



**Environmental
Planning
Commission**

**Agenda Number: 9
Project Number: 1006864
Case Number: 07EPC 40065
March 20, 2008**

Supplemental Staff Report

Agent	Hartman & Majewski Design Group
Applicant	SunCal Companies, New Mexico Division
Request	Site Development Plan for Subdivision
Legal Description	Tracts M, N & P- Watershed and Inspiration Subdivisions
Location	Located north of Arroyo Vista Blvd., west of Tierra Pintada Dr., south of the Petroglyph National Monument, and east of the Atrisco Terrace.
Size	Approximately 500 acres
Existing Zoning	Residential Resort (RR)
Proposed Zoning	Residential Resort (RR)

Staff Recommendation

DEFERRAL of 07EPC 40065, based on the findings beginning on Page 12, for 30 days to the April 17, 2008 hearing.

Staff Planners

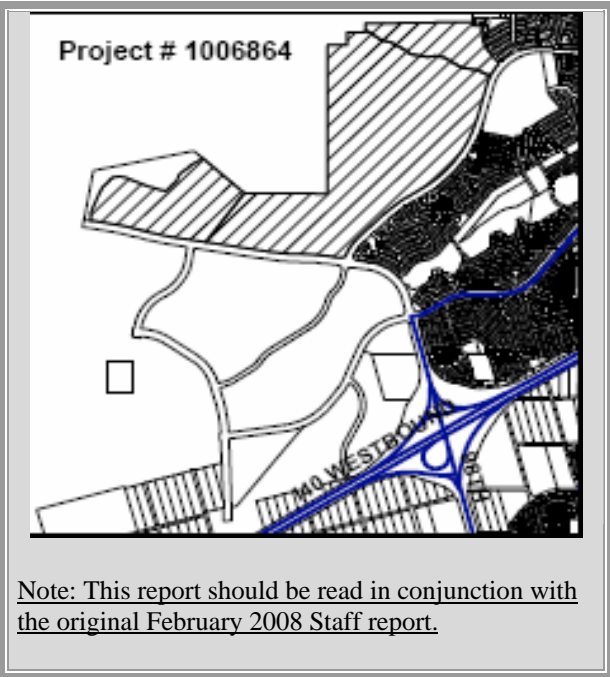
*Catalina Lehner-AICP, Senior Planner
Jennifer Donofrio, Associate Planner*

Summary of Analysis

This proposal for a site development plan for subdivision with design standards is for an approx. 500 acre site consisting of Tracts M, N & P, Watershed and Inspiration Subdivisions, a portion of the Westland property.

Applicable plans include the Westside Strategic Plan, the Facility Plan for Arroyos, the Trails & Bikeways Facilities Plan, the Westland Master Plan, the Westland Sector Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan. Staff finds that the proposal continues to partially further applicable policies overall, but does not further important policies in the NWMEP. Outstanding issues include topography, open space and setbacks, and the fact that the design standards do not provide sufficient clarity for future reviewers.

A non-facilitated meeting was held with the neighborhoods. Staff has not received any neighborhood comments, but has received agency comments. Staff recommends deferral for 30 days so that outstanding issues can be addressed.



City Departments and other interested agencies reviewed this application from 1/7/08 to 1/18/08. Agency comments used in the preparation of this report begin on Page 31 of the original report.

I. BACKGROUND

This proposal for was deferred for 30 days at the February 21, 2008 EPC hearing due to lack of a quorum. During the deferral period, the applicant has made some revisions to the proposed design standards and has included additional information in response to the Staff report (see attachment). Staff met with the applicant on February 29, 2008 to discuss the revisions.

II. PROPOSAL (IN BRIEF)

This proposal is for a site development plan for subdivision with design standards for an approximately 500 acre site, zoned Residential Resort (RR) and located south of the Petroglyph National Monument and north of the Town Center activity center. The proposed design standards would apply to approximately 1,500 housing units; no commercial or office uses are proposed.

HISTORY

⇒ Please refer to the November 15, 2007 Staff report, beginning on p. 3 (see attachment).

ZONING

⇒ Please refer to p. 4 of the February 21, 2008 Staff report for an explanation of the Residential Resort (RR) zone.

POLICY ANALYSIS

Applicable Plans are the Comprehensive Plan (Developing Urban area), the Westside Strategic Plan, the Facility Plan for Arroyos, the Trails and Bikeways Facilities Plan, the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan, the Westland Sector Development Plan, and the Westland Master Plan.

⇒ A full policy analysis begins on the bottom of p. 5 of the original February 21, 2008 Staff report (see attachment).

Staff believes that the revisions made and information provided during the deferral period are helpful, but not significant enough to warrant changes to the original policy analysis. Therefore, overall, the extent to which policies are furthered remains partial.

There are a few instances in which policy compliance has improved, such as landscape. However, Staff does not consider these instances as significant as those in which policies continue to not be furthered, such as design guidelines in the Facilities Plan for Arroyos and grading policies in the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP). The NWMEP policies such as the Design Overlay Zone regulations and Impact Area regulations are understood to be regulations which must be complied with, unless the NWMEP is amended by the City Council.

III. PHYSICAL PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

Physical planning is a term often used to describe planning that incorporates the natural environment and sustainability into its practice. The 500 acre subject site, adjacent south of the Petroglyph National

Monument and adjacent east of the Atrisco Terrace Open Space, is located in a unique geologic area. Therefore, careful and holistic consideration of soils/erosion, topography and water/drainage is warranted at this stage in the development process. It is important to understand how the forces of nature have shaped, and will continue to shape, this area.

Geology

A unique geologic formation caused by lava flow, now inside the southeast portion of the Petroglyph National Monument, pushed outward toward the subject site's northwestern boundary and created interesting landforms. This presents an opportunity to integrate such landforms into the proposed development, rather than to mass-grade them. The landforms should be considered an amenity; their preservation would help integrate the development with the surrounding open space areas.

Soils

The soils in the area consist primarily of Bluepoint loamy fine sand and loamy sand (Source: Westland Master Plan, p. 25). This type of soil is very likely to erode and become blowing soil. Blowing soil is common in this area in its undeveloped state, with natural vegetation. It is worthwhile to note that, with mass grading and development that does not harmonize with topography, the likelihood of blowing soil depositing on the proposed development and existing developments is high. Though mitigation measures during construction can provide some relief, the tendency for soil to blow is not going to decrease and should be taken into account when planning the proposed development. For example, Staff believes that integrating the development more with topography (and altering topography as little as possible) would be beneficial for both the public and the developer in the long run.

Drainage System

This area is part of a large natural drainage system characterized by erosion, particularly arroyo cutting and wind redepositing soil. The land generally drains from west to east with slopes ranging from 3% to 15% (average slope is 5%) from the existing land surface. The Ladera Pond system, built to accommodate runoff from a 100 year flood, lies south of the subject site. From the subject site, runoff is intended to go through the existing Stormcloud subdivision and become part of the Ladera Pond system, ending up at Ladera Golf Course. Ladera Golf Course is a playa, an area where water naturally collects.

The Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (WUA) has a finalized development agreement with SunCal (see attachment). The City well/pumpstation/water treatment facility north of the subject site will be utilized to provide water utility service. However, the water service must be provided in phases as specified in the development agreement.

IV. CULTURAL RESOURCES/ARCHAEOLOGY

It is worth noting that this West Mesa area, of which the subject site is a part, is known to contain archaeological resources (See attached study: A Preliminary Evaluation of the Cultural Resources within the Westland Sector Plan in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Location information is not provided). In 1995, Westland (SunCal) conducted a preliminary archaeological investigation on a small number of randomly selected locations within the Westland Master Plan area. Several artifacts were identified in the preliminary evaluation along the south boundary of the Residential Resort zone. According to the

Preliminary Evaluation report, the artifacts were buried in the dunes. Staff notes that only a very small portion of the Residential Resort Zone was randomly selected and therefore the area could have significant cultural resources buried in the dunes which are proposed to be re-contoured/ graded. As a result, re-contouring/ grading the site could be very harmful to the potential cultural resources.

V. ANALYSIS- SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SUBDIVISION

⇒ Please refer to the February 21, 2008 Staff report, beginning on p. 20 (see attachment).

VI. ANALYSIS- SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SUBDIVISION, DESIGN STANDARDS

Background: The purpose of design standards is to establish a development framework to guide future site development plans and ensure that the development will further applicable City Plans, goals and policies. Design standards consist of several sections, which typically are the following (or a combination thereof): Site elements, Pedestrianism, Parking, Setbacks, Landscape, Lighting, Screening, Utilities, Signage, Building elements and Architecture.

⇒ A complete analysis of the proposed design standards can be found in the original February 21, 2008 Staff report beginning on p. 21.

Revisions: In this supplemental report, Staff analyzes only changes made to the proposed design standards (section by section) during the deferral period. One change is the total number of pages in the document. The revised version contains 12 pages, versus 7 in the original version. The majority of the new pages are photos and maps. The first seven pages of the new submittal include conceptual maps and ideas, and the final 5 pages include the design standards (beginning on Sheet 8).

1. PROJECT DATA (SHEET 1)

The applicant has not made any changes to this sheet. Staff still finds that residents would not have a choice besides driving to access commercial services since none are planned within convenient walking distance. The note located in the bottom left corner states that "Watershed and Inspiration shall comply with the design guidelines of the Westland Master Plan and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan." Staff finds that the submittal should comply with not only the design guidelines in the plans, but other regulations that are not design related. In addition, the note does not make reference to the Facilities Plan for Arroyos or the Trails and Bikeways Plan. Staff recommends that all of the applicable plans be acknowledged on this sheet. Furthermore, note that the site development plan for subdivision does not include design guidelines for the Community Recreational Center.

There have been no changes to the table which specifies densities by site plan area. However, there are inconsistencies between this table and the densities listed on Sheet 6. Staff recommends changes to the table on Sheet 1 to create consistency with Sheet 6. In addition, Staff points out that gross density (as opposed to net density) includes streets and open space areas. Net density is the total number of dwelling units (DUs) on a housing site divided by the acreage of the site. Staff believes that net density provides a more accurate density calculation, since including streets and open space areas makes the overall density appear to be less than it is.

2. SITE PHOTOS (SHEETS 2 AND 3)

Additional photos have been added to the site photo section since the original submittal. This version includes panoramic photos with the position of the photo illustrated on a site map. These photos are helpful to understand the opportunities and constraints of the site. However, most of these photos are not of the Impact Area. According to NWMEP Policy 11-2, photographs of the subject site within the Impact Area in its original condition shall be submitted with the application for site development plan for subdivision.

3. CONTEXTUAL ZONE MAP AND LAND USE MAP (SHEET 4)

The contextual Land Use Map is new to the site development plan for subdivision. This map illustrates how the Watershed and Inspiration site would connect to other land uses. The Watershed and Inspiration site would abut the Town Center Village (TCV), consisting of 85% residential and 15% commercial on the south side, and the Stormcloud residential development to the east. Staff has no assurance that commercial development in the TCV would be in proximity to the Watershed and Inspiration developments, because the great majority (85%) of the TCV will be developed with all residential uses.

4. ILLUSTRATIVE RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE PLAN (SHEET 5)

The Illustrative Recreational and Open Space Plan is a new addition to the site development plan for subdivision. The map identifies the park acreages, open space corridors, graded slopes with landscape enhancements, wildlife movement assumptions and views. The parks are no longer referred to as "pocket parks". Instead the parks are labeled as "Park".

The location of open space corridors has not changed since the original submittal. However, now the applicant differentiates the open space into two categories (1) enhanced open space and (2) natural open space. The majority of the enhanced open space exists along the principal and minor arterial roads (Arroyo Vista Boulevard and Tierra Pintada Drive) and the proposed road accessing the private Community Recreation Center.

Enhanced Open Space

Staff finds that the enhanced open space, which includes multi-purpose trails, is generally connected although it always ends in a roadway. The location of enhanced open space along the road network is likely to create wildlife-vehicle and pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Staff is also concerned about how functional the open space would be and about how much re-contouring would be used to create the enhanced open space. Staff also recommends that the applicant define enhanced open space.

Natural Open Space

The natural open space areas include the Mirehaven Arroyo, the Petroglyph national Monument, and the Atrisco Terrace Major Public Open Space. There are trails to access each of these open space destinations. Staff notes that the trail along the Mirehaven Arroyo has been relocated and now abuts the entire length of the Mirehaven Arroyo. Staff finds that this modification provides better opportunities for residents and visitors to use the trail and enjoy views of the Arroyo and Monument.

Graded Slopes, Connectivity & Wildlife

The graded slopes with landscape enhancements are a new addition. The proposed site development plan does not include any information about graded slopes (though there is a section on slope enhancement on Sheet 11). Staff understands, from meetings with the applicant, that the graded slope area would be comprised of land that slopes too much to be developed. The graded slope areas would be sandwiched between homes and serve as visual open space, rather than useable open space. Therefore, the map appears to show more connectivity than would occur in reality. Staff does not know how much grading the applicant is proposing to do on the graded slopes or if there would be pedestrian access to the graded slope area.

The illustrative map indicates that the graded sloped areas would connect with the open space areas. Staff finds that the graded slopes create an opportunity for the applicant to enhance the trail network to allow for pedestrians and bicyclists to have access from the site to the Petroglyph National Monument. The Petroglyph National Monument recommends that there be a trail along the graded slope area north of the Sports Park to connect to the Monument. This trail would allow visitors to park their vehicles at the Sports Park and walk to the Monument.

Staff also notes that the graded sloped areas are not continuous. Roads divide the graded sloped areas, reducing opportunities for the graded sloped areas to serve as wildlife corridors. The SunCal website explicitly makes reference that their developments create wildlife corridors through the open space within its communities. However, the map shows the wildlife corridor located away from the community. The applicant anticipates that wildlife would travel within the Petroglyph National Monument and the Mirehaven Arroyo. The applicant has provided no justification to support the wildlife movement assumption. Staff is not an expert on wildlife movement, but is concerned that wildlife would enter the site and be impacted by people. Staff assumes that because the applicant does not anticipate wildlife entering site, that there would be some barrier preventing wildlife from entering the site.

Visual Considerations

The new map includes visual consideration arrows emphasizing important view areas. However, the proposed site development plan does not address NWMEP Policy 12, Structures shall not block views of the Escarpment or visually contrast with the natural environment. Staff needs more information to determine if the proposal furthers this policy. For example, a map with the locations of structures that shows which structures would affect views of the Escarpment would be helpful to demonstrate compliance.

5. CIRCULATION SYSTEM (SHEET 6)

The proposed circulation system has been slightly modified to include a new street type H, a bridge across the Mirehaven Arroyo. The updated circulation map does not include the locations of the graded sloped areas. Some of the trails on the map do not correspond to the trails on Sheet 5. The applicant has not indicated the location of prescription trails. Note that the density specified on this sheet needs to match the density specified on Sheet 1 to create consistency.

6. CONCEPTUAL DRAINAGE AND UTILITY PLAN (SHEET 7)

A new general note was added discussing the location of the site and the applicant's intentions in terms of grading. According to the proposed drainage plan, lower density areas would be graded into the topography, while the majority of the project would be re-contoured/ graded and slopes would be landscape enhanced appropriate to the setting. The note also states that the project would conform with the grading requirements in the NWMEP Impact Area.

Recall that Sheet 6 provides an overview of residential development densities by area. The higher densities (4-5 dwelling units/ acre) exist near the sports and activity parks (Residential Areas E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, and C-2). However, higher-density residential areas do not make up the majority of the subject site. Staff finds that the applicant needs to better explain where they propose to re-contour/ grade within the subject site and better define which density is considered lower and which is considered higher. Staff points out that Residential Area A, right next to the Atrisco Terrace, is planned to develop at 2 DU/ac, while Residential Area B-1 (also right next to the Atrisco Terrace) is planned to develop at 3.2 DU/ac., which may not be appropriate in this area where slopes reach 15%.

Staff also notes that the applicant could re-contour/grade the extended Impact Area not officially within the boundaries of the Impact Area (See pink area on Sheet 1). According to the Note on Sheet 1, the applicant states that they will only comply with height restrictions along the north boundary of the site abutting the Petroglyph National Monument.

Westland Master Plan

The Westland Master Plan (WMP) includes a section on Slope (page 26). According to the Slope Analysis, the greatest diversity of slopes exists north of the Ladera drainage ponds at the eastern edge of the Plan area. In addition, Slopes between 0-5%, which are very suitable for development, exist at the eastern boundary between Unser Boulevard and 98th Street. The middle of the Plan area has slopes ranging from 5-15% and above, and the highest percentage slopes are found in the Atrisco Terrace and immediately to the east and west. The Plan states that a slope of 3-5% is ideal for development and that major development constraints do not occur on slopes of less than 15%.

According to the applicant, slopes within the boundaries of the site range from 3-15%. Staff finds that, based on the WMP Slope section, some areas may exceed a 15% slope, especially areas abutting the Atrisco Terrace open space. Where extreme slopes such as these exist, development often utilizes the slopes as part of the development rather than destroying them through mass grading. Staff recommends that the applicant conduct a slope analysis to illustrate the slopes within the site and indicate the type of grading that would occur on them to accommodate development. In addition, the NWMEP intends that slopes within the Impact Area are minimally impacted; information is needed to ensure that only minimal impact occurs. This is another reason why a slope analysis is needed.

Cultural Resources (see also p. 1 of this report).

Finally, re-contouring/grading may affect cultural resources. According to the Preliminary Evaluation report conducted by Westland (SunCal) in 1995, artifacts were buried in the dunes (see attachment). Only a very small portion of the Residential Resort Zone was randomly selected for evaluation; therefore, the area could have significant cultural resources buried in the dunes which are proposed to be

re-contoured/ graded. As a result, re-contouring/ grading the site could be very harmful to the potential cultural resources.

THE FOLLOWING TOPICS COMPRISE THE DESIGN STANDARDS (SHEETS 8 THROUGH 12):

7. THE OVERALL DESIGN THEME AND LAND USE CONCEPT (SHEET 8)

The updated version of the proposed site development plan for subdivision includes similar information to that found in the drainage and utility plan (Sheet 7) that discusses grading and re-contouring. Other than this, there have been no changes. Overall, Staff recommends that generic statements of compliance be supplemented. It is more effective, to both ensure compliance and facilitate future review, to specify the requirements in the context of the design standards. Doing so makes delegation (see 14 below) justifiable.

The applicant states that the proposal would be responsive to the topography, landforms, and adjacent land uses to maximize the offsite view opportunities. Staff believes that topography and landforms should not only be preserved to maximize offsite views, but also to preserve the environmental landscape and that grading should be minimized. Grading and re-contouring the site would destroy the existing flora and fauna and potentially expose elements from the earth which are best left unexposed (ex. cultural artifacts, soils).

8. OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS AND DESIGN (INCLUDES SETBACKS AND GARAGES) (SHEET 8)

Focusing mainly on residential setbacks, garages and driveways, this section is overall a bit difficult to read. Staff suggests breaking out the subsections, especially where requirements are specified.

Setbacks

The revised, proposed site development plan includes setback requirements for three different lot sizes (compared to two in the original submittal). The new lot size breakdown is: lots 7,500 sf or greater, lots between 5,500 sf and 7,500 sf, and lots less than 5,500 sf.

- a. 7,500 sf or greater: no maximum setback proposed, driveways not less than 20 ft.
- b. between 5,500 sf and 7,500 sf: 20 ft. maximum setback, driveways not less than 20 ft.
- c. less than 5,500 sf: setbacks not less than 10 ft. but no more than 16 ft.
- d. attached residential lots (series of 3 or less): front not less than 15, side not less than 8, rear not less than 15.

Staff consulted with the Code Enforcement Division. Staff points out that setbacks are measured from the beginning point of a building, which includes the porch. Therefore, separate setback requirements for homes and porches and garages do not make sense because these are all buildings and setbacks are measured starting with a building. Encroachment into the setback area is not allowed without a variance. Note: Street design cross-sections will need to be modified since they show two types of setbacks, which is undesirable for enforcement and review purposes.

In addition, Staff finds that setbacks need to be specified for the side yards and that the rear yard setbacks need to be integrated with the lot types and not at the end of the section. Not specifying

setbacks clearly will result in ambiguity and complicate the plan check process. Therefore, Staff suggests that setbacks for the 7,500 sf or greater lots and the lots between 5,500 sf and 7,500 sf follow the R-1 regulations of the Zoning Code. The R-1 zone specifies a minimum side yard setback of 5 ft. on both sides or 10 ft. on one side (with slightly different requirements for corner lots.)

3. STREET DESIGN (SHEET 9)

Eight, instead of seven, street types are now proposed in addition to two street types in the Westland Master Plan (WMP). The two street types in the WMP, principal arterial and minor arterial (see p. 84) continue to not be included, though Staff believes that they should be in order to maintain consistency. The street type cross-sections still show level streets with no walls or changes in topography.

In response to Staff concerns, a new Street Type H has been added. Street Type H, the street crossing over the Mirehaven Arroyo, has two 11 ft. travel lanes and 4 ft. sidewalks. There is no bicycle lane, though Staff believes that there should be one especially given the emphasis on trails in this area. Street type B and C have been modified to no longer include trees in the median, in response to fire access concerns.

The Westland Master Plan states that all local streets shall not exceed 32 feet in width. However, street types B and C exceed the required width.

4. TRANSIT FACILITIES (SHEET 9)

There are no changes to this section.

5. PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES (SHEET 9)

There is one change to this section, which now states that benches and trash receptacles shall be provided at appropriate locations. Staff recommends a couple of minor language changes.

6. BICYCLES AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION (SHEET 9)

There are no changes to this section. Therefore, Staff still has concerns about bicycle access into the Petroglyph National Monument and compliance with the Trails and Bikeway Facility Plan, as well as the lack of a bicycle path on the arroyo crossing.

7. LANDSCAPE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS (INCLUDES OPEN SPACE) (SHEET 10)

The proposed landscaping design standards have changed significantly. Staff points out that the landscape areas map on Sheet 10 does not match the new Recreational and Open Space plan map on Sheet 5.

Open Space

Additional language states that slope enhancements will include stabilization with boulders and re-vegetation with native shrubs. Benches and information bollards will be provided at trail heads. Watering points for wildlife, maintained by the HOA, will be included along the edges of the Mirehaven Arroyo. The one change to the Mirehaven Arroyo subsection states that trails will now go down into the Arroyo.

Parks

New language has been added which states that parks near the open space (there are two) will visually connect with the open space, and will serve to connect people with trails. This sentence needs some clarification. According to this intent, it would make sense to have a park near the National Park Service (NPS) requested trail locations, although park radius lines indicate that every resident will live within 0.5 mile of a park. Staff notes that the landscape areas map (which depicts parks and open space) does not show the slope enhanced landscape areas.

Plants & Vegetation

A few changes have been made to the plant palette and occur in the trees section. Silk Tree, one-seed juniper and Golden Raintree have been removed. Western Redbud has been added. The shrubs, grasses and flowers sections have not changed.

Language has been added to indicate that inverted crowns will be used in the streetscape, including medians and parkways, to harvest rainwater and that xeric principles will be employed. The plant selection criteria section has been expanded and mentions the goals of suitability, variety and safety.

Regarding the Mirehaven Arroyo, the boundary between the house and the arroyo is to be treated similarly to houses that abut the Petroglyph National Monument, as specified in the Walls and Fences section of the proposed design standards (see narrative later in this report.)

A diagram for slope enhancement is provided and has not changed since the previous version. Staff is concerned that mass grading of the site will contribute to erosion and suggests that, rather than revegetate the slopes, it would be prudent to leave the native vegetation—especially since native plants are already established and would minimize blowing soil and erosion. Also, native plants are required and listed in the design standards.

Staff continues to recommend that the applicant develop grading regulations (perhaps in a separate section) that would protect the natural topography of the land and create compliance with applicable policies (mostly in the NWMEP) that address grading. Regarding landscape and open space, Staff suggests that water management be addressed here as a subsection.

8. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REQUIREMENTS (SHEET 12)

New additions to this section include photographs that are more representative of home styles found in the Albuquerque area. Additional elaboration regarding side and rear elevations, windows/doors and roofs is provided. Overall, the revised proposed standards focus on consistency between all elevations of the homes. However, Staff notes that side and rear elevations visible from adjacent public streets, schools, parks and open space shall present an enhanced quality appearance that is compatible with the front elevation. Staff finds this language confusing, since it implies that in all other cases the elevations may not have a quality appearance on all sides or be balanced and compatible with the front elevation.

9. BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section.

10. UTILITIES/SCREENING (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section. Roof-mounted equipment is not addressed, but should be to ensure compliance with applicable NWMEP policies.

11. WALLS AND FENCES (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section. Therefore, Staff has the same concerns as before, especially regarding retaining walls. Retaining walls and their proposed heights, materials and location throughout the subject site are not addressed. Staff wants to ensure that topography is minimally disturbed and recommends that retaining walls be addressed as a separate section, since retaining walls are different than screening walls. Staff recommends that the term “should” be changed to “shall”.

12. SIGNAGE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section. Therefore, Staff has the same concerns as before. The heights, size, and location of permissive signs in each development area (the Impact Area, View Area, and Westland Master Plan Area) need to be specified; a generic cross-reference would not be helpful for future reviewers. Staff recommends that the term “should” be changed to “shall”.

13. LIGHTING DESIGN REQUIREMENTS (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section. Therefore, Staff has the same concerns as before. The proposal does not include information about whether the light poles throughout the site will be of similar design. Staff recommends addressing this point with specifics, since a generic cross-reference would not be helpful for future reviewers.

14. ADMINISTRATIVE (SHEET 12)

There are no changes to this section. Therefore, Staff has the same concerns as before. The applicant continues to propose delegation to the Development Review Board (DRB) for future site development plans for building permit, delegation to the Building Permit Desk for individual structures and that minor adjustments be allowed as approved by the Planning Director.

Staff finds that delegation to the DRB is not advisable at this time. Overall, the proposed design standards are still not as specific as they need to be to provide clear direction to future reviewers. Staff consulted with Code Enforcement regarding the idea that requirements need to be specified within the design standards (as opposed to cross-referenced). Specifics facilitate review of future submittals and make delegation warranted. Also, Staff wants to ensure that applicable policies and regulations are implemented; the proposed design standards need to make compliance apparent to be effective and justify delegation of the EPC’s review authority.

CONCERNS OF REVIEWING AGENCIES/PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION

- ⇒ For a discussion of reviewing agencies’ concerns, please refer to the original February 21, 2008 Staff report, beginning on p. 25 (see attachment).

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

⇒ For a discussion of neighborhood concerns, please refer to p. 26 of the original February 21, 2008 Staff report (see attachment).

VII. CONCLUSION

This proposal is for a site development plan for subdivision with design standards for an approximately 500 acre site, zoned Residential Resort (RR) and located south of the Petroglyph National Monument and north of the Town Center activity center. The proposed design standards would apply to approximately 1,500 housing units.

The subject site lies within the boundaries of the Developing Urban area of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional applicable plans include the Westside Strategic Plan, the Facility Plan for Arroyos (FPA), the Trails & Bikeways Facilities Plan, the Westland Master Plan (WMP), the Westland Sector Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP).

Overall, Staff finds that the extent to which policies are furthered remains partial. The proposal partially furthers and does not further applicable Goals and policies in some instances. There are a few instances in which policy compliance has improved, such as landscape. However, Staff does not consider these instances as significant as those in which policies continue to not be furthered, such as design guidelines in the FPA and grading policies in the NWMEP. Another significant issue is the fact that the design standards do not provide sufficient clarity for future reviewers.

The affected neighborhood associations (NAs) are the Tres Volcanes NA and the Watershed NA. A non-facilitated meeting was held in January; Staff has not received any comments. Commenting agencies, such as Transportation (Planning), the Petroglyph National Monument and the Water Utility Authority have provided comments. Because there continue to be outstanding issues, Staff recommends deferral for at least 30 days so that the applicant can adequately address them in the proposed site development plan.

FINDINGS -07EPC 40065, March 20, 2008-Site Development Plan for Subdivision

1. This request is for a site development plan for subdivision with design standards for Tracts M, N, and P, Watershed and Inspiration subdivision (the subject site), an approximately 500 acre area bounded by Arroyo Vista Boulevard, the Atrisco Terrace Open Space, Tierra Pintada Drive, and the Petroglyph National Monument. The subject site is located in the Residential/ Resort zoned area of the Westland Master Plan, north of the Town Center (the designated activity center).
2. In July 2000, the EPC approved a site development plan for subdivision and a site development plan for building permit for the entire Residential/Resort zoned area which included a golf course and associated meeting facilities (Project #1000416). The site development plans have expired pursuant to Zoning Code §14-16-3-11, because they were not implemented within the seven year timeframe allowed for development.
3. The proposed development would consist of approximately 1,500 residential units with parks, open space areas and various types of roadways. No commercial or office uses are proposed.
4. The subject site lies within the boundaries of the Developing Urban area of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional applicable plans include the Westside Strategic Plan (WSSP), the Facilities Plan for Arroyos, the Trails & Bikeways Facilities Plan, the Westland Sector Plan, the Westland Master Plan and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP).
5. The proposal *does not further* the following relevant Comprehensive Plan policies:
 - A. Policy II.B.5a: Full range of urban land uses. Only residential uses, and no neighborhood commercial uses, are proposed in the approximately 500 acre area.
 - B. Policy II.B.5f: Clustering of homes/open space areas. The design standards do not address the concept of cluster development to blend housing and open space, though there is an opportunity to do so. The houses are not clustered and the open space areas are small and disconnected.
 - C. Policy II.B.5m: Urban/site design/unique vistas. There are no requirements in the design standards to ensure that unique vistas of the Petroglyph National Monument and the Atrisco Terrace would be maintained and that the visual environment would be improved.

6. The proposal *partially furthers* the following relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals:
- A. The Open Space Goal. The proposal includes parks of varying sizes and one major open space area (Mirehaven Arroyo). Open space corridors are proposed, but many end at streets and do not connect with each other, thus precluding a connected open space system and functional wildlife corridors.
 - B. The Transportation and Transit Goal. The proposal encourages walking and bicycling within the development and has more than sufficient roadway capacity, but does not create a balanced overall circulation system. There is no mix of land uses and no employment or services located within convenient walking distance.
 - C. The Water Management Goal. Preservation of the Mirehaven Arroyo and use of mostly xeric plant materials will contribute to efficient water management. However, the proposed design standards do not holistically address water management in this area.
7. The proposal *partially furthers* the following relevant Comprehensive Plan policies:
- A. Policy II.B.5d: Neighborhood values/environment/resources. Generally, higher density housing is intended near arterial roadways and less dense housing abutting open space. However, there is no evidence indicating how topography will be taken into account in this area characterized by unique environmental conditions.
 - B. Policy II.B.5g: Development/topography/trails. The proposed development is intended to be responsive to topography, but no information is provided beyond this general statement. Trail corridors are proposed, but connectivity is lacking.
 - C. Policy II.B.5k: Land adjacent to arterial streets. Though several street types are intended, residential development is proposed adjacent to large arterial streets. At this stage, it is unclear if harmful effects of traffic will be minimized.
8. The proposal *does not further* the Air Quality Goal or Air Quality Policy II.C.5b. Overall the proposed development is auto-centric with wide streets and front-loaded garages, and lacks commercial services within walking distance (typically 1/4-1/2 mile). The uses and design of the development encourage residents to drive, which increases vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and auto emissions and therefore worsens air quality.
9. With respect to the Westside Strategic Plan (WSSP), the proposal generally furthers Policy 1.1 regarding urban form and distinct communities. The subject site is located outside the designated activity center for the Westland North Community, so low density residential development is appropriate in this location. However, the proposal includes only residential development and does not further the overall intent of the WSSP to bring employment to the Westside.

10. The Facility Plan for Arroyos (FPA) contains policies for urban recreational arroyos and design guidelines for development adjacent to major open space arroyos, such as the Mirehaven Arroyo near the subject site's northwestern boundary. At this stage, the proposed design standards do not sufficiently address the FPA, particularly with respect to trails, walls, materials and the proposed arroyo crossing.

11. Regarding the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP), Design Overlay Zone regulations and Impact Area regulations apply. In many instances, the proposal does not specifically address the requirement so compliance cannot be ensured. In other instances, such as the following, the regulatory requirements are not fulfilled because the proposal does not:

- A. Demonstrate how development at the edge of open space will be designed to compliment open space (Policy 9).
- B. Demonstrate a provision for varied setbacks (Policy 9.2).
- C. Include only plants from the Plant Species List (Policy 9.5).
- D. Show that cut and fill will be kept to a minimum (Policy 11.2).

12. The Westland Master Plan (WMP) contains statements of intent regarding affordable housing and the jobs/housing balance which the proposal does not further. 20% of the housing in the WMP area shall be affordable; it appears that affordable housing is not included with the current proposal. The proposal does not include any commercial or office uses and has removed job and service opportunities from the Residential/Resort zone by no longer including the hotel and golf course.

13. The Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan (TBFP) contains applicable Goals. The proposal partially furthers Goal 3. Trails may separate pedestrian and bicycles, though bicycles and vehicles are not separated. More strategies are needed to mitigate trail-user conflicts. Goals 4 and 5 are relevant, but are not adequately addressed in the proposal.

14. The design standards in the proposed site development plan for subdivision need to be strengthened in order to ensure compliance with policies and regulations in applicable Plans, particularly the NWMEP. Also, the design standards do not provide sufficient clarity for future reviewers, who need requirements spelled-out and not cross-referenced to another document. A deferral will allow the applicant time to address outstanding issues, particularly topography, open space and setbacks, and to clarify the design standards.

15. The affected neighborhood associations (NAs) are the Tres Volcanes NA and the Watershed NA. A non-facilitated meeting was held on January 16, 2008. The applicant's notes indicate that the following

topics were discussed: vehicular access to the Monument, trails, parks and open space. Staff has not received any correspondence from the neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATION - 07EPC 40065, March 20, 2008-Site Development Plan for Subdivision

DEFERRAL of 07EPC 40065, a site development plan for subdivision with design standards for Tracts M, N, and P, Watershed and Inspiration subdivision, bounded by Arroyo Vista Boulevard, the Atrisco Terrace Open Space, Tierra Pintada Drive and the Petroglyph National Monument, for 30 days to April 17, 2008 based on the preceding Findings.

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&
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