



## PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

CASE: GPA24-05 & ZON24-10 VETERANS PROJECT LOCATED ON THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 63RD AVENUE AND ORANGEWOOD AVENUE.

CASE #: GPA24-05 & ZON24-10

MEETING DATE: 04/24/2025

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

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### **SUBJECT**

\*GPA24-05 & ZON24-10 - A request by Stephen W. Anderson on behalf of Gammage & Burnham, PLC, representing City of Glendale, for a Minor General Plan Amendment from LI (Light Industrial) to HDR 20 (High Density Residential 12.0–20.0 du/ac) and OFC (Office) and rezone from M-1 (Light Industrial), R-4 (Multiple Residence-4) and (C-3) (Heavy Commercial) to PAD (Planned Area Development) for approximately 10 acres of real property to allow for veterans small home community with ancillary support services. The site is located at the northwest corner of 63rd Avenue and Grand Avenue and is in the Barrel Council District.

Presented by: Alex Lerma, Senior Planner

### **REQUEST**

Planning Commission recommendation to amend the General Plan Land Use Designation and Zoning classification for Veterans Community Project (GPA24-05 & ZON24-10).

### **APPLICANT/OWNER**

Stephen W. Anderson on behalf of Gammage & Burnham, PLC, representing City of Glendale.

### **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 seeks an amendment to the property land use designation and zoning classification to facilitate the development of a small home veteran community with ancillary support services. The development will provide fifty (50) small, site-built homes. In addition, the development will be providing on-site support services. Site access is proposed along 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue by way of two (2) separate

drives.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **General Plan Designation:**

The property is designated as LI (Light Industrial).

### **Zoning Classification:**

M-1 (Light Industrial), R-4 (Multiple Residence-4), and C-3 (Heavy Commercial).

### **Property Location and Size:**

The approximate 10-acre property is located at the northwest corner of 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Grand Avenue and is in the Barrel Council District.

### **History:**

The site previously had multiple uses, including an animal hospital, multiple motels, and a mobile home park. All uses were removed in 2010, and the site has remained vacant since.

### **Project Details:**

The applicants' request includes an amendment to the site's land use designation and the adoption of a PAD to facilitate the development of a small home veteran community with ancillary support services to address a housing initiative for veterans. The project will provide fifty (50) small, site-built homes; two (2) of the homes will be fully ADA-accessible, six (6) of the homes will be designed to accommodate families, and the remainder forty-two (42) homes will be individual units. All fifty homes will be fully functional with full kitchens and bathrooms. Each unit will have an outdoor patio or porch area to create a neighborhood environment. Housing is intended to be transitional, by providing residents with stability so that they can then move on to permanent, independent housing.

Along with the housing element, the project will also include support services for the veterans, which will be designated to a commercial building identified as the "Village Center." The commercial building will include offices for the support staff, community meeting spaces, mailboxes, counseling/training rooms, and other necessary amenities. The Village Center staff is not projected to exceed 15 at any given time. Staff will not be residing at the site and will only be there during business hours. On-site services will be exclusively for those veterans residing on site; services will not be available to the general public.

The community will include outdoor amenity options such as barbecue areas, a playground, dining ramadas, a pool or water features, gazebos, walking trails, and a dog park. The exact amenities are yet to be determined, but ample space has been provided on-site for these features.

Site access is anticipated along 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue by way of two (2) separate drives.

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION TO DATE:**

### **Applicant's Citizen Participation Process:**

On September 11, 2024, the applicant mailed notification letters to adjacent property owners and interested parties. An in-person neighborhood meeting was conducted on September 25, 2024. There were fourteen (14) participants at the meeting. Those who attended had no significant issues with the proposal. 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 April 2, 2025. Notification postcards of the public hearing were mailed to adjacent property owners and interested parties on March 28, 2025. The property was posted on April 4, 2025.

**STAFF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

**REQUIRED FINDINGS AND STAFF ANALYSIS**

**Required General Plan Amendment Findings:**

**Section 35.6.206(G) of the Unified Development Code required the following General Plan Amendment Findings:**

1a. The amendment is consistent with the policies and objectives of the rest of the General Plan; and

**Staff Analysis:**

**Conservation, Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Element: Goal CCR-1:**

Deteriorating neighborhoods are revitalized, and blight is removed.

**Policy CCR-1.5:** The City shall direct specific redevelopment efforts to areas of visual blight.

The proposal presents a great opportunity to not only address the needs of a specific population but also revitalize an area considered a blighted section along Grand Avenue. In past years, the City of Glendale purchased these properties, which presented safety concerns with unkept commercial buildings and unimproved areas. The City took the proper steps to remove all the structures from the site and provided adequate screening along Grand Avenue to shelter the underutilized site from a heavily trafficked roadway. The Veterans Community Project provided a great opportunity to repurpose an area that has remained vacant for the past fourteen years.

**Conservation, Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Element: Goal CCR-2:**

Deteriorating neighborhoods are revitalized, and blight is removed.

**Policy CCR-2.1:** The City shall encourage and support infill development to take advantage of existing infrastructure, community and educational facilities, and enhance existing neighborhoods.

Taking into consideration that the project is repurposing the site, most of the infrastructure is already in place and able to support a project of this type. The development will provide a level of organized circulation both internally

and externally by providing connectivity to the right-of-way to accommodate both pedestrians and vehicles. Most of the adjacent properties are already in use with light industrial uses and public open spaces. It is important to note that the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) Post 1433 Sandy Coor, is directly northeast of the subject property. Once in operation, the site will enhance the existing neighborhood by providing opportunities to collaborate with different entities within the neighborhood.

1b. The proposed amendment furthers the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Glendale.

**Staff Analysis:**

**Growth Area Goal GA-1:** Glendale's identified Growth Areas are supported with appropriate infrastructure.

**Policy GA-2.1:** The City shall concentrate growth in areas that may be served most efficiently.

The site is located in an area that not only has available infrastructure but daily services within close proximity. The project is located directly adjacent to major roads including 63rd, Orangewood and Grand Avenues. Public services are available within close proximity, along with retail and employment options, providing efficient services to those residing on the property.

**Public Health and Safety Element Goal S-2:** Glendale maintains effective fire protection services and the incorporation of fire safety features in new development.

**Policy S-2.7:** The City shall require that new development provide adequate access for emergency vehicles, particularly firefighting equipment, and evacuation routes, as appropriate.

The PAD narrative includes a conceptual site plan which identifies site access, off-site connectivity and interior circulation. Primary access to the site will be located along 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, with two (2) separate driveways. Through the Design Review process, Fire Services will have the opportunity complete a more thorough review of the site's access points and interior circulation to verify that emergency vehicles can safely access and maneuver internally.

2. If the amendment is to the Land Use Map, an additional finding must be made that the proposed change will be compatible with other land uses, existing or planned, in the vicinity.

**Staff Analysis:**

**Housing Element Goal HE-3:** Glendale has housing options that meet the range of socioeconomic needs of the City's current and future residents.

**Policy HE-2.2:** The City should support adjustments to the housing mix based on demographic needs and economic changes within Glendale.

The proposal is focused on assisting a specific population by providing housing and support services to homeless veterans. There will be a mix of housing types with a total of fifty small homes, two of which will be fully ADA accessible, six will be designed to accommodate families, and the remainder forty-two homes will be individual units. This assistance program will provide the needed support by addressing the ongoing challenges faced by veterans transitioning from military service to civilian life.

**Staff Analysis:**

**Housing Element Goal HE-4:** Glendale has appropriate housing options and housing assistance for special needs populations.

**Policy HE-4.2:** The City shall combine its efforts with social service agencies and organizations to provide shelter, housing, and services for special needs, homeless, and other vulnerable populations.

The Veterans Community Project has been working with the City of Glendale to establish a project associated with housing and assistance for veterans on land that is currently owned by the City. Once completed, the Glendale site will be the sixth project The Veterans Community Project has established at a national level. The project will empower veterans and their families, by providing the necessary resources and care needed to improve the overall well-being of former servicemen.

**Required PAD Purpose:**

The Unified Development Code states that 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 PAD will serve as a tool to accommodate a unique mix-use project to provide housing and support services in one location as a response to the needs of homeless veterans. The overall approach to the design of the site is to provide functionality and connectivity with different areas both internal and external to the project. The small home community serves as the central element of the project with the arrangement of the homes creating a neighboring environment. Specific design measures have been taken to address appropriate vehicular and pedestrian access, setbacks, open space/amenities and the integration between the VFW

Post 1433 Sandy Coor.

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

**Staff Analysis:**

To reiterate, the project's primary focus is to provide transitional housing to homeless veterans. In total, fifty homes will be developed to accommodate veterans. Building elevations are proposed to be one-story. The layout of the homes are trauma-informed, meaning they have taken into consideration the needs of veterans who often suffer from PTSD and hyper-vigilance. Access points and windows are intentionally placed to avoid sightline conflicts. The homes are stand-alone to avoid unsettling noises through the walls of adjacent units, to provide the best privacy and security.

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

**Staff Analysis:**

Based on the unique nature of the project, the PAD provides the needed flexibility to establish design and development standards able to facilitate a project that is focused on providing the necessary support to a specific population that could otherwise be challenging if implemented under a standard zoning classification. Through customized development standards, the developer was able to modify specific regulations deemed challenging or unnecessary for this type of project.

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

**Staff Analysis:**

The infill project will provide for a small home community with a high standard of building design with durable materials appropriate for the desert climate. The colors used on the exterior of the units are representative of the five branches of the military. The varied building styles and color schemes will provide the housing area of the project variety and character. The design of the Village Center, the project's service center, will complement the housing area in both scale and architectural finishes, providing the overall project the needed balance.

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:**

One of the advantages of an overlooked, underutilized, repurposed property is that adequate utilities exist in the area. Both water and wastewater lines are available along 63<sup>rd</sup> 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. Prior to site development, an administrative review process will be required,

at which time, City staff will determine the offsite improvements. 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 PAD supports the goals and policies of the General Plan by encouraging housing with quality-level amenities and architectural quality (Policy HE-5.2), ensuring that adequate buffers between residential and non-residential uses are implemented (Policy LU-2.4) and developing safe, well built, attractive housing that adds variety to neighborhoods, thereby serving as a catalyst for the improvement of the surrounding neighborhoods (Policy HE-5.3).

**RECOMMENDATION**

Should the Planning Commission recommend approval of GPA24-05, it should be as written in the staff report.

Should the Planning Commission recommend approval of ZON24-10, it should be subject to the stipulations in the staff report.

**PROPOSED MOTION**

Move to recommend approval of GPA24-05, as written.

Move to recommend approval of ZON24-10, subject to the following stipulations:

1. Development shall be in substantial conformance with the Veterans Community Project PAD Narrative, final date stamped March 20, 2025.
2. "No Parking" signs shall be installed along the project's frontage on 63rd Avenue.
3. Site driveways must be 150 feet apart from curb return to curb return and not centerline of driveway.

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**Attachments**

PAD Narrative  
GPA Narrative  
CP Final Report\_without labels  
Prop207  
Cert, Adq. Schools  
GPA Map  
ZON Map  
Aerial Map

# PowerPoint Presentation