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City of Mesa
55 N Center St
Mesa, AZ 85201

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please find attached the formal Planning and Zoning Board application for The Village at Dana Park. The proposed master plan will be improving the existing shopping center at 1758 S. Val Vista Dr.

The Village at Dana Park is a mixed use retail center of approximately 60 acres, comprised of 250,000sf of existing retail and restaurants. The new shopping center master plan will add approximately 70,000sf of new retail and restaurants, focused on a new mixed-use "cluster" on the north portion of the site. Two new commercial pads will also be added on the south portion of the site. Roughly 10,000sf of existing retail will be removed. The final design will therefore include approximately 320,000sf of retail and dining areas.

In addition, the new master plan will add 153,000sf new offices in the north mixed-use cluster, a 102,000sf hotel, 325,300sf multi-family residences wrapped around a 790 car parking garage (to serve both residential and retail patrons), and a 40,000sf theater.

The master plan changes target an enhancement of the current uses on site and use an infusion of new uses to increase the long term success of the project. Mixed use commercial clusters are being added to the project in an attempt to break up the monotony of a lengthy strip center. Residential, hotel and theatre uses are also being added to give the retail and restaurant environment an influx of onsite patrons to enhance the life and vitality of the project as a whole.

The property ownership and design team are aware that a Council Use Permit will be required to develop residential on the site. We feel that the improvements to the property meet the four criteria specified for CUP approval. The City of Mesa has long viewed this property as a high end mixed use commercial center. All previous zoning submittals have had residential integrated into the development. The current master plan proposal clearly advances the goals of the General Plan and is consistent with the purpose of its district by creating a truly mixed use environment that strengthens the vitality and long term success of the project. The location of the residential helps to buffer the more intense commercial functions of the property with the residential product. Furthermore, the aesthetics of a high quality residential building far outweigh the appearance of the previously planned parking garage in this portion of the site. Services, facilities and infrastructure will all be sized to appropriately handle the new site improvements.

The property currently has a set of Design Guidelines in place from the Z98-79 zoning case that was approved in April 1999. The current shopping center has a building design that is high quality but slightly dated. We would like any new buildings built on site to be complementary to the existing style, but the flexibility to have a less specific architectural style associated with them. We feel that these guidelines are generally beneficial for the development of a cohesive and successful project with a few minor exceptions. Exceptions are as follows:

- Under **Core Site Area**, there is language describing concrete and/or Bomanite pavers in the streets. The existing pavers in the streets has been a major maintenance problem. They do not hold up well to vehicular traffic and create both unsafe and unsightly conditions regularly. New work will provide resolution by removing the pavers and using asphalt as the predominant street paving material.
- Under **Parking and Site Typical**, we would like to use concrete for pedestrian walkways in lieu of pavers because of the aforementioned maintenance issue. Also, parking stalls are described as being 10' wide, which is not how the current site is built out. The existing parking fields are standard 9' wide parking stalls and the new work will follow suite. We also feel that a 8' wide planter between parking stalls will be sufficient for effective landscaping instead of the 10' wide island prescribed here. Not all planters will need a pedestrian walkway. Only the ones that are connecting pedestrian areas of the site.
- Under **Buildings Typical**, we would like to add the following exceptions:
 - Item 1: allow a variety of parapet and cornice conditions that complement the existing architecture that may be less than the 12" and 24" depth required.
 - Item 3: we would like to expand that language to allow multiple canopy types per building.
 - Item 5: We would like the flexibility to use metal roofing products when appropriate.
 - Item 6: We would like the ability to use floor to ceiling glass at locations other than entries.
 - Item 8: Allow use of exposed wood as long as it is in a soffit condition or of proper dimension and treatment to resist weathering and deterioration.
 - Item 12: Ground floor openings are not required to be covered by an arcade, rather they must always take into consideration adequate shade for the walkway and to prevent excessive solar heat gain in the store. Architectural accents are encouraged to break up monotony of the building but not restricted in dimension and location.
 - Item 14: Building colors need to complement and highlight the existing white, tan and gray palette.

The improvements to the property can be categorized into five different sections. For ease of understanding, we will call these Streetscape, South Cluster, North Cluster, Multifamily, Theatre, and Hotel.

Streetscape Improvements

The Streetscape improvements focus on enhancing the pedestrian experience along the front sidewalks of the retail stores at the project. The current layout includes an oversized driveway fronting the retail. There is very little shade provided by the palm trees and the pedestrian pathway, while adequate in width, is littered with random landscape areas that make it awkward to navigate. The scope of improvements will be to replace the pavers with asphalt, narrow the drive aisle and add head-in diagonal parking along the edge of the sidewalk. Landscape areas within the sidewalk will be reorganized to provide direct pedestrian pathways. Most palm trees will remain in place. Trees and free standing canopies will be added along the parked edge of the sidewalk to provide additional shade. Other entry drives will also be narrowed in order to slow traffic and promote a friendlier pedestrian environment. The reduction of pavement will allow larger areas of landscape and possibly the addition of a bike lane.

South Cluster Improvements

The South Cluster improvements include adding commercial buildings to the south side of the site and modifying the adjacent entry drive and parking field. The goal is to create more of a walkable street edge that leads out to Baseline Road. The new street edge provides a better pedestrian link with tree-lined walkways and enhanced paving. It serves to connect the retail to Baseline and to provide an improved entry sequence from Baseline Road. Both the driveway running north/south from Baseline and the driveway running east/west from Val Vista will be narrowed to encourage vehicular traffic to slow down. Thus creating a safer and friendlier feel for pedestrians.

The two single story buildings will house either office, retail or restaurant and form the edge of a small open space at the corner intersection. The building design will complement but not mimic the existing project. Attention will be paid to providing adequate shade at the pedestrian walkway adjacent to storefronts. Quality materials such as stone, metal panel and concrete will be used to accent the buildings.

The parking field will be reorganized to provide easy to navigate parking and pedestrian links. Modifications to existing driveways will be made in a fashion to enhance pedestrian links and preserve as many existing palm trees as possible. The palms are viewed as a positive characteristic of the existing center that needs to be preserved as much as possible.

North Cluster Improvements

The North Cluster improvements include adding multi-story buildings on the north and south side of the northernmost entry drive off Val Vista, and complementary improvements to the pedestrian pathways within the existing parking lots. The new buildings will provide a two-sided retail streetscape for a portion of the existing project and along the entry drive from Val Vista. The palm tree character of the existing drive will be preserved. Along the edge of the diagonal parking, trees will be added in a manner consistent with the intent of the City of Mesa Development standards to assist with sidewalk shading.

The building design will complement but not mimic the existing project. Attention will be paid to providing adequate shade at the pedestrian walkway adjacent to storefronts. Quality materials such as stone, metal panel and concrete will be used to accent the buildings at the pedestrian level. Entries to the buildings will be facing the new drive and plaza, not the parking fields. Corner tenants will most likely have storefronts that wrap the endcaps of the buildings, but the entry will remain facing the street/plaza.

The cluster of buildings creates a community amenity space on the south side of the drive. This space will be a flexible multi-use public space with a permanent shade canopy. It will accommodate a variety of programming events such as outdoor movie nights, farmers markets, craft fairs, concert series, etc... Connections to the parking lots from this area will consist of paseos that cut through the buildings at mid-block. The paseos will lead to pedestrian walkways within the parking fields.

Multifamily Improvements

The Multifamily improvements are located on the northwest portion of the site. The previous master plan called for a four story garage running 600' along the edge of the single family development to the west. The new master plan wraps the

garage with a quality residential product that is set back from the existing single family neighborhood anywhere from 85' to 160' from the property line. A small detached commercial building has also been added to the south side of the entry drive to assist with the extension of the mixed use environment.

The development will consist of a 4 story with mezzanine residential building and a supporting parking garage that will also supplement the retail parking need. The unit count for the building is expected range from 260 to 320 units. The matrix of units will be determined by market demand at the time of buildout. The building design will complement but not mimic the existing project. Quality materials such as stone, metal panel and concrete will be used to accent the buildings at the pedestrian level. The target resident is younger individuals and couples that desire to live close to restaurants and social activities.

The arrival sequence and valet/drop-off for the residential occurs as an extension of the new enhance entry drive through the North Cluster. The sidewalks will continue in an urban fashion with enhanced paving all the way to the front door of the residential. The residential portion is being designed to feel like an extension of the mixed use environment. The backs of the existing retail buildings in this area previously formed a service drive. Service functions will be relocated and screened with walls and landscaping so that the impact on the pedestrian environment is mitigated.

Theatre Improvements

The Theatre improvements include the option to either repurpose the existing shell retail space to accommodate a small theatre or build a new theatre building in its place. A new vehicular drive will be cut through the existing retail building to allow direct access to the new parking garage. The garage is being designed to park the residential units and supplement the parking needed for a theatre. The new drive will also be a direct pedestrian link from the vertical circulation of the garage to the theatre entry. This street will be lined with retailers giving it a vibrant and urban feel. Enhanced paving and street trees will provide for a comfortable and shaded environment. The building facades will be designed to be a contemporary complement to the existing buildings rather using the same architectural style. Quality materials such as stone, metal panel and concrete will be used to accent the building at the pedestrian level. Entry to the theatre will be on the east face of the building, facing the current surface parking lot.

Hotel Improvements

The Hotel improvements will add a limited service hotel at the northeast portion of the site. Parking and curbs have been modified to provide a fluid entry sequence for vehicles and an easy pedestrian connection to the shopping district. The hotel is located in this area to maximize its exposure to the freeway and to simplify access.

Existing on-site parking currently accommodates 2,430 cars. The new master plan will remove 981 of these existing spaces, but will add 613 new surface parking stalls. While providing the required parking for new multi-family residents, the new 790 car garage will devote 158 spaces – its first level – to commercial use. Thus, the new plan will provide 2,220 commercial spaces (meeting the required 2,199 commercial parking stalls).

We believe the updated master plan will create a more cohesive and sustainable center that will offer a vastly improved pedestrian experience. To achieve this, we are

reducing the cross section of some of the existing streets to increase shade and pedestrian connectivity.

While the new master plan will diversify the aforementioned amenities offered by the Village at Dana Park, the new site plan lessens the distance visitors must walk from parking to the retail areas, improves traffic flow, and adds landscaping and shade elements. These improvements will encourage visitors to visit the Village more frequently and for longer periods of time.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Regards,



George Melara, AIA

Nelsen Partners

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE NARRATIVE

Purpose:

This section provides an outline of standards for the design of landscape elements and access, including plant materials, groundcovers, outdoor structures, plaza space, hardscapes, and site pedestrian and vehicular access. The purpose of this section is to create aesthetically pleasing, quality, functional, safe and accessible outdoor areas. These design standards for the Dana Park improvement project are intended to create easy and safe accessibility for cars, bicycles and pedestrians, provide shade, visually soften buildings and hardscapes, create opportunities for growth, provide programmatic elements for the community and ensure ADA accessibility. The following standards are intended to be flexible and adaptable to address the environmental and economic context at the time of design and construction.

Design Intent Statement:

This Dana Park project site is an expansive location that serves as the city of Mesa's primary high-end shopping gateway on the highly visible corner of Baseline and Val Vista Drive. The design delicately balances the existing site and structures with the integration of new buildings, pedestrian pathways, hardscape and landscape. Dana Park aims to be a hub for residents as well as a destination for the Phoenix area community to engage in commercial, dining, retail, employment and living opportunities. In order to achieve this it is essential to thoroughly examine the current site conditions and properly assess where improvements, enhancements and additions are needed to enhance the experience for visitors and to attract potential clients to this development. It is clear that pedestrian experience is paramount to the success of the project. The goals for improving the site through Landscape Architecture are to enhance and refine hardscape materials, widening pedestrian pathways, clearly

defining connections between retail stores, clearly defining connections to Dana Park from the surrounding neighborhoods, minimizing the focus on vehicular dominated parking design, providing opportunities for programming throughout the project, greatly increasing shade throughout the site and expanding and enhancing vegetation and groundcover. Through these fundamental measures the project site will transform into a model for a mixed use urban lifestyle.

The Dana Park landscape plan responds to the flow of pedestrian traffic between and throughout the project site. The site and ground level are planned to naturally and seamlessly facilitate pedestrian traffic at a busy urban shopping and mixed use complex. A more clearly defined pedestrian corridor connects people from the primary and secondary external intersections and entrances to existing and proposed buildings around the entire site. Additionally, enlarged pedestrian corridors seamlessly connect visitors to various commercial centers on site. Pedestrians are ushered along main arteries and walkways fully shaded either by large shaded trees, shade canopy or a cantilevered shade structures. 'Pocket Parks'/'Parklets' are used twice on site to connect surrounding buildings and add additional programming opportunities for various users and tenants. Shaded outdoor spaces are provided along the building edges to increase shade opportunity while still providing the option to be shaded in the summer or to lounge in the sun during Arizona's mild fall, winter and spring. With significant shade provided by vegetation at the core of the Dana Park project, a large shade canopy also extends into the parking lots and public right-of-way to bring shade to pedestrians as they move towards and throughout the site. The landscape is calibrated to respond to the harsh desert climate. An elegant combination shade trees, tall Date Palms, and lush but low water use shrubs and groundcover creates an environmentally sound, economically smart and appropriately expressive complement to the exterior building skin.

Low Water Use Landscape:

All new landscape shall comply with the Arizona Department of Water Resources' Low Water Use/Drought Tolerant Plant List. The project shall limit the use of water intensive landscape. This limit includes, water features and turf. These elements will be used on site but in reasonable quantities in proportion to the project site size and used in locations that promote gathering and areas of respite.

Groundcover:

All landscape areas will be topdressed with vegetative groundcover. The current preliminary plan calls for all landscaped areas to be topdressed with Decomposed Granite, color and size to match existing at a two inch minimum depth.

Trees:

Trees will be planted as screens in certain areas such as loading areas that are adjacent to public gathering areas and walkways. Trees planted as screens will provide a semi-opaque barrier and shall maintain a view corridor for the safety of pedestrians and vehicles. All trees will be drought tolerant, native desert trees. No pollen producing, invasive or high water use trees will be used on this project.

Irrigation system:

All landscape and streetscape areas being renovated will receive new irrigation as needed. Any additional irrigation system will match existing conditions. If existing conditions are not up to functional standards or code a new system shall replace the existing with state of the art 'smart' controller that use soil sensors. Manufacturers claim an additional 30% more water savings than conventional systems. Sensor based controller will also provide optimal watering to each plant type to maximize their health and strong growth.

Preliminary Dana Park Vegetation List:

This section outlines the preliminary vegetation list for the Dana Park project. Species are subject to change based on availability and applicability at time of construction. Any species altered will be replaced with a similar species in like and kind.

Existing healthy native type trees and plants (mesquite, palo verde, etc.) will be protected in place or salvaged from the site and shall be relocated on site per city regulations.

Existing healthy date palms and native cacti accent plants will be protected in place or salvaged from the site and shall be relocated on site as desired per the new plan.

Val Vista & Baseline Streetscape

Parkinsonia x 'Desert Museum' (Desert Museum Palo Verde)

Leucophyllum langmaniae (Rio Bravo Sage)

Bougainvillea 'Barbara Karst' (Bougainvillea)

Caesalpinia Mexicana / Red Bird of Paradise

Entry Drives

Existing Date Palms

Parkinsonia x 'Desert Museum' (Desert Museum Palo Verde)

Leucophyllum langmaniae (Rio Bravo Sage)

Eremophila glabra ssp. carnosa ('Winter Blaze')

Lantana camara 'Dallas Red' (Red Lantana)

Lantana 'New Gold' (Yellow Lantana)

Muhlenbergia emersleyi 'El Toro' (Bull Grass)

Retail Streetscape

Prosopis hybrid (Phoenix Mesquite)

Parkinsonia x 'Desert Museum' (Desert Museum Palo Verde)

Sophora Secundiflora (Texas Mountain Laurel)

Ficus indica columns (Indian Laurel)

Tecoma stans 'Gold Star' (Tecoma 'Gold Star')

Tecoma stans 'Crimson Flare' (Tecoma Crimson Flare)

Bougainvillea 'Barbara Karst' (Bougainvillea)

Eremophila glabra ssp carnososa ('Winter Blaze')

Rosmarinus officinalis 'Tuscan Blue' (Rosemary Tuscan Blue)

Teucrium chamaedrys (Germander)

Aloe barbedensis (Aloe)

Parking Lot

Existing Palo Brea Trees

Parkinsonia praecox (Palo Brea)

Ruellia penninsularis (Baja Ruellia)

Leucophyllum langmaniae (Rio Bravo Sage)

Eremophila glabra ssp carnososa ('Winter Blaze')

Lantana camera 'Dallas Red' (Red Lantana)

Lantana 'New Gold' (Yellow Lantana)