



STAFF REPORT
5/13/2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Luis Lopez, Development Services Director
SUBJECT: Vista Del Agua Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report

SPECIFICS:

- a) Resolution No. WA-2020-03 a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Coachella Water Authority approving the Water Supply Assessment dated November 2017 for the Vista Del Agua Project.
 - b) Resolution No. 2020-02, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella certifying Environmental Impact Report (SCH # 2015031003) prepared for the Vista Del Agua Specific Plan; the adoption of environmental findings and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and approving the Vista Del Agua Specific Plan Project.
 - c) Resolution No. 2020-03 a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella approving General Plan Amendment 14-01 on approximately 275 acres (Vista Del Agua Specific Plan) generally located on the south side of Interstate 10 and Vista Del Sur, north of Avenue 48; east of Tyler Street and west of Polk Street. General Plan Amendment 14-01 proposes to amend the General Plan from General Neighborhood, Urban Neighborhood, Suburban Neighborhood, Suburban Retail and Neighborhood Center to Specific Plan.
 - d) Resolution No. 2020-04, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella approving Tentative Parcel Map 36872 to subdivide 275 acres into 6 numbered lots and 1 lettered lot for finance and conveyance purposes only.
 - e) Ordinance No. 1156 an Ordinance of the of the City of Coachella approving Change of Zone 14-01 that changes the existing General Commercial (C-G), Residential Single Family (R-S), Manufacturing – Service (M-S) zoning to a Specific Plan zone.
 - f) Ordinance No. 1157, an Ordinance of the City of Coachella approving the Vista Del Agua Specific Plan 14-01 that proposes residential, commercial, open space and park land uses along with development standards and design guidelines for the development of approximately 275 acres.
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council (sitting as the Coachella Water District Board for the WSA) approve the Vista Del Agua Project by taking the following actions:

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. WA-2020-03 a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Coachella Water Authority approving the Water Supply Assessment dated November 2017 for the Vista Del Agua Project.
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 2020-02, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella certifying Environmental Impact Report (14-04) prepared for the Vista Del Agua Specific Plan; the adoption of environmental findings and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.
- 3) Adopt Resolution No. 2020-03, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella approving General Plan Amendment 14-01 that proposes to amend the General Plan from General Neighborhood, Urban Neighborhood, Suburban Neighborhood, Suburban Retail and Neighborhood Center to Specific Plan.
- 4) Adopt Resolution No. 2020-04, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Coachella approving Tentative Parcel Map 36872 to subdivide 275 acres into 6 numbered lots and one lettered lot for finance and conveyance purposes only.
- 5) Introduce for 1st Reading, by title only, Ordinance No. 1156 an Ordinance of the of the City of Coachella approving Change of Zone 14-01 that changes the existing General Commercial (C-G), Residential Single Family (R-S), Manufacturing –Service (M-S) zoning to a Specific Plan zone.
- 6) Introduce for 1st Reading, by title only, Ordinance No. 1157, an Ordinance of the City of Coachella approving the Vista Del Agua Specific Plan 14-01 that proposes residential, commercial, open space and park land uses along with development standards and design guidelines for the development of approximately 275 acres.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Vista Del Agua Project was considered at the February 26, 2020 City Council meeting at which time it was continued to the April 8, 2020 City Council meeting and subsequently to the May 13th City Council meeting. On the day of the February 26th public hearing, two letters were submitted to the City Council on behalf of the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters and on behalf of DiMare/Shadow View T.I.C and Shadow View Land and Farming, LLC an affiliate of Reading International Inc.

Since the February 26th public hearing Staff, the City Attorney and Project consultants have prepared responses to the issues raised in the two letters that were submitted. Responses to both letters are contained in Attachment No. 8, Volume IV (A) Supplement to the FEIR. Additionally,

the Environmental Impact Consultant has prepared an “Alternatives Memo” (Attachment No. 9) that includes the three alternatives described in the EIR and further adds Alternative 4, that analyzes the southerly extension of Tyler Street from Avenue 47 to 800 feet south of Avenue 49 (primary access) and the extension of Vista Del Sur to Dillon Road (secondary access).

As in the case of Alternatives 1, 2 and 3, Alternative 4 would have similar air quality impacts as the Project and does not eliminate or reduce the significant and unavoidable air quality/greenhouse gas impacts. (Draft EIR, p. 5-18.) In fact, as set forth in a Supplemental VMT, GHG, & NOx analysis for Alternative 4 (Exhibit “A”), RK Engineering has found that by extending the distance that must be traveled to access the project (2.7 miles under Alternative 4 compared to 1.5 miles under the Project), the annual VMT increases by approximately 3,192,134 vehicles miles traveled per year. This correlates to an *increase* in NOx by approximately 5.3 pounds per day. Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) are the primary criteria air pollutants of concern because the project was found to exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds for NOx and cause a significant unmitigatable impact to air quality resources. The increase in VMT also correlates to an *increase* in GHG emissions by 1,280.1 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, Alternative 4 not only would not reduce significant and unavoidable air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, but it would actually increase these significant impacts as compared to the Project. (Vista Del Agua Specific Plan EIR Alternative 4 Supplemental VMT, GHG & NOx Analysis, City of Coachella, RK Engineering, March 11, 2020.)

Finally, Alternative 4 would have similar significant and unavoidable transportation/traffic issues as that of the Project. (DEIR, p. 3-3). Thus, implementation of mitigation measures would still be required.

As a result of the additional analyses, Staff is not recommending any changes to the Specific Plan or to the conditions of approval. The offsite construction of Shadow View Blvd is as described and required in conditions 8, 15, 16 and 25 as follows:

Condition No. 8. Mitigation measures included in the project Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program are hereby incorporated by reference as project conditions of approval.

Condition No. 15. The first Master Subdivision Map must provide for all requisite on-site and off-site easements, rights-of-way and alignments for vehicular access and extension of utility infrastructure, including reclaimed water facilities, to the project site.

Condition No. 16. The Shadow View Blvd. access shall be designed as approved by the City Engineer and the Fire Department. Timing of the ultimate improvement shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Specific Plan and EIR.

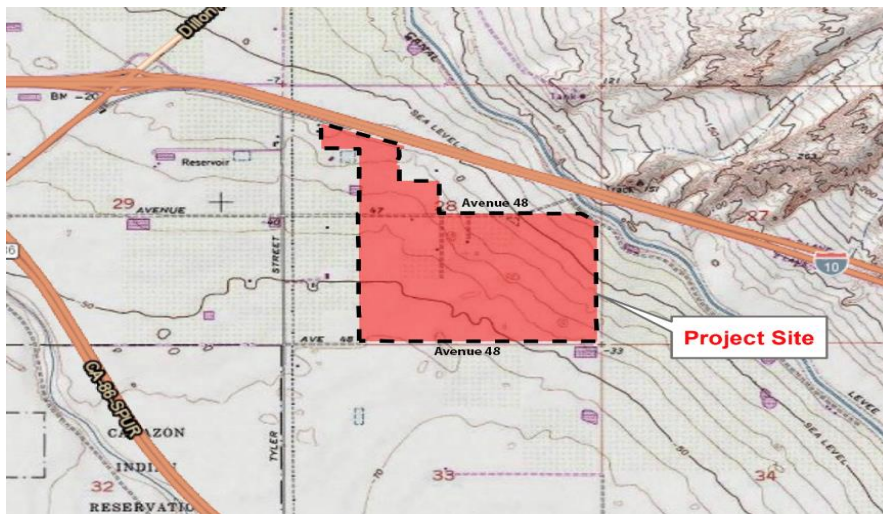
Condition No. 25. Prior to or concurrent with approval of a Builder's Tentative Map or Commercial Map, traffic related improvements shall be constructed in accordance with Mitigation Measures TR1, TR2, TR 3, TR 4 and TR 5.

Staff would like to clarify that the interim improvement of Shadow View Boulevard would include a 34-foot right-of-way that includes two, 12-foot travel lanes, a 5-foot Class 2 bike lane and a 5-foot sidewalk on one side of the road.

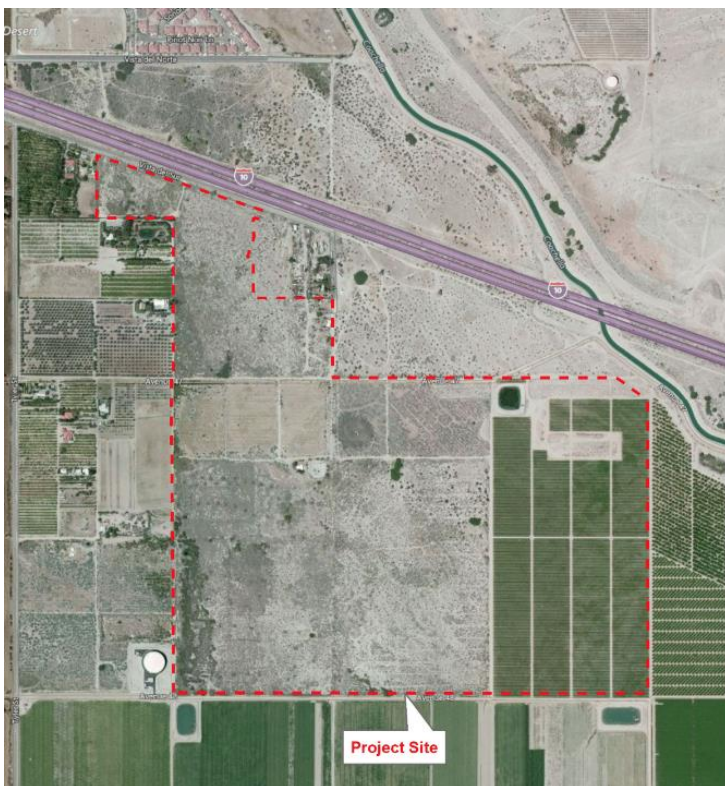
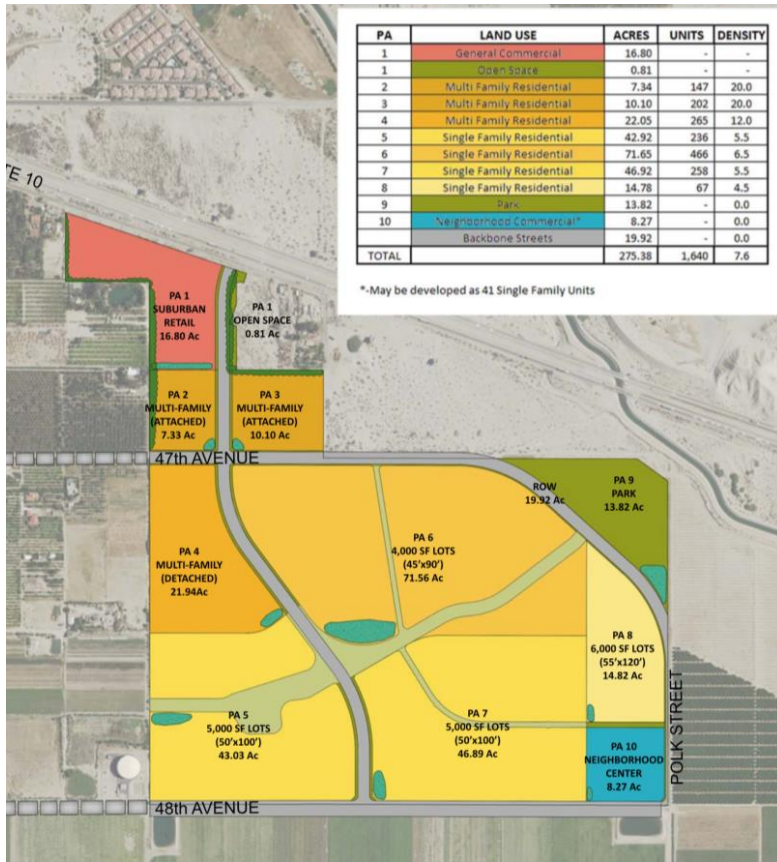
BACKGROUND:

The Vista Del Agua applications were submitted to the City in 2014 and consist of the above referenced six applications. Over the past 5 ½ years a significant effort on behalf of the Project Applicant and City Staff culminated in a June 19, 2019 Planning Commission public hearing and a unanimous recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission. At the Planning Commission public hearing an attorney representing the Shadow View property owners raised concerns about the future alignment of Shadow View Blvd through the Shadow View property.

The proposed project includes approximately 275 acres located south of I-10 and Vista Del Sur, east of Tyler Street, south of Avenue 47, north of Avenue 48 and east and west of Polk Street as illustrated on the exhibit below.



The specific plan proposes a maximum of 1,640 dwelling units including 1,026 single-family homes and 613 multi-family dwelling units. The project also includes two commercial planning areas that total approximately 25 acres along with approximately 30 acres of open space including a 14-acre park located east of Polk Street. The project includes both a main and tributary paseo system that traverse the site that serve as both drainage and open space corridors. A copy of the specific plan land use plan is illustrated below along with a table of proposed lands uses, planning areas, acres, units and density:



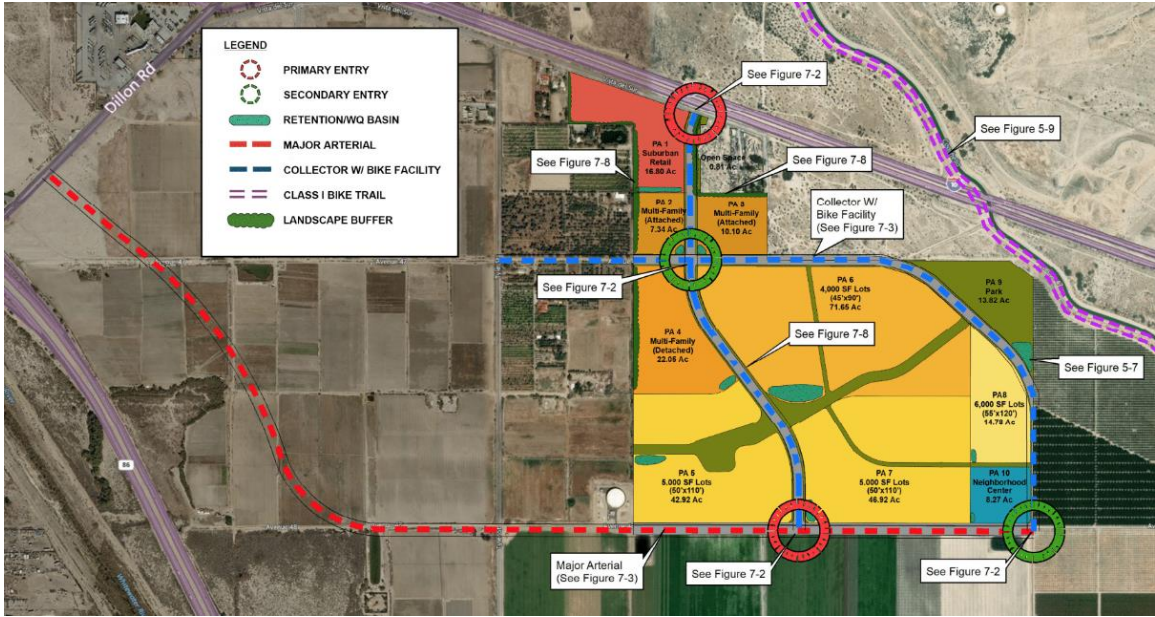
The aerial photograph to the left was taken a few years ago. At that time the eastern portion of the site was in agricultural production. However, as of now the agricultural use on the site is now fallow.

The highlights of the Vista Del Agua Project include the following:

- A mix of single family and multi-family dwelling units totaling 1,640 dwelling units on approximately 275 acres;
- An approximately 17-acre General Commercial planning area located south of Vista Del Sur and west of proposed Street A;
- An 8-acre Neighborhood Commercial planning area located north of Avenue 48, west of Polk Street. (This planning area may be developed with 41 dwelling units if the Neighborhood Commercial center has not been developed by the issuance of the 800th occupancy permit).
- A 13.82-acre public park to be dedicated to the City located east of Polk Street, south of Avenue 47
- Two paseos that traverse the site that include drainage facilities and multi-purpose trail networks that link to the site to City and a Regional multi-purpose (CV Link) trail network.
- The extension of Shadow View Blvd to the site in accordance with the Mobility Element of the Coachella General Plan

VISTA DEL AGUA SPECIFIC PLAN

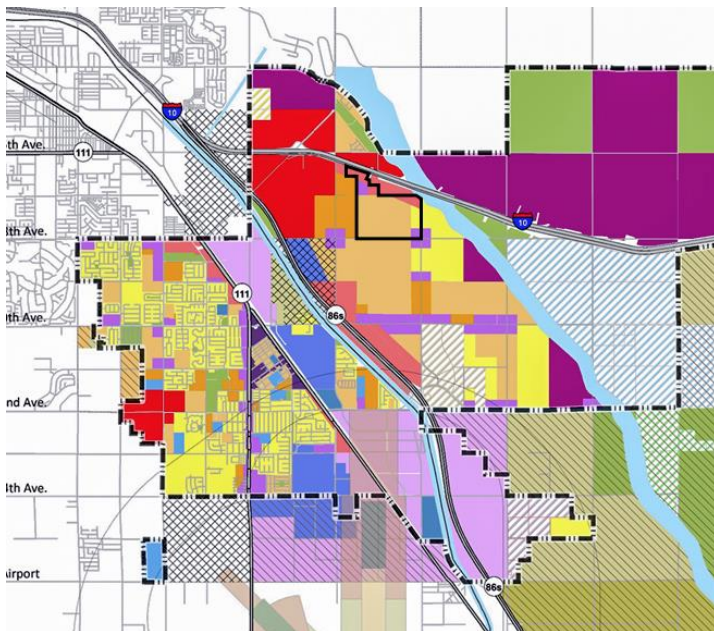
As stated above the specific plan proposes a maximum of 1,640 dwelling units including both single family and multi-family dwelling units. Planning Areas 2, 3 and 4 are proposed for multi-family dwelling units and Planning Areas 5, 6, 7 and 8 are proposed for single-family dwellings. The exhibit below illustrates the land use plan with planned neighborhood monuments and streetscapes and contains references to Planning Area details and cross sections that are within the Specific Plan document.



DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

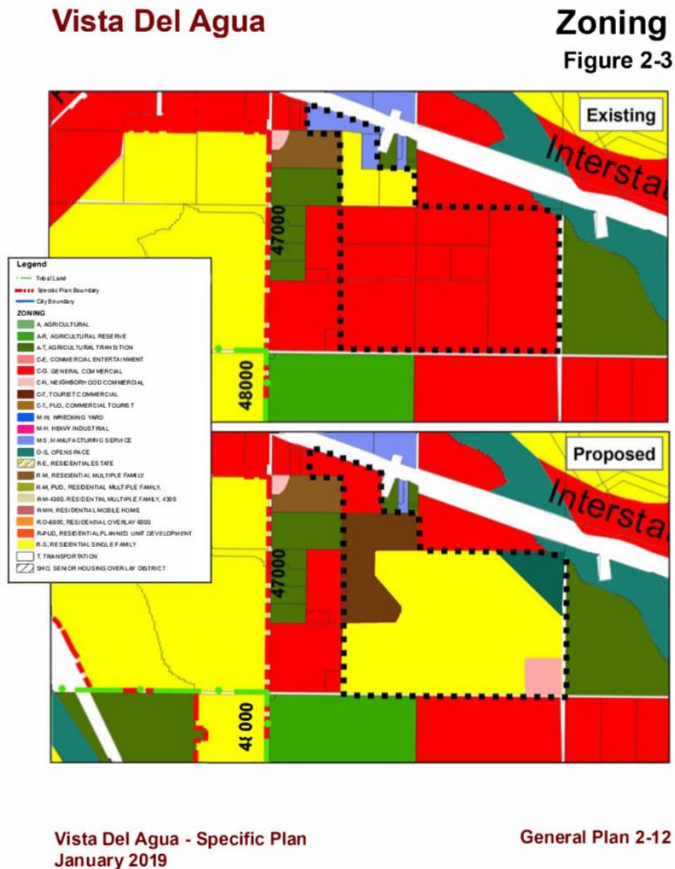
Existing General Plan

The Coachella General Plan 2035 designates the 275-acre site as General Neighborhood, Urban Neighborhood, Suburban Retail District, Suburban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center shown on the exhibit below:



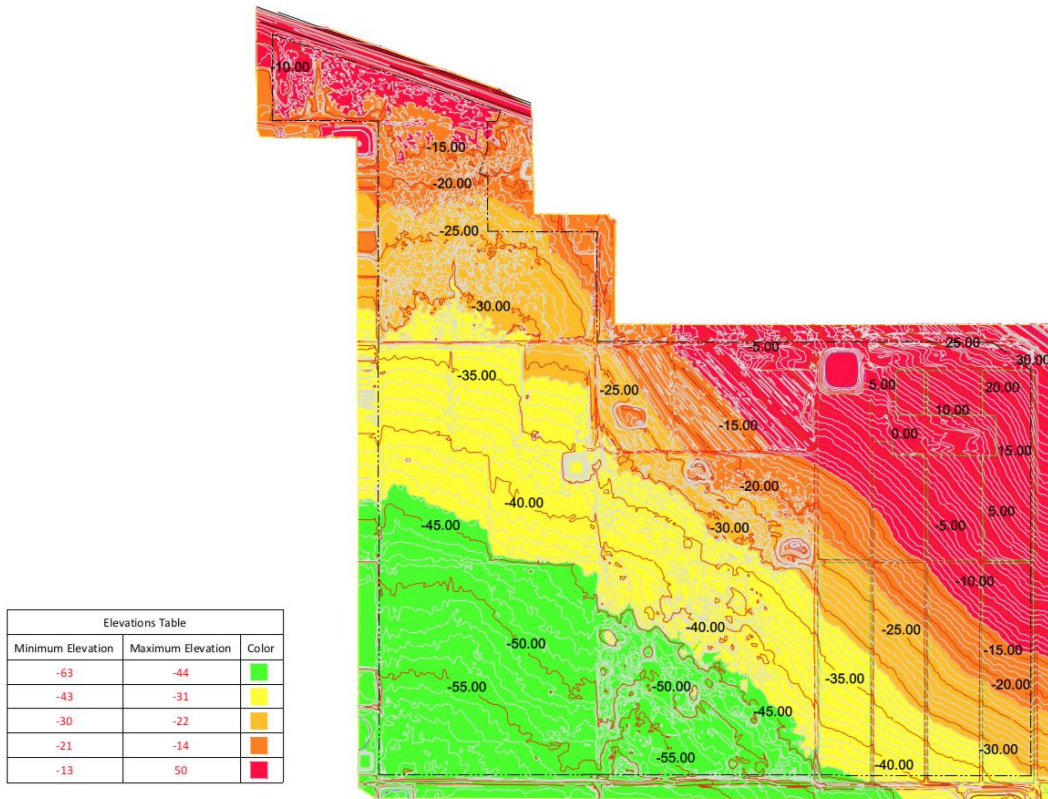
Existing Zoning

The existing zoning on the site includes C-G, General Commercial, with portions of the site zoned R-S, Residential Single Family and M-S, Manufacturing Service. The proposed zoning is Specific Plan that will utilize the zoning standards contained within the specific Plan for development standards within each planning area.



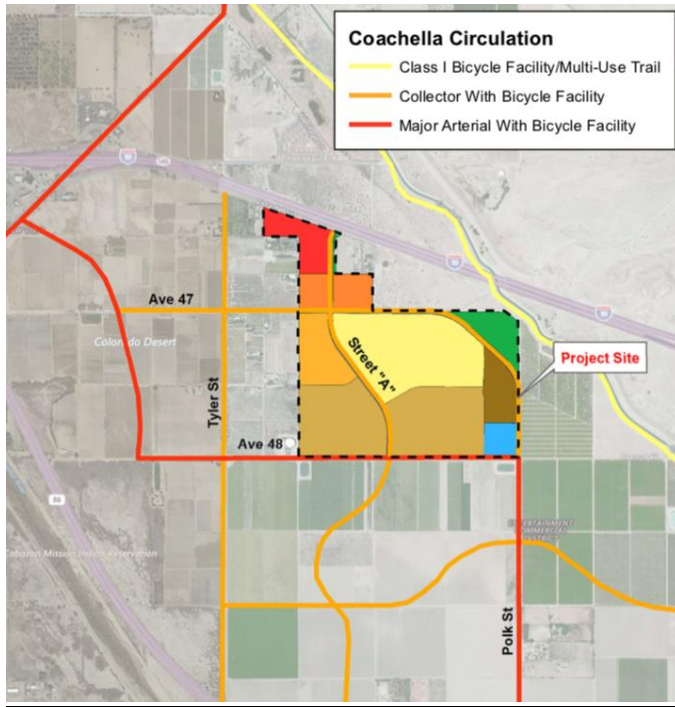
Project Setting and Location

The project site is surrounded by existing agricultural uses and vacant land to the west, south and east. The site is currently undeveloped with unimproved dirt roads created from prior on-site agricultural activities, trails from off-road recreational vehicles and former paint ball activities. The site is relatively flat and slopes upward about 25 feet in elevation to the northwest. In the south central and eastern portion of the project site, the property slopes upward from about 60 feet below sea level to 25 feet above sea level as illustrated on the exhibit below.

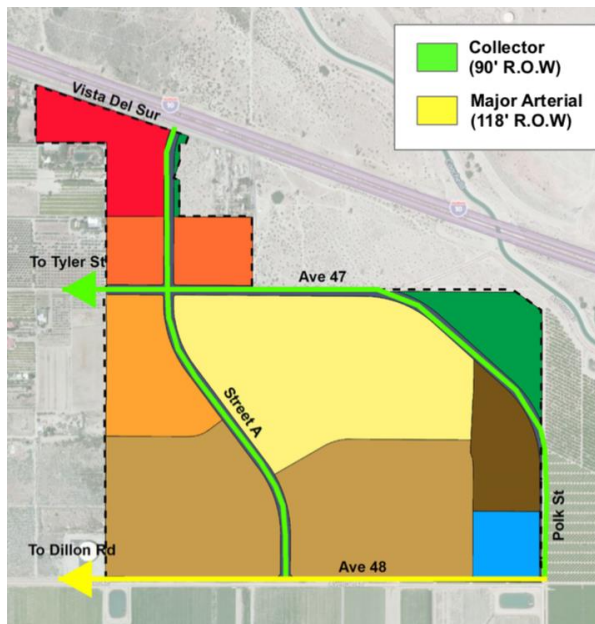


Site Access

Access to the proposed project is planned via Shadow View Blvd, Avenue 47, Vista Del Sur and Avenue 48 as shown on the exhibit below.

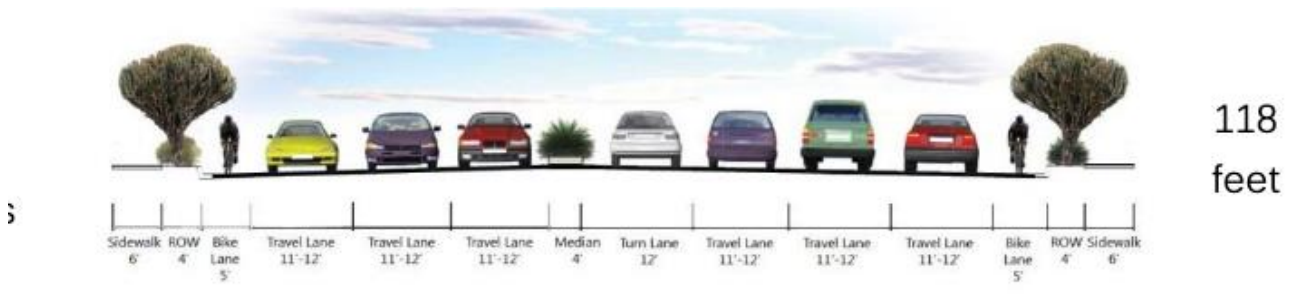


Local access within the specific plan is planned via Street A, Avenue 47, Avenue 48 and Polk Street. Local streets within the specific plan will connect each planning area to the regional system.

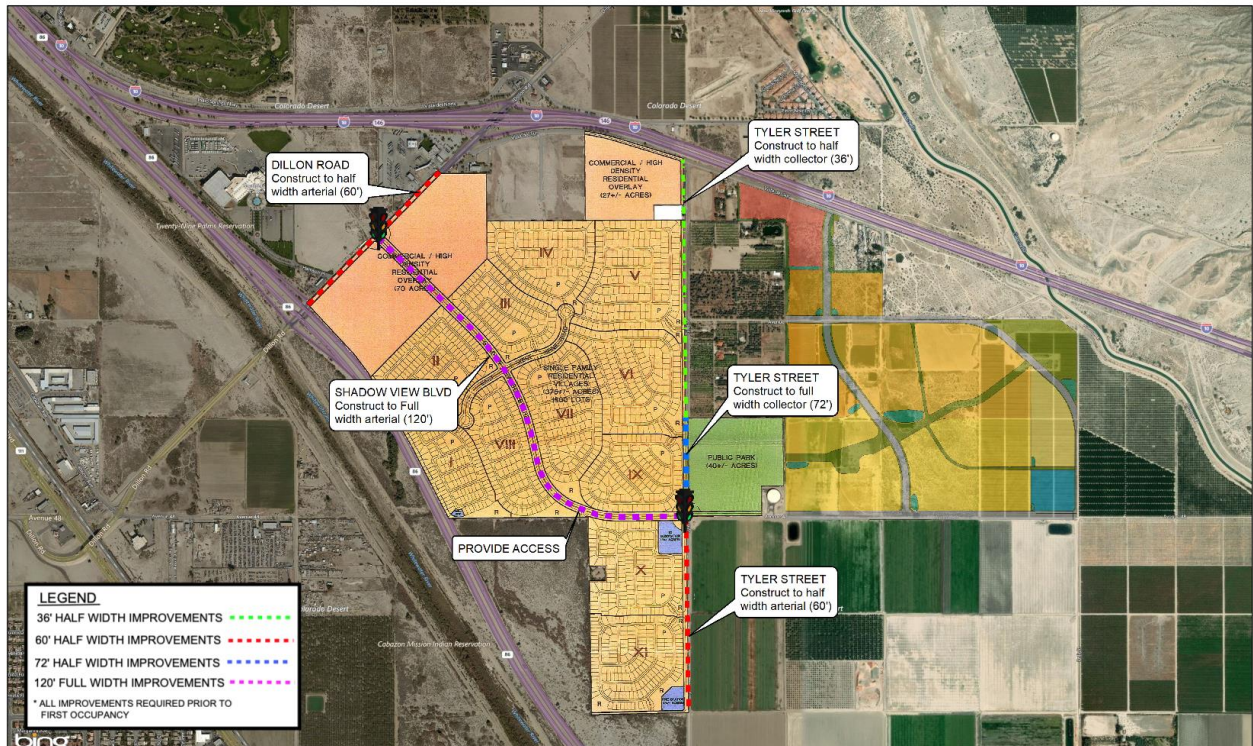


The specific plan also includes several non-vehicular project design features including bicycle lanes, trails, pathways and sidewalks that are designed to promote non-vehicular modes of transportation that will reduce vehicle trips to the adjacent City and regional street system. With

regards to the off-site improvement of Shadow View Blvd, Shadow View Blvd is designated as a Major Arterial with Bicycle Facilities as illustrated on the exhibit below and proposes a right of way of 118 feet as illustrated below.



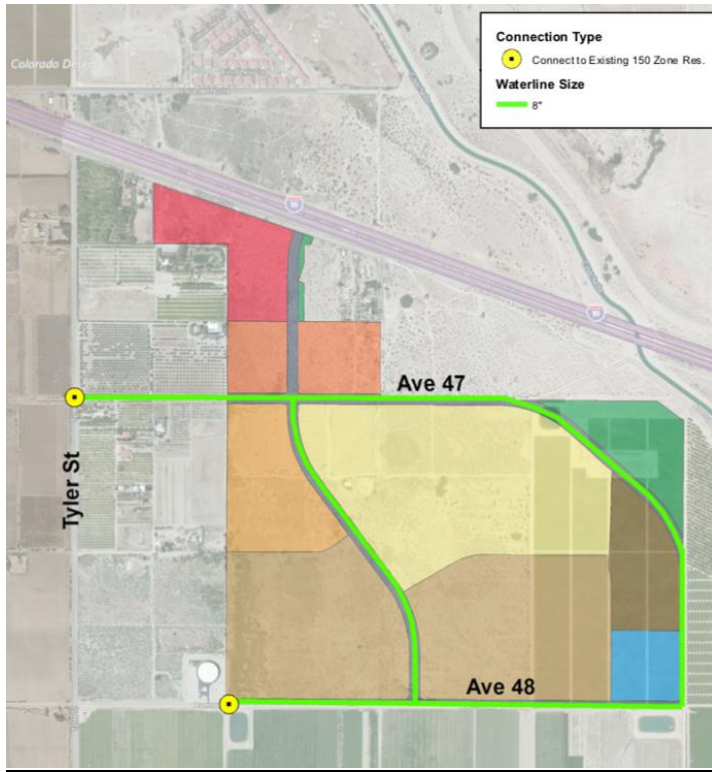
Although the right-of-way for Shadow View Blvd does not exist through the Shadow View specific plan area at this time, the conceptual amendment for the Shadow View Specific Plan as illustrated on Figure 4-25 within the Coachella General Plan illustrates Shadow View Blvd connecting to Dillon Road and the Vista Del Agua Property via Avenue 48. The Shadow View Specific Plan and tentative tract maps (that have since expired) also showed Shadow View Blvd in this basic alignment.



PUBLIC UTILITIES:

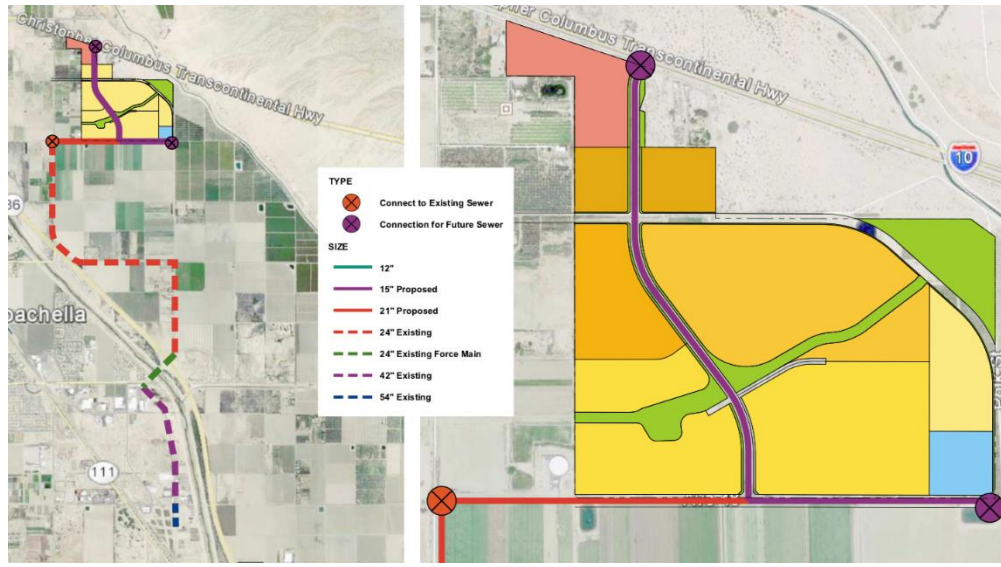
Water

The project will require the extension of water lines and other support facilities to serve the proposed project as shown on the following exhibit. A water supply assessment (WSA) was completed for the proposed project and it determined that substantial evidence supports a determination that the total project water supplies available to the City’s Water Authority during normal, single dry, and multiple dry water years during a 20 year projection (and beyond) are sufficient to meet the projected water demand of the proposed project, in addition to the City’s existing and planned future uses, including agricultural and manufacturing uses. This conclusion is based on, among other things, the volume of water available in the regional aquifer, the City’s current and planned local water management programs and projects and supplemental and sustained regional groundwater supplies. Furthermore, the WSA and the Vista Del Agua project will incorporate various water conservation elements adopted by the City and /or CVWD including conservation elements for indoor and outdoor uses throughout the project. The project will connect to existing City water infrastructure as illustrated on the exhibit below.



Sewer

The following exhibit illustrates the proposed conceptual sewer plan for the Vista Del Agua project. The Project proposes to extend sewer lines to the existing sewer line at Avenue 48 and Tyler Street. From there, the line will utilize existing pipes that extend to the City treatment plant at Avenue 54 and Polk Street.



Electricity and Natural Gas

IID will provide electricity to the project and Southern California Gas will provide natural gas to the project site. Additional lines for both IID and Southern California Gas will be extended to the project site. Both IID and the Southern California Gas Company can provide service to the proposed project without significant improvements to their operating system.

Law Enforcement

The Coachella Police Department (CPD) through a contract with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSA) provides law enforcement to the City of Coachella. Additional residents and employees generated by the Specific Plan build out would result in increased demand on existing police facilities and services would likely increase response times. The proposed project will pay Development Impact Fees (DIF) to the City consistent with City Ordinance 1013

Fire Services

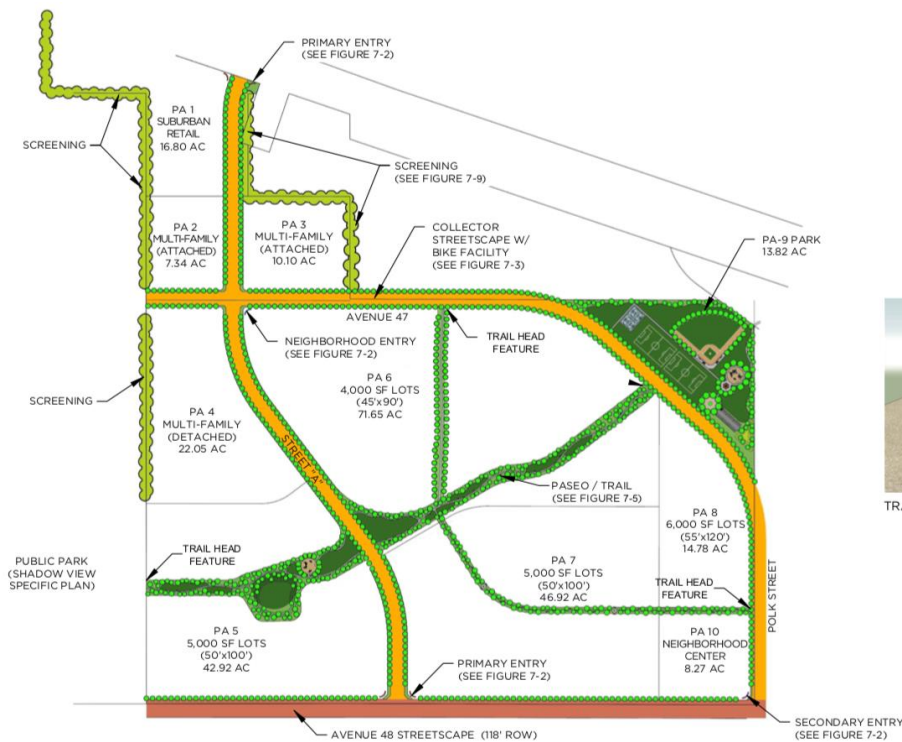
The Coachella Fire Department through a contract with the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) will provide fire services to the site. Existing fire stations that would provide service to the Vista Del Agua site include Stations No's 79, 86, 87 and 39 would provide fire services to the proposed project. The proposed project will pay Development Impact Fees (DIF) fees to the City consistent with Ordinance 1013.

Schools

The project site is within the Desert Sands Unified School District. In 2018, Staff initiated discussions with DSUSD staff regarding incorporating a school site within the Vista Del Agua Project, however the School District responded that a school site within the Vista Del Agua project site was not required. Future students from this development will utilize existing and planned schools within the DSUSD. In addition, the Project will pay school fees consistent with State law.

Parks

The specific plan includes park, open space and recreational uses that total approximately 30 acres. As can be seen from the exhibit below, a proposed 13 acre public park is located on the east side of the project site across Polk Street within the building restriction zone. Additional open space areas are proposed within two paseos that are proposed to traverse the project site that will provide access to the proposed park. The west end of the east/west paseo terminates at a planned 40 acre regional park within the Shadow View specific plan thereby connecting the two parks together via the paseo system. The three multiple family planning areas will incorporate private open space and recreational amenities within each planning areas. Additional active open space will be provided within the proposed single family planning areas as well.



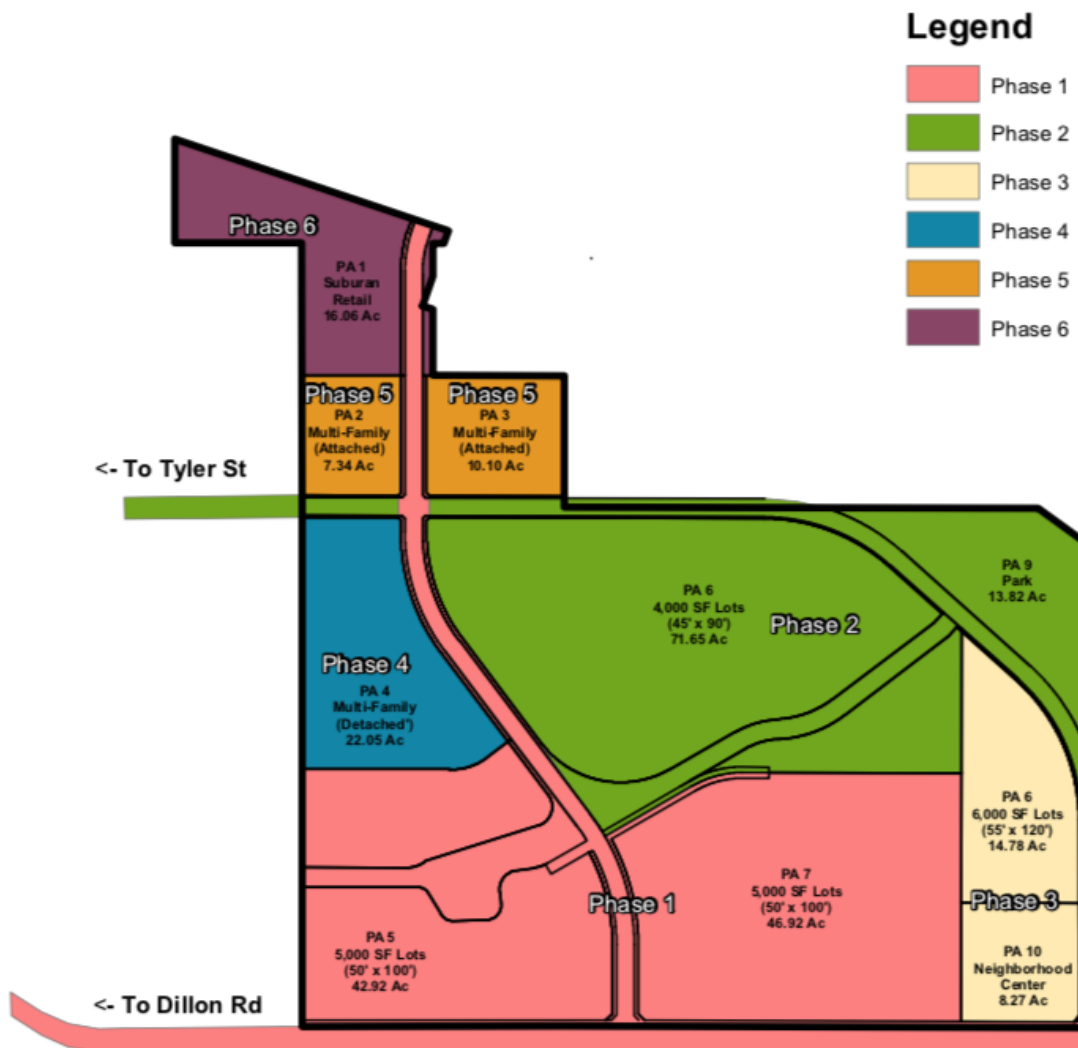
TRAIL HEAD FEATURE

Drainage/Hydrology

The Project will provide flood control facilities to intercept and convey off-site and on-site drainage areas that will revert to natural conditions as illustrated on the above exhibit. Most of the drainage for the site will be conveyed along the paseo areas with excess storm water released into a proposed detention basin in the southwest portion of the site. The runoff will be conveyed to the existing watercourse that discharges into the Coachella Valley Storm Channel.

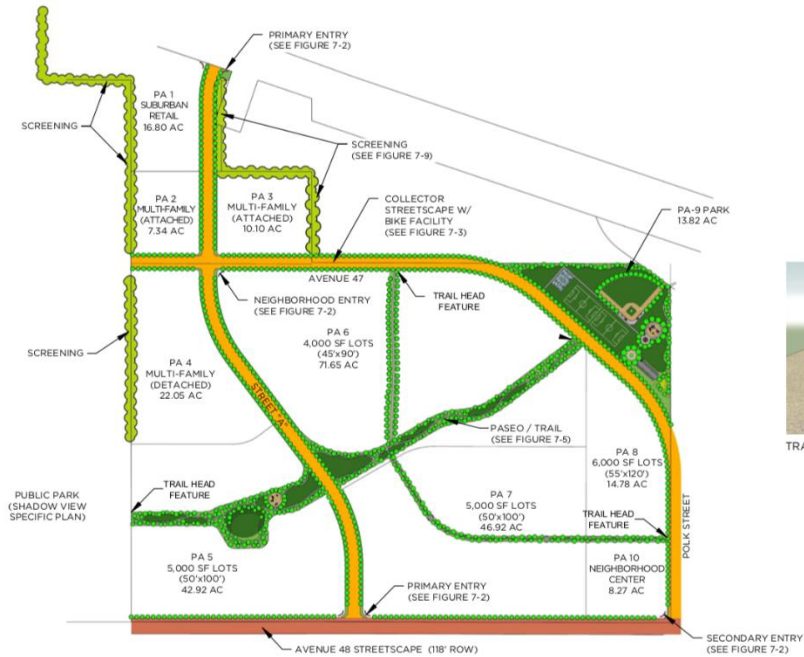
Phasing

The Specific Plan phasing plan proposes that the specific plan be developed over 6 phases as illustrated on the exhibit below. Phase 1 includes Planning Areas 5 and 7, both of which are proposed for 236 and 258 single-family homes. Phase 2 includes Planning Area 6 that includes 466 single-family homes and includes construction of the 14-acre public park. Phase 3 includes PA 8 that is proposed for 67 single-family homes and PA 10 is proposed for an 8-acre Neighborhood Center. However, in the event PA 8 is not developed as neighborhood commercial by the 800th certificate of occupancy, PA 10 may be developed with up to 41 single family homes. Phase 4 is located on the west side of the project and includes PA 4 that is proposed for 265 single-family homes. Phase 5 is located north of Avenue 47 on either side of "A" Street and includes PA 2 and PA 3. PA 2 proposes 147 dwelling units and PA 3 includes 202 dwelling units, both at a density of 20 dwelling units per acre. The last phase, phase 6 includes PA 1 the 16.80-acre Suburban retail center.



SPECIFIC PLAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

As stated earlier, the Specific Plan includes a total of 10 planning areas including 4 planning areas that are proposed for single-family homes and 3 planning areas that are proposed for multi-family detached homes. A 16-acre suburban retail planning area is proposed at the northwest portion of the site and an 8-acre neighborhood commercial center is proposed at the southeastern portion of the project site. A 13-acre public park is proposed at the eastern end of the site across Polk Street and a primary and secondary paseo system is proposed within the project to connect the proposed park to a future regional park proposed adjacent to the western side of the project as illustrated below:



TRAIL HEAD FEATURE

The specific plan includes primary, secondary and neighborhood entry treatments located at major project intersections along with landscape buffers that will be used for screening between existing and future land uses within the specific plan.

Examples of the three types of entry treatments are provided below:



PRIMARY ENTRY



SECONDARY ENTRY

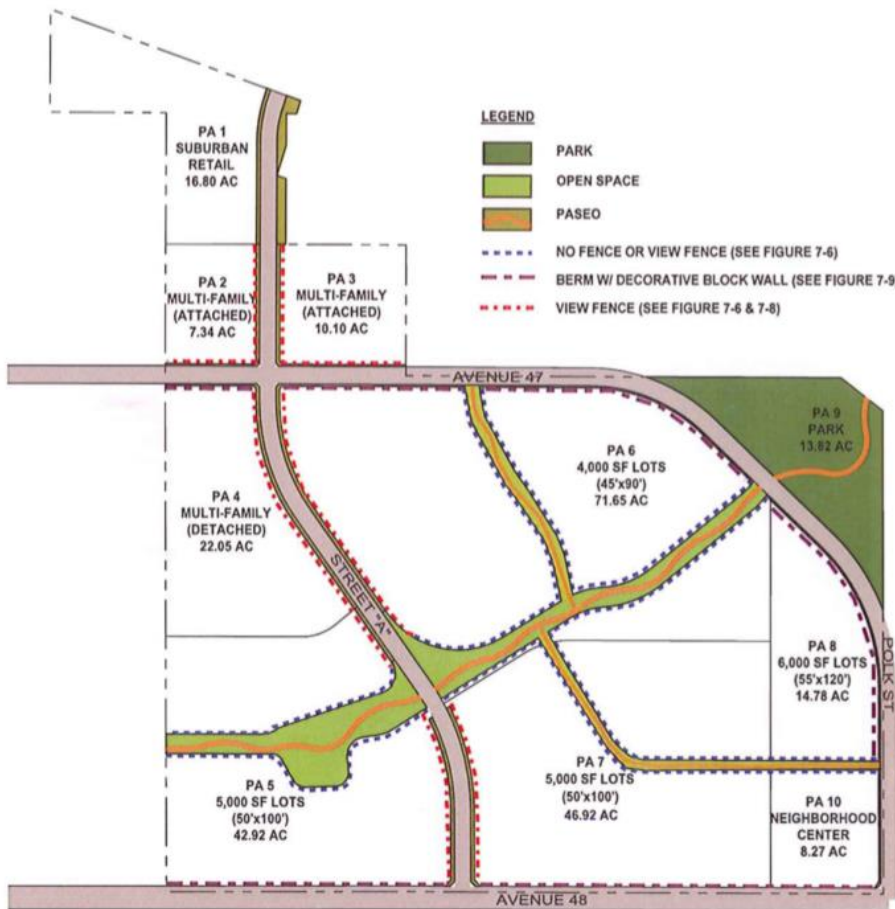


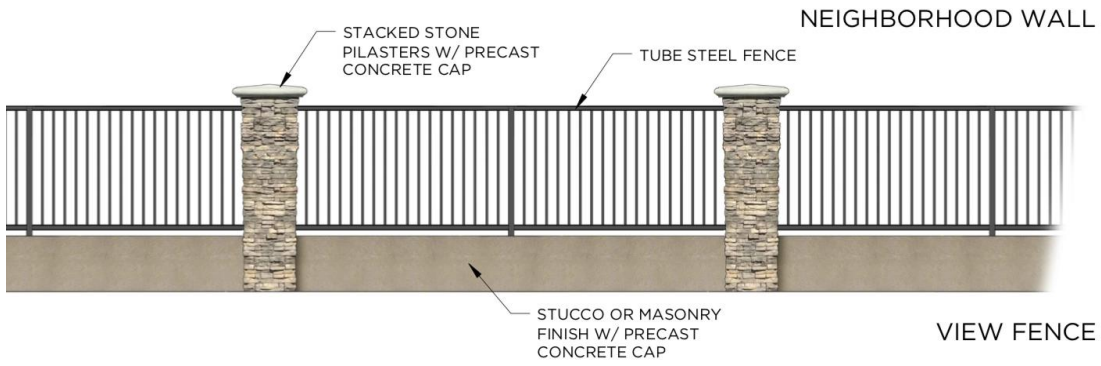
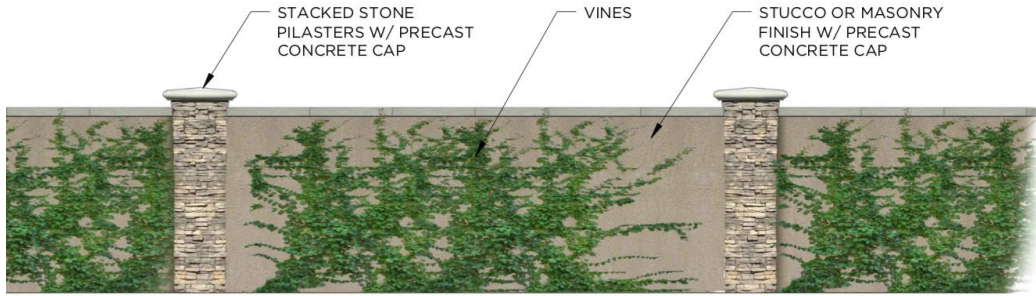
NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRY

A specific plan wall and fence plan, as illustrated on the exhibits below illustrate both the location and types of fencing that are proposed within the specific plan.

Vista del Agua

Wall / Fence Plan Figure 7-7





A conceptual plan for the proposed public park located in PA 9 is presented below. Plans include sports fields, a tot lot and open play areas.



The Specific Plan includes conceptual illustrations of both the proposed single family and multi-family housing types as illustrated on the exhibits below:



Typical Cluster Layout
NTS



Conceptual Apartment Layouts
NTS



A DEIR was prepared for the Vista Del Agua project in accordance with the California Quality Act (CEQA) and Sections 15120 through 15131 and 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines.

The DEIR was circulated to the State Clearinghouse and Interested Parties for two 45-day review periods from June 8, 2018 to July 23, 2018 and from August 10 to September 24, 2018. Twelve comment letters were received during the first public review period and four comment letters were received on the re-distributed DEIR. The City, in accordance with CEQA requirements, has responded to public comments that were received during the DEIR review periods. (See Comments and Responses in Attachment No. 7: Volume IV of the Environmental Impact Report).

The DEIR identified seven significant unavoidable significant adverse impacts that would result from the proposed project in the following four areas:

1. Aesthetics-Visual Character
2. Agricultural and Forest Resources
3. Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas
4. Transportation/Traffic

For a complete discussion and analysis of the significant impacts please reference the attached CEQA Findings of Fact. The Findings of Fact have been prepared for the Project and are included as Exhibit A within Attachment No. 2. The California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) (CEQA) requires that public agencies shall not approve or carry out a project for which an environmental impact report (EIR) has been certified that identifies one or more significant adverse environmental effects of a project unless the public agency makes one or more written Findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each Finding (State CEQA Guidelines [Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.], § 15091). This document presents the CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations made by the City of Coachella (City), in its capacity as the CEQA lead agency, regarding the Vista Del Agua Project (Project), evaluated in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“Draft EIR”) and Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Project.

Also included within Attachment No. 2 is the proposed Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Vista Del Agua Project that contain all of the proposed mitigation measures along with the timing for implementation of each mitigation measure.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Vista Del Agua project applications with the findings and conditions of approval as recommended by the Planning Commission and Staff.
2. Deny the Vista Del Agua project applications
3. Continue these items and provide staff and the applicant with direction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no fiscal impacts expected to the City from the Vista Del Agua Project.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff has analyzed all of the components of the proposed project, including the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report that have been prepared to analyze expected project impacts. Staff believes the Environmental Impact Report has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and recommends that the City Council certify the Environmental Impact Report and approve the Water Supply Assessment, General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan, Change of Zone and Tentative Parcel Map.

Attachments:

1. Attachment No. 1: Resolution No. WA 2020-03 approving the Water Supply Assessment
2. Attachment No. 2: Resolution 2020-02 including CEQA Findings (Exhibit A) and MMRP (Exhibit B) certifying the EIR for the Vista Del Agua Project (SCH2015031003)
3. Attachment No. 3: Resolution 2020-03 for GPA 14-01
4. Attachment No. 4: Resolution 2020-04 for PM 36872
5. Attachment No. 5: Ordinance No. 1156 for Change of Zone 14-01
6. Attachment No. 6: Ordinance No. 1157 for Specific Plan 14-01
7. Attachment No. 7: Volume IV (FEIR) of the Environmental Impact Report
8. Attachment No. 8: Volume IV (A) Supplement to FEIR) containing the following:
 - Response to Rutan February 2020 letter and June 2019 letter
 - Response to Carpenter's Union letter and attachments
 - Supplemental EIR Errata
9. Attachment No. 9: CEQA Alternatives Memorandums dated 1/21/20 and 4/24/20
10. Attachment No. 10: Specific Plan Conditions of Approval
11. Attachment No. 11: PM 36872 Conditions of Approval
12. Attachment No. 12: Correspondence (None Received after February 26, 2020)
13. Attachment No. 13: Vista Del Agua Specific Plan Document
14. Attachment No. 14: Water Supply Assessment for Vista Del Agua