

# **Rezoning, Site Plan, and Design Review Applications**

for

# **AVILLA**



**North of the Northeast corner of  
Elliot Road and Power Road  
3309 S. Power Road**

by:

## **NexMetro Development, LLC**

Case Nos.: ZON18-00689

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# **AVILLA at POWER ROAD**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Continuing its reputation for developing high quality and successful single story, detached, casita-style residences in the greater Phoenix Metro Area and other parts of the country, NexMetro Development, LLC (“NexMetro”) is the proposed developer of approximately 9.22 gross (8.42± net) acres north of the northeast corner of Power Road and Elliot Road (the “Site”). NexMetro is in escrow to acquire the Site and develop it with a unique, innovative, and high-quality residential community known as “Avilla.” Avilla will contain 99, 1-story, predominately detached residences that will be an attractive presence in the area and provide a viable and sustainable solution on a challenging, relatively small site, located at the “mid-block” along Power Road and adjacent to an existing self-storage facility.

Avilla represents a lifestyle choice, presenting future residents a unique living experience and an alternative housing choice to the traditional options of single-family residences or apartment complexes. Avilla combines the best elements of residential single-family living with multi-family-like lease terms and management. The combination of these elements creates a desirable residential option with upscale features and spacious indoor/outdoor living areas maintained by a professional management company, without the mortgage payment or HOA fees of a typical single-family development. The casita-style residences are one story in height, with the majority of them containing no more than 1 du/building, creating a “single family subdivision” feel throughout the neighborhood. This gated community is designed with move-up market finishes and features in an efficient setting. Avilla will be compatible with the neighboring developments and will provide high quality, unique, and additional housing opportunities within the City of Mesa (the “City”) and surrounding area.

To achieve this, NexMetro requests the following:

- Rezone the Site from LI/PAD to RM-2/PAD;
- Site Plan approval for 99, 1-story residences; and
- Design Review approval for the Site Plan, Landscape Plan, Building Elevations, etc. for Avilla.

## **II. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA**

An aerial of the Site is attached as *Exhibit 1*. The Site is designated on the City’s General Plan as Mixed-Use Activity/Employment and is zoned LI/PAD. Wrapping the Site on the north and east is an existing self-storage facility, designated on the General Plan Mixed Use Activity/Employment and zoned LI/PAD. South of the Site is undeveloped land designated on the General Plan Mixed Use Activity/Employment and zoned LC and RS-43. West of the Site is undeveloped property within the Town of Gilbert.

## **III. PROPOSED REZONING, SITE PLAN, AND DESIGN REVIEW**

As discussed, NexMetro is proposing the Site be rezoned from LI/PAD to RM-2/PAD. NexMetro’s proposed Rezoning, Site Plan, and Design Review applications for an upscale, unique,

medium-high density neighborhood is compatible with the City's General Plan and is viable and sustainable solution on a challenging site. The General Plan's Goals and Policies identified in *Appendix A: General Plan Compatibility* support NexMetro's applications. NexMetro's requests will provide for a coordinated and compatibly arranged variety of land uses in the area through innovative site planning. The proposed zoning change responds to the existing and future needs of the community by providing alternative housing for people seeking to live in the area.

#### **A. Site Plan**

As is depicted on the Preliminary Site Plan attached as *Exhibit 2*, careful consideration has gone into planning Avilla. NexMetro has created a community that is attractively designed, aesthetically landscaped, and provides an appropriate use of this challenging Site. Avilla is a gated community that will consist of approximately 99 residences at a density of approximately 10.74 gross (11.76 net) du/ac. The residences are a mix of one, two, and three bedrooms, with approximately 80% of the buildings being detached and the one-bedroom residences being attached in a duplex style. Unlike traditional apartment complexes where the majority of the units are 1 and 2 bedrooms (typically 50-60% 1 bedrooms, 30-40% 2 bedrooms, and less than 10% 3 bedrooms), Avilla has more 2- and 3-bedroom residences (33% 1 bedrooms, 39% 2 bedrooms, and 28% 3 bedrooms).

The residences will range in square footage between approximately 625 sq. ft. and 1,250 sq. ft. The 1-story buildings are similar to what would be found in traditional single-family residential subdivisions and are a lower profile than what would be found in traditional garden style multi-family communities (2- and 3-story buildings) or commercial developments. The residences are grouped around pedestrian courtyards to create a sense of arrival and place within the greater context of the community and greater connection within the community. *See Exhibit 4, Typical Courtyard Layout.* All homes will be fire sprinkled, allowing a reduced building separation that enhances the impact of the courtyard design. The home interiors are an open concept design with 10-foot ceilings, large windows, and high-end finishes such as stainless-steel appliances and granite countertops.

The proposed design and layout provide convenient, safe, and attractive pedestrian connections throughout Avilla Enclave, including a potential connection to future commercial development south of the Site. Particular attention has been given to provide pedestrians with convenient access to centrally located amenities and open space areas. The Site's Power Road frontage has been enhanced through a combination of landscaping, theme walls, and the placement and orientation of the residences, with some buildings backing up and other siding up to the arterial street.

The placement of the buildings and yard walls provide visual interest by varying the roof lines and orientations, providing small scale pedestrian courtyards, amenities and landscape features, and architectural detail. Materials for both hardscape elements and housing product establish a theme and work harmoniously to create a visually pleasing environment. A unique feature for Avilla is that every residence includes a private, 6-foot masonry wall enclosing the rear yard (average of approximately 400 square feet) that is nearly as wide as the residence itself, with a minimum depth of 8 feet. Prior to residents moving in, the entire yard will be covered with

decomposed granite and a minimum of one tree will be installed. Residents are allowed to customize their yards upon approval by the property management company. Common improvements by residents include brick paver patios, barbecues, patio furniture, and trellises or umbrellas. Small scale pedestrian courtyards and outdoor seating areas are also provided to create a seamless and smooth transition between public and private portions of the community.

### ***B. Landscaping, Amenities, and Open Space***

The overall landscape theme is inspired by luxury living while also embracing an adapted Sonoran Desert style landscaping. *See Exhibit 3, Landscape Master Plan.* As shown on the Conceptual Master Landscape Plan, the design, elements, and materials create a sense of community and neighborhood, while adding a fresh approach to timeless desert environments for Arizona residential communities. The elements and features are designed to create a “sense of place” and a permanence achieved by relating the elements to the “human scale” and integrating with the architecture.

The landscaping theme draws from the lush desert look and feel of an adapted Sonoran landscape tempered for the Arizona climate through the use of drought tolerant elements. The use of palms at the entry and pool area creates a sense of entry and a resort style landscape look and feel. The landscape elements provide a diversity of colorful plant materials and are evocative of luxury living. The landscaping theme also integrates design cues from the timeless architecture and design elements of the Southwest reflected in the materials and detailing. Avilla draws from traditional southwest architecture through the use of stucco and tile that contrast in color and texture. Together these elements embrace the southwest architecture of the proposed homes and blend with the existing built environment of the area.

The landscape palette for Avilla consists of multiple tree species that include Palo Verde species, Mesquite species, and Oak species that are fast growing and medium to large in height. *See Exhibit 3.* The palette includes smaller trees such as Mulga and Mastic that are moderate in height and provide shade for smaller spaces. The shrubs, accents, and groundcovers have been selected to provide year-round color and complement one another and the tree species. The plants have been chosen for their color, texture, and form, creating a landscape environment that is adapted to the desert and inviting to the residents and visitors of Avilla.

Avilla has been planned with quality neighborhood scale amenities consistent with NexMetro’s desire to create an upscale, suburban community where residents will be able to play, relax, or socialize in a pleasing environment. *See Exhibit 7, Amenities Enlargement.* The amenity areas within Avilla are designed to enhance the community character and quality of life by providing recreational opportunities and connectivity for residents through the integration of effective internal and external open spaces. The amenity and theming elements have been integrated to maintain the overall “sense of place” and identity of the community. Avilla will contain a centrally located main amenity area, providing active and passive open space for residents and guests to enjoy. Pedestrian paths are provided throughout the Site, connecting the residences to the amenities. *See Exhibit 8, Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Plan.* Additional amenities include: resort style swimming pool and spa, large outdoor lawn, lounge areas, shade sail and trellis, barbecue grills, dog park, and gathering areas for residents to

congregate. NexMetro's neighborhoods have traditionally attracted singles, young couples, and seniors, with a very limited number of school aged children. For this reason, the amenities provided focus on recreation and socialization of adult residents.

Open space requirements for multi-family residential developments are a result of the lack of private usable space typically associated with standard two and three-story multi-family communities. The minimum requirement for open space is 200 square feet per residence, resulting in a required minimum open space requirement of approximately 0.45 acres (19,800 sq. ft.). Avilla will contain approximately 50,181 square feet of common area open space and approximately 42,268 square feet of private (rear yards) open space. When combined together, this result in a total amount of open space area of approximately 2.12 acres, which is approximately 25% of the net Site area (8.42 net acres)—far exceeding the minimum required (0.45 acres). See ***Exhibit 14, Open Space Exhibit*** for additional details. The common open space occurs in convenient locations throughout the Site for residents to use and enjoy. The private open space is located within the rear yards of the residences for each resident's own personal use and enjoyment, which is more typical of a single-family development than a traditional multi-family community. The use and amounts of public and private open space continue to demonstrate the innovative design of Avilla.

### ***C. Architecture***

The proposed architecture for Avilla is appropriate for this Site and is compatible with the surrounding area. There are three floor plans (1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom residences), each with distinct architectural elevations and all with pitched roofs. Additionally, three separate, distinct, yet complementary color schemes are proposed to provide visual interest and a change to the streetscape. See ***Exhibit 5, Building Elevations and Exhibit 6, Floor Plans***. The proposed architectural elevation style for Avilla is a Spanish theme. The homes have layered architectural massing to create shade and shadow. The Spanish style was inspired by the eclectic rural architecture of Spain and Latin America. Typical features include a low-pitched roof with little or no eave overhang, "S" or flat tiled roofs, decorative wrought iron detailing, and simple detailing at doors and windows. The colors for the homes surrounding each courtyard will be similar in order to create a consistent identifiable aesthetic. Stone veneers have been added to some of the elevations to further create diversity between the schemes. The varied colors will aid in creating the distinct character for each courtyard within the community. See ***Exhibit 5 and Exhibit 9, Material and Color Palette***.

The pool amenity and management office welcomes residents and guests at the main entrance to the community off of Power Road. See ***Exhibit 10, Office Elevation***. The design of this entry area is intended to give residents and visitors the ability to park outside the gate and visit the management office. See ***Exhibit 2, Preliminary Site Plan***. The management office is designed to be a focal point of the entrance area. At approximately 25 feet in height, the management office is slightly taller than the homes. This building incorporates the architectural elements, materials, and colors of the homes, with layers of horizontal and vertical planes. The resident postal boxes are incorporated with the building, making it truly a neighborhood-gathering place where residents can regularly interact with management and one another.

Noticeably absent from the four-sided elevations are garages. Due to the unique design of Avilla, detached garages and covered parking are internalized and screened from adjacent roadways. The garage elevations incorporate similar elements and stone veneer from the residences in order to create a consistent design throughout the neighborhood. Parking canopy covers are consistent with the buildings’ color and will be architecturally integrated with the surrounding structures. See *Exhibit 11, Garage Elevations*.

**D. Theme Walls, Entry Gates, and Entry Monument**

As depicted in *Exhibit 12, Conceptual Community Theme Walls, View Fencing, and Entrance Features (Hardscape Features)*, the theme walls, view fencing, and entry monument have been designed to be consistent with the home elevations and landscaping theme.

There is a hierarchy of three wall types that will be used in various locations throughout Avilla. See *Exhibit 13, Conceptual Wall and Signage Plan*. Areas with a greater visual importance will use the theme wall, which incorporates CMU block with a band and cap of contrasting colored split-face CMU block. Long runs of wall will be broken by columns integrating similar split face block used in the theme wall and finished with a decorative cap. The entry gates will use a material palette similar to the architecture and perimeter walls, with the gates being primarily composed of tubular steel, steel panels and wrought iron. See *Exhibit 12*. Automobile gates will be automatic wrought iron gates with design articulation to match the architecture of the development. Pedestrian gates will also be wrought iron.

The materials of the monument sign will include variations of earth tone paint colors on stucco over CMU with some smooth face CMU. See *Exhibit 12*. Other materials incorporated into the sign wall will be woven steel artwork that complements the Avilla logo as well as decorative basket weave elements.

**E. Development Standards**

Given the unique nature of Avilla and the traditional requirements of the City’s RM-2 development standards, which are not readily applicable to this distinct, one-story, predominantly detached, multi-family community, NexMetro is proposing the following development standards for Avilla (changes in development standards are noted in **bold**):

Regulation <sup>1</sup>	City of Mesa RM-2 Development Regulations	Avilla Homes Proposed Development Regulations
Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	7,200	7,200
Min. Lot Width (ft.) – Multi-Family Res.	60	60
Min. Lot Depth (ft.) – Multi-Family Res.	94	94
Max. Density (du/net ac.)	15	<b>12.0</b>
Min. Lot Area per du (sq. ft.)	2,904	2,904
Max. Height (ft.)	30	<b>25 ft./1 story</b>

<sup>1</sup> Per Table 11-5-5.



<b>Regulation<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>City of Mesa RM-2 Development Regulations</b>	<b>Avilla Homes Proposed Development Regulations</b>
<b>Building Setbacks</b>		
Front (Power Rd.)	30 ft.	<b>20 ft.</b>
Side (south)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
Side (north)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
Rear (east)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
<b>Landscape Setback<sup>2</sup></b>		
Front (Power Rd.)	30 ft.	<b>15 ft.</b>
Side (south)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
Side (north)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
Rear (east)	20 ft.	<b>10 ft.</b>
<b>Minimum Separation Between Buildings</b>		
1-Story	25 ft.	<b>8 ft. (Eaves and Overhangs are permitted to encroach a maximum of 12 inches)</b>
Detached Covered Parking Canopies	20 ft.	<b>6 ft.</b>
Max. Building Coverage	45%	45%
Min. Open Space (sq. ft./unit)	200	200
Building Entrances – Projection or Recess	5 ft. min. depth 50 sq. ft.	<b>3 ft. min. depth 14 sq. ft.</b>

**IV. MISCELLANEOUS**

**A. Parking**

Avilla is providing the code-required amount of parking—208 spaces. Of the 208 parking spaces, 32 will be enclosed garage spaces that reduce the visual impact and scale of the parking spaces. The parking stall spaces are approximately 9 ft. x 16 ½ ft., with a 1 ½-foot overhang. The final site plan will meet the City’s parking requirements.

**B. Phasing**

It is anticipated that Avilla will be constructed in two phases, with the necessary off-site improvements being made, on-site infrastructure being constructed, and models and the management office being built. The second phase will consist of building out the remaining homes. Staff may administratively approve deviations from the proposed phasing.

**C. Grading and Drainage**

The Preliminary Grading and Drainage Plan is attached as *Exhibit 15*. All project drainage systems will be designed and constructed in accordance to the latest MAG Standard Specifications

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<sup>2</sup> Per §11-5-5(A)(1).

and Details and the latest City of Mesa Standard Details and Specifications. Onsite drainage (including adjacent half-street areas) and retention shall consist of some onsite surface retention and an underground storm drain system that will be designed to capture storm water runoff according to the City's calculation requirements.

## V. PROJECT TEAM

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## VI. CONCLUSION

Avilla's casita-style community is an exciting and unique housing choice that makes good use of this challenging Site. The proposed Rezoning, Site Plan, and Design Review approvals are supported by the City's General Plan and are compatible with the surrounding area. Avilla creates a sustainable solution for this Site and an attractive presence in the area. We request your approval.

**NexMetro Development, LLC**

## APPENDIX A: GENERAL PLAN COMPATIBILITY

The Avilla Rezoning, Site Plan, and Design Review applications are supported by the City's General Plan goals, objectives, and policies as follows:

### **Community Character**

#### Mixed Use Activity Designation

Avilla complies with the Mixed-Use Activity Designation by providing a residential community as part of a larger, mixed-use environment along Power Road, providing additional housing opportunities within the area and support for the existing and future employment and commercial opportunities.

#### Employment

Additionally, Avilla complies with the Employment Designation by providing a residential use that supports the continued development of the employment and commercial uses along the Power Road corridor.

### **Guiding Principle 1: Create and maintain a variety of great neighborhoods.**

#### Key Element 1: Safe, Clean and Healthy Living Environment

- Initial site planning and design/redesign that includes application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards.
- Maintenance of streets, sidewalks, street lighting, etc. to ensure roadways, paths and trails are safe; improve lighting where needed.
- Avoiding incompatible land uses and/or providing appropriate transitions between uses.
- Encouraging new development and redevelopment that improves walkability between housing and key amenities and services.
- Locate and design public spaces so that there is a high degree of natural surveillance.
- Provision of active outdoor open space for all ages.

#### Key Element 2: Build Community and Foster Social Interaction

- Designing new developments with anchors or focal points, such as schools, parks or shopping areas that are designed and located to facilitate meetings and interactions.
- Providing pedestrian systems that link residents to neighborhood focal points to naturally bring people together.

#### Key Element 3: Connectivity and Walkability

- On the smaller micro-neighborhood level some degree of disconnection, particularly for vehicles, can be helpful to create neighborhood identity.
- It is also important to design and maintain neighborhoods to be walkable. Walkable neighborhoods have streets, sidewalks, and trails designed and maintained to help people feel safe and comfortable using them.

- Block lengths developed consistent with the character area standards.
- Trees and shade provided along streets and pedestrian ways consistent with the character area standards in a way that does not interfere with night time lighting of the street, sidewalk and paths.
- Utilizing Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design standards and techniques for the design of lighting, landscaping, and buildings along streets.
- Providing shade and comfortable places to stop along a street or trail.
- Encouraging a development pattern that provides easy, multimodal access to shopping, work, recreation, and other nearby amenities.

#### Key Element 4: Provide for Diversity

- Having a variety of housing types provides interest to the built environment and provides the opportunity for differing people to live in close proximity to one another. The variety of housing also allows people to stay in the same neighborhood as their housing needs change throughout their life.
- Neighborhoods become interesting place to live when you can encounter a variety of people. Diverse and inclusive neighborhoods allow people of different incomes, ages, races, and ethnicities to gather and get to know each other which make the community stronger.
- Encouraging a variety of dwelling types within each area of the community consistent with the character area standards and not allowing an over concentration of multi-residence dwellings in an area.

#### Key Element 5: Neighborhood Character and Personality

- Requiring the use of high quality architecture, building materials and landscape design and maintenance in all developments.
- Creating neighborhood boundaries and limiting through traffic into the neighborhoods.

#### Key Element 6: Quality Design and Development

- In smaller lot and multi-residence areas, requiring developer-provided landscaping of front yards throughout the development and a mechanism for ongoing maintenance.
- Requiring that all building facades that face a street or public space have architectural interest.
- Using a variety of high-quality, durable materials that are appropriate for this climate.
- Unique public or community spaces that provide a focal point to draw people together.

Neighborhoods Policy 1: Encourage the appropriate mix of uses that will bring life and energy to neighborhoods while protecting them from encroachment by incompatible development.

Neighborhoods Strategy 5: Investigate strategies and incentives to encourage appropriate infill and property reuse consistent with neighborhood goals and values.

## Housing

- Providing a mix of high quality housing options throughout the city, in conjunction with supporting uses and activities, is the key to achieving the goal of creating and monitoring a variety of great neighborhoods.
- Development of multi-residence housing should be thought of and designed with the goal of providing quality, long-term housing for those who choose this form of housing rather than simply cheap transient housing for those who cannot afford anything else.
- Require architectural design, outdoor space, and amenities that will maintain value over time.

Housing Policy 1: Encourage a range of housing options in all areas of the city in order to allow people to stay in their neighborhood as their housing needs change.

## **Transportation**

### Transportation Goal 2

- Objective 2 – Make walking safe, convenient and enjoyable while encouraging social interaction in public places.