

## Planning & Zoning Commission

### Staff Report

Case No. SA9-20-00001

<b>Commission Meeting Date:</b>	April 5, 2021	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Orlanthia Henderson, Acting Planning and Zoning Manager	
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	Anna Casadei, AICP, Planning and Building Director	
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Staff recommends that the Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council.	

<b><u>SUBJECT:</u></b>	Public Hearing: La Villita Specific Plan
<b><u>SIZE:</u></b>	162 Acres
<b><u>LOCATION:</u></b>	The property is located on La Villita Road, south of Sahuarita Road, east of Interstate 19 and west of the Santa Cruz River.
<b><u>APPLICANT:</u></b>	The Planning Center
<b><u>OWNER:</u></b>	Green Valley 28 LLP



**ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS:**

	<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION</b>	<b>ZONING DESIGNATION</b>
<b>SUBJECT PROPERTY</b>	Vacant Land	Special Planning Area (Sahuarita Square), Growth Area	RH - Rural Homestead
<b>NORTH</b>	Partially Vacant and location of Los Arboles Mobile Home Park	Special Planning Area (Sahuarita Square)	GR-1 Rural Residential Zone and TH - Trailer Homestead
<b>SOUTH</b>	Vacant Land, Composting	Special Planning Area (Sahuarita Square)	SP- Specific Plan (Sahuarita Farms)
<b>EAST</b>	Agriculture	Special Planning Area (Sahuarita Square)	SP - Specific Plan (Sahuarita Farms)
<b>WEST</b>	Vacant Land	Specific Planned Communities	SP - Specific Plan (Rancho Sahuarita)

**PROPOSAL:**

The Planning Center on behalf of Green Valley 28 LLP is requesting approval of an application for a Specific Plan rezoning for an area of 162 acres within the Town limits. The intent of the proposal is to allow for a multi-phase community that with a mix of different housing types and other compatible non-residential uses to create a live-work-play environment. The proposed specific plan is comprised of one parcel under single ownership.

**BACKGROUND:**

Specific Plans are provided for in both Arizona Revised Statutes and the Sahuarita Zoning Code. The Town has significant history with specific plans. Rancho Sahuarita, Sahuarita Farms, Madera

Highlands and Quail Creek are all examples of the master planned developments governed by specific plans adopted by the Town.

The proposed La Villita Specific Plan site is located south of the Los Arboles Mobile Home Park on La Villita Road. The Sahuarita Farms Specific Plan area is located directly east and south of the project site; to the east is active pecan grove and to the south is vacant land and a composting facility. Vacant Rancho Sahuarita Specific Plan area is located directly to the west. Located southwest of the project is the Valle Verde Del Norte neighborhood, a 100-lot subdivision with one-acre lots.

Rancho Sahuarita Boulevard will serve as one of the main roadways serving this project; the other major roadway will be La Villita Road. A man-made berm surrounds most of the site and will be removed and addressed with major drainage channels incorporated throughout the project.

The specific plan project area contains 162 acres and includes opportunities for a variety of commercial uses and a multi-phase residential approach with a maximum of 1,200 residential units proposed. The project has six sub-areas with greater density placed along the La Villita corridor. The proposed residential sub-areas allow for flexibility in housing products and densities. The applicant anticipates the site to develop in three phases with the first phase including the area closest to La Villita Road. Exhibit II.J.1 in the Specific Plan (Page 35) shows the different phases proposed.

The proposal includes several opportunities for recreation and open space; the project will be held to the Town Recreation Design & Development Standards, including the Recreation Area Plan requirements once platting of subdivisions begins. The site has portions of riparian habitat located onsite which are tied to a man-made berm constructed years ago. The applicant submitted a Conservation Plan (Appendix B) that addressed the location of riparian habitat onsite and proposed mitigation measures to address and create new riparian habitat as well as recreational open space opportunities that complement riparian habitat areas.

### **DETAILS OF THE REQUEST:**

#### **Land Use**

The residential uses proposed include traditional detached and attached single-family homes as well as multi-family residential family units. A cap of 1,200 total residential units is proposed for the project. Commercial uses are restricted to Village Center sub areas A1, A2 and A3 (See Exhibit II.B.1, page 13). Each sub-area has an allowable density that includes a target number of dwelling units. Each sub area also has a zoning equivalent; Village Neighborhood equivalency is R-5

(Multiple Residence Zone) and Village Center equivalency is B-1 (Local Business Zone). The allowable densities vary dependent on the location of the sub area.

### Parks

The developer will submit Recreational Area Plans with subdivision plats in order to meet the Town Parks & Recreation standards. The project overall has identified two neighborhood parks measuring between 2-10 acres in size and pocket-parks scattered throughout the site (Exhibit II.I.2, page 32), each measuring approximately 1 acre or less. Parks will be provided in phases, with the first 2-10 acre neighborhood park being provided prior to completion of 10% of build out.

### Transportation

Exhibit II.C.1 (page 20) provides details of traffic circulation and utilities for the project. The developer will dedicate rights-of-way in accordance with the Town's Major Streets and Routes Policy Manual. The developer will build all the roadways within the development that are necessary to meet the demands of the development. The developer will extend La Villita Road along the east frontage of the project and connect Rancho Sahuarita Boulevard from the west property line of project through to La Villita Road. The applicant has indicated all roadways will be public with a possibility of gated subdivisions; in those cases, the roads will be private.

Off-site transportation infrastructure improvements are necessary and are being required through a development agreement, which will require Town Council approval concurrent with the Specific Plan.

### Water, Sewer and Other Infrastructure

A water provider for the project will be determined prior to approval of the first Development Plan or subdivision plat. The project is in the Farmers Water Company service area. The developer will enter into an agreement with the Water Utility designated by the State of Arizona Department of Water Resources as having an assured water supply. The developer has agreed to extend water and sewer along La Villita Road from the intersection of Sahuarita Road and La Villita. This project will be served by the Town of Sahuarita Wastewater Utility; a Sewer Master Plan will be provided with the first future Development Plan or subdivision plat for the project and updated as needed.

### Conservation and Sustainability

The site consists of previously cleared agricultural land with riparian habitat located along a berm found the length of the west property line. The developer provided the Town with a Riparian Habitat Conservation Plan (Appendix B, page 93) to address the riparian habitat found onsite.

The developer is also recreating habitat along La Villita Road in conjunction with recreational facilities planned for the project.

### Regulatory Development Standards

The specific plan proposal includes two land use groups, Village Center and Village Neighborhood. Details of each group are found in Section III, (page 37) of the specific plan. Each land use has a zoning equivalency of either B-1 (Local Business Zone), or R-5 (Multiple Residence Zone).

### GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE:

The La Villita Specific Plan is in conformance with the Town of Sahuarita General Plan. There were several factors that went into making the General Plan conformance determination:

- The proposed land uses are consistent with the General Plan Special Planning Area map. The Specific Plan meets several General Plan goals and policies.
  - LU-2: Encourage efficient development patterns  
This project uses the approach of Specific Plan development as encouraged in General Plan Policy LU-2.1, it also provides a mixture of land uses that promote mixed residential, non-residential and recreation and open space opportunities for future residents. It also will serve as a bridge between two specific plans, promoting connectivity between the Rancho Sahuarita Specific Plan and the Sahuarita Farms Specific Plan communities.
  - LU-4.1: Strongly encourage a wide range of housing products  
This project encourages a wide range of housing types and at different densities throughout the Specific Plan. – The project provides opportunities for a variety of densities and housing types to support this land use Goal.
  - GA-1: Encourage growth to occur in areas suitable for development.  
This project will complement the Sahuarita Square catalyst project and expand and develop connectivity along La Villita Road with roadway extensions and pedestrian enhancements.
- The proposal is compatible with adjacent land uses and Specific Plans.
- The proposal is compatible with the Sahuarita Square District special planning area with its goals of creating an attractive destination and offering a mix of uses. The proposed mixture of varying density residential uses along with non-residential uses will provide the area with variety and liveliness. Sahuarita Square District goals were addressed with the discouraging of auto-related uses in the Specific Plan as well as by providing residential density minimums for certain sub-areas..

**CONCLUSION:**

The La Villita Specific Plan represents a great opportunity to put into place a portion of the “community puzzle.” Staff analysis focused on the land uses proposed, the procedures outlined in the Specific Plan and the question of infrastructure and community facilities proposed to meet needs of the community. The Specific Plan area will be developed over time and will be tied to a development agreement. Staff is currently negotiating the development agreement and is close to finalizing the document that will address aspects of the specific plan in greater detail, including infrastructure improvements and other developer requirements.

Overall, staff finds the proposed La Villita Specific Plan is in the best interest of the Town. It complements existing specific plans for the area and assists in implementation of the Sahuarita Square District Special Planning Area. It provides for additional growth within a designated General Plan Growth Area and provides for transportation improvement and expansion in an area with future planning already in place. Staff supports the proposed La Villita Specific Plan.

**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION:**

Zoning Code Section 18.90.060 provides the process for new Specific Plans. The procedure includes a public hearing by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall hold a public hearing, at which all interested parties shall be heard. The Commission may recommend conditions to protect the public health, safety and welfare, and may recommend regulations unique to the plan. After the public hearing, the Commission’s findings and recommendations are transmitted to the Town Council. The Town Council will hold a public hearing and will make a decision on the request.

**PUBLIC NOTICE and COMMENT:**

The applicant held a pre-application meeting with Town staff on September 17, 2019, staff encouraged the applicant to coordinate with the local school district during the pre-application meeting; to date, school district comments have not been submitted to the Town. The applicant held a public neighborhood meeting for the project on February 6, 2020 at Anamax Park Recreation Center, minutes and sign-in sheet are attached.

Public notice for the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting was provided in the Green Valley News on March 21, 2021. The site was posted with a 4 foot by 8 foot sign on March 18, 2021. Mailed notice was provided to all property owners within 600 feet of the proposed Specific Plan. No public input has been received at the time of this report’s publishing. Comments that are received by staff will be provided to the Commission at the April 5, 2021 public hearing.

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

The Commission shall hold a public hearing to determine whether this is in the best interest of the Town of Sahuarita and its residents, and make a motion to forward a recommendation to the Town Council.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the Town Council in favor of adoption of the La Villita Specific Plan.

**SUGGESTED MOTION:**

I move to recommend approval of case number SA9-20-001, the La Villita Specific Plan, as presented by staff.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

Digital attachments include:

- La Villita Specific Plan Application
- Applicant Neighborhood Meeting Sign-in sheet
- Applicant Neighborhood Meeting Notes
- La Villita Specific Plan
- La Villita Final Traffic Report
- La Villita Specific Plan Land Use Map