



## Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Karolyn Kent, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Christine Zielonka, Development Services Director  
John Wesley, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Cases ZON18-00067 and ZON18-00181, Minor General Plan Amendment and Rezoning for Bella Encanta, located within the 9500 through the 9800 blocks of East Hampton Avenue

DATE: December 3, 2018

This memo is provided to inform the City Council of the reasons staff is now recommending support for the Minor General Plan Amendment only (ZON18-00181).

These cases involve an approximately 33-acre tract located on the south side Hampton Avenue west of Crismon Road. The applicant is proposing a residential development consisting of small lot, detached single residences and attached condominium residences. A total of 249 dwelling units are proposed.

This area is designated in the General Plan for employment uses. Because of the size of the proposed change, a Minor General Plan amendment is needed to change the character designation from Employment to Neighborhoods. Given the emphasis in the General Plan for retention of designated employment areas, the desire to maintain non-residential uses along the freeways, and the limited amount of employment area in eastern Mesa, the Planning and Zoning (P & Z) Board recommended denial of the proposed amendment.

In 2017, the City Council acknowledged that residential uses may be appropriate for this location and approved a residential development on the north side of Hampton across from this location. The applicant presented at the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Board detailed information on the continued lack of market demand for non-residential uses in this location. Given the evidence provided by the applicant, the Council may determine that employment uses are no longer viable at this location and it is appropriate to change the General Plan designation from employment to neighborhoods.

The staff recommendation to the P&Z Board on November 14<sup>th</sup> was for denial of the Minor General Plan Amendment, but subsequent events have occurred in which staff is now recommending approval of the Minor General Plan Amendment only. Since the P&Z meeting, a City Council Study Session was held on November 15<sup>th</sup> regarding some of the challenges staff

is presented with regarding small lot/cluster developments. The developer has indicated that they are willing to make significant changes to their site plan in order to adhere to the City Council direction given that day for staff to enforce the design and construction of high quality, sustainable residential development. Staff has also had further discussions with the applicant regarding the potential for future economic development in this area, and the relationship of residential development of these parcels to the planned non-residential uses that are being preserved along the Crismon Road frontage. The developer has expressed a willingness to work with staff to make major changes to their site plan that would ultimately result in providing a creative, high-quality, sustainable development that will be supportive of the non-residential uses along the arterial corridor and the planned employment areas across Crismon Road.

Also of note, is that last summer there was an approval for a two-step Planned Area Development (PAD) for an office and commercial development at the northwest corner of US-60 and Crismon Rd, which is just east of Bella Encanta. The site was rezoned to Planned Employment Park PAD with a conceptual plan and the applicant is required to come back for site plan approval and design guidelines for the property.

The staff report for the rezoning and site plan request is lengthy and points out several issues staff has with the proposed design of the project. The major concerns are:

- The design of the attached condominium buildings with regards to landscape areas;
- The livability of the service drives/front access to the units;
- Limited setback along Hampton with minimal landscaping between the wall and the right of way;
- Lack of a sound buffer along the US 60 and the limited landscape area to screen these units from the freeway;
- The proposed shallow lot depth on the RSL 2.5 lots; and,
- the requirement to use trash bins instead of barrels for the condominiums and the location of those bins next to single-residences homes.

The applicant is requesting a Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay zone to allow for deviations from standard code. The intent of the PAD overlay is to “provide for creative, high-quality development.” A fairly significant redesign is needed to address the staff concerns and address the code requirement for use of a PAD overlay. Based on their denial of the minor general plan amendment, the P & Z Board has recommended denial of the rezoning and denied the accompanying site plan and preliminary plat. They did not, however, hold any substantive discussion regarding the rezoning or site plan.

At this time, the City Council is only considering the applicant’s request for a minor general plan amendment. Due to the significant changes the applicant is proposing to the site plan, the rezoning case (ZON18-0067) is going back to the P&Z Board for further consideration and recommendation to Council.