

Sienna Ridge

A Single-Family Home and Townhome Community Rezone/Site Plan Narrative



Request for a Rezoning to RM-2 PAD with Site Plan on Approximately 3.7 Acres

Generally located east of the Loop 202 Freeway, at the NWC and SWC of E. Aspen Avenue and South 90th Street

SUBMITTED TO:
City of Mesa Planning Division

PREPARED BY:
Iplan Consulting

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PROJECT TEAM

Land Use Entitlements/Applicant:

Iplan Consulting
3317 S. Higley Road #114-622
Gilbert, AZ 85297
Contacts: Greg Davis / Jason Sanks
Email: Greg@iplanconsulting.com
Jason@iplanconsulting.com
Phone: Greg: (480) 227-9850
Jason: (602) 326-0581

Owner:

5228 S. Blackstone LLC
P.O. Box 4807
Oak Brook, IL 60522
Contact: Margaret Pacult
Phone: (630) 363-2477

Architect/Site Design:

A. David Gibson Architect, LLC
2518 E. Virginia Street
Mesa, AZ 85213
Contact: David Gibson
Phone: (480) 330-7192

Civil Engineer:

Watson Civil Engineering
3746 E. Omega Circle
Mesa, AZ 85215
Contact: Joel Watson, P.E.
Phone: (480) 330-0803

Landscape Architecture:

Harrington Planning + Design
4711 E. Falcon Dr., Suite 222
Mesa, AZ 85215
Contact: Jason Harrington
Phone: (480) 250-0116

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PURPOSE OF REQUEST

Iplan Consulting presents to the City of Mesa a request for rezoning and site plan review pertaining to approximately 3.7 acres of land generally located east of the Loop 202 freeway, south of Main Street. It is more specifically bound on its east side by S. 90th Street and has ease of access to three nearby arterials: Main Street, Broadway Road, and Ellsworth Road. The property is designated “Neighborhoods” in the City’s 2040 General Plan, zoned RS-43, and has APN# 218-41-278D.

The site plan included in this request shows a thoughtfully designed, townhome community with upscale resort style amenities on an underutilized remnant ADOT parcel adjacent to a mobile home subdivision, the freeway, and single-family homes to the south. The proposed density of approximately 9.8 units per acre falls in the acceptable range of the RM-2 rezoning category and is consistent with the County equivalent zoning to the east which is zoned with a more intense multi-family district.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED LAND USES

The project has the Loop 202 freeway to its west and north. Along the east side of 90th Street are a series of manufactured homes located within unincorporated Maricopa County that are zoned R-5 in the County which is a “Multiple Family Residence District” per their zoning ordinance. The County R-5 zoning district allows buildings up to 40’ in height, all commercial uses allowed in the C-1 zoning district, and up to 43 dwelling units per acre. This R-5 zoned property is developed with a mobile home subdivision, as shown in this current Google street view:



Along the south boundary of the project, there is an existing neighborhood of site-built homes zoned RS-6 PAD along the south side of a drainage channel that will separate them from the proposed townhomes. These homes back to the subject site and are as shown as follows:



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A more direct view of the drainage channel, which extends under 90th Street, along with the ADOT freeway noise attenuation wall in the background is shown as follows:



The below zoning map shows the context of the site (indicated with a red star) in the context of surrounding zoning and land uses:



Existing Site Conditions

The approximately 3.7 acre site (3.36 net) is currently vacant and is a remnant property that ADOT sold after the Loop 202 was completed. The triangular shape of the property causes significant constraints for development as a standard lot single-family development as it would not layout efficiently or be financially viable. The acreage features excellent collector street access to nearby arterials and the Loop 202 freeway.

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Mesa 2040 General Plan and the “Missing Middle Housing” Solution

The property is located within the General Plan’s “Neighborhoods” land use designation which allows for a broad range of residential density and housing types. Specifically, it notes this focus: “a neighborhood can contain a wide variety of housing options”. Further, the land use designation notes the RM-2 zoning category as a “primary” zoning district in the Neighborhood Character type, which allows for the proposed detached single-family homes and attached townhomes. Our proposed density is approximately 8.6 units per net acre and therefore in the range of generally anticipated densities for the RM-2 zoning district. The site’s unique adjacency to the Loop 202 Freeway and tall noise attenuation wall, drainage channel separation from the homes to the south, and 90th Street to the east buffers the homes and townhomes from adjacent land uses well. Please note that Table 7-4 of the General Plan, called “General Intensity 2040” indicates that the City anticipates this area will develop with a mid-intensity range due to its proximity to key transportation corridors and existing variety of somewhat denser housing types including neighborhoods of manufactured housing which tend to be denser than larger lot site-built residential developments.

The City’s General Plan specifically notes the need for “middle housing” throughout the City. This is best captured on page 4-12 of the General Plan: “The Missing Middle Housing”. The most salient points of this section are captured below as a reference when considering our project:

“Most residential development focuses on single-residence development at or below four units per acre or multi-residence development over 12 units per acre. In the middle is a housing type that is often overlooked that is important for young families and other middle-income workers...Key elements to ensuring neighborhoods provide this type of housing in a quality way in the future include:

- **Evaluating and updating zoning code and subdivision requirements to ensure there are no hindrances to this type of housing.**
- **Ensuring that housing in this range includes associated amenities such as parks and open space, and that it is located in areas that have close access to a variety of transportation modes.**
- **Integration of these housing types into the larger neighborhood framework**
- **Ensuring the integration of a mix of housing options in each area of the city”**

The need for this type of housing continues elsewhere in the General Plan, as mentioned in multiple sections about changing population demographics and their related housing needs. This reoccurring theme is referred to starting in the Executive Summary, and further through Chapter 3: A Vision for the Future (Changing Demographics) which specifically notes the need for “smaller house sizes and development patterns”. This continues in the same chapter in “Urban Design/Place-Making” where “plans for redevelopment should focus as much on urban design and the creation of quality places”. The quality and appearance of the proposed Sienna Ridge project arguably will infuse this specific neighborhood with an enhancement to its overall attractiveness and street appeal. 3D street view exhibits have been prepared to show how the project will enhance the neighborhood, regardless of the looser concern expressed by staff at pre-app that the project is marginally denser than the housing to the east and south. The homes proposed along 90th Street are single-family detached residences and purposefully oriented to 90th Street with sidewalks and courtyards allowing their most attractive façades to face the neighborhood rather than backing the homes to 90th Street with just a wall and landscaping which would have a dulling impact on the neighborhood.

Chapter 4: Creating and Maintaining a Variety of Great Neighborhoods features a land use exhibit on Page 4-1 that exemplifies what we are attempting to achieve in our integration into the existing urban fabric around us. This land use exhibit shows different housing types, appropriately buffered, in the same neighborhood. The propensity of some cities to press the same housing density across all neighborhoods suppresses the very

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tenets of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. Further, on page 4-2, the General Plan notes that suburban neighborhoods where less housing diversity exists, a more traditional, mixed-housing form should develop over time. In the case of Sienna Ridge, we are proposing a hybrid of detached single-family homes on 90th Street with attached townhomes appropriately buffered in the center of the parcel. In the context of a mobile home park, a freeway, and standard lot single-family housing development to our south, we find our project blends in exceptionally well with providing the desired housing diversity of a traditional neighborhood.

RM-2 PAD ZONING

This project exceeds all of the typical development standards required in the R-2 zoning district, except for the setbacks between buildings. In this respect, the 10' proposed separation between the individual single-family homes is proposed at 10' which is similar to the typical 5'/5' single-family small lot districts found in communities rather than 30' which is typically a development standard intended for large, multi-family apartment-style buildings. The larger townhome buildings exceed 30' of separation as intended in R-2. This is important to understand as the 10' separation where proposed does not make the project appear more dense or compact, rather it is a unique need of this project to allow it to look more like a single-family home project rather than a multi-family apartment project. Landscape standards also exceed City requirements, per the City of Mesa Landscape Calculations table provided on the "Preliminary Landscape Plan". The street scene for the project along 90th Street shows the need for the 10' separation between single-family homes:



The RM-2 PAD zoning development standards are shown below, and modified in **BOLD** where the deviation through the PAD is requested:

Development Standard	Allowed/Required	Proposed
Maximum Density	15 DU/acre	8.6 DU/net acre
Minimum Lot Area/Unit	2904 SF	5,558 SF (161,172 SF/29 units)
Maximum Building Height	30'	30'
Maximum Lot Coverage	70%	<50%
Min. Yard -Freeway	30'	30'
Min. Yard - 90 th Street	25'	25'
Min. Yard – to RS-6 PAD on S.	25'	35'
Setbacks – Interior	0'	0' (between townhomes)
Setbacks – Between Buildings	30'	10' (between single-family homes)
Parking Req'd – 2.1 spaces per unit	61	58 garage spaces (2 car garage per unit), + 19 open guest parking spaces = 77 TTL
Landscape Shade Coverage Area	50% of landscape area	60%
Private Open Space – Detached Units	400 SF per unit	740 SF per unit
Private Open Space – Attached Units	100 SF per Unit	233 SF per Unit
Landscape Setback to Loop 202	15'	0' (for select parking stalls and s/w)

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The single-family homes and townhomes have specifically been designed in the spirit of Chapter 3 of the City's Quality Development Design Guidelines related to Multiple Residence site design. The livable spaces of the units are oriented to 90th Street to provide a streetscape that respects the similar orientation of the existing residences on the west side of the street. Direct sidewalk access is provided to the street allowing future residents to leave their front doors and simply walk to the street and enjoy the neighborhood.

Two-car garages are provided for each unit and are rear loaded on the units with alley-style access as typically desired by the City. Nineteen additional guest parking spaces have been provided throughout the site and exceed the City's required minimum of 61 parking spaces for the project.

Common area amenities include a clubhouse with accessible parking, swimming pool, shade ramada, tot lot, and BBQ area for residents to congregate and socialize together. This is an exceptional amenity package for a project with only 33 units. This area is centrally located within the project which will provide ease of access for all residents. Landscape coverage for overall landscape areas, as well as specifically provided for pathways and parking areas, exceeds the minimum requirements of the zoning ordinance. Area calculations, including tree and shrub counts, are provided on the landscape plan in the calculations table.

A perspective rendering of the amenity area is provided as follows:



Private area open space has been provided for the single-family detached units in the amount of 744 SF each which covers the front courtyard and second floor balconies. This is nearly double the minimum requirement of 400 SF per unit. For the townhome units, more than double the minimum 100 SF per unit has been provided, with each unit offering 233 SF. These areas are well-depicted in the perspective rendering above where the low courtyard wall and partial louver shade cover indicates the area calculated for this requirement.

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SUMMARY

The proposed RM-2 PAD zoning on this site conforms with the Neighborhood Character of the area in the City's General Plan and is considered a primary zoning district for consideration. The site's unique shape, context, and excellent accessibility make it a desirable opportunity for new single-family homes and townhomes that will introduce "middle housing" diversity into the existing neighborhood with a high quality of design and exceptional amenities for its future residents. The proposed site plan conforms with and exceeds the City's Quality Development Design Guidelines for Multiple Residences.