Major Amendment - Master Zoning Plan for the Retirement Community in Northeast El Paso

March, 2012
Major Amendment – Master Zoning Plan for the Retirement Community in Northeast El Paso

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and
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Executive Summary

On July 17, 2008, the City of El Paso approved a Land Study covering approximately 4,944 acres in Northeast El Paso. This approved Land Study consisted of one District and 21 Subdistricts. Subdistricts 18, 20, and 21 are located adjacent to the east side of the Painted Dunes Golf Course on the north side of U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) in Northeast El Paso. These three Subdistricts are the subject of a Major Amendment – Master Zoning Plan (MA-MZP) that is being submitted due to land use configuration changes and different development densities now proposed from those previously approved in the July 17, 2008 Land Study. The District under review in this MA-MZP is approximately 426.9 gross acres (323.6 net developable acres). No changes are proposed for the remaining 4,517 acres at this time.

On August 12, 2008, the City of El Paso approved a zoning change to General Mixed-Use (GMU) for the entire 4,944 acres. This MA-MZP does not request a change to SmartCode zoning, nor does it propose a change in the existing GMU zoning for the 4,944 acres.

While this MA-MZP document is not a conventional **El Paso SmartCode** development application, this MA-MZP incorporates numerous SmartCode principles such as one-quarter mile pedestrian sheds as the foundation of the physical site layout, increased residential dwelling unit densities that are based on the transect concept, and walkability or pedestrian-oriented nature of the neighborhood blocks.

ES.1 Scope

The District contemplated under this MA-MZP is intended to develop into a unified, comprehensively planned retirement community. Figure ES.1 shows the proposed land use and block configuration of the District. The District is organized as a retirement community consisting of a communal center that is central to the site and is surrounded by pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. Green shaded areas depict open space uses, while the yellow shaded areas depict residential uses. A generic illustration of buildings (red, orange, blue) that front the Painted Dunes Golf Course and the communal center are on Figure ES.1.

**Figure ES.1: Aerial View of the District Looking West**
ES.2 Proposed Land Use Types

Each of the following proposed land use types are shown distributed throughout the Retirement Community Master Plan.

- Open space has been set aside to provide for site drainage and for the recreational needs of the District.
- Community uses include recreational buildings, non-denominational church, community businesses, and multi-purpose buildings.
- Low-Density Residential 4.0 consists primarily of single-family detached dwellings and two-family dwellings composing an average density of no greater than 4.0 dwelling units per gross acre (du/ac).
- Medium-Density Residential 8.0 consists primarily of four-family to eight-family dwellings (or residential cluster development) composing an average density of no greater than 8.0 du/ac.
- Mixed-Use Low Intensity 20.0 consists of neighborhood-serving retail and/or commercial uses and/or multi-family dwellings (e.g., condominiums, apartments). The multi-family dwellings compose an average density of no greater than 20.0 du/ac.
- Special Use District consists of retirement-oriented buildings, such as a recreational center, recreational amenities (e.g., tennis courts, swimming pool, bocce ball courts), and multi-purpose buildings or gathering spaces.

ES.3 Phasing

The District is proposed to be developed as one parcel with three phases. Construction and development of Phase 1 is expected to begin in 2013, with all three phases expected to be completed by year 2023. The general phasing schedule is shown graphically on Figure ES.2.

Figure ES.2: Generalized Phasing Plan

ES.4 Uses and Services

The maximum proposed total floor area for all non-residential land uses is 200,000 square feet, and would consist of a recreational center, commercial/retail space, and a non-denominational church.

The number of dwelling units for the District contains a maximum potential of 1,088 dwelling units.

There are five connected Neighborhood parks. Trails would be designed for pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart friendly uses.
Section 1: Introduction

On July 17, 2008, the City of El Paso approved a Land Study covering approximately 4,944 acres in Northeast El Paso. This approved Land Study consisted of one District and 21 Subdistricts. Subdistricts 18, 20, and 21 are located adjacent to the east side of the Painted Dunes Golf Course on the north side of U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) in Northeast El Paso. These three Subdistricts are the subject of a MA-MZP that is being submitted due to land use configuration changes and different development densities now proposed from those previously approved in the July 17, 2008 Land Study. The District under review in this MA-MZP is approximately 426.9 gross acres (323.6 net developable acres). No changes are proposed for the remaining 4,517 acres at this time.

On August 12, 2008, the City of El Paso approved a zoning change to GMU for the entire 4,944 acres. This MA-MZP does not request a change to SmartCode zoning, nor does it propose a change in the existing GMU zoning for the 4,944 acres.

The provisions for the preparation of this MA-MZP are found under Title 20, Chapter 20.04, Section IV, which states: “For any use authorized in a Mixed-Use District (RMU, GMU, and IMU), a master zoning plan shall be required.” While this MA-MZP document is not a conventional El Paso SmartCode development application, this MA-MZP incorporates numerous SmartCode principles such as

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1 The El Paso SmartCode (2008, revised 2011) does not include provisions for the development of retirement-oriented communities.

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2 The transect is an urban planning model that defines a series of zones that transition from rural agricultural environments to downtown urban environments. The transect is an important component of the the “smart growth movement.”
1.1 Background

There is a continuing demand for retirement communities in the desert southwest, as evidenced by the numerous such developments in nearby New Mexico and further to the west in Arizona. However, to date no such communities exist in the El Paso region. The El Paso Water Utilities – Public Service Board’s landholding in Northeast El Paso is well suited for the development of a retirement community. The retirement community outlined in this MA-MZP offers the opportunity to provide the first retirement community in the El Paso region. The retirement community has as its focus the Painted Dunes Golf Course, dramatic views of the Franklin Mountains, and is adjacent to Fort Bliss and its attraction to and amenities for retired military personnel.

Planning for retirement communities differs from standard community planning, in that it has a heavy emphasis on conveniences, health and wellness amenities, and recreational uses. However, they do not provide for family and child oriented uses, such as schools and playgrounds. The proposed MA-MZP follows many of the basic principles of new urbanism, which in El Paso is represented by the El Paso SmartCode. These include well defined neighborhoods with interconnected streets and an emphasis on walkability. Each Neighborhood has as its focus a civic space near its center, and these are interconnected throughout the community by a network of open space and pedestrian trails (see Figure 1). Nearly all retirement communities are designed to have easy access to a communal center at the heart of the development, built around a civic green, with its convenience commercial uses, civic buildings, public meeting spaces, and recreational facilities. The communal center has been located to provide immediate access to the existing Painted Dunes Golf Course, and augments this with a substantial new recreational center. Streets and public spaces are laid out to provide views to the Franklin Mountains to the west. Residential uses within each Neighborhood offer a mix of densities and unit types, with a balanced approach of housing options. Access to the retirement community would be principally from U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) in Northeast El Paso, with additional access points from McCombs Road. In the future, when mass transit reaches this portion of the urbanized area, this site can accommodate internal transit connections to such a system and serve as transit oriented development. See Figure 2 for an illustrative diagram of the retirement community.

Figure 2: Illustrative Site Plan
1.2 Scope

The scope of this document is to describe the purpose, characteristics, components, and timing of the proposed mix of land use within the District. The District contemplated under this MZP is intended to develop into a unified, comprehensively planned retirement community that conforms with, enhances, and furthers the City's adopted El Paso SmartCode and Draft Plan El Paso.

- The El Paso SmartCode (2008, revised 2011) was created and adopted to foster “smart growth” development in El Paso to enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents. It contains specific guidelines for the development of pedestrian friendly environments.
- The Plan El Paso (2012) is an updated city comprehensive plan that recognizes quality of life, in addition to transportation and education, as foundational goals for the City. It contains updated goals and policies that are intended to guide quality growth of the City over a 20 year time frame.

1.3 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this MA-MZP is to provide details about the proposed land uses and proposed structures to convey compatibility within the District and with adjacent properties. Some of the objectives of this MA-MZP are as follows:

- Provide for neighborhoods that are compact and pedestrian-friendly;
- Provide the opportunity for several residential densities;
- Provide for a range of open spaces, including parks and recreation, distributed throughout the District;
- Interconnect open space and parks within the District via pedestrian walkways and pathways;
- Allow for the use of drainage ways for open space amenities;
- Coordinate appropriate transportation corridors with specific land use patterns;
- Provide for streets that disperse and reduce the length of vehicular trips; and
- Provide for street designs that reinforce safety.

Figure 3 shows the proposed land use and block configuration of the District. The District is organized as a retirement community consisting of a communal center that is central to the site and is surrounded by pedestrian-friendly neighborhood centers. Five neighborhood parks are proposed and are surrounded by residential land use, along with higher-density residential adjacent to the Painted Dunes Golf Course. Green shaded areas depict open space uses, while the yellow shaded areas depict residential uses. A generic illustration of buildings (red, orange, blue) that front the Painted Dunes Golf Course and the communal center are on Figure 3.
1.4 General Guidelines

This MA-MZP establishes the desired development guidelines for the District. The components of the guidelines are buildings, streets, and spaces; the distribution of which is governed by this MA-MZP. This MA-MZP provides guidelines for the distribution, placement and appearance of forms, linkages, and spaces within the District. It is not the intent of these guidelines to mandate or imply that a design reference to each component be included in each submittal. Rather, when there is a practical opportunity for a component to be included as part of the development plan, such guidelines should be considered.

1.4.1 The District

The intent of the general design and function of the District as a whole is as follows:

- Development intensity generally increases toward mixed-use area(s) and generally adjusts as appropriate to integrate with adjacent development.
- The District and its Neighborhoods are structured with respect to walkability and minimization of pedestrian/vehicular conflicts wherever practicable.
- The District is organized as a community incorporating mixed-use areas (“Neighborhood Centers”) serving pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.
- The District supports an immediate framework for pedestrian and bicycle systems, and is amenable to a framework of future transit, if desirable. Expansion for golf cart systems would be commensurate with demand.
- Civic, institutional, and commercial activities are integrated with residential areas.
- A range of open space types, such as trails, parks, and plazas are distributed within and throughout the District.
- Various land uses, housing types, and densities are distributed throughout the District.
- Development within the District must adhere to specific Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design guidelines.
1.4.2 Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are distinct areas where the residents and/or non-residential uses share a park, community business, architecture, and/or have boundaries that may include roadways or natural features. Neighborhoods are generally within walking distance of another. The Neighborhood atmosphere is deemed to be the prevailing character of the buildings, open spaces, and streets. The intent of the general design and function of the Neighborhoods is as follows:

- A one-quarter mile radius is used to determine the approximate boundary and center of a Neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods are compact, pedestrian-friendly, and composed of diverse housing types.
- There is opportunity to obtain goods and services and enjoy social interaction and recreation within walking distance of most Neighborhoods.

1.4.3 Buildings and Open Space

The intent of buildings and open spaces within a Neighborhood is as follows:

- Well-configured parks, plazas, and streets are devoted to the collective social activity, recreation, and visual enjoyment of the Neighborhood.
- Buildings and landscaping contribute to the physical definition of parks, plazas, and streets as public places.
- Public gathering spaces are provided in a manner that reinforces community identity.
- Principal buildings and facades, where possible, relate to and are oriented toward the street to encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Buildings, open spaces, and other features act as landmarks, symbols, and focal points.

Figure 4 shows an example of a well-configured open space area, with appropriate landscaping for El Paso.
1.4.4 Circulation

The intent of the general design and function of the circulation systems is as follows:

- Transportation corridors are planned and reserved in coordination with proposed land use patterns.
- Natural or man-made green corridors and open space areas are used to define and connect Neighborhoods to other facilities within the District.
- The transportation network offers multiple travel choices (e.g. vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, golf cart).

Figure 5 shows an example of an integrated circulation network that balances traffic flow.
Section 2: Master Land Use Plan

The MA-MZP for the District should be as described herein, and as depicted on the Retirement Community Master Plan (see Appendix A). Key components of the Retirement Community Master Plan are described below.

2.1 Development Context

The District is generally bounded by the U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) on the south; the Painted Dunes Golf Course on the west; the El Paso Natural Gas facility and vacant land to the north; and vacant land to the east. The District is currently zoned as GMU, and is planned for residential and supporting non-residential land uses.

2.2 Topography

The land comprising the District slopes gently downhill at an approximate 2 percent gradient eastward from the Franklin Mountains.

2.3 Proposed Land Use Types

Each of the following proposed land use types are shown distributed throughout the Retirement Community Master Plan (see Appendix A), and are described in greater detail in Section 3.

2.3.1 Open Space

Open space has been set aside to provide for site drainage and for the recreational needs of the District.

2.3.2 Community Uses

Community uses include recreational buildings, non-denominational church, community businesses, and multi-purpose buildings.

2.3.3 Low-Density Residential 4.0

Low-Density Residential 4.0 consists primarily of single-family detached dwellings and two-family dwellings composing an average density of no greater than 4.0 du/ac.
2.3.4 Medium-Density Residential 8.0

Medium-Density Residential 8.0 consists primarily of four-family to eight-family dwellings (or residential cluster development) composing an average density of no greater than 8.0 du/ac.

2.3.5 Mixed-Use Low Intensity 20.0

Mixed-Use Low Intensity 20.0 consists of neighborhood-serving retail and/or commercial uses and/or multi-family dwellings (e.g., condominiums, apartments). The multi-family dwellings compose an average density of no greater than 20.0 du/ac.
2.3.6 Special Use District

Special Use District consists of retirement-oriented buildings, such as a recreational center, recreational amenities (e.g., tennis courts, swimming pool, bocce ball courts), and multi-purpose buildings or gathering spaces.

2.4 Development Intensity

2.4.1 Organization

The District is organized as a community consisting of a communal center that is central to the site and is surrounded by pedestrian-friendly neighborhood centers. The mixed-use, communal center development is used to anchor residential areas, and to provide goods and services within walking distance of Neighborhoods.

2.4.2 Intensity

Development intensity generally increases toward the communal center that is central to the site, and generally decreases toward the northern, eastern, and southern portions of the site. Therefore, the District provides for a gradient of lessening development intensity away from the mixed-use and non-residential communal area.

2.4.3 Distribution

Housing types and densities are distributed throughout the District. The communal center that is central to the site provides for the ordinary needs of daily living of the residents of the adjacent Neighborhoods.

2.4.4 Density

Densities are capable of supporting mixed-use development near the communal center. Per the recommendation of City of El Paso Planning Staff, Low-Density Residential is anticipated to contain no greater than 4.0 du/ac, Medium-Density Residential is anticipated to contain no greater than 8.0 du/ac, and Mixed-Use Low Intensity is anticipated to contain no greater than 20.0 du/ac. This MA-MZP shows three categories of residential development intensity, with each expressed as an average density and a range of housing types.

2.4.5 Walkability

The communal center that is central to the site and the surrounding Neighborhoods are arranged to support walkability and to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts, wherever practicable. The Plan El Paso encourages residential development to be located within “walking distance” (one-quarter mile) of retail and service centers, community facilities, medical facilities, and/or transportation facilities. The El Paso SmartCode also encourages walkability by stating the “Pedestrian shed means an area that is centered on a
common destination. Its size is related to average walking distances for the applicable community type," which is approximately one-quarter mile. Companion maps to the MA-MZP show lines delineating the area within one-quarter mile of the proposed Neighborhoods. See Appendix A.

2.5 Specific Land Use Provisions

Because the District is proposed as an age-restricted retirement community, no school sites are proposed.

2.6 Roadways

Roadway types vary depending on the proposed function, anticipated adjacent land uses, and expected traffic load. This MA-MZP contains two roadway types in anticipation of demand for a number of housing opportunities, each with distinct access needs. Details and explanatory text describing the design and supposed function of each roadway can be seen in Appendix A.

In general, there is one major arterial roadway that conforms to the El Paso Major Thoroughfare Plan, which is located on the extreme northern and eastern sides of the District. The one major arterial promotes east/west access in Northeast El Paso. There are three minor arterial roadways, with two providing north/south access and one providing east/west access within the District. Various additional thoroughfares connect all sections of the development. See Appendix A.

2.7 Phasing

The District is proposed to be developed as one parcel with three phases. Construction and development of Phase 1 is expected to begin in 2013, with all three phases expected to be completed by year 2023. The phasing schedule is described below and is shown graphically on Figure 6 and in Appendix B.

Figure 6: Generalized Phasing Plan

The total site area of the one parcel is 426.9 gross acres, which includes drainage easements and open space, and contains a
maximum potential of 1,088 dwelling units. This equates to an overall density of 2.5 du/ac.

The total net site area that is available for development within the District is 323.6 acres, which excludes a drainage easement and open space, and contains a maximum potential of 1,088 dwelling units. This equates to an overall density of 3.4 du/ac.

2.7.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 (year 2013) is approximately 129.4 acres, and contains a maximum potential of 478 dwelling units. The mixed-use, communal center (200,000 square feet) is also included in Phase 1.

2.7.3 Phase 2

Phase 2 (year 2016) is approximately 114.4 acres, and contains a maximum potential of 321 dwelling units.

2.7.2 Phase 3

Phase 3 (year 2019) is approximately 78.1 acres, and contains a maximum potential of 289 dwelling units.

2.9 Relation to El Paso SmartCode

The El Paso SmartCode (2008, revised 2011) puts forth zoning regulations for the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the City. They have been made with reasonable consideration for the character of a project and its suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of the land throughout the City. This MA-MZP is in accordance with the policies of the El Paso SmartCode. The primary points of agreement with the policies are as follows:

The Region
❖ 21.10.030.A.2: New development should be organized in the patterns of Clustered Land Development (CLD), Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), or Regional Center Development (RCD) as defined in this Title.
❖ 21.10.030.A.4: Transportation Corridors should be planned and reserved in coordination with land use.

The Community
❖ 21.10.030.B.1: TNDs and Regional Centers should be compact, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use.
❖ 21.10.030.B.3: Ordinary activities of daily living should occur within walking distance of most dwellings, allowing independence to those who do not drive.

The Transect
❖ 21.10.030.C.1: Communities should provide meaningful choices in living arrangements as manifested by distinct physical environments.
❖ 21.10.030.C.2: The Transect Zone descriptions on Table 1 shall constitute the Intent of this Title with regard to the general character of each of these environments.

The Block and The Building
❖ 21.10.030.D.1: Buildings and landscaping should contribute to the physical definition of thoroughfares as civic places.
21.10.030.D.2: Development should adequately accommodate automobiles while respecting the pedestrian and the spatial form of public areas.
21.10.030.D.3: The design of streets and buildings should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility.

2.10 Relation to Plan El Paso

The recently released Plan El Paso (2012) coordinates policies at all scales using the same overall principles so that the plan can operate cohesively and guide the efforts of the City’s many stakeholders and decision makers at every level. It provides the basis for El Paso’s regulations and policies that guide its physical and economic development. This MZP is in accordance with the policies of the Plan El Paso. The primary points of agreement with the policies are as follows:

Regional Land Use Patterns

Policy 1.4.1: The City’s zoning and land development regulations will be reviewed and amended to require new neighborhoods to have:
- Greater interconnection of internal streets;
- Provision of small parks and civic functions within neighborhoods;
- A greater variety of housing types within each neighborhood; and
- Protection of natural features such as arroyos.

Urban Design

Policy 2.1.7: Development is encouraged along existing or planned bicycle networks where additional segments and/or secure bicycle storage can be added to the network.

Policy 2.2.1: City officials will consider the following ideal neighborhood patterns when evaluating rezoning requests and subdivision plats and when locating and designing development on public land, seeking to achieve compliance with as many patterns as possible.

Policy 2.2.3: The design of new neighborhoods and additions to existing neighborhoods should strive for a mix of housing types to create neighborhoods that accommodate diverse ages and incomes and allow residents to trade up, downsize, or create multi-generational households without being forced to leave the neighborhood. Housing types include both small and large single-family detached homes, duplexes, townhouses, multi-family buildings, live-work units, and accessory dwelling units, and include both rental apartments and units that can be owned by their occupants.

Policy 2.4.1: The relationships between the fronts and backs of buildings are critical to ensure that public spaces have natural surveillance from buildings and to avoid the blighting influence created when the backs of buildings face public spaces.
- Fronts of buildings should face the fronts of other buildings, or the sides where necessary; fronts should never face the backs of other buildings.
- 90% of their principal entries to buildings should face public spaces such as streets, squares, parks, or plazas instead of facing parking lots.
- No more than 20% of building walls that face streets should contain garage doors or service bays.
d. Residences may face minor and major arterials to avoid presenting blank walls to streets. Alleys may be necessary to create a vehicular entry to the lots instead of vehicular access directly from the arterial.

Transportation
- Policy 4.1.1: The City shall use LEED-Neighborhood Development as the basis for developing street connectivity standards for all new subdivision and land use development and redevelopment. No-outlet, dead-end, cul-de-sac, and other non-through streets shall be prohibited unless deemed necessary by City staff to accommodate specific site conditions. If a cul-de-sac or dead-end is unavoidable, it should be designed to resemble a “close” and should feature a pedestrian connection to areas beyond the dead-end.
- Policy 4.1.4: Include alleys into blocks so that buildings may be serviced from the rear, driveways and curb cuts can be minimized, and parking can be consolidated at mid-block locations.
- Policy 4.1.5: Provide non-motorized connections to improve route directness and reduce walking and bicycling trip lengths.
- Policy 4.4.3: Street design shall optimize safe, accessible, and meaningful travel choices – driving, transit, walking, and bicycling – and shall prioritize walkability through wide, buffered sidewalks, shade, and street-facing access to adjacent land uses.
- Policy 4.4.4: The City will make safety for all travel modes and users the priority, especially for the most vulnerable users (pedestrians, children, and those physically impaired) as a primary element in designing, building, and operating all streets.

- Policy 4.9.1: Coordinate planning, design, and implementation of bicycle improvements within the City, surrounding municipalities, and El Paso County, and the State in order to effectively promote regional connectivity.

Public Facilities
- Policy 5.16.1: Civic spaces are outdoor gathering places dedicated for public use. Civic spaces can be defined by a combination of physical factors including their size, intended use, landscaping, and the character of their edges.

Housing
- Policy 6.3.1: The City should require all new residential developments to be complete, compact, and connected, using the design principles under Goal 2.1 through 2.6 or a City-developed rating system as tools to assess the design of proposed developments.
- Policy 6.3.2: Require the master planning of newly developing or redeveloping areas to promote healthy living through walkable environments.
- Policy 6.3.3: Encourage mixed-use developments that allow people to live without requiring everyday use of an automobile.
Section 3: Property Development Regulations of the Major Amendment – Master Zoning Plan

3.1 General

The existing and proposed zoning for the site is GMU.

3.2 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the development regulations for the District is to promote compatible buildings and uses that are appropriate in scale, mass, location, and overall planning. The proposed mix of land uses supports the regulations offering a broad range of development possibilities to meet the needs of a variety of market sectors.

It is the intent of the development regulations to offer requirements that may be evaluated uniformly over time, while at the same time being flexible enough to change with the needs of the dynamic population of El Paso. El Paso's smart growth and new urbanist objectives play an important role in the regulations. The development regulations help to create a physically, socially, and economically unified master-planned community.

It is envisioned that compatible buildings and land uses are implemented according to the land use plan, as shown on Figure 7.

3.3 Land Use Types, Densities, and Development Regulations

The desired development guidelines for the District are described in Section 1.3, and regulated by the requirements of this section. The distribution of these land use types is shown on the Retirement Community Master Plan in Appendix A. Development within the Special Use District must adhere to specific ADA design guidelines.
3.3.1 Proposed Mix of Land Use Types

Open Space
Open space is distributed throughout the District in a manner intended to unite the community. Neighborhoods and dwelling units are linked to gathering places (e.g., parks, squares, plazas), while the pedestrian and bicycle/golf cart systems offers additional opportunities for social interaction as well. Inclusion of golf cart systems would be commensurate with demand.

Low-Density Residential
This residential type consists primarily of single-family detached dwellings and two-family dwellings that are distributed in a manner that follows the desired development guidelines in Section 1.3, and has an average density of no greater than 4.0 du/ac as shown on the Retirement Community Master Plan. The two-family dwellings may be included at the edges of these areas in order to connect with adjacent higher-density areas, provided the density maximum is not exceeded.

Open spaces are defined in the El Paso SmartCode as Transect 1. See example picture of land use configuration. Transect 1 includes natural landscape areas, with some agricultural use.

Low-Density Residential is defined in the El Paso SmartCode as Transect 3. See example picture of land use configuration. Transect 3 includes suburban uses, such as lawns and landscaped yards surrounding detached single-family houses, and occasional pedestrian use.
Medium-Density Residential
This residential type consists primarily of four-family to eight-family dwellings (or residential cluster development) that are distributed in a manner that follows the desired development guidelines in Section 1.3, and has an average density of no greater than 8.0 du/ac as shown on the Retirement Community Master Plan. Townhomes may be included at the edges of these areas in order to connect with adjacent higher-density areas, provided the density maximum is not exceeded. Cluster development is encouraged.

Mixed-Use Low Intensity
This land use type consists of neighborhood-serving retail and/or commercial uses and/or multi-family dwellings. The neighborhood-serving retail and/or commercial uses provide goods and services for the day-to-day needs of the Neighborhoods. Single-use retail or commercial uses are allowed. The multi-family dwellings (e.g., condominiums, apartments) are distributed in a manner that follows the desired development guidelines in Section 1.3, and has an average density of no greater than 20.0 du/ac as shown on the Retirement Community Master Plan. Townhomes may be included at the edges of these areas in order to connect with adjacent lower-density areas, provided the density maximum is not exceeded. Cluster development is encouraged.

Medium-Density Residential is defined in the El Paso SmartCode as Transect 4. See example picture of land use configuration. Transect 4 includes a mix of houses, townhouses, and small apartment buildings; scattered commercial activity; a balance between landscape and buildings; and the presence of pedestrian activities.

Mixed-Use Low intensity is defined in the El Paso SmartCode as Transect 5. See example picture of land use configuration. Transect 5 includes shops mixed with townhouses, larger apartment houses, offices, workplace, and civic buildings; predominantly attached buildings; trees within the public right-of-way; and substantial pedestrian activity.
Special Use District
This land use type consists of retirement-oriented uses, such as a recreational center, recreational amenities (e.g., tennis courts, swimming pool, bocce ball courts), and multi-purpose buildings or gathering spaces. It acts as the communal gathering space for the District, and benefits from the high visibility and its central location. Access is provided via two north/south minor arterial roadways as well as one east/west minor arterial roadway, and should be designed and developed as a unit in a manner that maximizes its potential to act as a catalyst for development of the District. The design and development of this area should be done in coordination with the adjoining mixed-use areas to produce an integrated development.

Development of the Special Use District should include a single large multi-purpose building for large group activities or events, several smaller multi-purpose buildings (e.g., pharmacy, convenience store, bank, golf cart sales/service), and office tenants or entertainment uses. Secondary uses may include coffee shop, dry cleaner, and florist; however, these uses must be integrated into the larger primary use. The Special Use District area should have direct access to the Painted Dunes Golf Course and its clubhouse amenities, and should allow access from the District in a manner that does not promote cut-through traffic from outside the District.

3.3.2 Proposed Residential Density
The gross residential density of the District is the sum of the dwelling units within the District divided by the total net site area that is available for development. The number of dwelling units for the District contains a maximum potential of 1,088 dwelling units. This equates to an overall density of 3.4 du/ac.

3.3.3 Proposed Non-Residential Floor Area Density
The maximum proposed total floor area for all non-residential land uses is 200,000 square feet, approximately 1.4 percent of the District.
3.3.4 Proposed Development Regulations for the District

Maximum Building Heights
Maximum building heights are shown in Appendix D.

Minimum Lot Dimensions
Minimum dimensions of lots are shown in Appendix D.

Yard Setbacks
Yard setbacks are shown in Appendix D. Properties within the District can be allowed zero setbacks for all uses unless otherwise indicated.

Buffers
A side/rear yard buffer of 5 feet wide (minimum) should be maintained between parking areas and adjacent lots, regardless of site size. A buffer 15 feet wide (minimum) should be maintained between residential and non-residential uses.

Garage Setbacks
Garages that are accessed from a rear property line via an alley should maintain a minimum 20 feet rear setback.

3.3.5 Proposed District Development Potential

Characteristics
The District is generally bounded by the U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) on the south; the Painted Dunes Golf Course on the west; the El Paso Natural Gas facility and vacant land to the north; and vacant land to the east. The purpose of the District is to provide retirement community housing choices in El Paso, with multiple options for dwelling units. Adjacency to the Painted Dunes Golf Course provides a strong recreational link, while U.S. Highway 54 provides regional access.

Components and Timing
The components of the District and the timing of development are shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3. A total of 1,083 residential dwelling units and 200,000 square feet of non-residential floor area are proposed.

Park Designations
Park land dedication within the District should be in accordance with the requirements of Title 19 Subdivisions and in accordance with the Retirement Community Master Plan (see Appendix A).
### Table 1: Phase 1 (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Approximate Acreage</th>
<th>Estimated Residential Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Estimated Non-Residential Floor Area (square feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transect 1 – Open Space</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 3 – 4.0 du/ac</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 4 – 8.0 du/ac</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 5 – 20.0 du/ac</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use District</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>129.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>478</strong></td>
<td><strong>200,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Total acres includes road right-of-way.

### Table 2: Phase 2 (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Approximate Acreage</th>
<th>Estimated Residential Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Estimated Non-Residential Floor Area (square feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transect 1 – Open Space</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 3 – 4.0 du/ac</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 4 – 8.0 du/ac</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>114.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>321</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Total acres includes road right-of-way.

### Table 3: Phase 3 (2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Approximate Acreage</th>
<th>Estimated Residential Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Estimated Non-Residential Floor Area (square feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transect 1 – Open Space</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 3 – 4.0 du/ac</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>88</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transect 4 – 8.0 du/ac</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>78.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>289</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Total acres includes road right-of-way.

**Proposed Intensity**

The gross non-residential intensity of the District is be the sum of the non-residential floor area divided by the sum of the land area of non-residential land uses, expressed as a floor to area ratio (FAR). The maximum proposed non-residential intensity for the District is approximately 0.1:1.

#### 3.4 Allowable Uses

**Appendix E** contains the table of allowable land uses for the District.
Section 4: Stormwater Management Plan

4.1 Purpose and Intent

The location of the District on a wide plateau, east of the Franklin Mountains ensures the need for a system capable of directing moderate-to-low volumes of stormwater in a safe and efficient manner. The land comprising the District slopes gently downhill at an approximate 2 percent gradient. In compliance with El Paso planning principles, this system should be planned, designed, and constructed in a manner that not only provides for the safe conveyance of stormwater but also serves the District as useable open space during dry times.

4.2 Relationship between Stormwater Management, Open Space, and Circulation

The proposed linear drainage facilities serve to move stormwater along the Districts' roadways to a larger conveyance facility that is adjacent to U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway), and also offer opportunities for pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart systems. Additionally, they have been designed to pass through the District's parks for the enjoyment of residents. Therefore, they should be improved consistent with these three functions including landscaping and configuration.

4.3 Design Elements

The proposed stormwater system should include the following general design elements, as shown on Figure 8:

- Design in such a way as to minimize stormwater runoff from the site in accordance with the El Paso Drainage Design Manual, and to minimize flooding potential upstream/downstream and within the site.
- Maintain the pre-development hydrologic response in their post-development state as nearly as practicable in order to reduce flooding, non-point source pollution, and maintain the integrity of natural and man-made channels.
- Encourage the use of non-structural stormwater management, such as the preservation of green space and other conservation areas, to the maximum extent practicable.
- Stormwater management facilities should be designed to conform with, enhance, and further the City's adopted *Mountains to River – A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso.*
- Create a conceptual drainage plan indicating existing and proposed major stormwater sewer facilities. The drainage plan should indicate the phasing plans and approximate location of temporary and permanent easements and rights-of-way that would be needed to accommodate the phasing.

The *Title 19: Subdivision Regulations, Section 19.19* provides additional detail on stormwater management requirements.
Section 5: Circulation Plan

5.1 Purpose and Intent

Within the District, one of the most important elements affecting how it is perceived and functions is the space between the façade of a building and the façade of another building across a street. Wide streets often have the effect of encouraging drivers to speed because of an increased feeling of safety. They are also less safe for pedestrians due to the increased time to travel from one side to the other, and decrease opportunities for social interaction. Wide streets also cost more to construct, and result in increased environmental impacts such as increased runoff and larger disturbance areas. Narrower streets often result in the opposite of the previously described effects. In compliance with El Paso planning principles, streets should be planned, designed, and constructed to produce an intimate relationship (i.e., pedestrian friendly) within the District.

A similarly important element within the District is the interaction of the trail system (e.g., pedestrian, bicycle, golf cart) and the Neighborhoods. The trail system may follow public rights-of-way and/or may follow permanent open space. In compliance with El Paso planning principles, the trail system within the District should be planned, designed, and constructed as a unifying element. Additionally, it should connect as many uses and/or Neighborhoods as practicable.

5.2 Relationship between Circulation and Land Use

The relationship between circulation and land use is described in Section 1.3.4, and further described as follows and as shown on Figure 9:

Figure 9: Generalized Circulation System

- The opportunity for goods and services should be within one-half mile of most dwellings.
- Locate higher density developments within walking distance of the communal center that is central to the site.
- The street and trail systems should be planned, designed, and constructed with multiple connections and direct routes.
- Thoroughfares arterials should be spaced no more than one half-mile apart.
- Provide alternatives to travel along high traffic-volume streets.

5.3 Design Elements

The proposed street and trail network has been laid out to accommodate the circulation needs of the District, and its development intensities. The design elements for the street and trail systems within the District should correspond to the unique needs of Neighborhoods. However, in all cases circulation patterns should be designed to encourage pedestrian movement, and to limit vehicular through traffic.

There are two types of streets proposed for the District, one with a 50 foot right-of-way (28 foot pavement width) and the other with a 60 foot right-of-way (34 foot pavement width). The narrower street is intended to serve the Neighborhood blocks within the District, while the wider street is intended to facilitate the movement of vehicles to and through the District. Both have a design speed of 20 miles per hour, and accommodate pedestrian walkways and landscaping. The basic street design elements are shown in Appendix A, and additional detail can be found in the [El Paso SmartCode, Chapter 21.80](#).

The trail system should consist of a 10-foot wide path, with a minimum of 4 feet of native landscaping on each side. Paths of concrete, asphalt, crushed granite, or natural material should be used depending on the user need. Landscaping with native vegetation reduces water requirement. Crushed granite or natural material paths would require permanent edging. Park benches should be installed at a minimum of one every 1/2-mile along the path, and coordinated with shade trees as appropriate. The [El Paso SmartCode, Chapter 21.80](#) provides additional detail on allowable landscaping.
Section 6: Open Space Plan

6.1 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the open space plan for the District is to provide for the health, safety, general welfare, and recreational and social needs of El Paso generally and the retirement community specifically. It is the intent of this plan to conform with, enhance, and further the City’s adopted *Mountains to River – A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso*.

6.2 General Principles

The following principles guide the placement and use of open space within the District:

- Open space and green corridors define and interconnect the communal center and Neighborhoods within the District, and help establish focal points of interest.
- A variety of open space features are distributed across the District, including trails, parks, squares, plazas, and landscaped streets, and are dedicated to the collective social, visual, and recreational enjoyment.
- The proposed configuration of open space facilities are adequate and meet El Paso’s planning principles.
- Residential lots should face open space facilities, except where the site’s physical character does not reasonably permit an alternative design.

6.3 Design Elements

The proposed open space plan should include the following general design elements discussed below and shown on Figures 10 and 11:

**Figure 10: Residential Open Space Example 1**

- Every residential unit should be within one-quarter mile of a designated park, square, plaza, or other usable open space.
- Approximately 14.4 acres of open space have been reserved, and would serve the dual function of providing for recreation and managing stormwater runoff. See Appendix A for a location of the open space layout.
- The trail system may follow public rights-of-way and/or may follow permanent open space. In compliance with El Paso planning principles, the trail system within the District should be...
planned, designed, and constructed as a unifying element. Additionally, it should connect as many uses and/or Neighborhoods as practicable.

- The Neighborhoods within the District include “neighborhood parks” in accordance with the *El Paso SmartCode*. The configuration of the “neighborhood parks” meets the goal of having a park within walking distance of every home. The “neighborhood parks” have the following facilities:
  - Benches;
  - Pedestrian access from street to benches;
  - Shade trees, if appropriate; and
  - Native low-water landscaping.

- Park benches should be installed at a minimum of one every 1/2-mile along the path, and coordinated with shade trees as appropriate. The *El Paso SmartCode, Chapter 21.80* provides additional detail on allowable landscaping.

- It is the intent of the trail system to provide an alternative to vehicle transportation travel. The trail system should include, at a minimum, the following components:
  - Connections to any adjacent trail system that exists at the time of platting;
  - Connections between Neighborhoods;
  - Connections to parks, squares, plazas and the communal center within the District;
  - A connection along the southern perimeter of the site; and
  - Consider/evaluate a new trail access under U.S. Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) to connect to the Northeast Regional Park on McCombs Street.
7.1 Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this section is to provide for the placement and design of forms and spaces within the District.

7.2 General Principles

The following principles guide the form of the District, and are shown on Figures 12, 13, and 14:

- Buildings express an architectural compatibility, with coordinated architectural features that contribute to the community identity.
- Buildings are compact, and designed at a human scale and are sited in a manner that supports pedestrian activity.
- Architectural and landscape design are appropriate to physical, historical, and economic conditions.
- Landmark buildings, entry statements, open spaces, and public art establish focal points at appropriate locations within and throughout the District.
- The design and function of buildings and open spaces respects and is influenced by local climate, topography, history, and building practice.
- Buildings and other improvements are compatible in their arrangement, bulk, form, character, and landscaping.
7.3 Design Elements

The following design elements further refine the form of the District:

- The District theme has a vernacular aesthetic of El Paso desert southwest.
- The general form should be one of interconnected Neighborhoods with traditional rectangular architectural forms; narrow streets and laid out in a grid pattern; and reduced yard space (reduced setbacks) that is balanced by more open space that is strategically placed and integrated into the District.
- Multiple residential product types per Neighborhood are encouraged, with traditional components such as porches and patios, portals/gateways and paths, vibrant color, and native building materials.
- Enhanced views to the Franklin Mountains and central communal space.
- Enhanced views of open space and green corridors for long views and for pedestrian circulation;
- Native landscape materials, with focused landscaping for impact.
- Native plant materials and irrigation systems favor reclaimed water, greywater, roof water, and surface stormwater, as appropriate and practicable.