



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

GPA-NM-1-25-3

Date of VPC Meeting	May 21, 2025
Request From	Industrial and Commercial
Request To	Mixed Use
Proposal	Mixed-use, multifamily residential
Location	Southwest corner of 19th Avenue and Dunlap Avenue
VPC Recommendation	Approval, per the staff recommendation
VPC Vote	14-0

VPC DISCUSSION:

Item No. 4 (GPA-NM-1-25-3) and Item No. 5 (Z-7-25-3) are companion cases and were heard together.

No members of the public registered to speak on this item.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Robert Kuhfuss, staff, presented both proposals, providing land use and zoning information on the site and surrounding area, its proximity to the Primary and Secondary Village Cores, and proximity to the light rail station. Mr. Kuhfuss summarized the various policy plans applicable to the site. Mr. Kuhfuss summarized public input received to date, reviewed each of the recommended stipulations, and provided an overview of staff's findings and recommendations.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Jeff Stapleton, Community and Economic Development staff, provided an additional presentation. Mr. Stapleton stated that Mr. Kuhfuss had provided a good overview of the project. Mr. Stapleton stated that the city had acquired the site in preparation for the Northwest Light Rail Phase I. Mr. Stapleton stated that the existing park-and-ride is at about 10% utilization and that the existing strip retail center is mostly vacant. Mr. Stapleton stated that the existing zoning will allow multifamily residential uses, and explained that because the site is underutilized, their preference is to rezone the site in a manner that is consistent with the plans and policies previously noted. Mr. Stapleton stated that the City Council authorized staff to begin the redevelopment

process in 2023. Mr. Stapleton referenced the vision as expressed in the 19North Transit Oriented Development Policy Plan, which encourages mixed-use development, enhancing the pedestrian realm, rights-of-way through the use of the Walkable Urban Code. Mr. Stapleton reiterated the Housing Phoenix Plan, which advocates increasing housing opportunities of all types including affordable, workforce, and market. Mr. Stapleton stated that a key element of the Housing Phoenix Plan is to incorporate HUD housing opportunities on city-owned properties. Mr. Stapleton referenced the Metro District Oriented Communities Policy Plan and stated that while the official boundaries of that plan are west of the site, the plan was used for guidance as to how the site might look. Mr. Stapleton reiterated the stipulation requiring the activation of the frontage and referenced a rendering of the site showing Plaza19 relative to a multi-story mixed-use building with retail on the ground floor. Mr. Stapleton referenced two massing studies that illustrated what the site might look like, emphasizing the relationship of the light rail station to the front of the site, with parking towards the rear of the site. Mr. Stapleton stated that the intent is to rezone to the Walkable urban Code so that bidders can simply design to that code and not be concerned whether the site is zoned C-1 or C-2. Mr. Stapleton stated that if the proposed zoning is approved, the site will be much more conducive to mixed-use development. Mr. Stapleton reiterated the maximum building height and the incentive to increase that height by providing 30% Affordable Housing. Mr. Stapleton stated that initially, they were seeking a maximum height of 56 feet but are amenable to the provision for 30% Affordable Housing incentive. Mr. Stapleton stated that having an Industrial land use designation next to light rail is not preferable and reiterated the request for the change in land use designation as requested in the proposed General Plan Amendment. Mr. Stapleton stated that they held a neighborhood outreach meeting on April 8, 2025 at the Cholla Library, which was well attended. Mr. Stapleton stated they were scheduled for the Planning Commission on June 5, 2025 and City Council on July 2, 2025. Mr. Stapleton stated they received a number of questions as there is not a specific project. Mr. Stapleton stated that the Request for Proposal will likely be issued in 2026 or 2027 and explained the Request for Proposal process. Mr. Stapleton stated that they will engage the various community groups and the Village Planning Committee, explaining to those groups the minimum qualifications, and the desired project, prior to going to a City Council subcommittee.

Committee Member Gabriel Jaramillo stated that in all the time that he has served on the Village Planning Committee and Planning Commission, he has never seen a group ask for input on a project like this and asked for clarification. Mr. Stapleton stated they utilize this process in the Central City and Encanto Villages. Mr. Stapleton stated that they typically get a number of questions relating the project vision and reiterated their intent for a residential use with neighborhood retail and reiterated the requirement for not less than 5,000 square feet of retail. Mr. Stapleton stated that the Park-and Ride will be right-sized based on current demand and Valley Metro's recommendation. Mr. Stapleton stated they expect to retain about 10% of its current capacity.

Committee Member Patrick Edwards asked about the number of parking spaces currently on the site. Mr. Stapleton stated there were currently 417 spaces. Mr. Stapleton stated that should the terms of the RFP be approved by the City Council, the RFP will be prepared and issued, which will lead to development proposals being submitted by various developers. Mr. Stapleton stated that each proposal will be evaluated and scored by an evaluation panel, which will lead to the selection of the winning proposer. Mr. Stapleton stated that business terms would then be negotiated, followed by additional community input and City Council Subcommittee evaluation and approval. Mr. Stapleton stated that the City Council would make the final decision to move forward and a Development Agreement would be executed, which would include provisions that implement the various stipulations of approval. Mr. Stapleton stated that construction plans would be submitted and permits issued, which would lead to construction activities on the site, with completion to occur sometime between 2029 or 2030.

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Vice Chair Joshua Matthews asked why Transect 5:5 was chosen rather than Transect 5:6, since Transect 5:6 would allow more height, density, and affordability. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that it was about achieving balance with all of the city's policy plans, the existing development in the area, the site's adjacency to light rail, and determining what is the appropriate intensity. Mr. Stapleton stated that outside of downtown, most of the requests that he is familiar with utilize Transect 5:5 as that transect adheres to a plan that has received community support as opposed to a transect that would allow 80 to 100 feet in height.

Committee Member Massimo Sommacampagna asked why the number of parking spaces associated with the park-and-ride was not fixed at this time. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that they will seek input from Valley Metro who will determine the number of parking spaces needed, which will then be reflected in the RFP.

Committee Member Gabriel Jaramillo asked if the project would include mixed income as well as mixed-use. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that was the case. Committee Member Jaramillo asked for additional information stating that the stipulations only address affordability as a bonus incentive and asked if there could be a stipulation that required mixed income. Mr. Stapleton stated that he would expect that a firm goal would be established through the RFP process that would establish the minimum number of affordable and workforce units, as well as a maximum number of market rate units. Committee Member Jaramillo asked for additional confirmation that the RFP process would establish required percentages regarding affordability beyond the bonus incentive contained in the stipulations. Mr. Stapleton stated that would be the case and that they would come back to the Committee at a later date to demonstrate that had been achieved.

Vice Chair Matthews asked how many dwelling units they expected to generate. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that they estimate approximately 300 units if constructed to a height of 48 feet; more if higher.

Committee Member Steve Pamperin asked for clarification regarding the percentage of covered parking and the number of EV parking spaces. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that the intent was to set the initial benchmark as was the case with setting the minimum amount of retail at 5,000 square feet. Mr. Stapleton stated that since the city owns the site, the city can require more if the conditions warrant and that setting the minimum number of EV spaces at 5% makes it easier for the developer to scale up. Mr. Stapleton stated that it is possible that a parking structure could be proposed and that he has seen where the developer placed the ground floor retail towards the street with structured parking behind, which makes it easier to build above.

Mr. Stapleton stated that the proposal is supported by the Metro District Community Collaboration, which is the business and property owner association to the west of the site. Mr. Stapleton also stated they have been working with Quik Trip to obtain a letter of support.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Vice Chair Matthews stated that he was excited to see this project come in and was happy to see something other than another gas station. Vice Chair Matthews stated that since the city owns the site, the city should be more aggressive in trying to achieve more affordable units, Vice Chair Matthews stated that 10% of 300 units is only 30 units as opposed to the project being allowed to achieve a height of 56 feet with all being affordable housing but also expressed concerns with the market being able to support that type of development. Vice Chair Matthews also expressed concerns over development agreements, stating they can be challenging. Vice Chair Matthews stated there was an opportunity to enhance Plaza19 and the retention area in response to CPTED, and that the city should encourage integration of the front of the building with the light rail.

Committee Member Jaramillo stated that he would like the Village Planning Committee to be a part of the RFP process in order to ensure that the number of affordable units is appropriate as opposed to the matter being left up to potential bonuses.

Committee Member Elizabeth Pérez-Pawloski asked if the Committee can amend the stipulation regarding the amount of affordable housing units. **Mr. Kuhfuss** stated that the Committee could amend that or any stipulation and reminded the Committee that the numbers contained in that stipulation were the result of conversations between the city's Planning, Housing, and Community and Economic Development Departments. Committee Member Pérez-Pawloski asked how a change to a stipulation could be achieved. Mr. Kuhfuss explained that whoever makes the motion could include in that motion a proposed change to the applicable stipulations, which

would then be included in the second and ultimate vote. **Committee Member Pamperin** asked what the stipulation was regarding affordability for the Metrocenter project. **Mr. Kuhfuss** stated that he did not have that information committed to memory. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that he was the city's project manager for The Metropolitan and that there are no stipulations or affordability benchmarks except for one circumstance where the developer applied for the Government Property Lease Excise Tax program which involved an in-lieu payment to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund but that was when the developer was looking at providing 3,000 units and has since pivoted away from that goal. **Committee Member Jaramillo** stated that Concord Wilshire is working in good faith towards providing affordable housing at Metrocenter but there were no stipulations that require them to do so. **Committee Member Jaramillo** stated that now is a good opportunity to add stipulations regarding affordability. **Chair Stephanie Fogelson** expressed concerns regarding the red tape at the state level when it comes to affordable housing. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that the tax credit process is available but there is no requirement to do so. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that typically if a project were to be 100% affordable housing, the project could pencil out, but at a lesser amount, incentives are needed to achieve economies of scale. **Vice Chair Matthews** asked Mr. Stapleton if he, as the applicant, would be opposed to the Committee stipulating to 20% affordable housing, and how the Committee could be involved in the RFP process. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that outside of Arizona, where there is an exclusionary zoning regime, the benchmark is typically 20%. **Mr. Stapleton** further stated that they could come back to the Village with the terms of the RFP as well as the site plan. **Committee Member Jaramillo** stated that his preference would be to participate in the RFP process rather than attach an arbitrary number. **Committee Member Pérez-Pawloski** stated there was an opportunity to make a statement rather than accept a minimal deal. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that this site is not the only park-and-ride site that will be redeveloped, and that this development could set the tone for future projects. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that he would like to be aggressive when possible and that this site literally includes a light rail station making this a prime opportunity. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that he is considerate of the city not pushing itself out of the market but is also willing to let the site remain vacant until the right project comes along. **Vice Chair Matthews** referenced a project at the northwest corner of 7th Avenue and McDowell Road where more could have been achieved. **Vice Chair Matthews** reiterated that building something now for the sake of doing so could result in a missed opportunity. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that he did not want to be part of the Development Agreement process but would like to set the expectations. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that as a city-owned site, it is conceivable that the site could develop at 50% or 100% affordable housing but needed to know what that threshold is. **Committee Member Pamperin** stated that the area should include a mix of housing opportunities.

Vice Chair Matthews asked Mr. Stapleton if he would be amenable to a stipulation requiring a minimum of 20% affordable housing. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that would be acceptable. **Committee Member Heather Garbarino** stated that she is reticent to go against staff's recommendation and asked what the appropriate percentage is. **Mr. Stapleton** stated that 20% would be consistent with other states that have an

exclusionary zoning regime and that financing a larger percentage becomes more difficult. Mr. Stapleton stated that 20% also leaves the door open for a mixed income development.

MOTION:

Vice Chair Joshua Matthews motioned to recommend approval of GPA-NM-1-25-3 per the staff recommendation. **Committee Member Gabriel Jaramillo** seconded the motion.

VOTE:

14-0, motion to recommend approval of GPA-NM-1-25-3 per the staff recommendation passes with Committee Members Alauria, Barraza, Carmona, Edwards, Garbarino, Harris, Hepperle, Jaramillo, Larson, Pamperin, Pérez-Pawloski, Sommacampagna, Matthews, and Fogelson in favor and none opposed.

STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION:

None