



Public Hearing Staff Report

Case No. PD20-0003

Planning & Zoning Commission: April 13, 2026

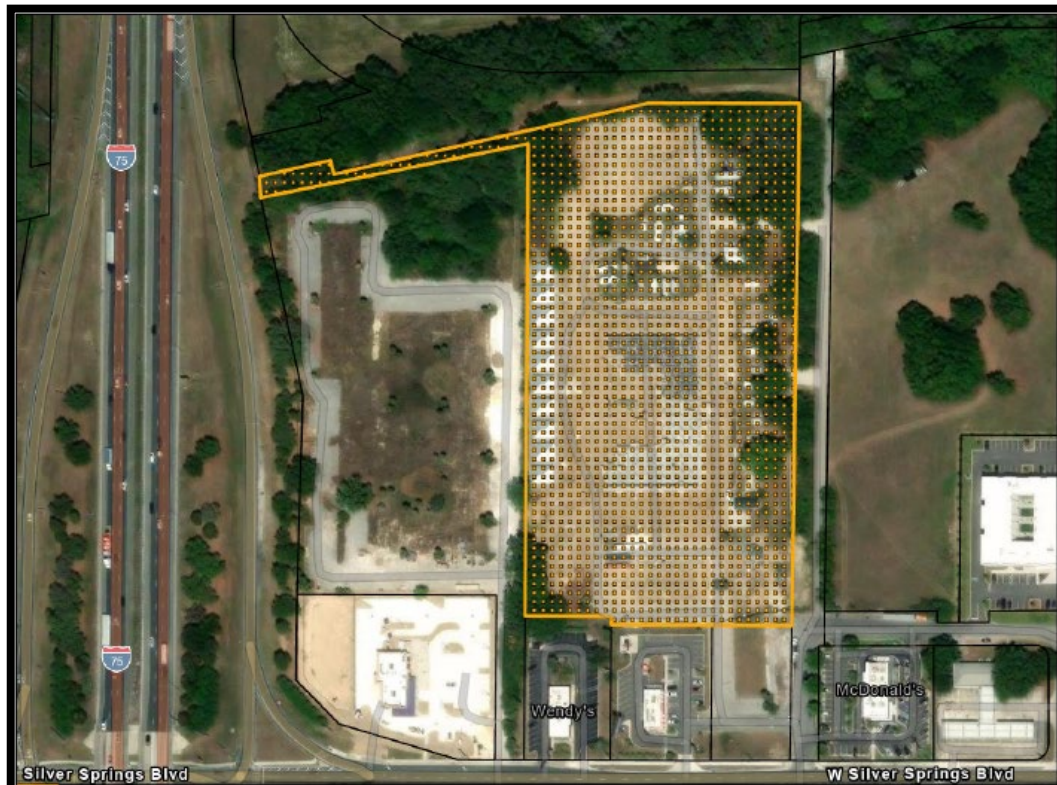
City Council (Adoption): May 19, 2026

Applicant and Property Owner: Saving Mercy Corporation
Agent: Chuck Pigeon, P.E., Ardurra Group, Inc
Project Planner: Emily W. Johnson, AICP, Senior Planner
Amendment Request: Public hearing to consider a resolution to amend the Planned Development Plan and Standards Book

Parcel Information

Acres: ±9.31 acres
Parcel(s)#: 22817-000-00
Location: 3610 NW 1st Loop
Existing use: Two-family, multi-family residential and administrative office building under construction
Future Land Use Designation: Employment Center
Zoning Designation: PD, Planned Development (Ordinance 2021-14)
Special District(s)/Plan(s): West Ocala Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)
Approved Agreement(s): N/A

Figure 1. Aerial Location Map



Section 1 - Applicant Request

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the Saving Mercy Planned Development (PD) Plan and Standards Book to allow for the following modifications:

- Increase the total number of residential units from 144 to 200, consisting of 20 duplex units and 180 multi-family apartment units.
- Increase the maximum permitted building height from 35-feet to 45-feet.
- Revise the development layout to reflect four phases, including 20 existing duplex units and three multi-family apartment buildings.
- Incorporate additional minor, non-substantial revisions, including: a reduction in administrative office and other ancillary uses; removal of previously proposed storage units and a pavilion; relocation (with no change in size) of amenity areas; an increase in the number of vehicle parking spaces; a decrease in the number of bike parking spaces; and the addition of architectural details for a new freestanding monument entrance sign.

Section 2 - Background Information

The existing PD zoning district was approved by Ordinance 2021-14 on December 15, 2020, with the associated PD Plan and Standards Book adopted by Resolution 2021-7. The prior staff report did not include comprehensive background or property history; therefore, additional context is provided herein to support evaluation of the proposed amendment.

The subject property encompasses a total of approximately 9.31 acres and is currently developed with 20 duplex units, an administrative office building and a two-story apartment building containing 59 multi-family units are under construction. The current designations of the properties are:

Zoning: **PD, Planned Development**, intended to provide a process for the evaluation of unique, individually planned developments, which may not be otherwise permitted in other zoning districts.

Future Land Use: **Employment Center** (Comprehensive Plan – Policy 6.5), a maximum of 24 dwelling units per acre and 2.0 floor area ratio (FAR).

The subject property was brought into City limits in 1975 via Ordinance 788, as part of a larger annexation of approximately 26.3 square miles. Subsequently, the property was zoned B-2, Community Business, and designated as Retail Services Future Land Use (FLU) by the Comprehensive Plan. The subject property was previously developed with a motel and RV Park, which have since been demolished.

On January 22, 2013, the City Council adopted Comprehensive Plan Amendments consistent with the Ocala 2035 Vision, which eliminated the Retail Services FLU, while assigning the new designation of Employment Center to the subject property. The intent of the Employment Center FLU is to provide a regionally-important hub for business, enterprise, research and development, and employment activities.

On December 15, 2020, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2021-14, rezoning the subject property from B-2 to PD, Planned Development. The associated PD Plan and Standards Book were adopted via resolution 2021-7 and established a five-phase development program consisting of 12 single-family homes, 70 duplexes, and 62 multi-family units in four apartment buildings. The PD also included

allowances for supporting facilities, including business offices for administrative services, a meeting and group assembly room for residents, laundry facilities, maintenance facilities, solid waste and recycling areas, playground facilities, dog park, pavilion area, bicycle parking, outdoor seating and walkways, a community garden, and storage units for residents. It was also indicated that support services would be provided on-site to assist residents in achieving housing stability and independence.

Pursuant to Section 122-946, non-substantial modifications to PD Plans may be approved by the site plan review committee. Non-substantial changes include minor changes in right-of-way alignment/access/circulation; minor changes to buildings (architectural features) or changes in building orientation; changes in number of units or building square footage of a specific use type less than five percent; and minor changes to dumpster locations, parking areas, open space/landscaping/trees, utilities, sidewalks and accessory uses.

Two prior administrative revisions were approved by staff for non-substantial changes to the PD, pursuant to Section 122-946(b):

- In 2023, the applicant revised the plan to include a two-story apartment building containing 59 multi-family units, replacing the original approval for 24 duplex units, a 10-unit apartment building, and one single-family dwelling. The overall maximum unit count of 144 units did not change.
- In 2024, the applicant amended the phasing schedule to begin construction of the infrastructure and the multi-family units.

Table 1: Adjacent Property Information:

<u>Direction</u>	<u>Future Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Current Use</u>
North	Employment Center	B-2, Community Business M-1, Light Industrial M-2, Medium Industrial	City of Ocala right-of-way Vacant, undeveloped industrial acreage
East	Employment Center	B-2, Community Business	Vacant, undeveloped commercial acreage
South	Employment Center	B-2, Community Business	Fast-food restaurants (Wendy’s, KFC) Undeveloped commercial parcel
West	Employment Center	B-2, Community Business	Undeveloped commercial acreage

The subject property is accessed via a City-owned right-of-way connecting to W Silver Springs Boulevard (State Road 40). The property is also bordered to the north by an undeveloped City-owned right-of-way intended for the future extension of NW 37th Street and its realignment with SW 33rd Avenue. To the south, the property is adjacent to fast-food restaurants along W Silver Springs Boulevard, in proximity to the I-75 interchange.

Section 3 – Staff Analysis

This report analyzes the proposed amendment to the associated PD Plan and Standards Book for consistency with the City of Ocala’s Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, and the

established neighborhood development pattern.

The PD Plan and Standards Book proposes a revised four-phase development plan. Phase I, consisting of 20 duplex units with associated parking and infrastructure, has been completed. Phase II, currently under construction, includes a two-story apartment building with 59 multi-family units and a 1,460-square-foot administrative building, along with associated parking and infrastructure.

The existing PD alluded to support services being provided onsite, however, the primary purpose of the PD is to provide transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. While the overall intent of the PD remains unchanged, the proposed amendment would increase the total number of units from 144 to 200 and the maximum allowable building height from 35-feet to 45-feet.

Proposed PD Plan and Standards:

The proposed amendment further modifies the phasing approach; Phase I has been completed, and Phase II is currently under construction. The remaining phases will include additional administrative office space, two apartment buildings containing 57 and 64 units (136 units total), a maintenance facility, outdoor amenity areas (including a playground and dog park), and associated parking and infrastructure.

Neighborhood Meeting:

Pursuant to Section 122-949, a neighborhood meeting is only required prior to filing an application for a new PD rezoning; a neighborhood meeting is not typically required to amend the PD.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:

The requested rezoning is consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the City of Ocala Future Land Use Element:

- 1. Future Land Use Element Policy 6.5: Employment Center. The intent of the Employment Center land use is to provide a regionally-important hub for business, enterprise, research and development, and employment activities. Employment Centers are generally single use districts, but may include more than one (1) use if there are appropriate buffers and transitions between complementary uses. Permitted uses shall include a primary use and may include a secondary use. Primary uses are industrial, office and commercial. Secondary uses are public, recreation, institutional, and residential, as well as educational facilities. There are no form requirements in this land use category.*

Access is primarily from major collectors, arterials, or limited-access highways. The primary modes of transportation include automobiles, trucks, freight rail, bus, and commuter rail transit. Provisions should be made for walking, bicycles, and transit.

There is no minimum density and intensity in this future land use category. The maximum density and intensity before any incentives is 24 dwelling units per gross acre or 2.00 FAR. The location and application of incentives shall be set forth in the Land Development Code.

Staff Comment:

The proposed request amends a previously approved PD; the only substantive changes are to increase the overall number of units, increase the maximum building height, and provide new architectural standards.

- The Employment Center FLU category requires a maximum density of 24 dwelling units per

acre. The revised PD Plan increases the proposed density from 15.47 to 21.48 dwelling units per acre. This density is still within the maximum allowed under the Employment Center FLU.

2. *Future Land Use Element Policy 7.2: City guidelines shall be context-sensitive to providing appropriate transitions between adjacent land uses with particular emphasis on building compatibility between neighborhoods and non-residential uses.*

Staff Comment:

The PD abuts commercial development to the south and is surrounded by undeveloped industrial and commercial acreage to the north, east, and west. The surrounding area is a major commercial corridor in proximity to the I-75 interchange.

- The amendment includes an increase in the maximum allowable building height from 35-feet to 45-feet, with three-story apartment buildings proposed on the north and south ends of the property. Adjacent zoning districts, B-2 and M-1, permit maximum building heights of 50-feet and 60-feet, respectively (Sec. 122-286). As such, the proposed increase in height is compatible with the scale and character of surrounding nonresidential development.

3. *Housing Element Policy 1.4: The City shall continue to allow special needs housing in all residential categories designated on the Official Zoning Map. This includes the availability of sites and infrastructure for special need residents such as the elderly, handicapped, and institutionalized.*

Staff Comment:

The PD provides transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness, and is intended to promote employment, housing stability, and long-term independence.

4. *Housing Element Policy 1.5: To meet the objective of providing dwelling units of varying types, sizes and costs throughout the city, the City shall permit, where appropriate, infill development of various housing types such as but not limited to apartments over garages, mother-in-law apartments, multi-generational housing, live-work units, and residential units above commercial activity.*

Staff Comment:

The proposed PD Plan includes both duplex units and apartment units as transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Consistency with Land Development Regulations:

The requested rezoning is consistent with the following Sections of the City of Ocala Code of Ordinances:

1. *Section 122-941(b): A rezoning to PD with a PD plan shall meet the following minimum requirements: (1) One-acre minimum site; (2) a five-acre or more site shall include at least two uses with any one use not less than ten percent (acreage or square footage) of the total site, except in the case of residential developments, which are permitted to be single-use; (3) must be located on a public roadway with at least 100 feet of frontage.*

Staff Comment: The subject property contains approximately 9.31 acres, the PD is proposed to include duplex and apartment units.

The acreage and frontage are not anticipated to change as a result of the amendment request.

2. Section 122-244 - District criteria: Zoning districts allowed under each land use classification.

Employment Center	O-1, OP, B-1, B-1A, B-2, B-2A, B-4, B-5, SC, M-1, M-2, M-3, G-U, INST, A-1, PD , FBC
--------------------------	---

Staff Comment: The current Employment Center Future Land Use category only permits residential units as part of a PD zoning district.

3. Section 122-942(a) – Planned Development Required Standards: In reaching recommendations and decisions as to rezoning land to a PD district and approving a conceptual site development plan, the planning and zoning commission and city council shall apply the following standards, in addition to the requirements of this chapter applicable to the rezoning of land generally:

(1) *Access. Every permitted use in a PD shall have access to a public street directly or via an approved private road, pedestrian way, court or other area dedicated to public or private use, or common element guaranteeing access.*

Staff Comment: The previously approved access to the site is not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request.

(2) *Buffers. When a PD abuts a less intensive use, it will be required to adhere to section 122-260, pertaining to buffer specifications, at a minimum. City council may require additional buffering based on individual circumstances.*

Staff Comment: The previously approved buffers and screening are not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request.

(3) *Underground utilities. Within a PD, all utilities, including telephone, television cable and electrical systems, shall be installed underground in accordance with current city policies and standards. Appurtenances to these systems which require above ground installation must be effectively screened, and thereby may be excluded from this requirement.*

Staff Comment: New onsite utilities shall be located underground such that tree installations are possible without conflict.

(4) *Open space. Open space requirements for a PD are as follows:*

a. *Open space shall include active and passive recreation areas such as courtyards, streetscapes/sidewalks, playgrounds, golf courses, waterways, landscaped yards and patios, lagoons, floodplains, nature trails, roof areas, and other similar open spaces. Water retention areas that are designed as aesthetic lakes or ponds for passive or active recreational use may also be counted as open space, as long as these areas are designed to retain a minimum of three feet of water at all times.*

Staff Comment: The previously approved amount of open space is not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request. The PD plan indicates that a minimum of 42.2% of the development will be preserved as open space (approximately 3.92 acres).

b. *Fenced water retention areas, open water areas beyond the perimeter of the site, street right-of-way, driveways, off-street parking areas and off-street loading areas shall not be counted in determining open space. Side yards less than six feet wide shall not be counted as open space.*

Staff Comment: The previously approved aggregate open space is not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request.

- c. Open space shall be clustered into larger tracts/areas. Buildings and structures should be clustered so that the open space is usable to the occupants/residents rather than merely providing spacing between buildings or structures. Zero lot line and clustered design is encouraged. Front, side and rear yards in single-family residential areas shall not be counted as aggregate open space.*

Staff Comment: The amendment request includes relocation of proposed amenity areas to cluster open space into usable recreation areas for residents. The previously approved amount of open space is not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request.

- d. There shall be a minimum open space requirement of 25 percent of the total gross acreage for all development in any PD project. For single-use residential PD projects, the minimum open space requirement shall be 40 percent. At least ten percent of the total required open space shall be in usable aggregate form. Aggregate open space is defined as common open space areas that are designed and intended for use by all occupants/residents of a PD.*

Staff Comment: The previously approved amount of open space is not anticipated to change as a result of this amendment request.

- (5) Unified control. The applicant shall furnish the city with sufficient evidence to the satisfaction of the city attorney that the applicant is in the complete, unified and otherwise-unencumbered control of the entire area of the proposed planned development, whether the applicant be an individual, partnership, corporation, other entity, group or agency. The applicant shall provide the city all necessary documents and information that may be required by the city attorney to assure the city that the development project may be lawfully completed according to the plans sought to be approved.*

Staff Comment: The agent submitted a Title Opinion and Statement of Unified Control to the City dated September 2025.

- (6) Phasing. City council may allow or require phasing of the proposed development. All phasing must be related to previous development, surrounding properties, and available public facilities and services, where a failure to proceed with subsequent phases of development will have no adverse impact on the completed phase(s) or surrounding properties.*

Staff Comment: The PD Plan and Standards Book proposes a revised four-phase development plan. Phase I, consisting of 20 duplex units with associated parking and infrastructure, has been completed. Phase II, currently under construction, includes a two-story apartment building with 59 multi-family units and a 1,460-square-foot administrative building, along with associated parking and infrastructure.

The remaining phases will include additional administrative office space, two apartment buildings containing 57 and 64 units (136 units total), a maintenance facility, outdoor amenity areas (including a playground and dog park), and associated parking and infrastructure. The timing of phasing will be determined at a future date.

- (7) Platting. All uses/parcels meeting the definition of a subdivision shall meet chapter 114 (subdivisions) requirements.*

Staff Comment: Subsequent to PD approval by City Council, a conceptual subdivision may be

submitted for review.

- (8) *Site plan review. Development requiring site plan review shall comply with Chapter 122, Article IV. A final site plan shall be consistent with a final development plan.*

Staff Comment: Site plan review shall occur as required with a designated phase of the development. Portions of the development may only be subject to subdivision requirements

- (9) *Development. A development meeting the criteria for a shopping center shall comply with all regulations as set forth in division 29 of chapter 122 (shopping centers) except for: subsections 122-908(7),(8) and (9) and 122-918(a)(l).*

Staff Comment: A shopping center is not proposed as part of the development schedule.

- (10) *Access to utility systems and public services. A PD shall be located in relation to sanitary sewer lines, water lines, storm/surface drainage systems, and other utility systems.*

Staff Comment: Utility services are outlined in detail in the Level of Service Analysis below. All utility services are located in proximity to the development.

Variations from Code of Ordinances

- There are no additional variations from the Code of Ordinances proposed as part of the amendment request. The existing PD was granted a variation from Section 122-1010(a)) to reduce the amount of parking required from 1.5 parking spaces to one parking space per unit.

Table 2: Existing and Proposed Zoning District Standards

	Zoning District	Intent and Purpose	Minimum Lot Width (feet)	Maximum Building Height (feet)
Existing	PD, Planned Development	Development of 144 units (single-family, two-family/duplex, and multi-family units)	N/A	35-feet
Proposed	PD, Planned Development	Development of 200 units (two-family/duplex and multi-family units)	N/A	45-feet

Staff Comment:

As previously stated, the existing PD was approved to provide transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. While the overall intent of the PD remains unchanged, the proposed amendment would increase the total number of units from 144 to 200 and the maximum allowable building height from 35-feet to 45-feet.

Section 4 - Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

Typically, an analysis of LOS impact based upon maximum potential buildout (density/intensity) is not realistic for a rezoning petition. For this rezoning, the proposed density and intensity for the PD are consistent with the Employment Center Future Land Use designation and represents a reduction in potential impacts compared to the maximum buildout allowed under the existing Future Land Use designation. Additionally, further detailed LOS impact analysis will be required to address the specific proposed development as part of subsequent application review.

For this staff report, the following LOS analysis provides a review of the potential impact on public facilities based upon the applicant’s request to increase the maximum number of units from 144 to 200, generating 56 additional units.

A. Required Public Facilities (adopted LOS standards in the comprehensive plan):

Transportation: The PD Plan depicts that the subject property has frontage along a city-owned right-of-way, connecting to W Silver Springs Boulevard (SR 40). The 2023 congestion management data from the Ocala-Marion TPO for the affected roadway(s) is provided below.

Table 3: Adopted LOS / Available Capacity:

Road/ Street Name	Lanes	Speed Limit	Functional Classification	Adopted LOS	LOS Capacity	2023 AADT	Existing LOS
SR 40	4	45 MPH	Arterial	D	38,430	32,200	C

Developments proposing to generate 100 or more net new PM peak hour trips are required to submit a traffic study as part of the development review process.

LOS Impact: The subject segment of State Road 40 is currently operating below the adopted LOS.

Potable Water: City utilities are available at this location; connections will be determined during the site plan review process. City water mains run along W Silver Springs Boulevard (SR 40) south of the project for connection.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Potable Water:* 300 gallons per day (gpd) per equivalent residential unit (ERU), or the equivalent of 167 gallons per capita daily (gpcd).
- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The permitted capacity of the City's water system is 24.4 million gallons daily (mgd).

LOS Impact: The amended PD Plan proposes an additional 56 units, which would generate an impact of 16,800 gpd (or 0.0168 mgd) at the current LOS. A capacity analysis will be required at the time of subdivision review for any future development.

Sanitary Sewer: City utilities are available at this location; connections will be determined during the site plan review process. City force mains run along W Silver Springs Boulevard (SR 40) south of the project for connection.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Sanitary Sewer:* 250 gallons per day (gpd) per equivalent residential unit (ERU), or the equivalent of 80 gallons per capita daily (gpcd).
- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The permitted capacity of Water Reclamation Facility #2 is 6.5 million gallons daily (mgd) and the permitted capacity of Water Reclamation Facility #3 is 4.0 million gallons daily (mgd).

LOS Impact: The amended PD Plan proposes an additional 56 units, which would generate an impact of 14,000 gpd (or 0.014 mgd) at the current LOS. Water Resources staff has indicated the approximate daily flows are 6.6 mgd leaving a remaining capacity of approximately 3.9 mgd; additional capacity analysis will be required at the time of subdivision and site plan review for any future development.

Solid Waste: The subject property is located within the City's service area; refuse pickup will be determined during the subdivision review process.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Solid Waste:* 3.54 pounds per capita per day for residential development.

LOS Impact: Solid waste is transported to facilities outside of the city, the capacity of these facilities is under other jurisdiction.

Parks and Recreation Facilities:

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Solid Waste:* 4.6 developed park acres per 1,000 population for each Regional Park Service Area (RPSA).
- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The City's population of 69,283 requires 318.70 developed park acres. The city currently owns and maintains 622.27 developed park acres, pursuant to the Spring 2025 Activity Guide released by the Recreation and Parks Department.

LOS Impact: Open space and resident amenities will be provided as part of the future development; however, the proposed rezoning may generate additional demand for park facilities within the City's northwest quadrant of the City. Additional capacity analysis will be required at the time of subdivision review for future development.

B. Other Public Facilities:

The following public facilities do not have adopted Level of Service standards and are provided as additional information.

Stormwater: The subject property contains isolated areas of Flood Zone A, which indicates a 1% annual chance of flooding. Any future development must retain runoff on-site to match pre-development conditions. Facilities must be designed to provide flood protection for a 100 year, 24-hour storm event and subsequent 14-day recovery.

Electric: The subject properties are within the Ocala Electric Utility service territory.

Fiber: Service is not currently available at this location.

Fire Service: Ocala Fire Rescue Station #4 is located approximately 1.8 miles from the subject property. This distance exceeds the desired industry standard of 1.5 miles for fire service.

Schools: The proposed amendment is anticipated to impact College Park Elementary, Howard Middle School, and Vanguard High School. The maximum units shown below in blue reflect the maximum allowable under the existing PD. The proposed units reflect the maximum allowable proposed by this amendment.

		DWELLING TYPE	Maximum Units	Proposed Units
		SFR	144	200
SCHOOL LEVEL	SCHOOL NAME	SFR STU GEN RATE	ESTIMATED STUDENTS	
E	College Park Elementary	0.107	16	22
M	Howard Middle School	0.043	7	9
H	Vanguard High School	0.071	11	15
		DWELLING TYPE	Maximum Units	Proposed Units
		MFR	144	200
SCHOOL LEVEL	SCHOOL NAME	MFR STU GEN RATE	ESTIMATED STUDENTS	
E	College Park Elementary	0.137	20	28
M	Howard Middle School	0.055	8	11
H	Vanguard High School	0.066	10	14

Staff Comment: Preliminary review of the Required Public Facilities does not indicate any capacity issues. Further LOS analysis will be required prior to any expansion or future redevelopment as part of subsequent site plan reviews.

Section 5 - Staff Findings and Recommendation

- The existing PD was approved to provide transitional housing and support services for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- The proposed amendment would increase the total number of units from 144 to 200 and the maximum allowable building height from 35-feet to 45-feet.
- The proposed amendment revises the development layout to reflect four phases; Phase I is complete and Phase II is currently under construction.
- The Employment Center FLU category requires a maximum density of 24 dwelling units per acre. The revised PD Plan increases the proposed density from 15.47 to 21.48 dwelling units per acre. This density is still within the maximum allowed under the Employment Center FLU.
- The PD Plan is consistent with the minimum standards for a PD District (Section 122-942).
- The proposed rezoning is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan, and the City’s Code of

Ordinances.

- City utilities are available at this location, and no level of service issues have been identified for public facilities as a result of the zoning amendment.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions of PD20-0003

- A final sign package, compliant with the approved PD Standards Book, shall be submitted with the Phase III site plan.