



## PLANNING DIVISION

### STAFF REPORT

**City Council Hearing**

**February 22, 2021**

CASE No.: **ZON20-00861**

PROJECT NAME: **Eastmark Community Plan Amendment**

Owner's Name:	DMB Mesa Proving Grounds LLC
Applicant's Name:	Jill Hegardt, DMB Associated, Inc.
Location of Request:	The 3600 to 4400 blocks of South Ellsworth Road (east side), the 3600 to 4200 blocks of South Eastmark Parkway (west side), the 9200 to 9600 blocks of East Elliot Road (south side), and the 9200 to 9800 blocks of East Warner Road (north side). Located south of Elliot Road and north of Warner Road between Ellsworth Road and Signal Butte Road.
Parcel No(s):	Multiple Parcels
Requests:	Major Amendment to the Eastmark Community Plan. This request is to modify the character descriptions for Development Units 1 and 2 of the Eastmark Community Plan.
Existing Zoning District:	Planned Community (PC)
Council District:	6
Site Size:	325± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Master Planned Community
Existing Use(s):	Master Planned Community
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	<b>January 27, 2021/ 4:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Tom Ellsworth, AICP; Principal Planner
Staff Recommendation:	Approval with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

### HISTORY

On **September 22, 2008**, the City Council approved a Major General Plan Amendment changing the land use designation on the property from Medium Density Residential, Community Commercial, Regional Commercial, Mixed Use Residential, Mixed Use Employment, Business park and Office to Mixed Use Community.

On **November 3, 2008**, the City Council Approved an annexation of the property (Ordinance No. 4891) and established City of Mesa Zoning R1-43 (Case No. Z08-55). The City Council approval also included a rezoning of the property from R1-43 to a Planned Community District (PCD) and established the Mesa Proving Grounds Community Plan, now known as the Eastmark Community Plan (Case No. Z08-56).

On **August 27, 2018**, the City Council approved a Major Amendment to the Community Plan to allow changes to Development Units (“DUs”) 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Plan. Specifically, the changes included amendments to land use groups within the plan, the land use budget, modifications to the DU character descriptions, and the removal of the requirement for a non-potable water master plan (Case No. ZON18-00121).

On **February 26, 2020**, the Planning and Zoning Board approved a Development Unit Plan for Development Unit 2 of the Eastmark Community Plan.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background**

The subject request is to amend the Eastmark Community Plan (CP) to modify certain land use character descriptions within Development Units 1 & 2 of the approved Community Plan. Specifically, the applicant is requesting to add certain text (see exhibit 3.2) to the character descriptions for Development Units 1 and 2 (DUs 1 & 2) outlined in the CP to allow large-scale campus type employment uses within the development units (i.e DU1 & 2). Per Section 11-11-8(D)(8) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), any proposed change to the Community Plan that substantively alters one or more components or required elements of the Community Plan is considered a major amendment. Because of the change in the character description to allow major uses that were not previously allowed within the section of the Community Plan, the change is considered a major amendment and requires review and recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Board and a final approval by the City Council.

The property is approximately 325 acres of undeveloped land located on the east side of Ellsworth Road between Elliot and Warner Roads. The surrounding area has been planned for the growth of larger employment type uses. These planned employment areas include the Elliot Technology Corridor along Elliot Road, employment land use designations on the west side of Ellsworth Road within the City’s recently approved Hawes Crossing PAD, and the planned employment areas within Development Unit 5 of the Eastmark CP which is located west of the subject property. The proposed amendment to the community plan will allow development of DUs 1 & 2 consistent with the planned land uses in the surrounding area.

### **General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:**

The General Plan character area designation for the site is “Mixed Use Community”. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the purpose of the Mixed Use Community character area is to identify larger land areas where it is possible to develop a mixture of uses that will create a complete and identifiable community. The subject request conforms to the goals of the Mixed Use Community character area, as it will foster the development of large scale employment uses and also help

support agglomeration of high level industries to further achieving the goals of creating a mixed use community with residential, commercial and industrial uses. The request is also consistent with the criteria for review outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1&2) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

**Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan:**

The property is located within the Mixed Use Community District of the Gateway Strategic Development Plan. According to this plan, the focus of the Mixed Use Community District is to provide sustainability through the creation of a live/work/play community with a wide variety of land uses to include low to high density residential, commercial, employment, civic and recreational uses. The proposed request conforms to the goals of the Gateway Strategic Development Plan by allowing for a greater variety of employment uses, in addition to the residential and commercial uses within the Community; thereby creating a complete community for people to live, work, and play.

**Zoning:**

The subject property is zoned as a Planned Community District (PCD) with an approved Community Plan (CP). The proposed major amendment to the CP is consistent with the purpose and intent of the PC district found in section 11-11-1 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO). Per this section of the MZO, the goal of the PCD is to encourage and promote innovative and sustainable residential and non-residential land uses and ensuring an appropriate mixture of land use and employment options.

**Airfield Overlay – Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) Article 3, Section 11-19:**

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the property is located within Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3) of the Airfield (AF) Overlay District due to its proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, there are no commercial or industrial use restrictions within the AOA 3. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the subject request and had no comments on the proposed development

**Community Plan Amendment:**

The applicant is proposing modifications to the text outlined in Section 8.4(A) and 8.4(B) of the Eastmark Community Plan pertaining to the Development Unit Character Themes for Development Units 1 and 2 of the Eastmark Community Plan. Specifically, the request is to allow large-scale campus type employment uses to be located within Development Units 1 and 2. These modifications constitute a major amendment to the Community plan due to the addition of the character description and the allowed uses that could be developed on the property. Currently, DU1 allows development of a high intensity mix of land uses such as office, commercial, and higher density residential uses; and DU2 allows for office, commercial and residential uses that is to serve as a land use transition area for the lower intensity residential development planned to the south of the subject property (i.e. DU2)

Per Section 11-11-8(D)(8) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), any proposed change to the Community Plan that substantively alters one or more components or required elements of the PC District or Community Plan as determined by the Planning Division is considered a Major Amendment.

Per the approved community Plan, the development unit character themes provide general descriptions to guide specific design standards through a review and approval of specific Development Unit Plans (DUP). Per Section 4.1 of the CP, a development unit plan that showcases actual design standards and elements shall be required prior to development on the property. The DUP's will require review and approval by the Planning and Zoning Board and shall be required to conform to the character descriptions define in those specific areas within the Community Plan.

Overall, the proposed amendment to the character description of DU 1 & 2 are consistent with the purpose and intent of the PC zoning district and the overall vision of the Eastmark Community Plan.

**Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:**

<b>Northwest</b> (Across Elliot & Ellsworth Roads) LI-PAD Hospital	<b>North</b> (Across Elliot Road) LC & LI PAD Undeveloped	<b>Northeast</b> (Across Elliot Road) LI PAD Undeveloped
<b>West</b> (Across Ellsworth Road) LI-PAD& MX-PAD Undeveloped	<b>Subject Property</b> PCD (Eastmark DUs 1 & 2) Undeveloped	<b>East</b> PCD (Eastmark DU 5/6) Undeveloped
<b>Southwest</b> (Across Ellsworth Road) LC-PAD Undeveloped	<b>South</b> PCD (Eastmark DU 3/4) Approved Residential	<b>Southeast</b> PCD (Eastmark DU 5/6) Approved Residential

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The property is located at the northwest corner of the Eastmark Community and is surrounded on the west (across Ellsworth Road) and north (across Elliot Road) by mostly undeveloped parcels zoned for industrial and commercial uses. These properties are located within the City's Elliot Road Technology Corridor to the north and the employment areas of the recently approved Hawes Crossing PAD to the west. Both the ERTC and the Hawes Crossing PAD are both planned to be developed with higher intensity employment uses. The Dignity Health Hospital is located to the northwest of the site, specifically at the corner of Elliot and Ellsworth Roads. Also, the properties to the east of the subject site are all planned to be developed for employment uses. Overall, the proposed changes to the character description to DU 1 & 2 will not be out of character with developed or planned areas within the immediate vicinity of those Development Unit areas.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

As part of the completed Citizen Participation Process, the applicant mailed notification letters to property owners within 750' of the property. The applicant is scheduled to hold a neighborhood meeting on January 12, 2021 via a virtual platform. The citizen outreach for this request also included information regarding applications for another CP amendment within Eastmark and associated Development Unit Plans that are being reviewed concurrently with the

subject request under consideration. To date, comments received from neighboring property owners have been focused on changes to Development Units 5 and 6 which will be scheduled and considered by the Board in a future date. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on January 27, 2021.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan and Gateway Strategic Development Plan. The proposed amendments to the Eastmark Community Plan meet the purpose and intent of a Planned Community District as specified in Section 11-11-1 of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as all of the required elements of a Community Plan found in Section 11-11-4 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

**Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the Eastmark Community Plan with the modifications to Section 8.4 as shown in attached Exhibit 3.2.
2. The Planning Director is authorized and directed to correct the Community Plan for grammatical, formatting, and other errors that do not affect or change the meaning of the CP's substantive requirements or standards.
3. Compliance with the Infrastructure Master Plans as approved by the City Engineer and City Traffic Engineer.
4. The appeal of decisions made in the approval of, or amendment to, a Community Plan, Development Unit Plan, or a Site Plan will be per the requirements set forth in the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

**Exhibits:**

**Exhibit 1- Vicinity Map**

**Exhibit 2- Staff Report**

**Exhibit 3- Application Information**

3.1 Project Narrative

3.2 Revisions to Section 8.4 of the Eastmark Community Plan

**Exhibit 4- Citizen Participation Plan**

**Exhibit 5- Citizen Participation Report**