

Cosanti Commons

Development Review Board Project Narrative

973-PA-2022



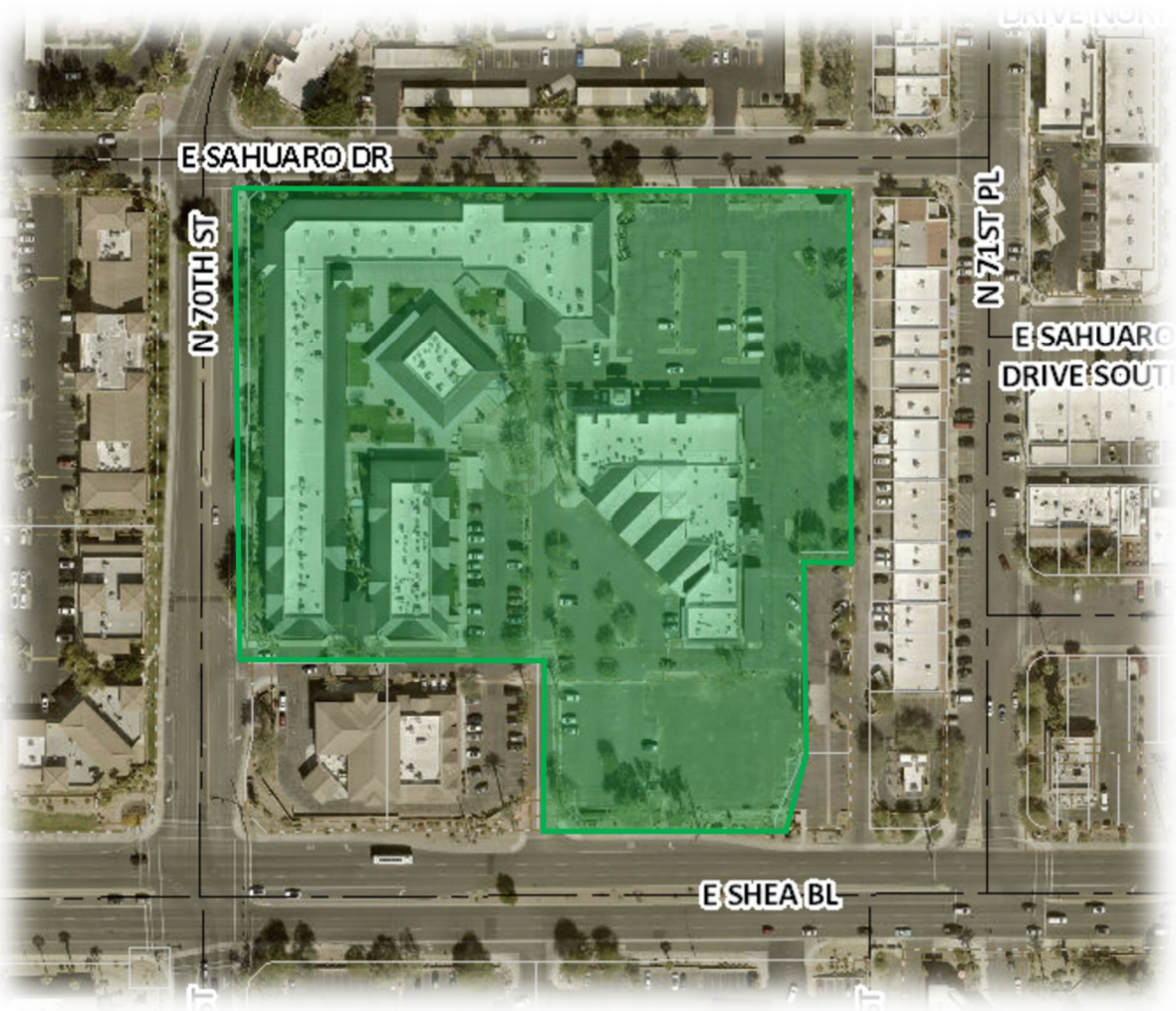
Development Request

The application is a request for Development Review Board (“DRB”) approval of a new residential mixed-use development on a 8.62+/- gross acre site located at 7000 E. Shea Boulevard, which is at the northwest corner of East Shea Boulevard and N 71st Place (the “Property”). The General Plan Amendment and Rezoning cases were approved by City Council on December 3, 2024, for the Property (reference cases: 2-GP-2023 and 6-ZN-2023). The GPA approved a Mixed-Use Neighborhoods land use designation, and the Rezoning approved a Planned Unit Development, Planned Shared Development (“PUD PSD”) district to allow for the integrated residential mixed-use development which includes, for the residential mixed-use building, residential dwelling units and Cosanti Exhibit Space as well as shared development standards and parking between the existing commercial center and the new building. The development plan includes 189+/- residences, Cosanti Exhibit Space, and amenities which include, but are not limited to, underground parking, landscaped spaces, pool/spa area, flex space, and fitness space. The building massing is set back from Shea Boulevard. The building will be a maximum height of 42-feet (three-stories) exclusive of mechanical appurtenances.

Proposed Design Concept



Context Aerial – Existing Site



Shea Boulevard Streetscape

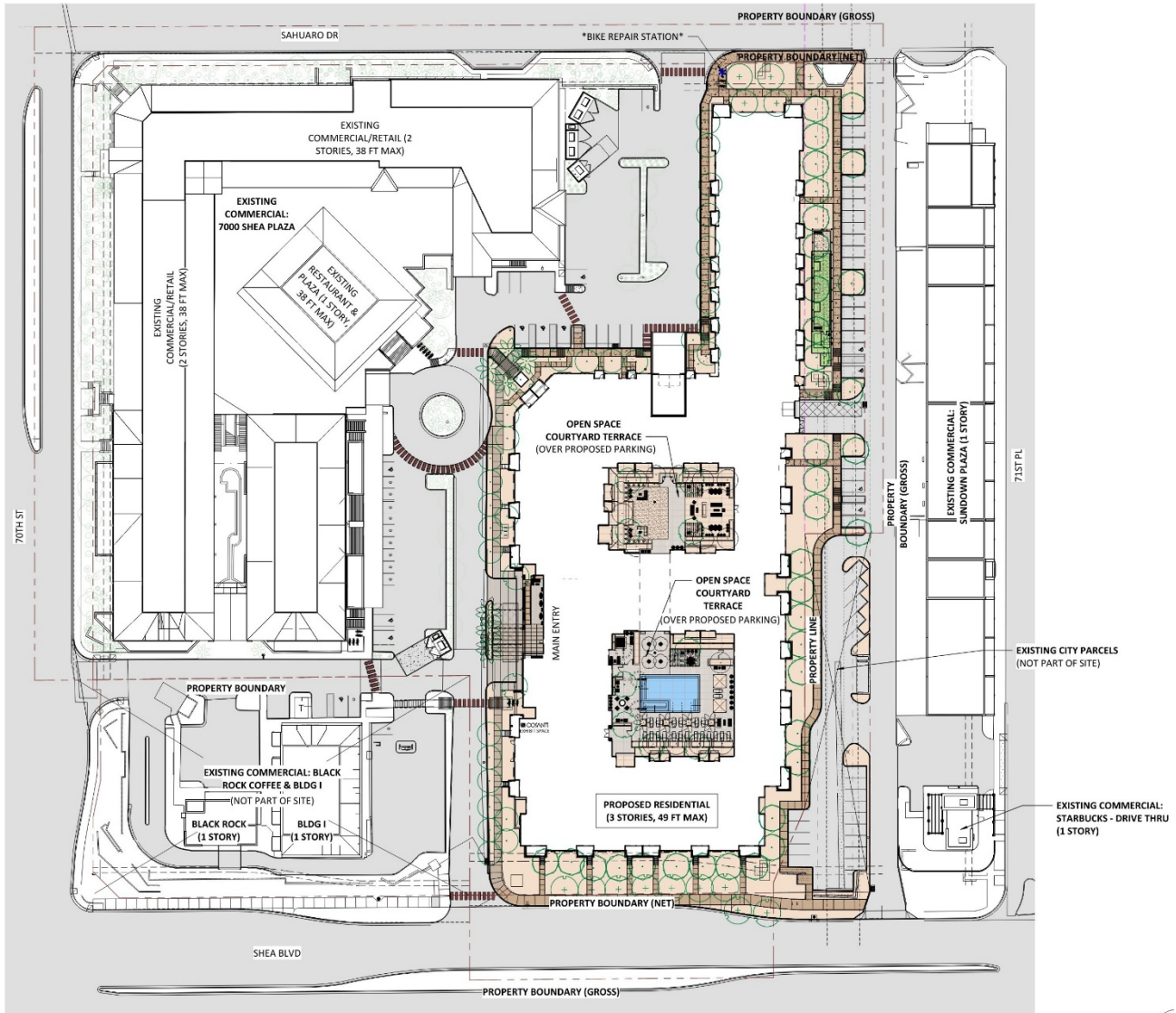
EXISTING



PROPOSED



Proposed Illustrative Site Plan



Development Review Board Criteria

Sec. 1.904: In considering any application for development, the Development Review Board shall be guided by the following criteria:

- 1. The Board shall examine the design and theme of the application for consistency with the design and character components of the applicable guidelines, development standards, Design Standards and Policies Manual, master plans, character plan and General Plan.***

Response: The proposal is supportive of the desired values defined in the General Plan, which include goals and policies that benefit the community. As demonstrated in detail with the recently approved zoning case for the Property, the development plan conforms to the 2035 General Plan, Planned Unit Development (“PUD”), and the Scottsdale Sensitive Design Principles.

The Property is surrounded by a variety of existing retail/support services and multifamily residential. The Property includes a range of commercial tenants who will remain including, but limited to, The Herb Box, Vixxo, Beginners Edge, and Arizona Bread Company. Black Rock Coffee is located to the southwest (not part of the rezoning boundary). To the west is a range of established commercial and support services including Sack Time Mattress, AZ Party Mart, Bravo Salon, and the Clock Doctor. South of Shea Boulevard there is a range of service-related businesses including Walgreens and Discount Tire. To the north of the Property is the Del Sol multifamily residential community. Large employers are located nearby, such as HonorHealth’s Shea Campus (approximately 2.5 miles to the east) and the Scottsdale Airpark (approximately 2 miles to the north). The Scottsdale/Paradise Valley YMCA is located approximately 800 feet to the west and Chaparral High School is located approximately 1,500 feet to the south. Further, there is approximately 155,000 square feet of vacant retail space in the area.

Key development considerations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Provide the Cosanti Foundation with dedicated exhibit space to display artwork to the public (estimated value of \$1,380,000)
- Provide use of flex space to the Cosanti Foundation to use for educational purposes in conjunction with SUSd, Scottsdale Community College, ASU, and U of A (estimated value of \$1,440,000)
- Implement unified architectural character of the Property and design elements consistent with the surrounding context that respond to the Southwestern climate and focus on sustainability through design, massing, material selection, and landscaping
- Offer new, vibrant housing options to Scottsdale residents, focusing on less expensive studio and one-bedroom residences to better serve the nearby workforce (teachers, nurses, small business owners and employees)
- Revitalize and redevelop an underutilized struggling retail center with synergistic land uses to promote the live, play, work philosophy
- Strengthen the economic success of the area through new residential while preserving and bolstering area businesses, many of whom are struggling

- Increase open space and improve the pedestrian environment by incorporating underground parking and large outdoor spaces, thereby reducing the heat island effect
- Enhance pedestrian connectivity through new and/or improved sidewalk connections further promoting walkability
- Attention to sustainable building methods and techniques including water conservation

2. *The architectural character, landscaping and site design of the proposed development shall:*

a. *Promote a desirable relationship of structures to one another, to open spaces and topography, both on the site and in the surrounding neighborhood;*

Response: The development request will allow for the redevelopment of an underutilized commercial center with 33% vacancy surrounded by a variety of supporting, employment, educational, commercial, and residential land uses that will offer services to the residents and guests. Streetscapes have been improved to encourage pedestrian comfort, safety, and accessibility with the proposal. The sidewalks will be upgraded along Shea Boulevard and Sahuaro Drive to include a new 8-ft wide sidewalk in addition to new 48" box shade trees. Sidewalks around the building and providing connectivity and further integration into the existing commercial retail portion of the Property will be 6-ft wide, lined with shade trees to provide pedestrian comfort. The proposed landscape palette consists of Palo Brea, Palo Verde, Fruitless Olive, Ghost Gum, and Chinese Elm, as well as other desert varieties, coordinating with the existing surrounding retail and multifamily development. The streetscape will be treated as a green space with planting areas and pedestrian activation elements including direct residential access. Additionally, to encourage multimodal transportation a bicycle repair station will be located along Sahuaro Drive for use by residents, patrons, and the greater community. The building massing is designed to respectfully integrate with the surrounding three-story building heights by proposing architectural elements influenced by the existing context.

b. *Avoid excessive variety and monotonous repetition;*

Response: As noted above with the key development considerations, the proposed architectural character, site layout, and landscaping design will respect the unique climate and vegetation of the Southwest. The building will utilize a combination of stucco, masonry and metal elements. In addition to the building form, building massing will be mitigated with varied articulation and a combination of numerous recessed and cantilevered/overhang elements through roof lines and balcony design. The color palette captures the organic warmth, subtle contrasts, and earthy beauty of the Sonoran Desert and reflects the interplay of light, shadow, and the muted vibrancy of the desert landscape. The balance of warm and cool tones captures Scottsdale's blend of contemporary design with natural beauty. The metal railings bring additional visual interest to the design.

c. *Recognize the unique climatic and other environmental factors of this region to respond to the Sonoran Desert environment, as specified in the Sensitive Design Principles;*

Response: Please see the Scottsdale Sensitive Design Principles section below.

d. *Conform to the recommendations and guidelines in the Environmentally Sensitive Lands*

(ESL) Ordinance, in the ESL Overlay District; and

Response: Not applicable.

e. Incorporate unique or characteristic architectural features, including building height, size, shape, color, texture, setback or architectural details, in the Historic Property Overlay District.

Response: Not applicable.

3. Ingress, egress, internal traffic circulation, off-street parking facilities, loading and service areas and pedestrian ways shall be so designed as to promote safety and convenience.

Response: This Property is located one block west of the Scottsdale Road and Shea Boulevard intersection, both major arterials, and approximately 2+/- miles west of the Loop 101, all of which provide regional access and public transit. By creating a comfortable and inviting pedestrian experience along Shea Boulevard and throughout the site, the design will encourage alternative modes of transportation, such as by foot, bicycle, and public transportation reducing reliance on vehicles. Encouraging these alternative means of transportation is fundamental to mixed-use pedestrian environments with the Property being located adjacent to and near numerous restaurants, retail, support services and employment destinations. The proposed building and site design with ground-level supporting uses (lobby/leasing, fitness space, recreational courtyards) encourage residents and visitors to utilize the surrounding businesses for their everyday dining and retail needs.

4. If provided, mechanical equipment, appurtenances and utilities, and their associated screening shall be integral to the building design.

Response: Mechanical equipment, appurtenances and utilities, and their screening methods will be integrated into the site and building design.

5. Within the Downtown Area, building and site design shall:

- a. Demonstrate conformance with the Downtown Plan Urban Design & Architectural Guidelines;*
- b. Incorporate urban and architectural design that address human scale and incorporate pedestrian-oriented environment at the street level;*
- c. Reflect contemporary and historic interpretations of Sonoran Desert architectural traditions, by subdividing the overall massing into smaller elements, expressing small scale details, and recessing fenestrations;*
- d. Reflect the design features and materials of the urban neighborhoods in which the development is located; and*
- e. Incorporate enhanced design and aesthetics of building mass, height, materials, and intensity with transitions between adjacent/abutting Type 1 and Type 2 Areas, and adjacent/abutting Type 2 Areas and existing development outside the Downtown Area.*

Response: Not applicable.

6. *The location of artwork provided in accordance with the Cultural Improvement Program or Public Art Program shall address the following criteria:*
- a. *Accessibility to the public;*
 - b. *Location near pedestrian circulation routes consistent with existing or future development or natural features;*
 - c. *Location near the primary pedestrian or vehicular entrance of a development;*
 - d. *Location in conformance with the Design Standards and Policies Manual for locations affecting existing utilities, public utility easements, and vehicular sight distance requirements; and*
 - e. *Location in conformance to standards for public safety.*

Response: This project does not fall under the mentioned programs – not applicable. However, the new residential mixed-use building celebrates its partnership with the Cosanti Foundation, and an interior space is included in the proposed building to be used by the Cosanti Foundation for their exhibits. The space is accessible by the public and located near a pedestrian circulation route running north and south near the midpoint of the site. An additional, interior space is available for use by the Cosanti Foundation for educational purposes and is a joint “flex” space. An exterior space at the southwest corner of the new building along Shea Boulevard will feature a Cosanti art installation as noted on the Site Plan. Conformance with the Design Standards and Policies Manual and standards for public safety will be met.

B. *The property owner shall address all applicable criteria in this section.*

PUD CRITERIA

Section 5.5003 of the City’s Zoning Code sets forth the criteria that must be satisfied when considering an application for a PUD District:

A. *PUD Zoning District approval criteria.*

1. *As part of the approval or modified approval of an application for a PUD District, the Planning Commission shall recommend, and the City Council shall find that the following criteria have been met:*

a. *The proposed development promotes revitalization, the goals, policies, and guidelines of the General Plan, area plans, and design guidelines.*

Response: As demonstrated with the approved General Plan Amendment and Rezoning case, 2-GP-2023 and 6-ZN-2023, the proposed development promotes revitalization and upholds the goals and policies set forth in these documents.

b. *The proposed development’s uses, densities, or development standards would not otherwise be permitted by the property’s existing zoning.*

Response: The development standards proposed with the approved case 6-ZN-2023 aligned best with the PUD zoning district.

c. The proposed development will be compatible with adjacent land uses and promotes the stability and integrity of abutting or adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Response: As an infill redevelopment project, the proposed design is respectful of the existing edge conditions in terms of setbacks, building placement, building height transitioning, human-scale and landscaping buffers. The architectural character of the proposed residential component is complementary of the existing commercial.

Integrating a mixed-use residential community into the Scottsdale Road and Shea Boulevard area is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2035 General Plan by offering new housing options for residents and encouraging a mix of synergistic land uses further strengthening the economic viability of this area, which is primarily composed of non-residential uses. This proposal will bring an estimated \$90,000,000 reinvestment to a struggling retail center (33% vacancy). The building massing is designed to respectfully integrate with the surrounding building heights by proposing a stepped design along the streetscape with architectural elements influenced by the existing retail uses.

d. There is adequate infrastructure and city services to serve the development.

Response: Water and Sewer reports are included with the application and demonstrate that there is adequate infrastructure and city services to serve the development.

The Property is well-situated for regional access while also taking advantage of transit opportunities and promoting walkability. The design implements a range of General Plan goals and policies including context appropriate site planning, creating a pedestrian presence with ground-level activity and shaded micro-environment through landscaping. The proposed land use also provides residential housing options within a mixed-use context, thereby reducing trip generation. The mixed-use proposal results in fewer vehicle trips than the existing commercial zoning as demonstrated in the traffic report provided with the zoning submittal.

e. The proposal meets the following criteria:

i. The proposed development is not located within any area zoned Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ESL) nor within the boundaries of the Downtown Area.

Response: Not applicable.

ii. The proposed development fronts onto a major or minor arterial and/or major collector street as designated in the Transportation Master Plan.

Response: The site has frontage on Shea Boulevard, a major arterial.

B. Amended development standards.

1. To encourage sensitivity to site conditions and provide flexibility in planning,

development standards outlined in Section 5.5005., excluding C. Allowable building height and D. Exception to building height, may be amended upon recommendation by the Planning Commission and a finding by the City Council that the amended development standards achieve the purposes of the planned unit development district better than the existing standards.

Response: Amended development standards (case 6-ZN-2023) approved for the Property include:

- **Average Setback:** Addition of the word “**MINIMUM**” with respect to the average setback requirement to clarify that average setbacks can be greater than the minimum as dictated by the development plan.
- **Encroachments beyond the Building Envelope:** Architectural features, trellis, canopies, balconies, patio enclosures, covered walkways, and screen walls are allowed to encroach 15 feet beyond the building envelope. This additional provision would allow a maximum encroachment of 15 feet for **BUILDING, WALL, AND ROOF ELEMENTS OF EXISTING STRUCTURES** to accommodate the existing condition of the commercial building.

C. Development Plan (DP).

1. Approval.

- a. Development Review Board considerations.
 - i. The Development Review Board shall review the DP elements and make a recommendation to the Planning Commission, based on the following considerations:
 - (1) The design contained in the DP is compatible with development in the area that it may directly affect, and the DP provides a benefit to the city and adjacent neighborhoods.
 - (2) The DP is environmentally responsive, incorporates green building principles, contributes to the city's design guidelines and design objectives, and that any deviations from the design guidelines must be justified by compensating benefits of the DP.
 - (3) The DP will not significantly increase solar shading of adjacent land in comparison with a development that could be developed under the existing zoning district.
 - (4) The DP promotes connectivity between adjacent and abutting parcels and provides open spaces that are visible at the public right-of-way and useful to the development.

Response: Integrating a mixed-use residential community into the Scottsdale Road and Shea Boulevard area is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2035 General Plan by offering new housing options for residents and encouraging a mix of synergistic land uses further strengthening the economic viability of this area, which is primarily composed of non-residential uses. This proposal will bring an estimated \$90,000,000 reinvestment to a struggling retail center. The building massing is designed to respectfully integrate with the existing retail center and surrounding three-story building heights by proposing a stepped design and architectural elements.

The building character and stepped building mass are complementary to the surrounding development pattern. The proposed building will integrate the existing onsite architectural vernacular utilizing a variety of desert-appropriate textures and building finishes, incorporating architectural elements that provide solar relief, shading and deep overhangs, and celebrate the Sonoran Desert climate by creating outdoor spaces and common amenities for its residents while also tying to the existing pedestrian network. Beyond the immediately adjacent context, the Property is located within close proximity to numerous employment, medical, and service-related businesses. The Property is well situated to benefit and further enhance a walkable environment through streetscape sidewalk connectivity and the internal pedestrian pathways connecting to area businesses.

- b. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Development Review Board, the Planning Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council for consideration of the DP.

Response: This occurred as part of the approval process for case 6-ZN-2023.

SCOTTSDALE SENSITIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The Character and Design Element of the General Plan states that “Development should respect and enhance the unique climate, topography, vegetation and historical context of Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert environment, all of which are considered amenities that help sustain our community and its quality of life.” The City has established a set of design principles, known as 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. In addition to the response below, please refer to Goal CD 1 above for a specific description of the design elements.

1. *The design character of any area should be enhanced and strengthened by new development.*

Response: The Southwestern contemporary building character and stepped building mass are complementary to the surrounding development pattern. The proposed residential building will utilize a variety of desert appropriate textures and building finishes, incorporate architectural elements that provide solar relief, shading and deep overhangs, and celebrate the Sonoran Desert climate by creating outdoor spaces and common amenities for its residents while also tying to the existing pedestrian network along the streetscape.

2. *Development, through appropriate siting and orientation of buildings, should recognize and preserve established major vistas, as well as protect natural features.*

Response: Although the setting of this site is more urban in character and does not have natural features such as natural washes and natural area open space, the development team has taken special consideration in providing appropriate interaction with the streetscape through building design and attention to the ground-level experience including additional open space and shade trees.

3. *Development should be sensitive to existing topography and landscaping.*

Response: The Property is redevelopment site located on a relatively flat improved parcel of land that is predominately an asphalt parking lot. Landscaping will consist of low water-use desert appropriate landscaping materials in conformance with established guidelines.

4. *Development should protect the character of the Sonoran Desert by preserving and restoring natural habitats and ecological processes.*

Response: The proposed redevelopment will include desert appropriate landscaping (as well as integration of native plants). Additional landscaping and increased open space areas will contribute to the area's habitat and improve air quality. Also, desert appropriate plants will be able to withstand the variations of the local climate and as they mature, they will become self-sustaining relative to water demand. The proposed 94,600 s.f. of open space, a 58% increase from the existing condition, will promote water conservation, prevent erosion, reduce the heat island effect, and decrease stormwater runoff.

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.*

Response: Pedestrian circulation along the streetscape is an important feature of the design, as numerous retail/support services, educational, residential, employment and recreational uses are within walking distance of the Property.

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.*

Response: The Property is well situated for mixed-use residential because it is located within walking distance to a range of supporting land uses including retail, restaurants, and support services. The development has been designed with an emphasis on the ground level pedestrian experience enhancing the land use goals for this area. Developing residential mixed-use with established transportation options (transit, foot, bicycle) reduces the number and distance of automobile trips and improves air quality, thereby enhancing the quality of life for the entire community.

7. *Development should show consideration for the pedestrian by providing landscaping and shading elements as well as inviting access connections to adjacent developments.*

Response: The proposed building will incorporate design elements that respect human scale, providing shade and shelter through building form, site, and landscape design.

8. *Buildings should be designed with a logical hierarchy of masses.*

Response: Variation in massing (stepped façade), proportion, material contrast, and architectural detailing will be provided establishing a natural hierarchy. The proposed development also provides continuity between the newly proposed and existing architecture in the surrounding area, providing contextually appropriate redevelopment and visual fluidity along the street frontages. Additionally, no reductions are being requested for building setbacks and stepbacks along the street edge for the new residential building. Only two amended development standards are being requested with the application: the addition of the word “MINIMUM” with respect to the average setback requirement to clarify that average setbacks can be greater than the minimum as dictated by the development plan, and to allow for minor building, wall, and roofline encroachments for the existing commercial building. The residential building will be compliant with the base PUD development standards.

9. *The design of the built environment should respond to the desert environment.*

Response: The proposed building will utilize a variety of Sonoran Desert-inspired textures and building finishes, incorporate architectural elements that provide solar relief and deep overhangs, and celebrate the Southwestern climate by creating outdoor spaces, respites, and shade.

10. *Developments should strive to incorporate sustainable and healthy building practices and products.*

Response: Sustainable strategies and building techniques, which minimize environmental impact and reduce energy consumption, will be emphasized. The specific sustainable elements are being evaluated with the design and development of the residential building in accordance with IGCC and will include, but are not limited to, well insulated building envelope, energy efficient windows, energy efficient light fixtures, and low flow faucets and shower heads. See 2035 General Plan Sustainability & Environment section above.

11. *Landscape design should respond to the desert environment by utilizing a variety of mature landscape materials indigenous to the arid region.*

Response: Context appropriate, mature arid-region plant materials will be utilized with the redevelopment and revitalization of the Property. The desert-lush character will be upheld through the careful selection of plant materials in terms of scale, density, and arrangement.

12. *Site design should incorporate techniques for efficient water use by providing desert adapted landscaping and preserving native plants.*

Response: The site design will maintain a low water use plant palette. Context appropriate desert plant materials will be utilized consistent with the established vegetative pattern found throughout the area.

13. *The extent and quality of lighting should be integrally designed as part of the built environment.*

Response: Lighting will be designed in a manner that is respectful of the surrounding context while maintaining safety and wayfinding for residents, patrons, and passing pedestrians.

14. *Signage should consider the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding context in terms of size, color, location and illumination.*

Response: Project identification will be contextually appropriate and processed under a separate approval and permit process.
