



PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

CASE: ZON23-10 DIGNITY HEALTH DESERT RIVER III LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 99TH AVENUE AND MYRLTE AVENUE.

CASE #: ZON23-10

MEETING DATE: 03/27/2025

FROM: Alejandro Lerma, Senior Planner, Planning, alerma@glendaleaz.com, 623 930-2810

SUBJECT

ZON23-10 A request by Manjula M. Vaz on behalf of Gammage & Burnham, PLC, representing Dignity Health, to rezone approximately 32-acres from PAD (Planned Area Development) to PAD (Planned Area Development) to allow for medical and supporting uses. The site is located at the northwest corner of 99th Avenue and Myrtle Avenue and is in the Yucca Council District.

Presented By: Alex Lerma, Senior Planner

REQUEST

Planning Commission recommendation to amend the zoning classification for Dignity Health Desert River III PAD.

APPLICANT/OWNER

Manjula M. Vaz on behalf of Gammage & Burnham, PLC, representing Dignity Health

REQUIRED ACTION

The Planning Commission must conduct a public hearing and determine if this request is in the best long-term interest of the neighborhood and consistent with the General Plan.

SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject property to establish an updated PAD (Planned Area Development) for the existing Dignity Westgate Medical Center. The intent of the PAD is to add additional medical uses and services and reaffirm existing onsite uses. Modified development standards will facilitate the potential future expansion of the medical campus. The site has three (3) existing driveways, with one (1) point of access along 99th Avenue and two (2) points of access along Desert River Boulevard.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

General Plan Designation:

The property is designated as BP (Business Park).

Zoning Classification:

PAD (Planned Area Development)

Property Location and Size:

The approximate 32-acre property is located at the northwest corner of 99th Avenue and Myrtle Avenue and is in the Yucca Council District.

History:

At its regularly scheduled meeting of October 28, 2008, the Glendale City Council unanimously approved zoning case ZON07-20, requesting to rezone approximately 110 acres from A-1 (Agricultural) to PAD (Planned Area Development) through Ordinance No. 2660, thus establishing the Desert River Planned Area Development.

Project Details:

The subject property is currently identified as Parcel C, D, E, & F of the Desert River PAD. The Desert River Land Use Master Plan designates the property for both Mixed-Use/Commercial and Office/Employment land uses. The existing medical building was erected in 2013 and was extended in 2016. The medical complex is approximately 67,470 square feet in building area. The existing Dignity Westgate Medical Center is a facility that offers many services, including surgical, orthopedics, and emergency room/services.

The intent of the request is to establish a new PAD to reaffirm the existing medical land uses that were previously allowed as analogous to those land uses permitted in the Desert River PAD. The intent of the PAD is also to continue the focus of site development towards medical services by providing a broader range of healthcare/medical uses as part of the site entitlements including rehabilitation hospital, ambulatory surgery centers and behavioral health facilities. The request will provide more flexibility to the site development standards to accommodate potential future expansions of the medical campus.

The project proposes a common architectural design theme that will create a high-quality mixed-use development. The design guidelines encourage selected building materials and colors to create a compatible design in keeping with the overall development. The buildings will include articulated wall planes, projections, and recesses to provide shadow and depth. The applicant has provided graphics for illustrative purposes only in the PAD booklet.

The site has three (3) existing driveways, with one point of access along 99th Avenue and two points of access along Desert River Boulevard.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION TO DATE:**Applicant's Citizen Participation Process:**

On October 11, 2024, the applicant mailed notification letters to adjacent property owners and interested parties. An in-person neighborhood meeting was conducted on October 24, 2024. There were no attendees at the meeting. To date, no communication has been received by either staff or the applicant regarding the request. The applicant's Citizen Participation Final Report is attached.

Planning Commission Public Hearing:

A Notice of Public Hearing was published in *The Arizona Republic* on March 5, 2025. Notification postcards of the public hearing were mailed to adjacent property owners and interested parties on March 5, 2025. The property was posted on March 7, 2025.

STAFF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Required PAD Purpose:

The Unified Development Code requires the following the purpose of this district is to encourage new and imaginative concepts in urban design and land development to promote and improve the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the city and to create distinct developments with unique urban design, single or mixed uses, and/or substantial additional benefit to the City that would not otherwise be required by this Code.

Section 35.2.901(A) of the Unified Development Code states that the purpose of the PAD (Planned Area Development) district is to:

1. Encourage creative and effective use of land and circulation systems to accommodate changes in land development technologies.

Staff Analysis:

The proposed PAD is appropriate and will facilitate a mixed-use project that incorporates infill development. The Dignity Health PAD will establish updated development standards and design criteria to facilitate a future expansion of the existing medical center. The proposed PAD will provide the medical center opportunities to expand on-site services by providing an extended list of land uses related to medical services and supported land uses.

Site access is currently provided by three (3) existing driveways. One (1) point of access is provided along 99th Avenue and two (2) points of access along Desert River Boulevard. Any additional driveways triggered by future site expansion will be reviewed at an administrative level.

2. Encourage residential development to provide a mixture of housing types and designs.

Staff Analysis:

The Dignity Health PAD is not proposing any type of residential uses. The PAD's permitted uses will be primarily focused on providing medical, office and commercial services to the surrounding area.

3. Encourage innovative development or redevelopment concepts for all land use types to provide a greater variety and intensity of uses.

Staff Analysis:

The proposed development is an innovative and appropriate use for the site with the potential to further expand the medical campus or establish supporting uses to specific areas of the site that have been underutilized. The Dignity Health PAD provides a variety of land uses with different levels of intensities to an area that is not yet fully developed.

4. Provide a process which relates the urban design and scale of the project to the unique characteristics of the site.

Staff Analysis:

The proposed PAD design standards are adequate and will ensure a quality model throughout the development. The proposed architectural theme will continue to encourage some of the design elements previously established through the 2008 Desert River PAD, and as such provide a level of consistency in design with adjacent development within the Desert River PAD and the Desert River II PAD areas. The development will focus on a highly dense environment based on the proximity to the Loop 101 freeway. Site development standards will allow a greater building height closer to the freeway and as land uses transition to the abutting existing multifamily/office developments, building heights will decrease.

5. Require the nature and intensity of development to be supported by adequate utilities, transportation, drainage, and common open spaces to serve the development and to minimize impact on existing or future adjacent development.

Staff Analysis:

Adequate utilities exist in the area. Water and wastewater services for the property are provided by City of Glendale. Both water and wastewater lines run along 99th Avenue. No Traffic Impact Analysis was required by the Transportation Department and no additional right-of-way will be required by the developer at this time. Any future expansion to the medical campus will require an administrative review process, at which time, City staff will determine if additional right-of-way will be needed based on any proposed additional driveways. Staff will also assure that the developer completes any required off-site improvements and verify that the project provides connectivity to adjacent developments. The City of Glendale Transportation and Land Development Departments have reviewed the proposal and are in support of the application.

6. Encourage development that is consistent with the policies and the guidelines established in any specific plan and the General Plan.

Staff Analysis:

The proposal is consistent with several of the goals and policies of the General Plan by preserving and enhancing existing medical and professional office centers to attract regional and national corporate facilities (Growth Area Policy-1.1). The project will continue to take advantage of the available transit options and service opportunities based on the existing surrounding uses. The project is located along a major arterial road and adjacent to the Loop 101 Freeway Corridor with the

Westgate Sports and Entertainment District and significant residential/employment/retail areas in close proximity (Economic Development Element Policy 2.3). The project will provide additional opportunities for a variety of professional office uses to be located within a mixed-use setting (Economic Development Element Policy 2.5).

RECOMMENDATION

Should the Planning Commission recommend approval of ZON23-10, it should be subject to the stipulations in the staff report.

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to recommend approval of ZON23-10, subject to the following stipulations:

1. Development shall be in substantial conformance with the Dignity Health, Desert River III PAD Narrative, date stamped January 27, 2025.

2. Due to the site's proximity to the airport, review and approval from the City's Airport Administrator and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) shall be required prior to the issuance of building permits for the site.

Attachments

PAD Narrative
CP Final Report_without labels
Prop 207 Waiver
ZON Map
Aerial Map
PowerPoint Presentation