



STAFF REPORT 4/17/2024

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

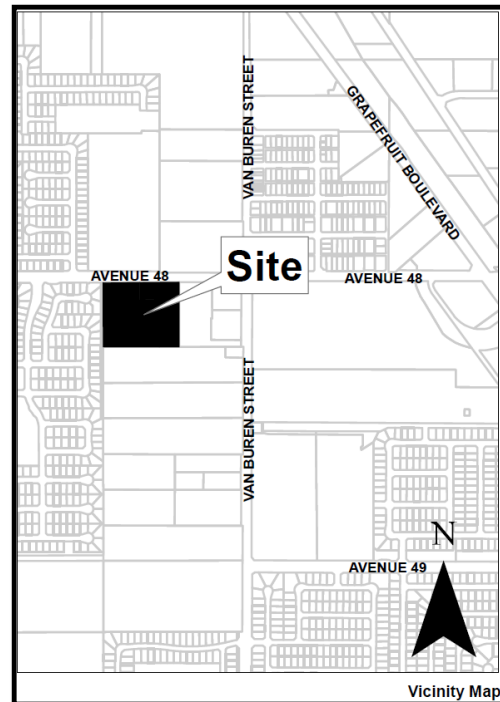
FROM: Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Coachella Valley Apartments 1st 1-Year Time Extension Architectural Review No. 22-12. The project consists of a proposed development of a 242-unit multi-family residential gated community with 15 buildings totaling 223,740 square feet on 9.7 acres of vacant land located near the southwest corner of Van Buren Street and Avenue 48. HCM Development (Applicant).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

HCM Development requests Planning Commission approval of the first 1 year time extension of Architectural Review No. 22-12 for the Coachella Village Apartment project on 9.7 acres of vacant land located near the southwest corner of Van Buren Street and Avenue 48 a proposed development of consisting of:

- 242-unit multi-family residential gated community with fifteen 2-story and 3-story buildings totaling 223,740 square feet with 1 to 4 bedroom units (9 floor plans) ranging in size from 527 square feet to 1,654 square feet.
- A 3,000 square foot daycare facility
- A 5,000 square foot Recreation Building, pools/spas, an onsite retention basin, and pedestrian walkways throughout the site.
- Variance request to reduce the minimum dwelling unit size of 750 square feet for the one-bedroom units to 537 square feet and reduce off-street parking to reduce parking by fifteen percent (15%) from 519 required spaces to 445 provide spaces.



Staff recommends that this item is tabled as the Ordinance No. 1195 adopted by the City Council on June 22, 2022 modified C.M.C. Chapter 17.72 Architectural Review allowing an Architectural Review permit to be effective for two years. The conditions of approval incorrectly stated that the Architectural Review was effective for 12 months.

BACKGROUND:

The Coachella Village Apartments project is proposed for development of a 9.69-acre site with a multi-family residential development consisting of 242 dwelling units and various recreational amenities. The Planning Commission first considered and recommended approval of the project to the City Council on November 15, 2017 the City Council. The project required City Council approval since the Architectural Review was also accompanied by a Change of Zone to modify the site zoning from General Commercial (C-G) zone to the Residential Multiple Family (R-M) zone. The project was considered and approved by the City Council on January 17, 2018. The Change of Zone was adopted by Ordinance and is in effect. The applicant submitted engineering and building plans, which have been approved. Engineering and Building permits could not be issued due to the Architectural Review No. 17-12 expiration on January 17, 2019 (expiration occurs 12 months from the approval date of January 17, 2018) and required new approvals by the City. Architectural Review No. 22-12 and Variance No. 22-04 were submitted by the applicant for the same project with no proposed modifications and approved by the Planning Commission December 6, 2022. The applicant request a one year time extension to December 6, Staff does not propose any new modifications to the project or the conditions of approval and recommends the Planning Commission approve the original project design.

Figure 1: Site with Proposed Development



Project Description:

HCM Development proposes a multi-family residential development (market-rate) consisting of 15 buildings totaling 223,740 square feet. The project also includes the following amenities: a 3,000 square foot daycare facility with outdoor play area, a 5,000 square foot Recreation Building, a pool and spa, and various other recreational amenities for residents throughout the site.

For the residential component of the project, nine different floor plans with efficiency units and up to 4 bedrooms, ranging between 527 square feet and 1,654 square feet are proposed. The buildings will be a mix of 2-story and 3-story buildings with a maximum building height of 35 feet, which is under the City’s maximum allowed height in the proposed R-M zone of three stories or 45 feet, thereby meeting the maximum height requirement. The applicant is required to submit a CUP application for the development of the daycare facility onsite within the proposed zoning designation.

Open Space and Recreation

Pedestrian circulation will be developed to provide access throughout the site. Outdoor areas will be provided between buildings and interconnected by the proposed pedestrian circulation to provide readily available open space areas for residents to utilize. Additionally, a 5,000 square foot recreation building will be constructed west of the main entrance to the project site that will include additional amenities for residents on the project site. A pool and a spa will be developed next to the proposed recreation building and an additional pool will be developed in the southeast portion of the site. The exhibits below show the common open space areas, including two swimming pools, two garden courtyards between buildings, and the common-area retention basin with picnic amenities.

Figure 2: Proposed Main Community Pool Area



Daycare Facility

A new building for a future daycare facility will be developed east of the main project entrance in the northeast corner of the project site. The building is proposed to be 3,000 square feet with an adjacent 2,000 square foot playground area to be utilized solely by the daycare. The daycare facility will be developed as an amenity for the proposed projects and may only be utilized by residents of the proposed development. An application for conditional use permit will be required prior to operation of a daycare center at this location.

Hydrology

The project includes one retention basin located within the project site at the southeast corner of the project site. That portion of the project is .41 acres and it is also intended to be used as a picnic area and dog park. The detention basin will be landscaped as shown on the conceptual landscape plan and will also provide shade trees.

The City Engineer has reviewed the hydrology report submitted for this project and concurs with the plan as presented

Environmental Setting:

The proposed project is located on 9.69 acres of vacant land within the R-M (Residential Multiple Family) Zone. The site is designated “Neighborhood Center” on the 2035 Coachella General Plan. The surrounding land uses and zoning designations are as follows:

- North:** RH (Residential High District) within the City of Indio
- South:** Residential units and vacant land (A-T, Agricultural Transition).
- East:** Vacant land (C-G, General Commercial).
- West:** La Paloma Estates single family residential neighborhood (R-S, Residential Single Family).

General Plan Consistency:

The 9.7 acre site is designated Neighborhood Center on the Coachella General Plan. The Neighborhood Center designation is intended to create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities-often mixed with multi-family housing-within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods. As is the case with this project, neighborhood centers are generally located fronting major roadways and are intended to balance the need to provide a comfortable, walkable environment for shoppers and diners.

The proposed project is consistent with the intent and purpose, intended physical character, allowed land uses, network and connectivity, street design, parks and open space and urban form guidelines as stated in the General Plan. As stated in the General Plan, the proposed development intensity is 15-40 DU/AC for residential uses and a FAR ratio of 0.5-1.5 for commercial uses. The commercial component of the Project meets the proposed FAR ratio of 0.5-1.5 and the proposed residential density consists of 24.97 DU/AC as required in the General Plan

Consistency with the Zoning Ordinance:

The proposed multi-family residential development will meet the City's goals of establishing high-density residential developments in conjunction with neighborhood commercial services for key intersections within the City, as outlined for the Neighborhood Center designations. The project will reserve approximately 4 acres of future commercial at the intersection of Van Buren Street and Avenue 48. Additionally, there will be pedestrian connections requirements for multi-family residential with the proposed change of zone. Furthermore, with the approval of the proposed change of zone, the zoning designation on the proposed site will be in conformance, or concurrent with the adopted 2035 General Plan as adopted on April 22, 2015.

Circulation and Infrastructure

Proposed access to the site is from two locations, one at each end of the project. The main access point is at the east end of the project along Avenue 48 between the proposed 5,000 sf recreational building and the 3,000 sf daycare building. The other point of access is at the west end of the project where only residents will be able to access the project. Automated gates at the projects main entrances are proposed. The automated gate on the east entrance is beyond the round-about past the recreation building and the daycare building.

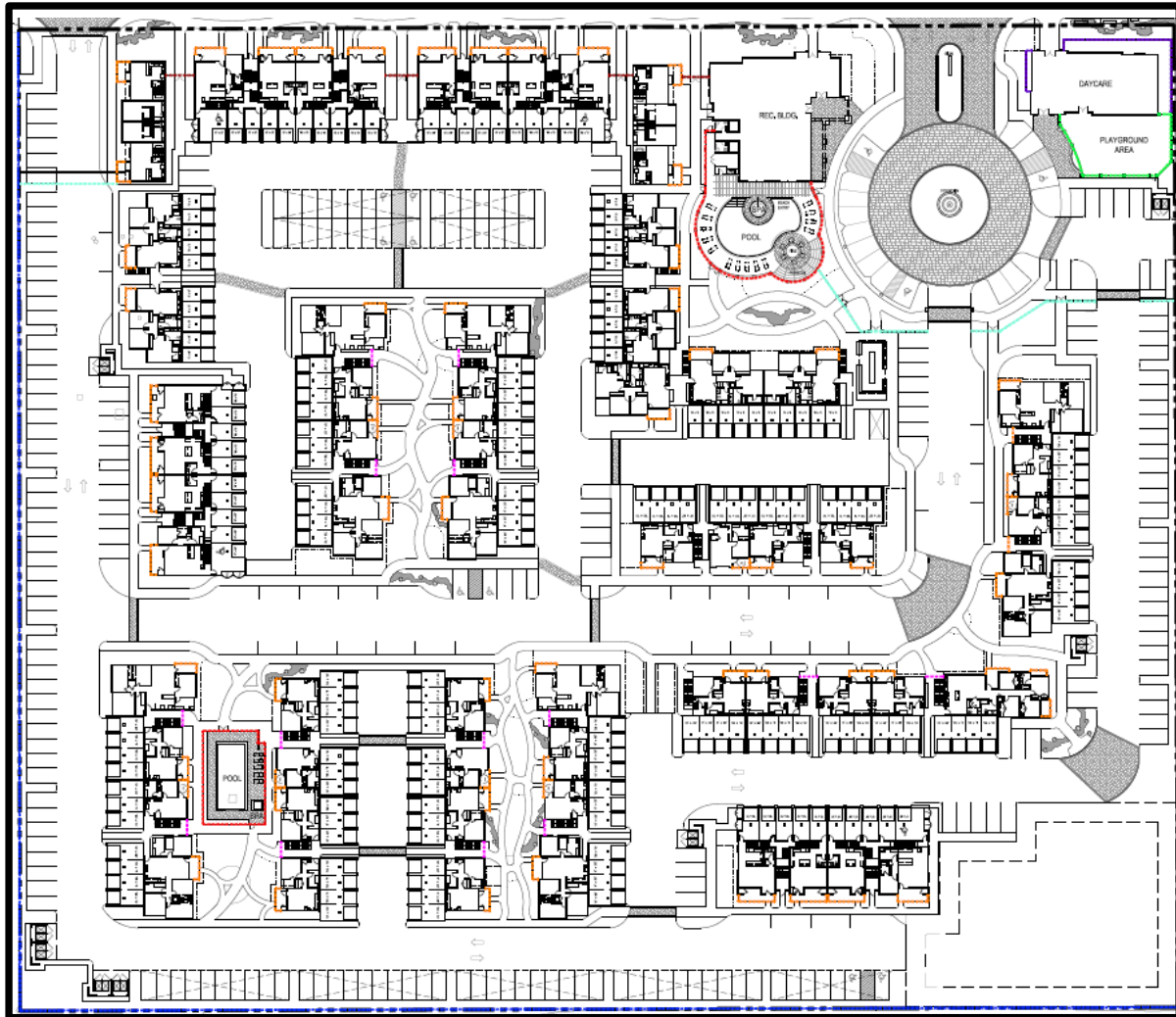
Landscaping

The project will provide landscaped area with Mediterranean Fan Palms, shrubs and ground cover along Avenue 48. Meandering sidewalks are proposed throughout the project within the landscaped areas adjacent to the street. A conceptual landscaping plan for the entire project is illustrated below. Final landscaping plans will be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of building permits for development within the project. Other planting material includes Desert Cassia, White Clouds, Yellow Bells, and Thread Leaf Agave.



Walls and Fencing

Block walls and wrought iron fencing will be used as reflected below. The legend identifies the perimeter fencing, pool column and fence, apartment walls, daycare wall, steel fence and proposed architectural entry wall and accent walls:



Architectural Theming:

The architecture of the proposed project is a contemporary Spanish Revival with a combination of hipped roofs with tile and flat parapet-wall roofs with varying roof lines. Mosaic tile is proposed as accents at the tower elements. Some units proposed chimneys with flat designs on some units and others with domes on top of the chimneys. The windows are a combination of “circle windows” and “rectangular windows” throughout. The architectural detailing is consistent generally on all four sides of the building. Each unit will be provided with a one car garage and additional covered parking is provided. Non-covered parking stall are also provided throughout the development. The proposed architectural building elevations and artist renderings of the proposed building are shown below:



Residential Layout/Architectural Theming;

In the tradition of the courtyard garden apartments, the proposed project utilizes a “green court” concept whereby the entrances to the homes and the balcony/patio areas face a common open space. Additionally, the homes are provided access off common private alleys as illustrated on the exhibit below.



VARIANCE REQUEST:

The project included a request for variance in order to deviate from the minimum number of parking spaces required for the development, and for reduced dwelling unit size. The project requires a minimum of 533 parking spaces and the project site provides for 445 spaces, that is the equivalent to 15% reduction in parking. The applicant is also requesting to deviate from the minimum 600 square feet for an efficiency unit to 527 square feet proposed in the project. The applicant is proposing a total of 75 efficiency units. A parking stall table and a unit size and bedroom number is provided below:

Table 1 – Development Standards

	Zoning Ordinance	Proposed	Complies with Code
Parking (Minimum)	Zoning - <i>Multi-family:</i> 1 space per dwelling unit. 514 parking spaces required <i>Day Care:</i> 1 per faculty and 1 per 10 children. 10 parking spaces required	Total spaces: 445 spaces (15% reduction from required parking)	No
Unit Size	Zoning (R-M Zone)– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency 600 sq. ft. • 1-bedroom 750 sq. ft. • 2-bedroom 900 sq. ft. • 3-bedroom 1,050 sq. ft. • 4-bedroom 1,200 sq. ft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency 527 sq. ft. proposed (75 units – 31%) • 2-bedroom of 925-1,075 sq. ft. (97 units – 40%) • 3-bedroom of 1,150-1,300 sq. ft. (33 units- 14%) • 4-bedroom of 1,350-1,500 sq. ft. (37 units – 15%) Total: 242 units -100%	No. Proposed 1 bedroom efficiency units are 63 sq. ft below minimum size requirement

In order to grant a variance, the Commission made the following findings in the affirmative, as specified in Section 17.76.020-B of the City Zoning Code.

- *That the strict application of the provisions of this chapter would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of the chapter.*
- *That there are special circumstances applicable to the subject property such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity.*
- *That such variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property in the same zone and vicinity, but which, because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question.*
- *That the granting of such variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the same zone or vicinity in which the property is located*
- *That the granting of the variance will not adversely affect any element of the general plan.*

The City of Coachella General Plan allows high-density residential developments with commercial components within new developments. The proposed development will be one of the first developments with the high-density apartments and one of the first developments that will provide residential units at market rate (Currently all multi-family residential developments are subsidized affordable housing communities). The zoning code requires an efficiency unit to be a minimum of 600 square feet. The proposed 525 square foot one-bedroom units will attract the younger resident's desire for smaller units with a mix of units for start-up families with children. The parking reduction sought by the applicant is supported by the General Plan in that it encourages new developments designed with walkable communities in mind. The site is 1,200 lineal feet from Van Buren Elementary School, adjacent to Line 91 of Sun Line Transit, the completion of Avenue 48 Road Widening Project, which will provide for multi-modal transportation opportunities, and ridesharing opportunities at the main entrance of the site. By reducing the minimum one-bedroom size from 750 square feet to 525 square feet, and reducing the minimum number of parking stall required from 515 to 445 parking stalls, the proposed development will be in line with the objectives of the General Plan in high density development of 15-40 dwelling units per acre and in designing walkable communities supporting multi-modal transportation.

The proposed 242 units will alleviate the anticipated population growth in the City of Coachella in meeting the RHNA allocation assigned by SCAG of 7,886 new dwelling units to be developed between 2022-2030. Based on the construction trends of the past ten years, the demand for housing is anticipated to increase in the City.

Signage:

No signage is proposed with the development of the site. Section 17.56.010(G) of the zoning code allows multi-family for one identification monument sign of twenty (20) square feet (four

feet x five feet maximum) with a five feet maximum height. The recreational building and the daycare may be eligible for wall signage via a sign program which the applicant can submit at a later time. The sign program will be subject to the review and approval of the Planning Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Environmental Assessment/Initial Study No. 17-05 was prepared and adopted January 17, 2018 for the subject project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. The project does not propose new changes since the original approvals of Architectural Review No. 17-12. Based on this Environmental Assessment/Initial Study and proposed mitigation measures therein, it has been determined that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment and it would be appropriate to recommend adoption a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration considered the impact of the project, and included several technical studies. A 30-day review period for the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration commenced on October 19, 2017 and will end on November 8, 2017 for interested and concerned individuals and public agencies to submit written comments on the project.

A summary of mitigation measures, which upon implementation, reduces the impacts of the proposed project to a less-than-significant level are incorporated into the proposed conditions of approval and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the subject project. The developer will be under the same obligation implement these mitigation measures as any other conditions of approval for the project.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Prepare a Resolution for the Planning Commission on May 1, 2024 approving Architectural Review No. 21-12 1-year time extension to December 6, 2025 with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff.
- 2) Table this item and consider this item at a future Planning Commission near the expiration date of December 6, 2024 if determined by the Planning Commission that the extension of time is warranted.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

It is staff's recommendation that the Planning Commission open the public hearing and allow input from all proponents and opponents of the proposed project. Because the extension of time is not necessary at this time to ensure project permitting can occur, staff's recommendation is that the Planning Commission approve Alternative #2.

Attachments:

1. Development Plan Set – (Site Plan, Floor Plan, Elevations, Landscape Plan)