



## Development Services

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission  
**FROM:** Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planner II  
**FOR:** Christine McLachlan, AICP, Planning Division Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Dockets MDP24-01 and RZ24-05 (Camp Riff)  
**DATE:** April 10, 2024

### Dockets MDP24-01 and RZ24-05 (Camp Riff)

Master development plan and rezoning requests to redevelop the former Turquoise Valley Golf Course and RV Park for camp sites, recreational vehicle spaces, community farm areas, multi-purpose pavilion, amphitheater, and other visitor amenities. In addition to master development plan approval, the applicant also requests rezoning the property to PD (Planned Development District).

### I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: Poster, Mirto, and McDonald – Savannah McDonald  
Location: 1794 W. Newell Street, Naco AZ  
APN: 102-55-002 and 005  
Parcel Size: 175 acres  
Current Zoning: RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4-acres) and R-36 (Residential, one dwelling per 36,000 square feet)  
Proposed Zoning: PD (Planned Development)  
Growth Area: C – Rural Community Areas  
Area Plan Designation: Business, Recreational Open Space (Naco Area Plan)  
Existing Uses: Former golf course, RV park, lounge, restaurant  
Proposed Uses: Mixed Use

### Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses

|       |             |  |
|-------|-------------|--|
| North | RU-4        | Single family residential, undeveloped |
| South | R-9, R-36   | Residential, RV park                   |
| East  | SR-12, R-36 | Single family residential, undeveloped |
| West  | R-9, RU-4   | Single family residential, undeveloped |

### II. PARCEL HISTORY

The parcels were previously used as a golf course with restaurant and RV park which closed in 2019. Docket SU23-25 requesting special use authorization for a music pavilion was denied by the Planning and Zoning Commission on November 8, 2023.

### **III. MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

A master development plan (MDP) is a detailed plan that identifies coordinated development of a specific area that is adopted as a component of the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan. Proposed plans describe private developments that can remain private or that can be dedicated to a local jurisdiction for ongoing service provision and maintenance. MDPs typically include future land uses; utility analysis, particularly adequate water service assurance; location of streets and other modes of transportation; major drainageways and flood control structures; open space; schools, parks, utility installation, and community facilities where applicable. MDP adoption constitutes an amendment to the comprehensive plan, replacing previously assigned land use designations identified in the county's comprehensive plan or applicable area plan.

Numerous factors can trigger an MDP requirement. These factors include projects requiring a mix of zoning districts, amending growth areas for property exceeding 160 acres, and rezonings in rural designated areas to Heavy Industrial (HI). In this case, the applicant requests a concurrent rezoning to Planned Development (PD) to allow mixed-use redevelopment of 175 acres. If the applicant were requesting a different zoning district or combination of zoning districts, MDP approval would not be required. Redevelopment of the former Turquoise Valley golf course is an atypical MDP request since it is effectively an independent development that does not physically integrate with surrounding uses beyond access to Newell Street, a county-maintained rural minor collector. Development characteristics commonly associated with MDPs that do not exist in this case include public road dedications, public facilities such as schools or parks, and off-site improvements such as traffic signals or deceleration lanes.

Supplemental information included with master development and rezoning applications satisfies most applicable submittal requirements. As stated above, this MDP request is atypical as the project is to establish mixed uses under common ownership without individually owned parcels or common spaces managed by a homeowner association through deed restrictions or covenants. The county zoning inspector has the discretion to defer some submittal requirements to permitting or waive them outright, depending on project type and complexity. MDP submittal criteria includes:

- *Scaled MDP map with land uses and phasing plan*
- *Screening and buffering*
- *Areas and maintenance of open space, recreation areas, habitat preservation, and/or scenic features*
- *Circulation within the development*
- *Utility and service analysis*
- *Projected development impacts at build out*
- *Adequate water supply assurance*
- *Projected trip generation for the entire project at completion using existing data and future estimates*
- *Access control to major streets.*
- *Water conservation measures (effluent reuse, recharge facilities, gray water systems, water harvesting systems, low-flow fixtures and appliances, drought-tolerant landscaping, low flow irrigation, and others)*
- *Analysis for soils having moderate to severe erosion hazards or corrosivity.*
- *3-Dimensional renderings of the proposed development in relation to existing development to evaluate the impact on views.*
- *Statement of development, or phases, not to exceed five years from approval unless otherwise approved by the Board of Supervisors.*



#### IV. NACO AREA PLAN

The Naco Area Plan contains a statement summarizing an intent to “protect the unique cross-cultural character of the Naco area while achieving sufficient regulated and harmonious growth to improve the economy and employment.” Growth has occurred as anticipated by the 1998 plan, at a ‘gradual pace.’ Current census data indicates a population of around 900 – at its adoption, the Naco plan estimated a 2016 population of about 1,300. Naco has seen little new development though the Plan is explicit in overarching community goals: preserve its unique history, encourage infill, conserve resources and open space, and ensure adequate services are available to support new residential and non-residential growth.

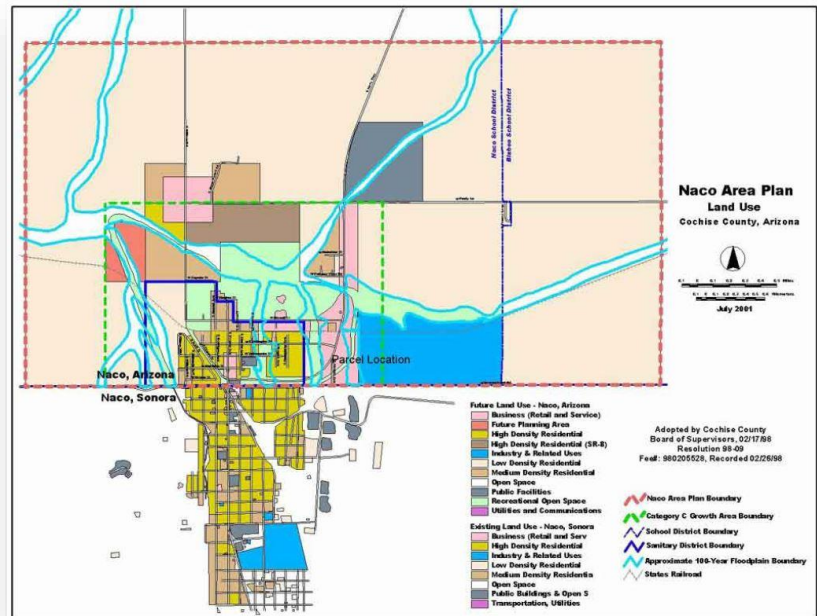
Goals that apply to the proposed Camp Riff MDP include:

- *Recognize Naco’s unique, international character*
- *Create a network of sites that promotes Naco’s history*
- *Require dedication of drainageways to serve as natural breaks in development and continuation of vegetative and wildlife habitats linked with recreational paths*
- *Ensure residential infill harmonizes with surrounding neighborhood*
- *Support new infill business*
- *Support business uses of a regional nature that optimize safe access along major highways, minimize non-residential traffic in neighborhoods, provide a buffer between less intense business and industrial uses, and cluster similar uses to protect residential areas*
- *Design projects traffic does not travel on predominately residential streets*
- *Provide adequate on-site parking*
- *Ensure water and sewer facilities reasonably related to new development requirements are provided*
- *10’ landscape buffers along streets and maintain existing vegetation or install new vegetation for screening and buffering using drought tolerant plants*
- *Landscape parking lots with canopy trees*
- *Require bank stabilization along Greenbush Draw using drought tolerant plants and native vegetation*

#### Comprehensive Plan Amendment

MDP approval serves as an amendment to the county’s comprehensive plan or applicable area plan. Typical plan amendments are evaluated based on consistency with six (6) factors:

1. Pattern of growth no longer reflects type of growth expected under current designation



2. Substantial changes have made development that conforms with existing designation undesirable
3. Extension of facilities and services have changed the type of development appropriate to the area
4. Substantial property owner support for proposed change
5. ‘Developing’ designations should be changed if a distinguishable development pattern has emerged
6. New designations should provide a harmonious transition between existing designations

The prevailing land use plan for the subject property is the *Naco Area Plan* and the properties are located within Growth Area C – Rural Community Area. MDP approval does not hinge on compliance with plan amendment factors since the master development plan is explicit in future proposed land uses and site design. After 5 years, re-instituting the principal golf course use is highly unlikely – without redevelopment, the property remains under-utilized and does not serve the broader goals of the *Naco Area Plan* relative to infill, encouraging new business, or promoting economic development opportunities. Changes in ownership and associated operating costs have a return to former uses unlikely if not undesirable to the property owner. Staff recommends changing land use designations from ‘Recreational Open Space’ and ‘Business’ to ‘Camp Riff MDP’ but retaining the current growth area C designation.

**V. PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Properties zoned PD in accordance with an approved MDP must be developed in substantial conformance with that plan. Planned developments propose projects that are developed in units or phases to facilitate mixed-uses that efficiently use land, maintain compatibility with adjacent uses, and provide adequate amenities. Camp Riff’s proposed uses are allowed uses within PD: campsites, RV parks, restaurants, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, and community gardens.

PD zoning has site development standards unique to that district, reverting to Section 2.51 of the zoning regulations when not specifically referenced within PD standards. Development standards include those typically expected with most zoning districts including minimum site area, setbacks and open space, building separation and height, screening, landscaping, and circulation.

| <b><u>STANDARD</u></b>                             | <b><u>REQUIREMENT</u></b>   | <b><u>PROVIDED</u></b>   |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Minimum Development Area</b>                    | 10 acres  | 175 acres  | Complies                                |
| <b>Density</b>                                     | Permanent residential units not proposed  | 521 dry campsites and RV hookups (estimated density 2.9/acre at max capacity)                            | Not Applicable                          |
| <b>Perimeter Setback</b>                           | 40’   | 75’-100’   | Complies                                |
| <b>Maximum Building Height</b>                     | 50’ provided perimeter setbacks are at least 50’  | Not identified   | Must comply or request MDP modification |
| <b>Maximum Site Coverage / Open Space</b>          | Unrestricted. Similar zoning district standards may be used. General Business standard is 85%; 10% gross area as open space; slopes greater than 15% and washes shall be undisturbed; | Not identified (existing perimeter setbacks, Greenbrush Draw, and washes likely exceed 15% of land area) | Complies                                |
| <b>Principal Building Separation (include RVs)</b> | 15’   | Not identified   | Complies                                |

|                                     |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Parking</b></p>               | <p>-1 space/5 fixed seats or 1 space/5 persons at maximum capacity (amphitheater); 1 space per space and 1 space per three employees (campsites, RV hookups); 1 space per 50 SF floor area (restaurant, event center, pavilion)<br/>                     -9'X19' parking space size with 24' aisle width; angled parking requires 9'X19' space size and 18' aisle width.<br/>                     -Paved parking surface not required in Category C growth area. Striping is not required.<br/>                     -Gravel parking surfaces must be designed to prevent water collection.</p> | <p>395</p>   | <p>Must comply or request MDP modification</p> |
| <p><b>Landscaping/Screening</b></p> | <p>Perimeter fencing required, and setbacks abutting roads and non-residential areas require landscaping. 10' landscape buffer along abutting streets, including Newell Street.</p>  | <p>Setbacks, natural terrain, vegetation, walkways, structures, and open space may be used for screening</p> | <p>Complies</p>                                |
| <p><b>Street Access</b></p>         | <p>Planned developments must have access to at least one maintained arterial or collector street.</p>  | <p>One existing and three proposed access points to Newell Street (minor collector)</p>                      | <p>Complies</p>                                |

**VI. COMPLIANCE WITH REZONING CRITERIA**

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations requires zoning district boundaries be in accordance with Comprehensive or Area Plan designations. PD zoning routinely accompanies MDP submittals, especially where mixed use projects are proposed. Camp Riff is a mixed-use redevelopment project offering campsites, RV spaces, event facilities and entertainment venue, and limited access to the public. Functionally, the project will operate like a recreational vehicle park and campground, offering spaces for rent and entertainment options available to visitors and members of the public. PD zoning allows maximum flexibility in site design and land use integration should unforeseen factors or market conditions require adjustments in the future. Depending on the scale of adjustments following MDP approval, changes with the potential to create significant off-site impacts to neighboring properties or streets may require MDP modification through a public hearing like the original adoption.

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations provides fifteen (15) criteria for evaluating rezoning requests. As proposed, the rezoning application complies with thirteen (13) of these factors:

**1. Provides an Adequate Land Use/Concept Plan: Complies**

The applicant provided a concept plan demonstrating the intent to redevelop the property with dry campsites, RV spaces, an event center, community garden, and multi-purpose space that includes a wedding pavilion and 500-seat amphitheater.

**2. Compliance with Applicable Site Development Standards: Complies**



development standards.

#### **7. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies**

This factor is used to determine if adequate services and infrastructure are in place to support more intensive land uses. The applicant is proposing a downzone which reduces allowable residential density from one dwelling per 18,000 square feet to one dwelling per 4 acres. Services and infrastructure are in place to support low density residential development.

#### **8. Traffic Circulation: Complies**

One existing access point to Newell Street will be supplemented with three additional access points, one to the east and two to the west. Eastern and western most access points will handle the most intense traffic generated by the project, funneling traffic to Naco Highway and Willson Road, respectively. The use of local streets to access these arterials as well as Highway 92 is inefficient and could create significant inconveniences to residents of those neighborhoods, particularly those living on Towner and Quetel Avenues and Zepeda Street. Vehicle traffic to and from the site uses Newell Street, which terminates at both Naco Highway and Willson Road. Staff is recommending a condition that promotional materials for Camp Riff include specific instructions to minimize non-local traffic intrusions into adjacent neighborhoods.

#### **9. Development Along Major Streets: Complies**

This project has frontage along one public roadway, Newell Street which is an improved and maintained minor collector. County right-of-way permits are required to improve the existing access point and create three additional access points along Newell Street. One gated emergency access point exists along available Quetel Avenue. Staff recommends this driveway remain only for emergency purposes and not as an additional point of access available to the public.

#### **10. Infill Compatibility: Not Applicable**

This factor applies to rezoning requests to General Business (GB), Light Industry (LI), or Heavy Industry (HI) zoning districts.

#### **11. Unique Topographic Features: Complies**

Greenbrush Draw and existing washes will remain undisturbed. Development around these location shall be in accordance with applicable county, State, and/or federal law.

#### **12. Water Conservation: Complies**

County water conservation requirements remain in effect with this project. Section 2.51.170 requires water saving strategies and the use of drought tolerant vegetation along with the preservation of established, native vegetation. Since the project is located within the Sierra Vista Sub-Watershed, the use of misters is prohibited, and new artificial water features are prohibited unless water harvesting is used, and the features are functional to the development. MDP development will comply with applicable water conservation regulations and policies identified in the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan.

#### **13. Public Input: Complies**

The applicant provided notice beyond the required 1000' notification area, sending more than 300 postcards providing project and neighborhood meeting details. A neighborhood meeting was held at the project site on February 3, 2024. Staff posted the property on March 19, 2024, and mailed notices on March 20, 2024, publishing legal notice in the Herald/Review on March 22, 2024.

**14. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable**

The applicant is not proposing uses involving hazardous materials.

**15. Planning Policies: Complies**

The Naco Area Plan land use map designates the former golf course as recreational open space and former RV park and restaurant as business. PD zoning approval will comply with zoning regulation requirements provided the MDP is also approved.

**VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The request is for MDP approval with concurrent rezone to Planned Development District. The 175-acres site formerly hosted the Turquoise Valley golf course and RV park with restaurant. These uses ceased operation in 2019 and are unlikely to return. The applicant wishes to redevelopment the site for mixed uses, including campsites, RV hookups, event space, wedding pavilion, and amphitheater. MDP approval constitutes an amendment to the *Naco Area Plan*.

**MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN****Factors in Favor of Approval**

- Camp Riff MDP application and supplemental documents generally conform with MDP submittal requirements identified in Section 2.09 of the zoning regulations.
- Camp Riff MDP application and supplemental documents generally conform with PD submittal requirements identified in Section 2.42 of the zoning regulations.
- The project complies with 13 of 15 rezoning criteria.
- Support from nearby property owners.

**Factors Against Approval**

- Opposition from nearby property owners.
- Proposed uses are more intense than historical uses and may significantly inconvenience nearby residents, especially those uses that generate previously unseen levels of traffic and noise. Staff recommends conditions to reduce off-site impacts.

**REZONING****Factors in Favor of Approval**

- Complies 13 applicable rezoning factors.
- Project is consistent with *Naco Area Plan* goals for infill, redevelopment, and economic growth opportunities.
- Support from nearby property owners.

**Factors Against Approval**

- Opposition from nearby property owners.

### **VIII. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the factors in favor of approval, Staff recommends forwarding Docket MDP24-01 to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval, changing the land use designation of 175 acres from 'Recreational Open Space' and 'Business' as identified in the *Naco Area Plan* to 'Camp Riff MDP.'

Based on the factors in favor of approval, Staff recommends forwarding Docket RZ24-05 to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of conditional approval, rezoning APNs 102-55-002 and 102-55-005 from R-36 (Residential District, one dwelling per 36,000 square feet) and RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4 acres) to PD (Planned Development District) with the following conditions:

1. Outdoor music shall end by 8:00pm Monday through Thursday, midnight Friday and Saturday (10:00pm for amplified music), and 6:00pm Sunday.
2. Existing gated access to Quetel Avenue shall not be accessible to the public.
3. Incorporate the following design standards identified in the *Naco Area Plan*:
  - Dedicate drainageways to preserve native vegetation and wildlife habitat, serving as natural breaks in development.
  - 10' landscape buffers along abutting streets using native vegetation and/or new drought tolerant vegetation.
  - Vegetate parking lots with canopy trees.
  - Stabilize Greenbrush Draw banks with existing or new drought tolerant vegetation.
  - Ensure development harmonizes with surrounding neighborhood through use of setbacks, landscaping, screening, and natural terrain.

### **Sample Motions**

Madam Chair, I move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of Docket MDP24-01, changing the land use designation of 175 acres from 'Recreational Open Space' and 'Business' as currently identified in the *Naco Area Plan* to 'Camp Riff MDP.'

Madam Chair, I move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of Docket RZ24-05 with conditions recommended by staff, rezoning APNs 102-55-002 and 102-55-005 from R-36 and RU-4 to PD, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.