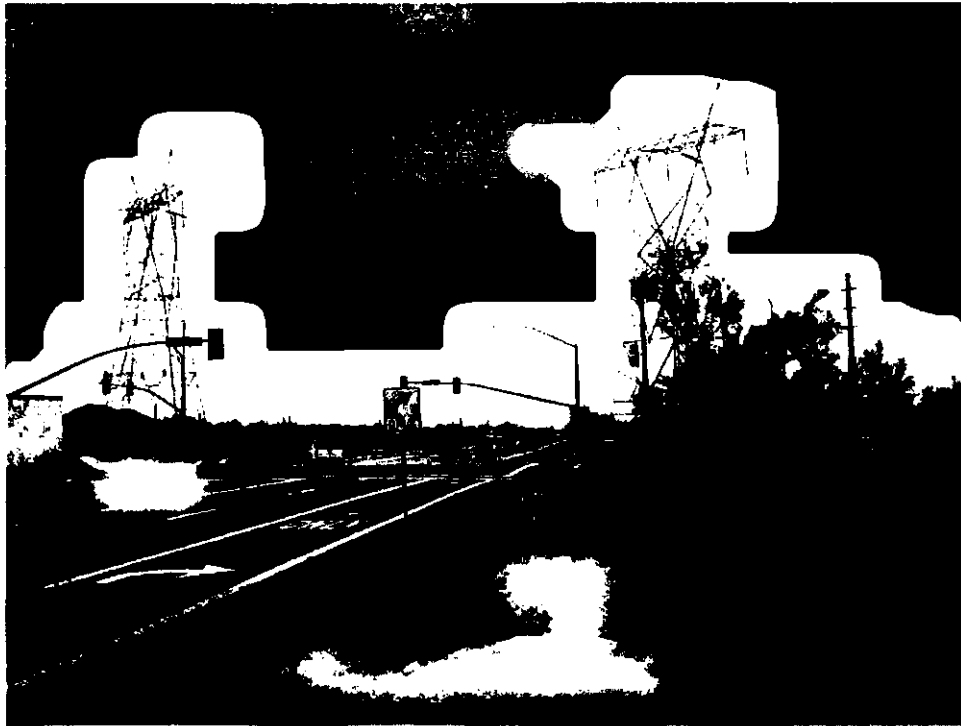
Adjacent Ranch Facility



Adjacent Ranch Facility



Dream Center Scottsdale First Assembly



Power-line Corridor at Intersection of Pima & Dynamite – View North



Power-line Corridor at Pima & Dynamite – View Southeast from Property

III. Conditional Use Permit

Conditional Use Permits may be granted only after the Planning Commission has made a recommendation and the City Council has found as follows (Section. 1.401):

A. That the granting of such conditional use permit will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare. In reaching this conclusion, the Planning Commission and the City Council's consideration shall include, but not be limited to, the following factors:

1. Damage or nuisance arising from noise, smoke, odor, dust, vibration or illumination.

Response: No excessive or significant noise, smoke, odor, dust, or vibration is anticipated to be generated from the proposed use.

2. Impact on surrounding areas resulting from an unusual volume or character of traffic.

Response: The arterial intersection of Pima and Dynamite is designed to handle the proposed volume of traffic and the proposed use will not result in unusual increase of traffic volume typically found on minor arterial roads. The proposed development includes a range of support services and would allow for shorter automobile trips given its location near a host of master planned communities, promoting a balance of land uses in a neighborhood that lacks rural neighborhood support service opportunities. The land use balance of integrating appropriate neighborhood services within residential communities helps promote reduction in vehicle trips, air pollution, and resource consumption.

B. The characteristics of the proposed conditional use are reasonably compatible with the types of uses permitted in the surrounding areas.

Response: The area includes a variety of more intense uses than traditionally found in rural residential neighborhoods. To the north along Pima Road, is a 25-acre church property known as the Dream Center. West along Dynamite, is a large ranch facility with a series of large-scale metal stables and active riding facilities. Further, the Property is near a host of master planned communities and residential subdivisions that include Troon, Troon North, Estancia, and Desert Highlands. The Property is adjacent to a major utility corridor with towers reaching approximately 140 feet in height, as well as two regional arterial roads (Pima and Dynamite) that serve as two of the highest capacity roadways north of the Loop 101 providing vehicular connectivity from the 101 to Carefree and from Phoenix to Fountain Hills.

- C. The additional conditions specified in Section 1.403, as applicable, have been satisfied.**

Below is the specific criteria outlined in the R1-190 district for rural neighborhood support services.

Rural Neighborhood Support Services limited to one of each of the following uses:

- ***Restaurant: Maximum of 5,000 square feet***
- ***Hardware Store including accessory uses such as Feed and Tack and a Plant Nursery: Maximum of 11,000 square feet (combined)***
- ***Gas and Energy Station: Maximum of eight (8) dispensers***
- ***General Store: Maximum of 7,500 square feet***
- ***Bank: Maximum of 5,000 square feet***
- ***Residential Living Unit: Maximum of 3,500 square feet***

Response: The proposed development plan for the Property conforms to the size limitations identified above.

- a. Lot area: The maximum lot area shall be ten (10) gross acres or four hundred thirty five thousand six hundred (435,600) square feet.**

Response: The maximum lot area is 10 gross acres.

- b. Building height: The maximum building height shall not exceed twenty four (24) feet above natural grade.**

Response: Buildings will not exceed 24 feet in height above natural grade.

- c. Building coverage: The maximum total building coverage, excluding patios shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the gross lot area.**

Response: Building coverage will not exceed 10% of the gross lot area.

- d. Location:**

- 1. Frontage on two (2) streets classified as minor arterials or greater.**

Response: The Property has frontage on Pima Road and Dynamite Boulevard both of which are classified as minor arterials in the City's Transportation Master Plan.

- 2. Located on the corner of a signalized intersection.**

Response: The Property is located on the corner of a signalized intersection.

3. *Located within one-half (0.5) mile of an existing or planned major preserve trail access location as designated on the City of Scottsdale conceptual preserve trail system map as of 1/1/2010.*

Response: The property is located within one-half mile of a planned major trail access location which is at the northeast corner of Pima & Dynamite.

4. *Located within fifty (50) feet of an existing 345KV power line easement.*

Response: The Property is located within 50 feet of an existing 345KV power line easement.

5. *Located within the Desert Foothills Character Area.*

Response: The Property is located in the Desert Foothill Character Area.

- e. *Scenic corridor: Located on property subject to a minimum of two (2) one hundred (100) feet wide scenic corridors as set forth in the city's scenic corridor design guidelines.*

Response: The Property is subject to two, 100-foot wide scenic corridors; one along Pima Road and one along Dynamite Boulevard.

- f. *Open space: the minimum open space including Natural Area Open Space (NAOS) shall be fifty percent (50 %) of the net lot area.*

Response: The proposed development plan exceeds 50% open space.

- g. *Design compatibility: All site improvements, including but not limited to, the buildings, parking areas, and other areas, should be designed to be consistent with homes and/or non-residential uses allowed in the surrounding or adjacent neighborhood. Building materials and form should be responsive to the Sonoran Desert climate. The Development Review Board shall emphasize the following:*

1. *Design elements such as varied building forms, variety of window sizes and placements, covered patios, sloped roofs and other such elements associated with large custom designed single family residential homes.*

Response: The proposed use incorporates design elements associated with the design of large custom single family residential homes to include varied building forms, a variety of window sizes and placement, covered patios, sloped roofs.

2. ***Building materials that reflect the character of the Sonoran Desert including materials that are unpolished and have substantial texture with no exterior painted surfaces.***

Response: The building uses will be the key influences of design and will direct a character that is representative of the rural flavor of the area in keeping with the character of the Sonoran Desert. Building materials may include facades that incorporate rammed earth, adobe brick, board form concrete, native stone, board-on-batten, vertical gabions, corten steel and other similar treatments. Roof materials and features may include corrugated metal, standing seam metal (and other similar profiles), corten steel, clay tile, wood shakes and copper.

3. ***Landscaping that limits the use of non-native plant materials to a maximum of five percent (5%) of the total lot area, excluding any plant nursery, and such materials be placed in courtyards surrounded by buildings and walls at least six (6) feet in height.***

Response: Landscaping on the site will limit a maximum of 5% of the total lot area for the use of non-native plant materials (to be located in courtyard areas only). This limitation excludes vegetation in the plant nursery.

4. ***Building and site design shall use passive solar control techniques such as but not limited to overhangs, recessed doors and windows, and earthen berms along the base of building walls.***

Response: Building and site design will take advantage of passive solar control techniques to include overhangs, recessed doors and windows, and earthen berms.

5. ***Site design minimizes exterior heat gain through minimizing asphaltic paving materials to the extent possible and the shading of parking spaces, walkways and patio surfaces by mature trees and/or shade structures.***

Response: The site design will minimize heat gain by limiting asphalt in the parking lot and drive aisles and providing shaded parking spaces, walkways and patios through the use of both mature desert shade trees and shade structures compatible with the on site buildings.

6. ***Exterior water conservation measures including but not limited to water harvesting.***

Response: Water conservation measures will be incorporated with the development plan.

7. ***An equestrian emphasis by including parking for horses and horse trailers. Such parking may include a covered structure or barn.***

Response: The proposed development plan includes horse parking and horse trailer parking at the north end of the site as an amenity to trail users and vehicles pulling horses.

8. Consistency with the Desert Foothills Character Plan.

Response: The site and building design is consistent with the Desert Foothills Character Plan (See section V. below).

Further, Section 1.403.Q. prescribes development standards specifically related the physical structures and site improvements of an automotive service stations with the intent to mitigate the effects of those occurrences identified above.

Q. Service stations.

- 1. The application shall include a detailed landscape plans showing plant, type, size and spacing. All landscape plans shall include an automated watering system and planting areas shall constitute a minimum of five (5) percent of the lot area and may be required to include as much as twenty (20) percent of the site, depending upon site size. Lack of care and maintenance of the landscape areas shall be considered due cause for revocation of the use permit. All trees planted shall have a minimum caliper of two (2) inches and all shrubs shall be at least five-gallon size.***

Response: A landscape plan has been included as part of the submittal and not only meets the above noted criteria, but exceeds the open space calculations with the preservation of the Scenic Corridors along both Pima and Dynamite. Additionally, the landscaping will be meticulously maintained in keeping with the design philosophy of the project and the owner/operator's commitment to establishing and sustaining a premier neighborhood amenity.

- 2. All structures approved under this use permit shall be of a unique design character that is appropriate to the area in which they are to be constructed. Renderings of building shall accompany each application and construction shall be in reasonable conformity thereto. All canopies shall be connected to the roof of the main structure unless otherwise approved.***

Response: The development will be a distinctive, small-scale environmentally sensitive neighborhood service opportunity consistent with the goals and strategies of the Desert Foothills Character Plan and in conformance with the Gas Station and Convenience Store Design Guidelines. Supporting graphics included with this application demonstrate the applicant's commitment to promoting sustainability and green building design while

enhancing the area's rural and rustic lifestyle and respecting the natural topography and desert vegetation. The gas canopy will be architecturally integrated with the General Store.

3. *No driveway shall extend into the curb radius.*

Response: The site plan has been designed in compliance with this requirement and no driveway will extend into the curb radius of the intersection.

4. *All source of artificial light shall be concealed and shall be attached to the main structure, unless otherwise specifically approved. All lighting shall be so designed as to permit no glare.*

Response: The lighting for the service station will be concealed and attached to the main structure and will be flush mounted with the canopy consistent with the Gas Station and Convenience Store Design Guidelines with minimal glare and light trespass to promote "dark skies."

5. *The minimum area of a lot considered adequate to accommodate this use, exclusive of street dedication, shall be twenty-two thousand five hundred (22,500) square feet.*

Response: The site exceeds 22,500 square feet.

6. *A solid masonry wall or planting screen shall be required between all service station sites and residentially zoned property. (Height shall be as determined in each case.)*

Response: There is no automobile repair service proposed for this project. Additionally, the energy station service area is situated in a manner which will not be visible from the adjacent residential properties.

7. *Each site plan for a service station shall show three (3) types of areas as follows:*

- a. *Building area.***
- b. *Service area which shall be screened from view by a masonry wall and within which all automotive repair and service shall take place. Entry to indoor service areas shall be from the rear of the station except in cases where it may be approved otherwise by the City Council.***
- c. *Sales area.***

Response: The sales area is within the General Store and there is no automobile repair service proposed for this project.

8. *None of the above criteria shall prohibit the City Council from considering an application to reconstruct or remodel an existing service station.*

IV. Scottsdale's Sensitive Design Principles

The City has established a set of design principles, known as the Scottsdale's Sensitive Design Principles, to reinforce the quality of design in our community. The following Sensitive Design Principles are fundamental to the design and development of the Property.

1. *The design character of any area should be enhanced and strengthened by new development.*
 - *Building design should consider the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding context and, as appropriate, incorporate those qualities in its design.*
 - *Building design should be sensitive to the evolving context of an area over time.*
2. *Development, through appropriate siting and orientation of buildings, should recognize and preserve established major vistas, as well as protect natural features such as:*
 - *Scenic views of the Sonoran desert and mountains.*
 - *Archaeological and historical resources.*
3. *Development should be sensitive to existing topography and landscaping.*
 - *A design should respond to the unique terrain of the site by blending with the natural shape and texture of the land while minimizing disturbances to the natural environment.*
4. *Development should protect the character of the Sonoran desert by preserving and restoring natural habitats and ecological processes.*
5. *The design of the public realm, including streetscapes, parks, plazas and civic amenities, is an opportunity to provide identity to the community and to convey its design expectations.*
 - *Streetscapes should provide continuity among adjacent uses through use of cohesive landscaping, decorative paving, street furniture, public art and integrated infrastructure elements.*
6. *Developments should integrate alternative modes of transportation, including bicycles and bus access, within the pedestrian network that encourage social contact and interaction within the community.*

7. ***Development should show consideration for the pedestrian by providing landscaping and shading elements as well as inviting access connections to adjacent developments.***
 - *Design elements should be included to reflect a human scale, such as the use of shelter and shade for the pedestrian and a variety of building masses.*
8. ***Buildings should be designed with a logical hierarchy of masses:***
 - *To control the visual impact of a building's height and size.*
 - *To highlight important building volumes and features, such as the building entry.*
9. ***The design of the built environment should respond to the desert environment:***
 - *Interior spaces should be extended into the outdoors both physically and visually when appropriate.*
 - *Materials with colors and coarse textures associated with this region should be utilized.*
 - *A variety of textures and natural materials should be used to provide visual interest and richness, particularly at the pedestrian level. Materials should be used honestly and reflect their inherent qualities.*
 - *Features such as shade structures, deep roof overhangs and recessed windows should be incorporated.*
10. ***Developments should strive to incorporate sustainable and healthy building practices and products.***
 - *Design strategies and building techniques, which minimize environmental impact, reduce energy consumption, and endure over time, should be utilized.*
11. ***Landscape design should respond to the desert environment by utilizing a variety of mature landscape materials indigenous to the arid region.***
 - *The character of the area should be emphasized through the careful selection of planting materials in terms of scale, density, and arrangement.*
 - *The landscaping should complement the built environment while relating to the various uses.*
12. ***Site design should incorporate techniques for efficient water use by providing desert adapted landscaping and preserving native plants.***
 - *Water, as a landscape element, should be used judiciously.*
 - *Water features should be placed in locations with high pedestrian activity.*

13. ***The extent and quality of lighting should be integrally designed as part of the built environment.***
 - *A balance should occur between the ambient light levels and designated focal lighting needs.*
14. ***Signage should consider the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding context in terms of size, color, location and illumination.***
 - *Signage should be designed to be complementary to the architecture, landscaping and design theme for the site, with due consideration for visibility and legibility.*

V. Desert Foothills Character Plan

The proposed development fulfills the goals and strategies of the Desert Foothills Character Plan in the following ways:

Goal 1: Preserve the natural, visual qualities of the lush upper Sonoran Desert by using desert-sensitive building techniques that retain and blend with the natural desert character of the area.

Response: The selection of building material and landscaping was drawn from the surrounding desert context. The intent is to create an exceptional environmentally sustainable desert-sensitive demonstration project which will become a model for truly mixed-use sustainable design and development in the upper Sonoran Desert. Building materials may include rammed earth, adobe brick, board formed concrete, native stone, copper, and other similar treatments. The color palette will be directly tied to the natural color of the materials use with no painted surfaces or bright and inappropriate finishes. All buildings will be limited to one story, 24-feet in height, in keeping with the goals of the Desert Foothills Character Plan to blend with the visual setting of the surrounding desert character.

The site plan was designed with the primary focus of preserving significant features of the native Sonoran Desert and then carefully and thoughtfully integrating buildings and structures to minimize visual impact. The development plan is designed in a manner to maintain natural buffers along the perimeter of the site by preserving a 100-foot Scenic Corridor along both Pima and Dynamite. Driveway access and signage within the Scenic Corridors will be limited and designed in a manner that minimizes the disturbance area and incorporates native vegetation. Parking areas along the south and east sides of the site improvements will be recessed significantly and not visible from Pima and Dynamite.

Goal 2: Promote connected areas of desert open space and trails through visual and functional linkages with and between local neighborhoods and a regional open space network.

Response: The Property contains several natural elements in the context of the surrounding environment and will provide ample opportunity for people to experience and enjoy the native Sonoran Desert through preservation of washes and two 100-foot Scenic Corridors (along both Pima and Dynamite). Preserving these amenities will contribute to an interconnectivity and relationship with the surrounding neighborhood, provide opportunities for pedestrian and equestrian links, enhance view corridors, maintain wildlife corridors, and respect the existing topography. The proposed services will be for existing trail users, visitors and tourists where there are none in the vicinity.

The open space network preserved through this development strengthens the City's desire to promote environmental sensitivity, especially in North Scottsdale. Additionally, the City's goal of providing a comprehensive open space program that is responsive to the greater public need is upheld.

Goal 3: Identify and celebrate the Rural Desert character experienced in the Desert Foothills study area that will result in or maintain a unique desert community distinguished from other parts of Scottsdale and the metropolitan area.

Response: The applicant's approach to the proposed development begins with a commitment to raise-the-bar with respect to design quality and character within the context of the Desert Foothills Character Area. The design of all non-residential structures should respect the existing rustic, rural character and scale of buildings across the area. The proposed development will achieve this goal on many levels. The design promotes a rich landscape palette as part of the overall site plan design to enhance the surrounding rural desert character, minimize building mass, and naturally integrate with adjacent properties. The vision for the Property is a native desert garden setting that celebrates the unique character and quality of the Sonoran Desert. Additionally, sustainable practices such as water harvesting and conservation and protection/relocation of mature plant material will be followed.

In terms of building design, the development will respect and enhance the unique climate and historical context of Sonoran Desert by using a variety of indigenous materials and construction techniques. The applicant intends to create an environmentally sustainable project with a collection of neighborhood service uses which embrace the Desert Foothills Character Plan and support the area's rural and rustic lifestyle. Low-scale buildings (maximum 24 feet in height) with residential detailing and rustic- western architecture are envisioned for the site.

Further, sustainable and green building principles bring an innovative element to the development plan and program for this site. Thoughtful consideration was not only given

to site and building design, but also to the users' experience and future implications of the development. The primary development goal of minimizing environmental impact can be viewed on many levels: 1) providing services to a area that lacks rural neighborhood support service opportunities and reducing vehicle trips thereby minimizing the carbon footprint; 2) incorporating a rural-rustic building design, native building materials and low-water use desert landscaping; and, 3) utilizing valuable alternative modes of energy through solar heating, wind power and water harvesting in addition to offering alternative fuels.

VI. Conclusion

The proposed development is a distinctive, unprecedented small-scale, environmentally unique and sensitive neighborhood service opportunity for Scottsdale. The totality of the circumstance, including location on the hard corner of two regional arterials, the intensity of the surrounding land uses and the visual impact of the power line corridor coupled with the applicant's rural-rustic, sensitive development goals create a logical fit for the proposed rural neighborhood support service development.

Further, the applicant will create a distinctive demonstration project in the upper Sonoran Desert, which will become a model for truly mixed-use sustainable design and development. The long-term commitment to entitle, develop, construct and manage the Property provides a special opportunity to highlight the latest principles and practices of sustainability and green building design. The collection of uses envisioned for the Property embraces the Desert Foothills Character Plan and elevates the rural and rustic lifestyle that has become the hallmark of North Scottsdale.