



CITY OF WILDOMAR – PLANNING COMMISSION
Agenda Item #3.1
GENERAL BUSINESS
Meeting Date: August 20, 2014

TO: Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Matthew C. Bassi, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Baxter/Susan GPA Initiation Request (PA No. 14-0078):

The applicant (Markham Development Management Group) is requesting Planning Commission consideration, in accordance with Section 17.08.040.B of the Zoning Ordinance, of a General Plan Amendment Initiation (Pre-Application Review) to change the General Plan land use designation from Very Low Density Residential (VLDR - 1 Acre Min. lot sizes) to Medium Density Residential (MDR - 2 -5 DU/Acre) located at the southeast corner of southeast corner of Baxter Road and Susan Drive (APN: 376-340-017 and 376-340-027).

RECOMMENDATION:

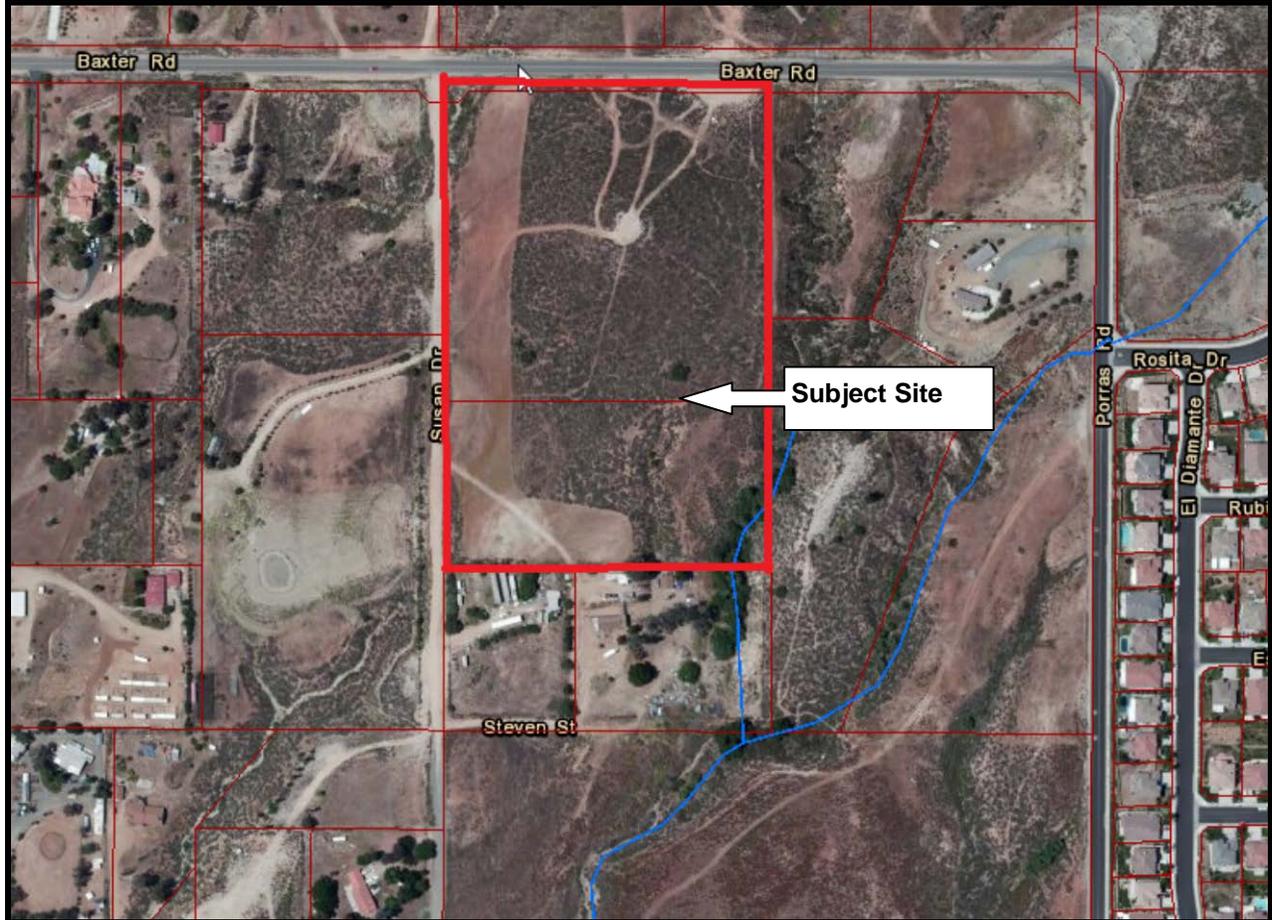
That the Planning Commission forward its comments/concerns to the City Council for review and consideration of this General Plan Amendment Initiation proposal in accordance with Section 17.08.040.B of the Zoning Ordinance.

BACKGROUND/DESCRIPTION:

The applicant (Markham Development Management Group) has submitted a Pre-Application Review (PAR) to propose a General Plan land use designation from Very Low Density Residential (VLDR - 1 Acre Min. lot sizes) to Medium High Density Residential (MDR - 2 -5 DU/Acre). After a formal project submittal is made, the applicant would like to also propose a change of zone from R-R (Rural Residential) to R-1 (One Family Dwelling) and develop a 48-lot single family residential subdivision along via a tentative tract map.

The project site is 15 acres and is located at the southeast corner of southeast corner of Baxter Road and Susan Drive (APN: 376-340-017 and 376-340-027). See aerial photo on the following page.

Vicinity/Location Map



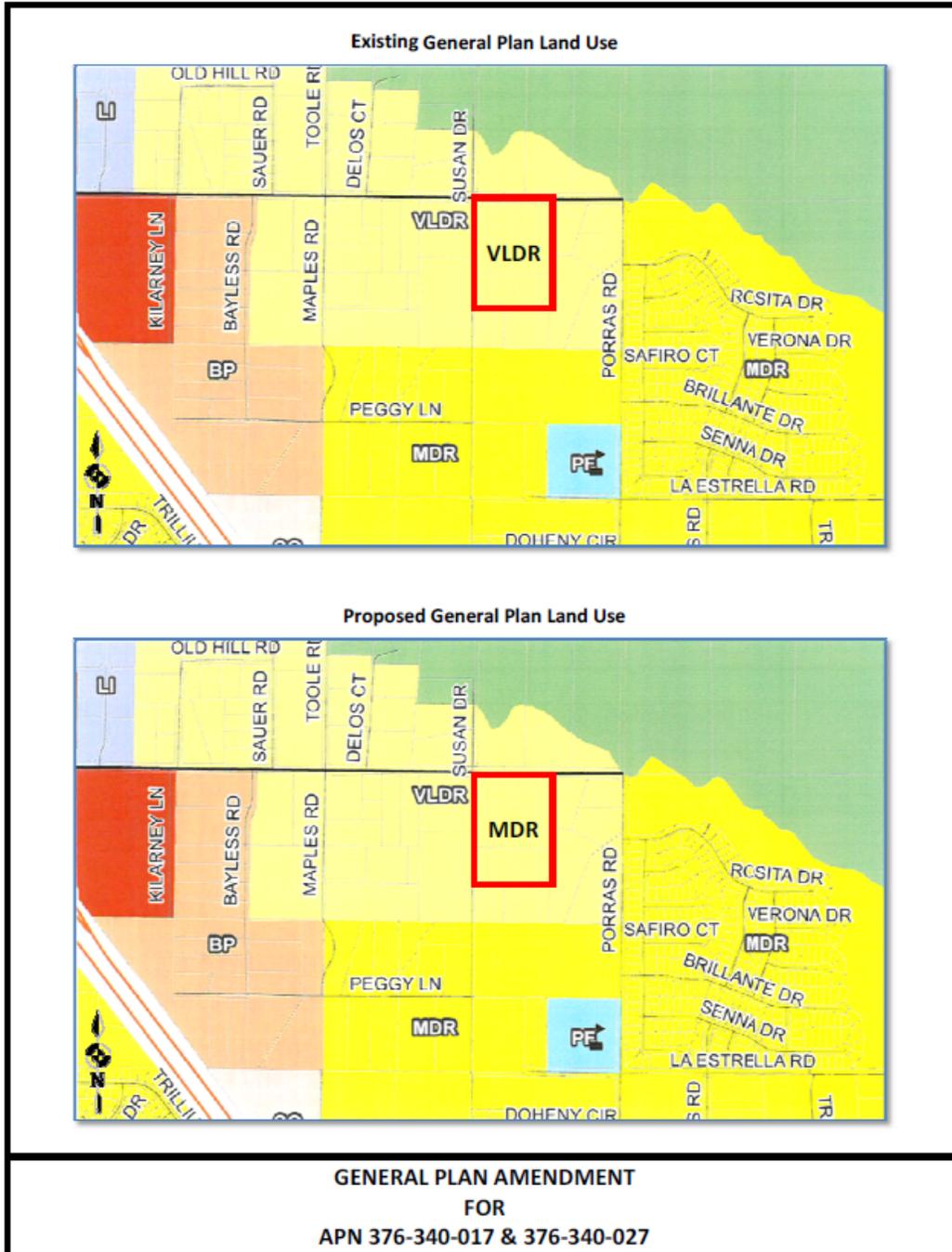
PROJECT ANALYSIS

Since the applicant needs a general plan amendment, the procedures outlined in Section 17.08.010.B and 17.08.040.B of the Zoning Ordinance is applicable to this project. As discussed in these sections, the initiation of a general plan amendment by a property owner/applicant first requires the order of the City Council, adopted by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the entire membership of the Council.

Prior to making a decision on the general plan amendment initiation by the City Council, the Planning Commission must first have an opportunity to review the request and provide specific comments/concerns to the Council. Hence, staff has brought this request forward to the Commission for review and consideration. Once the Council adopts an order to initiate a general plan amendment, the amendment process then follows the standard process outlined by state law and Section 17.08.010 and 17.08.100 of the Zoning Ordinance in processing a general plan amendment and any other applicable applications.

General Plan Amendment Request:

The applicant desires to amend the general plan land use map for the project area to accommodate a future single family residential subdivision. The specific proposal includes a land use change from Very Low Density Residential (VLDR - 1 Acre Min. lot sizes) to Medium Density Residential (MDR - 2 -5 DU/Acre). The exhibits below show the existing and proposed land use designation for the site and surrounding areas.



As noted on the aerial photo, the immediate area surrounding the project site is characterized by very low density/rural land uses. The topography of the site, and surrounding area, is hilly. While not shown, the entire area surrounding the site has the R-R zoning designation. In fact, a majority of the lot sizes well exceed 2 – 3 acres.

As part of staff's review of the proposed land use amendment, the following preliminary issues/concerns are provided for Commission consideration:

- Inconsistent density between very low density designation (1 unit/acre lot size) versus medium density designation (2 – 5 units/acre);
- land use compatibility with existing rural uses (i.e., 15 lots versus 48 lots);
- land use consistency regarding dwelling unit types, lot sizes, etc.;
- increased traffic from a higher density alternative (165 average daily trips vs. 528 average daily trips);
- grading issues (i.e., import/export of dirt, truck hauling of dirt, etc.);
- CEQA environmental factors (MND vs. EIR).

In providing comments/concerns to the City Council on this proposed general plan amendment, the Commission may consider the planning issues described above and other issues it deems important. If the Council supports the request to initiate the general plan amendment, the project would also require the review and processing of a Change of Zone, Tentative Tract Map and appropriate CEQA documentation (MND or EIR). At this time, these formal development applications have not been submitted.

In conclusion, staff has concerns about introducing medium density land uses in an area that is characterized existing very low density land uses. Staff recommends the Commission and Council express (in detail) its comments and concerns relative to the proposed amendment.

Any direction given to the applicant does not imply that the proposed amendment will be supported by staff or approved by the Commission and Council. The applicant can move forward at his/her own risk. The general plan amendment application, and all other applicable development applications, are required to go through the complete development review process, and is subject to a full public hearing before the Planning Commission and City Council, along with the CEQA environmental review document, and community meetings.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew C. Bassi
Planning Director

Reviewed By,
Thomas D. Jex
City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS

No attachments for this report.