
Porchlight Homes

Desert Place at Morrison Ranch

Modification to PAD-DMP
SWC Sossaman & Guadalupe

Project Narrative

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Project Narrative

1. Introduction

Pew & Lake, PLC, on behalf of Porchlight Homes, is pleased to submit this narrative and related exhibits in support of development requests for the approximately 6.74 net acres (8.76 gross acres) located at the SWC of Sossaman Road and Guadalupe Road in Mesa (APN 304-17-570). These requests will support Porchlight Homes' proposed single-family residential development located on an infill site in the Desert Place at Morrison Ranch community ("Morrison Ranch"). The proposed 37 lots with a minimum lot area of 5,750 sq. ft. will implement a high-quality use that is consistent with the Mesa General Plan 2040 ("General Plan") and that will complement and enhance the surrounding area.

Porchlight Homes has worked extensively with the Morrison Ranch HOA, which reviewed its request to become part of the HOA and develop homes that are similar in quality to the homes on the surrounding streets in Morrison Ranch. Members of the HOA were enthusiastic about the request and circulated a petition to approve the proposal. They garnered more than two-thirds votes, which means more than 500 members of the HOA voted in support of the proposed rezoning and preliminary plat requests.

The site aerial is depicted below:

Figure 1 – Site Aerial



2. Requests

The applicant requests City of Mesa approval of the following:

- a. Rezoning from NC-PAD-DMP to RS-6-PAD-DMP
- b. Preliminary Plat
- c. Administrative approval of the housing plans (By separate application)

It is noted that the proposed subdivision will be contiguous to the Morrison Ranch Subdivision, and as such, this will constitute a modification of the same final plat recorded as MCR 1131-34 on December 5, 2012. The below Figure 2 illustrates the proposed zoning request:

Figure 2 – Proposed City of Mesa Zoning



3. Existing General Plan Designation and Zoning Classification

As depicted in the below figures, the property is designated in the City of Mesa General Plan as Neighborhood Suburban and is zoned NC-PAD-DMP. The existing zoning was approved in October 2006 as part of the PAD-DMP for the Desert Place at Morrison Ranch Master Planned Community (Ord. # 4602), which reserved this corner lot for commercial uses.

Figure 3 – Existing Mesa General Plan Character Area



Figure 4 – Existing City of Mesa Zoning



4. Existing Site Conditions

The subject site is vacant, agricultural property with relatively even terrain. It is situated in the developed Morrison Ranch single-family detached residential subdivision. The site is surrounded by the completed subdivision improvements, including entry monumentation, the perimeter fence, detached sidewalks, landscaping, and roadway improvements for the 64 ft.-wide Avoca Drive and 56 ft.-wide Osage Avenue. There are no 100-year floodplains on the subject property.

Along the arterial street frontages at Guadalupe Road, a six-lane arterial, and Sossaman Road, a 4-lane arterial, right-of-way improvements are built-out and include detached sidewalks, curb/gutter, bike lanes, pavement, and street lights. There are no above-ground power poles, except for across the street on the north side of Guadalupe Road.

5. Relationship to Surrounding Properties

The project site is located in a residential area and within the Desert Place at Morrison Ranch final plat (MCR 1131-34). This subdivision includes a typical lot area of 5,750 sq. ft. (50 ft. x 115 ft.) for the RS-6 zoning that surrounds the subject site.

Avoca Drive and single family homes abut the property's west boundary. Abutting the property's south boundary are Osage Avenue, then single family Homes. Adjacent to the property's northeast corner (at the immediate southwest corner of Guadalupe and Sossaman Roads) is an approximately one-half acre property that is owned by the Desert Place at Morrison Ranch HOA. It is not a part of this application but is improved with a landscaped retention basin and adjacent utility facilities.

Abutting the property's north property line is Guadalupe Road and a Maricopa County-owned drainage channel. North of the drainage channel lies the Superstition Springs Village Unit 4 subdivision, which is zoned RS-6 and has minimum 5,201 sq. ft. lots (e.g., 50 ft x 105 ft.). The corner lot at the intersection of Guadalupe and Sossaman is zoned LC, in which an auto repair facility was constructed sometime between 2017-2018. Sossaman Road abuts the subject site's east property line, followed by a strip retail-commercial center known as "The Shops at Sossaman." This center is not built out, but is anchored by an Auto Zone and CVS Pharmacy. This commercial center is surrounded on the east and south by the Sossaman Estates subdivision, part of which is known as Sonoran Springs, which has a minimum typical lot area of 5,500 sq. ft. (50 ft. x 110 ft.). The table below summarizes the existing and surrounding land use context.

Table 1 – Existing and Surrounding Land Use Context

Direction	General Plan Character Area	Existing Zoning	Existing Use
Project Site	Neighborhood Suburban	NC PAD DMP	Vacant, Agricultural
North	Neighborhood Suburban	RS-6 and LC	Guadalupe Road, Drainage Channel, Single-Family Residential, Vacant and Auto Repair/Transmission Shop
East	Neighborhood Suburban	LC	Sossaman Road, Retail/Commercial, Vacant pad
South	Neighborhood Suburban	RS-6 PAD DMP	Osage Avenue, Single Family Residential
West	Neighborhood Suburban	RS-6 PAD DMP	Avoca Drive, Single Family Residential

6. Justification for Proposed Development

Porchlight Homes’ proposed single-family residential development supports the vision, goals, and policies of the General Plan by proposing improvements on an infill property that is consistent with the use and density of the surrounding subdivision. The proposed RS-6 PAD zoning is highly suitable for the subject property because of: (a) the proposed development connection into, and support from, the Morrison Ranch HOA; (b) the local commercial market; and (c) the project’s compliance with the General Plan goals and objectives.

a. Surrounding Residential Use and Morrison Ranch HOA Support

It is noted that because of the project’s demonstrated compatibility with the surrounding Morrison Ranch community, members of the HOA are in support and garnered more than two-thirds votes in approval of the proposed rezoning and preliminary plat requests. The proposed residential use is compatible at the subject property because it is surrounded by features that are consistent with the Morrison Ranch subdivision. The overall subdivision improvements, such as landscaping, white perimeter picket fence, monument sign, and theming along Guadalupe and Sossaman Roads present the appearance that the site is a residential phase of the subdivision.

The property is not located at the immediate intersection of Sossaman Road and Guadalupe Road. A landscaped retention basin is located on the corner that exceeds subdivision standards for corner setbacks, and a proposed local street internal to the project provides additional separation between the retention basin and the homes to the north. The landscaping, grade changes, and separation would make a commercial use less compatible for this property because of the limited visibility to any future commercial buildings. On the other hand, these buffering features would support a proposed residential use and help mitigate any effects of traffic.

Traffic at this location is significantly less than other arterials roads near the more commercial-oriented streets at the Superstition Springs Center and near the freeways, making the subject property more suitable for a residential use. At the neighborhood meeting held on September 24, 2019, neighbors in attendance noted that this intersection does not have the same intense traffic as on Power Road or Baseline Road, which further suggests that the surrounding streets have a more a residential character. This observation is confirmed by one of Mesa's Traffic Counts Map (Mesa Transportation Department, updated January 2017), which estimates that Sossaman Road south of Guadalupe at that time had only approximately 3,200 vehicles per day, which is nine times less than traffic than Power Road, and must lower than typical traffic on an arterial road.

East-west traffic on both Baseline Road and Guadalupe Road were approximately one-half to one-third of Power Road's traffic. However, Baseline Road had approximately 15% more traffic than Guadalupe Road west of Sossaman Road and 48% more traffic east of Guadalupe Road. In these respects, traffic is lower adjacent to the subject property than near the Superstition Springs area. The lighter traffic counts are due in part to property's further distance to the US-60 to the north and the 202-Santan Freeway to the east near Ellsworth Road.

b. Surrounding Commercial Market

When the subject property's Neighborhood Commercial zoning was incorporated into the Morrison Ranch DMP, it is important to note that the Master Plan was designed and approved in 2006 before the December 2007 Recession had begun (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, www.cbpp.org). At that time, the market and demand for brick-and-mortar commercial services was much different than today's market. The supporting conditions at this time do not support a retail-commercial use on the subject property.

On properties across the street within walking distance and within a couple miles in every direction, there are significant amounts of property to accommodate future commercial growth. The adjacent Shops at Sossaman retail-commercial parcel located on the east side of Sossaman Road that is not yet built-out. This is indicated by the vacancies and two undeveloped commercial pads (See Figures 5 and 6 below).

**Figure 5 – SEC of Sossaman & Guadalupe Roads
The Shops at Sossaman**



Figure 6 – Vacancies: SEC of Sossaman and & Guadalupe Roads

Building 1



Building 2



While some of the above vacancies will likely become occupied in the near future given the recent City of Mesa’s announcement to locate some of its employees’ spaces there. That will not bring retail and services to the site to benefit the City’s economic development goals from added tax dollars and neighborhood services. These vacancies and undeveloped pads suggest a low demand for commercial uses in this specific area.

Looking to the north of the subject property across Guadalupe Road is another LC-zoned commercial property with an existing AAMCO auto transmission shop and vacant land planned for future neighborhood-commercial uses. A site plan that was approved in April 2017 (Case. No.

Z17-010) contains three commercial pads that are planned, but which are currently vacant. The majority of the site remains undeveloped (see below).

Figure 7 – NWC of Sossaman & Guadalupe Roads



Taking broader view of commercially-zoned parcels in the area, there are LC zoned parcels in each direction at every 1-mile interval: two on Guadalupe Road at Power and Hawes Roads, and two on Sossaman Road at Elliot and Baseline Roads. These are among other commercial and employment zoned properties, most of which are undeveloped or are below capacity. The greatest impact seems to come from the fact that the Superstition Springs regional commercial center is only one/two miles to the north starting at the south corners of Power Road and Baseline Roads. Given the number of households and large single-family developments in this area and adequate commercial property in the vicinity, a residential use is more appropriate for the subject property.

c. General Plan Compliance

The project is consistent with the vision of the General Plan, which designates the subject property as the Neighborhood Suburban Character Area. This category is designed to support “primarily residential areas.” Porchlight’s proposed single-family residential use is consistent with the character area. Additionally, the project supports the goals and policies of the General Plan by:

- Implementing a housing type that supports the City’s desired typical use and range of Residential Single, medium to small lot housing types (Neighborhood Focus, pp. 7-5, 7-10);

- Connecting the proposed uses and circulation system to the established pedestrian network, including another pedestrian connection to Sossaman Road, which continues the established a sense of place and helps increase the feeling of being connected to the larger community (Neighborhood Suburban, p. 7-5, Form and Guidelines p. 7-10);
- Providing ease of access to the subdivision's open space amenities, the proposed development addresses connectivity and walkability vis-à-vis the suitable block lengths, sidewalks, and landscaping that will be preserved and extended into Morrison Ranch (Suburban, Form and Guidelines, p. 7-10);
- Maintaining the neighborhood character and personality by developing a use that is desired by the HOA and consistent with the distinctively themed branding in the entry features, perimeter landscaping, and open space plan (Great Neighborhoods, pp. 1-4, 1-5);
- Dedication of common areas to a homeowner's association in furtherance of maintaining safe, clean and healthy living environment (Great Neighborhoods, p. 1-5); and
- Providing enhanced quality of design and development by preserving the landscaped intersections at the project's ingress and egress points and by extending the high quality infrastructure into the subject site. This will enable Porchlight homes to develop its signature high-quality homes consistent with the surrounding community, which will contribute to a beautiful neighborhood identity (Great Neighborhoods, 1-4, 1-5).

7. PAD Zoning

Under the Zoning Ordinance, the intent of RS-6 zoning is to “provide areas for detached single residence housing at densities of up to 7 units per acre” and to “ensure that new residential development is well integrated with surrounding neighborhoods.” The purpose the PAD-DMP overlays are to allow for a cohesive development plan, high-quality design, and flexibility that is tailored to the unique circumstances and constraints of the property. Another intent is to implement creative options that helps organize uses “in a synergistic manner to the benefit of both the project and the neighboring area.”

In this case, the above purposes are met by implementing a high-quality single-family development with a density of approximately 5.49 units per acre (4.22 du/acre net) that integrates the streets, pedestrian system, and lot design into the existing community. The homes will have convenient access to all of the HOAs open space amenities. The proposed project will bring Porchlight's thoughtfully designed housing that will benefit the existing development and support nearby commercial uses.

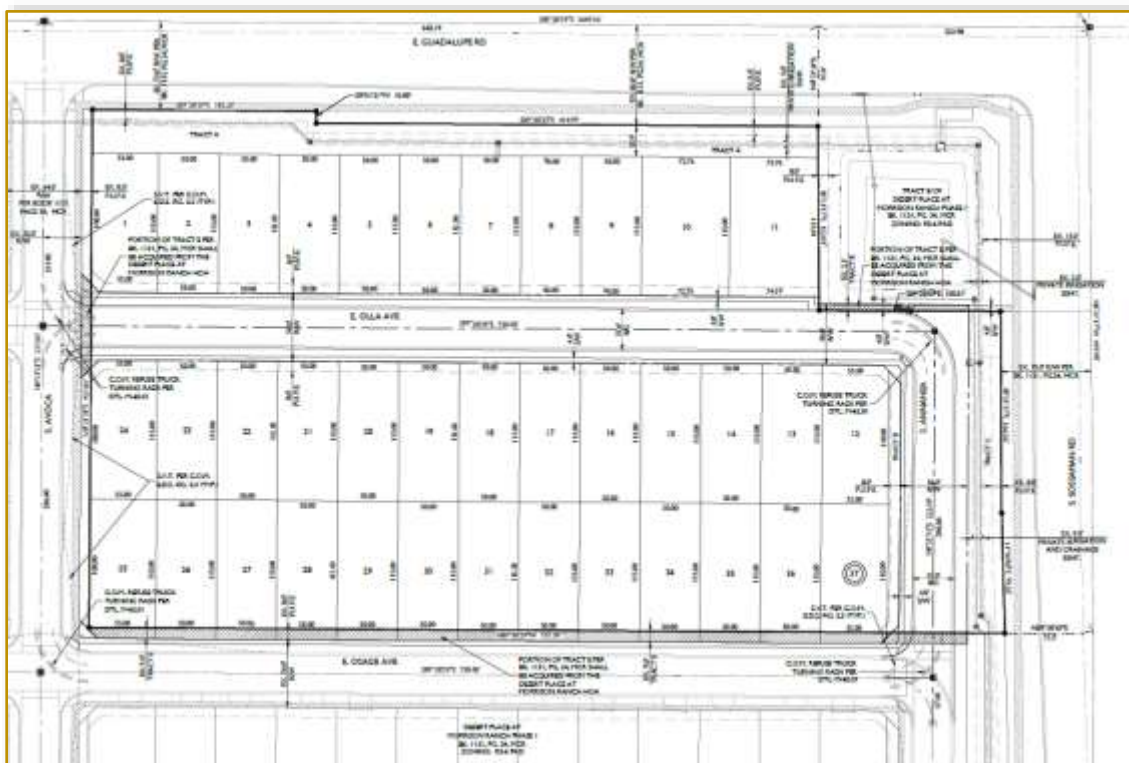
Certain constraints have been factored into the proposed development plan and proposed PAD standards. The site is relatively narrow, and it has an irregular shape because of the retention tract being carved out at the intersection of Guadalupe and Sossaman Roads. The proposed site design addresses these issues in a manner that maintains consistent lot sizes and maintains

effective continuity in the pedestrian and street system.

8. Project Description

The proposed development is a single-family detached residential community with 37 lots on 6.7 net acres, which amounts to a density of 5.49 units per acre. The proposed typical lot dimensions are 50 ft. x 115 ft. (5,750 sq. ft.), which matches the lot standard for the adjacent properties in Morrison Ranch. Access to the site will be provided by extending the adjacent public streets, including Olla Avenue from the west into the site and Ananea Avenue from the south. The proposed layout will complete the symmetry and grid pattern of the surrounding subdivision, in which homes will face north and south onto the proposed streets. The proposed development plan is depicted in the figure below:

Figure 8 – Proposed Site Layout



a. Open Space and Landscape Improvements

The proposed development will meet or exceed the City's requirements and will maintain substantial compliance with the approved Desert Place at Morrison Ranch PAD-DMP. All applicable open space, landscaping requirements will be met because Morrison Ranch's perimeter landscaping, entry monument signs, and fences are in place and will be preserved along both Guadalupe Road and Sossaman Road. Additionally, landscaping and sidewalks have been established along Avoca drive Osage Avenue to the west and south, respectively. Improvements include grade separated sidewalks, trees and shrubs on both sides of the streets, ADA ramps, lighting, and street signs. The existing landscaping and adjacent retention tact will continue provide exceptional design qualities and landscape buffers to the proposed residential lots.

The imagery below illustrates some of the existing landscaping and subdivision improvements:

Figure 9 – Morrison Ranch Perimeter Fence and Improvements



Figure 10 – Retention Tract Northeast of the Site (not a part)



As indicated in the proposed revisions to the Morrison Ranch final plat, the project will be contained within the existing landscape buffers, except to provide street access along small portions of Tracts E and B. In addition, the narrow 9-foot strip of Tract E and its 8-foot PUE along the property's south border will no longer be needed for the HOA to buffer a commercial use.

Accordingly, it will be incorporated into the design for the proposed individual lots. The applicant has worked with the HOA for approval of these connections into its community. During the future development process, where necessary, any right-of-way landscaping and pathways disturbed by construction will be replaced consistent with existing conditions and the subdivision design.

b. Development Standards

The proposed development complies with the development standards for RS-6 zoning, with the exception of minor modifications that comply with Mesa’s requirements for PAD overlays. The table below lists the requested modifications, followed by a discussion of the same.

Table 2 – Modified Development Standards

Standard (§ 11-5-3)	Mesa ZO Required	Porchlight Proposed
Lot Area	6,000 sq. ft.	5,750 sq. ft.
Lot Width	55 ft.	50 ft.

Also, the applicant proposes a 50 ft.-wide cross-section at Olla Avenue as shown on the submitted preliminary plat. It is noted that this width is compliant with Mesa’s required local street width. Specifically, the proposed cross-section for this small area maintains the same pavement width, and sidewalks are adjacent to the curb. At the south corner, an ADA ramp crosses the street to the north, where it connects to another ramp that leads to a pedestrian connection to Sossaman Road. This solution provides a continuous pedestrian connection from the south and east to Sossaman Road.

This requested modified arises out of the site constraints and configuration of the retention tract and underground utility facilities. This deviation is supported by the desire to maintain the above-standard lot depths consistent with the homes along the Olla Avenue and consistent with the overall Morrison Ranch community.

Regarding above modifications in lot area and lot width, they will enable the proposed development to seamlessly connect into the overall Morrison Homes subdivision. This will be accomplished by matching the same development standards, residential lot configuration, and massing of the proposed units. As proposed, the development standards promote deeper rear yards and design features commonplace in modern floorplans and building designs, all consistent with the approved Morrison Ranch community.

Under the Zoning Ordinance, the required lot depth in RS-6 zoning is 90 feet. A 115-foot typical lot depth is proposed, which is more than 27% above the minimum standard for lot depth. The proposed change in lot width from 55 ft. to 50 ft. is a 10% reduction, and the corresponding decrease in lot area is approximately 4%, which are more than compensated by the greater increase in lot depth. The benefits achieved by the deeper lots include, among other things, greater light and space between buildings, consistency with lot sizes in the surrounding

community, enhanced transitions to the buildings behind each lot, and more outdoor options for prospective homeowners.

Further, the proposed standards are consistent with, and higher than, the minimum standards in adjacent subdivisions. The proposed 5,750 lot area for RS-6-PAD-DMP zoning is greater than the minimum 5,201 sq. ft. of lot area in Superstition Springs Village Unit 4, located north of Guadalupe Road and the minimum 5,500 sq. ft. lot area of units in Sossaman Estates to the east of Sossaman Road. This is approximately 11% greater lot area than Superstition Springs Village and 5% higher than Sossaman Estates. These same nearby subdivisions also have lot widths of 50 feet as is proposed here.

It is noted that two of the lots (lots 12 and 37 on the submitted site plan and preliminary plat) will require a 110-foot depth to provide room for the curve in Ananea Drive, but these lots have a compliant lot width of 55 feet.

a. Design Guidelines

The proposed development will comply with the City of Mesa's Residential Development Guidelines, as was provided in the approved Morrison Ranch PAD-DMP. Porchlight Homes' proposed housing design will be highly consistent with the distinctly designed homes in the Morrison Ranch community. Once Porchlight's detailed plans are completed, they will be submitted to the City of Mesa for administrative product review. The applicant will continue to work with the Morrison Ranch HOA as part of its commitment to comply with the high quality design characteristics in the surrounding community.

The photos below of homes in Morrison Ranch are not submitted for design proposals, but which are presented here to indicate of the level of quality design that will be provided in this proposed development. Actual building plans will be different, but they will consistent with the below images and other housing types offered in the surrounding community.

Figure 11 – Representative Imagery of Nearby Morrison Ranch Housing



The proposed development will comply with all applicable standards of the City and respective utility providers for street improvements and utility connections and services. As with the landscaping and sidewalks, the roadway improvements and infrastructure are in place to provide connections to the proposed development. Water lines for the site will connect to existing 8-inch stubs at both Olla

Avenue and Ananea Drive. Sewer services will be extended from the 8-inch stub-outs at Olla Avenue and/or Osage Avenue. There are no power lines to place underground. Stormwater retention facilities bleed-off to the surrounding system will be provided in conformance with City requirements.

The property is located in the Gilbert Public School district and the Maricopa County Community College District. The relatively small scale of the proposed development will have a negligible effect on local schools, which include an estimated 14 schools within an 8-minute drive of the subject site. It is anticipated that the additional homes and resulting increase to the property value will enhance the values of properties in the surrounding area. Added tax revenues will ultimately contribute to funding of local schools in the long run.

b. Fiscal Impacts and Benefits to Mesa

The proposed residential development will bring a high-quality use to the area, which will contribute to the fiscal sustainability of the City of Mesa. The project will bring new revenues to the City through construction sales taxes, permitting fees, and related development fees. Additionally, the new residents residing in the development will generate additional sales tax revenues as they support local businesses and property taxes that support schools. Furthermore, the additional population will increase Mesa's share of state revenues. These benefits to the City should greatly outweigh any additional costs created, particularly because the subject property is an infill site adjacent to existing utilities and infrastructure.

9. Conclusion

Porchlight Homes' proposed single-family development is a well-conceived development plan that is sensitively integrated into the Morrison Ranch community. This home builder has established itself as a high quality local builder that is known for its thoughtful craftsmanship and its attention to detail. Porchlight Homes' existing communities exemplify its distinct design and inviting architecture that have contributed to vibrant communities many now enjoy. The applicant looks forward to proceeding with this process to enable Porchlight Homes to contribute to the excellence in Morrison Ranch community and the City of Mesa.