



City of Phoenix

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

ADDENDUM A **Staff Report: Z-62-18-2** **Verdin PUD** April 26, 2022

<u>North Gateway</u> Village Planning Committee Meeting Date	March 10, 2022
<u>Desert View</u> Village Planning Committee Meeting Date	April 5, 2022
<u>Planning Commission</u> Hearing Date	May 5, 2022
Request From	S-1 DCOD (Ranch or Farm Residence, Desert Character Overlay District) (144.82 acres), S-1 (Ranch or Farm Residence) (333.57 acres), RE-35 DCOD (Single-Family Residence District, Desert Character Overlay District) (10.24 acres)
Request To	PUD DCOD (Pending PUD) (Planned Unit Development, Desert Character Overlay District, pending Planned Unit Development) (155.06 acres), PUD (Planned Unit Development) (333.57 acres)
Proposed Use	Planned Unit Development to allow single-family residential
Location	Southwest corner of the 24th Street alignment and Sonoran Desert Drive
Owner	MacEwen Ranch, LLC
Applicant	Taylor Morrison/Arizona, Inc.
Representative	Susan Demmitt, Gammage & Burnham, PLC
Staff Recommendation	Approval, subject to stipulations

The purpose of this addendum is to revise the staff recommended stipulations, as requested by the applicant:

- Modification to the maximum number of dwelling units and addition of that number to the development standards,
- Modifications to the height of primary ornamental entry signs,
- Modifications to the plant palette,
- Addition of public trail access easements for the Mesquite Wash Corridor Trail and Community Paseo Paths,
- Requirement for a trail and easement along the Mesquite Wash,
- Addition of a 25-foot-wide open space tract along the eastern boundary of the property,

- Dedication of 16 acres at the southeast corner of the property to the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department.

Additionally, this addendum provides community correspondence received since the staff report was published.

The North Gateway Village Planning Committee (VPC) heard this request on March 10, 2022, and recommended approval with modifications by a 4-1 vote. The modifications included revisions to the development name and date stamp in Stipulation No. 1. During the meeting, discussion occurred regarding the proposal – both support and concerns – such as compatibility with standards outlined in the Desert Character Overlay District, density, and guidelines for a development adjacent to the Sonoran Preserve. Since this meeting, Taylor Morrison has worked with the community to revise standards in the Development Narrative.

The Desert View VPC heard this request on April 5, 2022, and recommended approval with modifications and additional stipulations by a 10-1 vote. The modifications included the following:

- Revisions to the development name and date stamp in Stipulation No. 1,

The additional VPC recommended stipulations included the following:

- Modifications to reflect a maximum overall unit count of 1,250 units and a maximum overall density of 2.6 units per acre,
- Removal of the Small Lot (SFR-3) land use district,
- Addition of a minimum 25-foot-wide open space tract along the eastern boundary of the property,
- Addition of public trail access easements for the Mesquite Wash Corridor Trail and Community Paseo Paths,
- Requirement for a trail and easement along the Mesquite Wash.

During the meeting, discussion occurred regarding the proposal, specifically noting protection of Cave Creek Wash, additional housing product, retention of the Desert Character Overlay District, groundwater issues, and sensitivity to natural wildlife.

Dwelling Units

The applicant has requested to decrease the maximum number of units for the proposal from 1,420 to 1,250 dwelling units, thus changing the overall density from 3.0 to 2.6 dwelling units per acre. Therefore, staff is recommending that Stipulation Nos. 1.a and 1.b require the maximum unit count and overall density to be updated throughout the Development Narrative.

Additionally, the dwelling units and development parcel allocation are outlined in Section 4, Regulatory Standards and Land Use Districts, of the Development Narrative. Stipulation Nos. 1.i and 1.j require the maximum unit count and a footnote referencing the development parcel allocation table be added to the Single-Family Land Use District Development Standards table.

Land Use Districts

The proposal utilizes land use districts as an alternative to traditional zoning districts. Each land use district regulates the product type and development standards. After discussions with the community and VPC, the applicant decided to remove the Single-Family Residential – Small Lot (SFR-3) district and focus on districts with larger lots. The SFR-3 district would have accommodated attached and detached single-family dwellings on minimum 3,000 square foot lots and had the highest density attainable in the development. Stipulation No. 1.c requires any references to the SFR-3 district to be removed from the Development Narrative and the applicant will update unit counts and percentages accordingly.

Signage

The applicant had clarified that the maximum lettering and copy height for the Primary Ornamental Entry signs is 16 feet to accommodate grading issues and being directly adjacent to Sonoran Desert Drive, a major arterial that will have a total of 6 lanes in the future. Stipulation Nos. 1.k and 1.s ensure that the correct height is formalized in the Development Narrative.

Plant Palette

The Development Narrative contains a plant palette that lists desert plants typically found in the Sonoran Desert of north Phoenix. The green list includes desert plants allowed within all areas of the PUD, as well as open space and common areas immediately adjacent to the edges of the subject site. The yellow list includes Sonoran Desert native and non-native plants that are representative of southwestern deserts. The yellow list plants may be used within all areas of the PUD, except for open spaces and common areas immediately adjacent to the edges of the subject site.

The applicant clarified two modifications to the proposed plant palette: removal of “Chilopsis Linearis – Desert Willow” from the green list and addition to the yellow list and removal of “Celtis Reticulata – Nettleleaf Hackberry” from the yellow list and addition to the green list. Stipulation Nos. 1.m, 1.n, 1.q, and 1.r formalize the changes to the plant palette.

The applicant has collaborated with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) to determine an appropriate plant palette for the development and the NWF has approved the plant palette. Stipulation No. 1.e to removes the word “approved” from any references to the plant palette. This change will avoid confusion since the plant palette has not been approved by the City’s Landscape Architect.

Trails, Easements, and Open Space

The development will have a public trail (Mesquite Wash Trail) developed along the Mesquite Wash Corridor. The Mesquite Wash Trail will be a 12-foot-wide natural surface multi-use public trail within a 30-foot-wide public multi-use trail easement along

the east side of the wash. Stipulation No. 7 formalizes the requirement and ensures that the trail is accessible to the public and built to Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) standards. Additionally, Stipulation No. 1.d ensures that the width of the multi-use trail easement is revised to 30-foot-wide throughout the Development Narrative.

After the North Gateway VPC meeting, the applicant negotiated additional modifications regarding easements and open space along the east side of the site with a member of the City of Phoenix Sonoran Preserve and Mountain Parks/Preserve Committee.

Public trail access easements will be provided for the Mesquite Wash Corridor Trail and Community Paseo Paths that provide connections to the Sonoran Preserve, as depicted on the Pedestrian Circulation Plan. These easements will ensure public access to the Preserve and restrict unauthorized motor vehicle access through the subject site to the Sonoran Preserve. Additionally, determination of the location and design elements of the trail connections will be coordinated with the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department. Stipulation Nos. 1.g and 1.i formalize these changes in the Development Narrative. Additionally, Stipulation No. 6 ensures that the trail is accessible to the public as discussed in the Development Narrative.

The applicant also proposes a minimum 25-foot open space tract along the eastern boundary of the subject site to provide a transition to the Cave Creek Wash corridor. Additionally, the open space tract will be considered a Certified Area Type "B" – Natural Revegetated Area which will include plant materials from the Plant Palette: Green List. Stipulation No. 1.p ensure that the open space tract is discussed in the section of the Development Narrative regarding the Certified Area Type "B". Stipulation No. 1.o updates the Certified Area Open Space Types exhibit to show the 25-foot open space tract.

The applicant also indicated that they are willing to dedicate approximately 16 acres at the southeast corner of the development to the City's Parks and Recreation Department for inclusion into the Sonoran Preserve. Stipulation No. 1.f ensures that language will be added to the Development Narrative discussing the dedication and Stipulation No. 8 requires the applicant to continue working with the Parks and Recreation Department to formalize the dedication.

Proposition 207 Waiver

Staff has not received a completed form for the Waiver of Claims for Diminution in Value of Property under Proposition 207 (A.R.S. 12-1131 et seq.), as required by the rezoning application process. Therefore, a stipulation has been added to require the form be completed and submitted prior to preliminary site plan approval. This is addressed in Stipulation No. 12.

Community Correspondence

Since the staff report was published, staff has received 37 items of correspondence. The correspondence is attached to this addendum.

Stipulations

Staff recommends approval per the modified stipulations below:

1. An updated Development Narrative for the ~~Sendero Foothills~~ VERDIN PUD reflecting the changes approved through this request shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Department within 30 days of City Council approval of this request. The updated Development Narrative shall be consistent with the Development Narrative date stamped ~~November 29, 2024~~ MARCH 3, 2022, as modified by the following stipulations:
 - a. ~~MODIFY THE VERDIN PUD DOCUMENT AS NECESSARY TO REFLECT A MAXIMUM OVERALL UNIT COUNT OF 1,250 UNITS AND A MAXIMUM OVERALL DENSITY OF 2.6 UNITS PER ACRE.. PAGES 6, 8, 26, AND 28: REVISE ALL REFERENCES TO THE MAXIMUM DENSITY TO 2.6 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE.~~
 - b. ~~MODIFY THE VERDIN PUD DOCUMENT AS NECESSARY TO REMOVE THE SMALL LOT (SFR-3) LAND USE DISTRICT. PAGES 6, 8, 26, AND 28: REVISE ALL REFERENCES TO THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF UNITS TO 1,250 DWELLING UNITS.~~
 - c. ~~MODIFY THE VERDIN PUD DOCUMENT AS NECESSARY TO REFLECT A MINIMUM 25-FOOT OPEN SPACE TRACT PROVIDED ALONG THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE VERDIN PROPERTY TO PROVIDE A TRANSITION TO THE CAVE CREEK WASH CORRIDOR. THE OPEN SPACE TRACT SHALL BE CONSIDERED A CERTIFIED AREA TYPE "B" – NATURAL REVEGETATED AREA WITH PLANT MATERIALS FROM THE VERDIN PUD PLANT LIST: GREEN LIST. PAGES 23, 26, 28, 29, 35, 36, 59, 63, 75, 134, 135, AND 136: REMOVE ALL REFERENCES TO THE "SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL – SMALL LOT (SFR-3)" LAND USE DISTRICT. UNIT COUNTS AND PERCENTAGES RELATED TO THIS REMOVAL SHALL BE UPDATED ACCORDINGLY.~~
 - d. PAGES 20, 52, 61, 102, AND 113: REVISE ALL REFERENCES TO THE WIDTH OF THE MULTI-USE TRAIL EASEMENT ALONG THE MESQUITE WASH CORRIDOR TO 30-FEET-WIDE.
 - e. PAGES 51, 71, 75, 76, 83, 86, 87, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 119, AND 121: REVISE ALL REFERENCES TO THE "APPROVED PLANT PALETTE" TO "PLANT PALETTE".

- f. **PAGES 8-22, SECTION 2. LAND USE PLAN, AND PAGES 97-123, SECTION 9. CERTIFIED OPEN SPACE DESIGN GUIDELINES: ADD LANGUAGE REGARDING CONVEYANCE OF APPROXIMATELY 16 ACRES ADDRESSED IN STIPULATION NO. 8. THERE SHALL BE A PROVISION FOR BOTH ON SITE OPEN SPACE AND THE DEDICATED 16 ACRES TO COUNT TOWARDS TOTAL OPEN SPACE.**

- g. **PAGE 16, OFF-SITE CONNECTIVITY: ADD LANGUAGE REGARDING PUBLIC TRAIL ACCESS EASEMENTS PROVIDED FOR THE MESQUITE WASH CORRIDOR TRAIL AND COMMUNITY PASEO PATHS, PER STIPULATION NO. 6. THE SECTION SHALL SPECIFICALLY NOTE THAT THE ACCESS EASEMENTS WILL ENSURE PERMANENT PUBLIC ACCESS AND RESTRICT UNAUTHORIZED MOTOR VEHICLE ACCESS THROUGH THE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY TO THE SONORAN PRESERVE.**

- h. Page 23, Section 1.d.Accessory uses.(1): Revise to read, “permanent
- d. and/or temporary alcoholic beverage and/or food sales and/or consumption;”

- i. **PAGE 35, SINGLE-FAMILY LAND USE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS TABLE: ADD A ROW AFTER MAX. DWELLING UNIT DENSITY THAT READS “MAXIMUM UNITS: 1,250 DWELLING UNITS FOR THE ENTIRE PUD AREA”.**

- j. **PAGES 36-37, SINGLE-FAMILY LAND USE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS TABLE: ADD A FOOTNOTE THAT REFERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT PARCEL ALLOCATION TABLE IN SECTION 4.C. (REGULATORY STANDARDS & LAND USE DISTRICTS – DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS) FOR THE MAXIMUM UNIT COUNTS FOR EACH DEVELOPMENT PARCEL.**

- k. **PAGE 41, SECTION 6.1: REVISE TO READ, “WHEN NOT PROHIBITED BY CITY CODE, SECTION 31-13, PRIMARY ORNAMENTAL ENTRIES NO HIGHER THAN 16-FEET ARE ALLOWED...”**

- l. **PAGES 52-53, SECTION 2.C: ADD LANGUAGE REGARDING PUBLIC TRAIL ACCESS EASEMENTS PROVIDED FOR THE MESQUITE WASH CORRIDOR TRAIL AND COMMUNITY PASEO PATHS, PER STIPULATION NO. 6. THE SECTION SHOULD SPECIFICALLY NOTE THAT THE ACCESS EASEMENTS WILL ENSURE PERMANENT PUBLIC ACCESS AND RESTRICT UNAUTHORIZED MOTOR VEHICLE ACCESS THROUGH THE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY TO THE SONORAN PRESERVE.**

- m. **PAGES 90-91, SECTION 6.H: DELETE “CHILOPSIS LINEARIS – DESERT WILLOW” TREE FROM THE GREEN LIST AND ADD IT TO THE YELLOW LIST TREES ON PAGE 91.**
 - n. **PAGES 90 AND 92, SECTION 6.H: DELETE “CELTIS RETICULATA – NETLEAF HACKBERRY” SHRUB FROM THE YELLOW LIST AND ADD IT TO THE GREEN LIST SHRUBS ON PAGE 90.**
 - o. **PAGE 101, CERTIFIED AREA OPEN SPACE TYPES EXHIBIT. UPDATE THE EXHIBIT TO INCLUDE THE 25-FOOT OPEN SPACE TRACT THAT WILL BE PROVIDED ALONG THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE SITE AS A CERTIFIED AREA TYPE “B” – NATURAL REVEGETATED AREA.**
 - p. **PAGE 105-108, SECTION 1.D.2: ADD LANGUAGE REGARDING THE MINIMUM 25-FOOT OPEN SPACE TRACT THAT WILL BE PROVIDED ALONG THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE A TRANSITION TO THE CAVE CREEK WASH CORRIDOR. EXPLAIN THAT THE AREA’S PLANT MATERIAL WILL BE FROM THE PLANT PALETTE GREEN LIST.**
 - q. **PAGES 119 AND 121, 1.E. PLANT AND WILDLIFE RELATIONSHIP MATRIX, PLANT PALETTE: GREEN LIST: REMOVE THE IMAGE AND INFORMATION REGARDING “CHILOPSIS LINEARIS – DESERT WILLOW” AND ADD TO THE PLANT PALETTE: YELLOW LIST ON PAGE 121.**
 - r. **PAGES 119 AND 122, 1.E. PLANT AND WILDLIFE RELATIONSHIP MATRIX, PLANT PALETTE: YELLOW LIST: REMOVE THE IMAGE INFORMATION REGARDING “CELTIS RETICULATA – NETLEAF HACKBERRY” AND ADD TO THE PLANT PALETTE: GREEN LIST ON PAGE 119.**
 - s. **PAGE 123, SECTION 10.1.B: REVISE TO READ, “THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT FOR PRIMARY ORNAMENTAL ENTRY SIGN LETTERING AND COPY IS 16 FEET...”**
2. The applicant shall submit a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) to the City for this development. No preliminary approval of plans shall be granted until the study is reviewed and approved by the City. The TIS shall provide signal warrant analysis for development access points along Sonoran Desert Drive as well as 7th Street and Dove Valley Road. The developer will be responsible for all additional dedications and/or roadway and signal improvements as identified by the approved study.

3. The developer shall submit Master Street Design and Phasing Plans for each Development Unit, as required by Section 636, Planned Community District (PCD), of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance.
4. All designated public roadways shall meet the City of Phoenix Storm Water Design Manual Standards for wash crossings.
5. The developer shall construct all streets within and adjacent to the development with paving, curb, gutter, sidewalk, curb ramps, streetlights, median islands, landscaping, and other incidentals as per plans approved by the Planning and Development Department. All improvements shall comply with all ADA accessibility standards.
6. ~~THE DEVELOPER SHALL WORK WITH THE CITY OF PHOENIX PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE PUBLIC TRAIL ACCESS EASEMENTS FOR THE MESQUITE WASH CORRIDOR TRAIL AND COMMUNITY PASEO PATHS THAT PROVIDE CONNECTION TO THE SONORAN PRESERVE AS DEPICTED ON EXHIBIT 6, PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION PLAN, IN THE PUD DOCUMENT~~ **DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVE, AS MODIFIED AND APPROVED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.** THE PUBLIC ACCESS SHALL BE DESIGNED TO RESTRICT UNAUTHORIZED MOTOR VEHICLE ACCESS, AS APPROVED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT **AND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.** THE LOCATION AND DESIGN OF TRAIL CONNECTIONS SHALL BE COORDINATED WITH THE ~~CITY OF PHOENIX~~ **PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.**
7. A MINIMUM 12-FOOT-WIDE MULTI-USE TRAIL (MUT) SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED WITHIN AN ~~AVERAGE~~ 30-FOOT-WIDE MULTI-USE TRAIL EASEMENT (MUTE) ALONG THE MESQUITE WASH IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 429 OF THE CITY OF PHOENIX MAG SUPPLEMENTAL DETAIL, AS MODIFIED TO ADDRESS WASH CORRIDOR CONSTRAINTS AND APPROVED BY THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.
8. **THE DEVELOPER SHALL CONVEY APPROXIMATELY 16 ACRES LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE SITE WITHIN THE EROSION HAZARD SETBACK AREA ALONG THE CAVE CREEK WASH CORRIDOR, AS GENERALLY SHOWN ON EXHIBIT 11 OF THE DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVE, TO THE CITY OF PHOENIX FOR INCLUSION IN THE SONORAN PRESERVE, AS MODIFIED AND APPROVED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. THE FINAL ACREAGE AND CONFIGURATION OF THE PROPERTY TO BE CONVEYED, ALONG WITH TIMING OF THE CONVEYANCE, SHALL BE MUTUALLY AGREED UPON**

**BY THE DEVELOPER, THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT,
AND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.**

9. If determined necessary by the Phoenix Archaeology Office, the applicant shall
8. conduct Phase I data testing and submit an archaeological survey report of the development area for review and approval by the City Archaeologist prior to clearing and grubbing, landscape salvage, and/or grading approval.
10. If Phase I data testing is required, and if, upon review of the results from the
9. Phase I data testing, the City Archaeologist, in consultation with a qualified archaeologist, determines such data recovery excavations are necessary, the applicant shall conduct Phase II archaeological data recovery excavations.
11. In the event archaeological materials are encountered during construction, the
40. developer shall immediately cease all ground-disturbing activities within a 33-foot radius of the discovery, notify the City Archaeologist, and allow time for the Archaeology Office to properly assess the materials.
12. **PRIOR TO PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL, THE LANDOWNER SHALL EXECUTE A PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER OF CLAIMS FORM. THE WAIVER SHALL BE RECORDED WITH THE MARICOPA COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE AND DELIVERED TO THE CITY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REZONING APPLICATION FILE FOR RECORD.**

Exhibits

Community Correspondence (75 pages)

[Verdin PUD](#) Development Narrative date stamped March 3, 2022

From: [Don Bessler](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#); [Joshua Bednarek](#)
Subject: Verdin
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 8:12:11 PM

Hello I am a Phoenix resident in the area and I am also a small business owner of a consulting company P3

from Donald Bessler to Host (privately): 7:22 PM

Systems Management. P3 is the nexus of People - Planet-Profit. P3 understands that generational solutions reside in understanding the reality of the codependency of these three perspectives. In my career, I have been responsible for developing critical habitat management programs including Sonoran Desert Preservation plans, Urban Forestry Plans, Sustainability Plans and Resiliency Planning. In reviewing the proposal and listening to the presentations, the consultants and developers have thoughtfully considered the place and the surroundings. My wife and I are avid users of the trails in the preserve, Sidewinder trail, Ocotillo.... We have always believed that the area under discussion would become housing; frankly, as parents of a young man, graduate of ASU and gainfully employed, we are heartbroken by the reality he faces with home ownership due to a high demand and short supply. While this product isn't likely to be first home ownership, the domino effect of residents moving up will free up the housing stock for newer buyers.

from Donald Bessler to Host (privately): 7:22 PM

I want to enter my support for the project.

from Joshua Bednarek to Donald Bessler (privately): 7:28 PM

Thank you, Donald. Would it be possible to send your comments to Julianna Pierre at julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov? That way we could have your comments for the record.

from Donald Bessler to Host & Presenter: 8:04 PM

please enter my previous comments into the record

--

Donald Bessler, PWLF
President



3/10/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II -Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:

As a local business owner in the North Phoenix area, I am writing to you to let you know that I support Taylor Morrison's Verdin project and am looking forward to welcoming these residents to the area.

As you know, the North Phoenix area is growing rapidly as an important employment corridor within the Greater Phoenix area. With this growth and development, additional housing stock is needed to serve those who will not only work in the area, but who also desire to live in the area. Housing is already competitive with a deficit to meet current demand, much less future demand with the emerging industry coming to this part of Phoenix.

Moreover, patronage to businesses in this area is an important part of the local economic fabric. Our local business will benefit with additional residential opportunities as those working in the area can also live in the area instead of simply commuting for work. This creates not only stronger financial investment, but also emotional investment into our community and fosters the work, live, play environment.

We look forward to welcoming the Taylor Morrison Verdin project and its diverse future residents to the area.

Sincerely,

Craig Jack - Anytime Fitness

29855 N Tatum Blvd
480-681-5200

3/10/22

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II -Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:

I understand that Taylor Morrison's Verdin development proposal is coming before you soon and, as a local business owner in the area, I am writing to you to let you know that I support and endorse Taylor Morrison's single-family residential community plans and the significant investment in infrastructure and roads that will benefit the area.

With ongoing development in the North Phoenix area, it has become evident that additional infrastructure is needed to support current and future residents and local businesses. It is my understanding that Taylor Morrison's Verdin proposal will bring substantial infrastructure improvements to the area – including extension of water and sewer lines and much needed relief to the intersection of Cave Creek Road and Sonoran Desert Drive in addition to a significant financial contribution to build out Sonoran Desert Drive. These investments in our community are welcome and vital to keeping local businesses running and accessible.

We look forward to the thoughtful development of this property and continued growth and success of this area.

Sincerely,



Ashley Oliver

602 882 0292

Mason Jar
Boutique

Ron Reeder

Center Owner

PostNet of Cave Creek, AZ
29834 N. Cave Creek Rd, #118
Cave Creek, AZ 85331

480.419.6999

480.419.9233

AZ111@postnet.com

postnet.com/az111



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3/10/2022

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Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II -Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:


As a local business owner in the North Phoenix area, I am writing to express my support for Taylor Morrison's single-family residential Verdin proposal.

As a local employer, I understand that it is important to have housing options available to employees near where they work. This helps with employee recruitment and retention and also helps attract and retain customers as people enjoy patronizing establishments with deep roots in the community. In these challenging times, as employers, we have a harder time finding employees and it is important for the City to support housing that, in turn, directly supports the success of local businesses.

We look forward to welcoming the Taylor Morrison Verdin project as it will support the needs of our community socially and from a business perspective.

Comments :

Sincerely,


PostNet, Owner

3/10/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

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We look forward to welcoming the Taylor Morrison Verdin project as it will support the needs of our community socially and from a business perspective.

Comments :

Smoke & Joe

Coffee & Cigars

Sincerely,



Suite 115

3/10/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
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Julianna Pierre
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Moreover, patronage to businesses in this area is an important part of the local economic fabric. Our local business will benefit with additional residential opportunities as those working in the area can also live in the area instead of simply commuting for work. This creates not only stronger financial investment, but also emotional investment into our community and fosters the work, live, play environment.

We look forward to welcoming the Taylor Morrison Verdin project and its diverse future residents to the area.

Sincerely,

Wala Beeman
manager

Titan Cleaners

*29850 N Tatum Blvd
#103*

From: [Wiele, Larry](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: North Village Planning Committee Comment
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 2:53:36 PM

Julianna

I now understand that these comments were due 48 hours prior to the meeting.

While this comment may not become part of the record, I still would like to express my opinion that while we may not be able to prevent development on private land adjacent to the Sonoran Preserve, the Village Planning Committee and the City of Phoenix can and should maintain strict Planning Guidelines and insist that developers of land within the City of Phoenix follow the planning guidelines that were established to maintain the desert characteristics and minimize the impacts on our natural resources.

Thanks

Larry Wiele
2413 W Horsetail Trail
Phoenix, AZ 85085

From: [Vashti Supplee](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#); [Jarod Rogers](#)
Subject: Verdin Z-TA-5-18-2 (Companion Cases Z-62-18-2, Z-75-18-2, and GPA-DSTV-1-18-2)
Date: Friday, March 11, 2022 10:05:55 AM

Hello Julianna- I listened to the presentations at the Gateway Village Planning Committee meeting March 10th. I have also been in conversation with Alex Stedman concerning the public trails and edge treatments. I consider the efforts by the Verdin team to be excellent and I agree with the Staff Recommendation with one addition.

The public access trails are a later addition and will end in a wonderful amenity to Verdin residents and the general recreation public seeking access to the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve. A stipulation should be added to the zoning that specifically designates Mesquite Wash as a public access corridor through the Verdin project and that designated access points from the Verdin project to the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve will be maintained as public access in cooperation with the Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department.

Phoenix Parks and Recreation may be able to provide better specific wording. The end objective is to have the public access trails as a condition of the rezoning. I have copied Jarod Rogers with Phoenix Parks and Recreation.

Sincerely,
Vashti (Tice) Supplee
918 W. Roosevelt Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

602-380-3722
vsupplee25@gmail.com

From: [Adam Stranieri](#)
To: [PDD Zoning](#); [Gregory L Harmon](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: RE: emplansd - Form Submission
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:14:49 AM

Hi Julianna,

Please see below for correspondence regarding Verdin and the associated cases. Please file accordingly.



Thank you,
Adam Stranieri, Planner III
City of Phoenix
Planning & Development Department
Planning Division, Zoning Section
Office: 602-262-7142
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003

From: no-reply@phoenix.gov <no-reply@phoenix.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 2:53 PM
To: PDD Development Services <pdd@phoenix.gov>
Subject: emplansd - Form Submission

FROM : Mandy R Fellows

SUBJECT : Verdin Development, Case #'s Z-62-18-2, GPA-DSTV-1-18-2, Z-TA-5-18, Z75-18-2

MESSAGE : Hello,

Taylor-Morrison (TM) would have you believe the Desert Character Overlay Sub-Districts A and B are just "technical Clean-ups" as stated on their website. As if the City of Phoenix didn't already spend MILLIONS in studies saying specifically how the area should be developed. They'd like to tell you it was suppose to be amended when the Sonoran Desert Pkwy alignment was built. If that were the case, why do they need an amendment to change it then?

Its not a matter of being against development - its a matter of following the rules already set in place by many years and many dollars used to study this area!

Taylor- Morrison needs to revise their PUD to be in alignment with the Overlays and current Zoning ordinances, not the other way around! Its going to cost the City millions to run the infrastructure needed for this development, not to mention DESTROYING miles and miles of Preserve for this leap-frog development.

TM will tell you that the proposed density of 1,420 in the middle of the desert, a leap-frog

development at that, can only be profitable with those numbers.....then clearly they are the ones trying to fool you. With current housing sales and prices, a developer such as Toll Brothers would absolutely have no problem developing 1-2 units per acre, selling them at 1.5M and turning a nice profit.

I'm sure this letter will fall on deep pockets and deaf-ears, as we have all been conditioned by these mega-corporations to only care about profits.

However, the Planning and Developments DUTY is to uphold the years and years of studies, decisions, and plans that are in place for this area!

In addition, due to the exact location between to major washes and floodplains, I formally request that FEMA due a study regarding the amount of fill dirt that will be removed and impacting the designated flood areas. I hope the Planning and Development doesn't put undo lives in the middle of tragedy when those two low lying bridges get washed out and the residents have no way to escape, seeing as their access roads are between the two bridges!

Again - lets not talk Units until we've talked about Lives!

Thank you for your attention,

Mandy Fellows
Phoenix Resident since 1991

Email : mandy.fellows12@yahoo.com

AREA : 602

PHONE : 6023093226

ADDRESS : 1615 W. Blue Sky Dr.

CITY : Phoenix

STATE : AZ

ZIP : 85085

Submission ID: 31686fa92d944f1386ba53a11879a0ec

Form Submission On : 3/14/2022 2:52:30 PM

Referer: <https://phoenix.gov/pdd>

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Please handle appropriately.

From: [Council District 2 PCC](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: emdist2 - Form Submission
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 10:07:47 AM

Please add to the public record

From: no-reply@phoenix.gov <no-reply@phoenix.gov>
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 at 4:45 PM
To: Council District 2 PCC <council.district.2@phoenix.gov>
Subject: emdist2 - Form Submission

FROM : Rob Nash-Boulden

SUBJECT : Verdin Rezoning

MESSAGE : Councilman Waring,

I appreciate that you meet your constituents in your district and had the pleasure of meeting you F2F (at my door) a couple years ago. As you are aware, the Taylor Morrison Verdin (McEwen 480) rezoning recently received staff approval from the Desert Village Planning Commission - with stipulations. As a resident of Tatum Ranch since 2005 and of North Phoenix since 1977, I know that this area will and can be developed. What I don't understand is why the portion of the property in the Desert Overlay Character District Area A should be rezoned to allow additional density near the Cave Creek Wash corridor on the upper 1/3 of their property. This developer has made some great improvements to their plan since I first viewed it a couple of years ago and has an amazing rezoning attorney making their case. Watching and providing constructive input at the DVPC meetings these past couple of years, I have watched with awe as Susan Demming has been able to create consensus among the committee by removing walls, tweaking some landscaping elements, adding a butterfly garden, and consulting with wildlife associations. Creation of walking paths, connectors to future developments, and paying toward future intersection improvements are all appreciated but really table stake gestures.

With all the feel-good items, momentum, and rock-star legal representation TM has, it will take a lot of leadership to reverse this trend and say "enough"! This property should be developed with the zoning that is in place to preserve the Desert Character Overlay District and maintain the densities as planned for this part of their parcel. This rezoning to 2-5 homes per acre along with the Developer's statement that they will have attached single family, multi-story, and lots as small as 3000 SF. While the averages on their whole property won't be terrible, there will be some pretty dense development that just doesn't align with the zoning or the character of the area.

When I think about this property as a first (or second counting Sonoran Gate) in the area, I worry that this rezoning creates a precedent that can later be used to apply to the other State Land properties along this corridor. This property is also very much an "island" today. While it will likely eventually connect to other developments, the connections from that development today to the State Land will be a web of spider trails and open borders. Inevitably, citizens are going to cross at Mesquite Wash and Paseo trying to get to the Apache Wash trailhead area.

Motorized vehicles are more likely to use this as a place to access the flood control areas and other areas given the open borders of the planned Verdin community. I can easily see where posted "no trespassing / State Land" signs are disregarded, and the adjacent flora and fauna destroyed. We cannot prevent this damage to the desert but having fewer homes will help.

Those that zoned this area knew development would come and gave us a playbook for how it should look. Maintaining the zoning on the upper portion will send the right message to the future development plans and prevent those who by right will look for up to 5 homes per acre while protecting the Cave Creek Wash area that was so thoughtfully included in the Desert Character Overlay District.

I urge you to please consider this input when you are asked to vote on this request.

Regards,

Rob

Email : rob@totalitsolutions.com

AREA : 602

PHONE : 722-2677

ADDRESS : 29210 N 50th Place

CITY : Cave Creek

STATE : AZ

ZIP : 85331

Submission ID: 1be06d2c527d4b55a11dd07846afa465

Form Submission On : 3/14/2022 4:45:17 PM

Referer: <https://phoenix.gov/district2/contact-district-2>

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3/15/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II -Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004


I am writing this letter to express my support for the Verdin Project in the North Phoenix area.

As a resident of North Phoenix, I believe Taylor Morrison's Verdin proposal is not only an appropriate land use for the property, but will set the right example for future development along Sonoran Desert Drive. As I understand it, there are several thousand acres of State Land in the area that will eventually be sold for development. Verdin sets a great example of how these properties will and should be developed in a sensitive desert environment and thoughtful way. I especially appreciate the developer's integration of public trail corridors and trailheads that will enhance and protect public access to the Sonoran Preserve.

As someone who cares about the future of this area and how it will be developed, I would like to see the Verdin project approved and for future development to be held to the same high standards.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Murphy


2328 W. BRAMBLE BERRY LN
PHX AZ 85085

3/15/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov

Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov

Julianna Pierre
Planner II - Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

I am a resident of the North Phoenix area and regularly use and benefit from the Sonoran Preserve. I support for the Verdin project. It's my understanding that the Verdin property is private property and has been planned for residential development for decades.

I believe in private property rights, and someone's right to develop their land. I also believe it's the developers responsibility to properly fit in to the surrounding community, and I believe they have displayed that.

Although it's not part of the City of Phoenix preserve area, the developers have gone to significant lengths to make sure that Verdin fits in with the surrounding desert context. I support the developer's plans for preservation of washes, wildlife corridors and natural open space area.

I am excited by the public trails that will be created and which are a benefit to the entire community. I also appreciate the developer's partnership with the National Wildlife Federation. The desert is a beautiful place, and this thoughtful development will allow private property to be developed, but is also sensitive to its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Matthew Murphy



2328 W. Bramble Berry Ln

Phoenix AZ 85085

From: [Council District 2 PCC](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: emdist2 - Form Submission
Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:49:34 AM

Please add to the public record

From: no-reply@phoenix.gov <no-reply@phoenix.gov>
Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 8:47 AM
To: Council District 2 PCC <council.district.2@phoenix.gov>
Subject: emdist2 - Form Submission

FROM : Camille proietti

SUBJECT : development Verdin community in N Phoenix near Sonoran Desert Preserve

MESSAGE : If you are at all interested in what your constituents consider important in their lives, you will pay special attention to the plans for Verdin in N Phoenix. There is absolutely no excuse to be building/changing the desert character overlay. There are millions of acres available that would not disrupt such a beautiful area in N Phoenix. Again, there is NO EXCUSE. It has been shown over and over again, that where cities categorically enhance resident life with access to nature trails and recreational areas, are considered one of the key criteria for high desirability. So continuing to take these areas and developing without keeping this in mind will make Phoenix a LESS DESIRABLE area to live in. And oh, BTW, water, water, water. Just keep building, because Arizona (specifically Phoenix) has unlimited water supply.

Email : camillepro1006@aol.com

AREA : 845

PHONE : 6299139

ADDRESS : 29322 N 24 Lane

CITY : Phoenix

STATE : AZ

ZIP : 85085

Submission ID: 353024d685f34e8a8e0d6e5261dd6c14

Form Submission On : 3/16/2022 8:47:31 AM

Referer: <https://phoenix.gov/district2/contact-district-2>

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Please handle appropriately.

From: [Cynthia Weiss](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); council.district2@phoenix.gov
Cc: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Message of support - Verdin Development
Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 6:11:19 PM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-1.pdf](#)

Councilman Waring,

As you know, I live in Sonoran Gate, the closest community to the proposed Verdin development that is currently under review and consideration. Ron and I have lived in this area of North Phoenix over 25 years.

Our family knows all the trails of both North and South Preserves as we are avid hikers and mountain bikers. We were hiking and biking the primitive trails long before Sonoran Desert Drive was built, and before much of the land was purchased and preserved by the City of Phoenix.

I must admit when my own community, Sonoran Gate began to form on the desert floor between the North and South Sonoran Preserves (see below), I was certainly not a fan. I would watch from the top of Ridgeback on one of my favorite hikes as Sonoran Gate started to take shape, week by week... and again, I was not happy with what was happening to this pristine pocket of North Phoenix.

Sonoran Gate from Ridgeback mountain, May 21, 2016

Then one evening in 2018, I will never forget, I was scheduled to meet a friend at the Apache Wash Trailhead for a hike. When I called her to confirm, she told me, "We're not hiking tonight, come meet me at the models by the trailhead."

And so I did. I went home that night with three words for my husband... "Honey, we're moving." And that was it. We've been living in Sonoran Gate going on 4 years and we could not be happier.

Once I saw the community of Sonoran Gate with my own two eyes, I changed from a person angry about the project to one that was eager to volunteer to live in what I consider to be one of the most beautiful places on Earth. We are truly blessed to be living in Sonoran Gate, and blessed by the people with the vision and talent that have made that possible.

I appreciate all the planning and civil engineering that allows me to live where I do. I appreciate all my neighbors in Sonoran Gate, even the scorpions, coyotes and rattlesnakes.

I support this rezoning and the Verdin project because I can clearly see the thought and care that has gone into it. I believe there are other families like ours that dream of living within walking distance of hundreds of miles of preserved hiking and biking trails. The Verdin project will help make that happen for hundreds of families who call Phoenix home.

If forced to stay at the current "one dwelling per acre zoning," any home built will be considered estate-sized and thus only available to the extremely wealthy and/or retired, thus blocking young families with children from living in the area. That would be a tragedy. To put a little dig on our neighbor city, that would be "SO North Scottsdale."

It would be difficult for anyone to thank Taylor Morrison and their team for wanting to develop these 480

acres. Any development in the area will mark a time of change many of us are not ready to accept, just as I was not ready to accept Sonoran Gate as it was being developed.

I do want to thank the City of Phoenix for saving the Sonoran North and South Preserves in the first place. Things could look much different in the area today, and public access to the now preserved areas would be much different had poor decisions been made decades ago.

I will thank Taylor Morrison and their team for the thoughtfulness of this plan, especially for NOT proposing a golf course in this environmentally sensitive area.

Thanks, Councilman Waring, for considering a plan that includes families, children the environment and community. It's a good plan, and a uniquely Phoenix plan we can stand behind.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Weiss



3/18/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II - Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:

I am writing to you to let you know that I support and endorse Taylor Morrison's single-family residential community plans and the significant investment in infrastructure and roads that will benefit the area. These improvements will set a high bar for future projects in the area.

With ongoing development in the North Phoenix area, it has become evident that additional infrastructure is needed to support current and future residents and local businesses. It is my understanding that Taylor Morrison's Verdin proposal will bring substantial infrastructure improvements to the area – including extension of water and sewer lines and much needed relief to the intersection of Cave Creek Road and Sonoran Desert Drive in addition to a significant financial contribution to build out Sonoran Desert Drive. These investments in our community will help businesses like mine.

We hope the City Council will approve this project soon.

Sincerely,



*pro
Luz*

P. Cruz

602-399-3890



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3/18/2022

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II - Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:

I am a local business owner in the North Phoenix area and I understand the importance of additional homes being built in the area. I support Taylor Morrison's Verdin project and am looking forward to welcoming these residents to the area.

Our North Phoenix community is growing very fast as an important employment corridor within the Greater Phoenix area. Housing is already in short supply and we need additional homes now. Demand far outweighs the current supply of housing and it will get worse.

My business will benefit with additional residential opportunities as those working in the area can also live in the area instead of simply commuting for work. This creates not only stronger financial investment, but also emotional investment into our community and fosters the work, live, play environment.

We look forward to the City approving the Taylor Morrison Verdin project.

Sincerely,

 Pet Planet

Elsie

*Happy to support...

2750 W DAVE VALLEY 602-444-8235

Suite 120 N. Valley Hg.

3/19/22

Jim.waring@phoenix.gov
Council.district.2@phoenix.gov
Councilman Jim Waring
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington Street, 11th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov
Julianna Pierre
Planner II - Village Planner
Planning & Development Department
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Re: Support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring and Ms. Pierre:

I support and endorse the Taylor Morrison's project. Their development will bring significant investment in infrastructure and roads that will benefit the area.


It has become evident that additional infrastructure is needed to support current and future residents and local businesses. These investments in our community will help businesses like mine.

We hope the City will approve this project as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Steph Edwards



 Celebrity Tanning 2805 W. Camelback Hwy.

From: [Don Bessler](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); [Julianna Pierre](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#)
Subject: Verdin Development
Date: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 10:44:05 AM

Hello;

I am a resident of Phoenix and live in your Council District near the area currently under consideration for development "Verdin" (for a Taylor Morrison Community). I am the President of a firm P3 Systems Management which was created to help entities find the sweet spot between People - Profit - Planet. In addition, I spent my entire professional career working for municipalities as a Parks and Public Works Professional. In those roles I was responsible for the stewardship of significant city infrastructure systems and public property including sensitive Sonoran habitat. I am familiar with community General Plans, Resource Management Plans, including programs like Urban forestry Programs, Urban Heat Planning, Resiliency & Sustainability planning and programming. My wife and I use the Phoenix Preserve often, including Apache Wash and Sidewinder Trail area. I have seen the Planning signage up for several years and we assumed that it would become housing.

I wanted to register my support for the project that is being proposed. Given my professional background, you might imagine that I have seen hundreds of development proposals over my many years of service; the amount of care and thoughtfulness that has been brought to bear by the developer and property owner is vastly superior to many that I have seen. Their understanding of the place and context is solid, their desire to work collaboratively, beyond meeting minimum requirements is exceptional. As parents of a young working professional, (graduate of ASU) we are disheartened by the lack of housing ownership options that are available for first time home buyers. Adding to the housing mix, with reasonable density residential will only help his prospects. Cities and communities that truly understand conservation should accept density within scale; environmentally, it certainly beats the alternative. We are seeing an exodus of our finest and brightest leaving the valley to communities that have better housing options. I believe that this will become even more evident over time as remote working becomes a staple of our economic future. Again, as parents and residents, this would be the worst for us. Being able to live where you grew up should be a practical option for our young people.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my viewpoint.

Sincerely

don

Donald Bessler, PWLF

President



From: [Leigh Penny](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Verdin Project
Date: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 10:42:46 AM

I am a resident of the North Phoenix area and regularly use and benefit from the Sonoran Preserve. I support the Verdin project. It's my understanding that the Verdin property is private property and has been planned for residential development for decades. Although it's not part of the City of Phoenix preserve area, the developers have gone to significant lengths to make sure that Verdin fits in with the surrounding desert context. I support the developer's plans for preservation of washes, wildlife corridors and natural open space area. I am excited by the public trails that will be created and which are a benefit to the entire community. I also appreciate the developer's partnership with the National Wildlife Federation. The desert is a beautiful place, and this thoughtful development will allow private property to be developed, but is also sensitive to its surroundings. Thank you!

Leigh Penny

From: [Kara Nicholls](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); [Julianna Pierre](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#)
Subject: Verdin Rezoning Request
Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 11:26:38 AM

To whom it may concern -

I am writing to show my support for the Taylor Morrison project Verdin. After attending the public meeting, where I did take the opportunity to speak. I want to reaffirm my support of the project. Not only do I live near to the north side of the preserve but I am a founding and current board member of the Desert Foothills Mountain Bike Association (DFMBA) and the founder of the Cactus Shadows High School Mountain Bike Team. My family has been using the trails where the preserve is today for over 15 years. The preserve has also been critical to our efforts to "get more kids on bikes." It is no surprise that one of the things the kids like is an occasional glimpse of the wildlife whether it be a rattlesnake, a tarantula, a gila monster or a fox.

As a director of DFMBA, my family has spent countless hours working with the land managers to ensure access, perform appropriate trail maintenance and educate the mountain bike community about trail courtesy.

My commitment to preserving open space for the public benefit is shown through my long commitment and the hands-on work I have done.

However as important as open space is to our community, I am concerned about the lack of housing available in Maricopa County. As the county rapidly expands it is important for the government to support available housing by allowing for that housing to be built. It is no secret that our supply of housing does not meet the demand causing the price of both rents and housing to become less and less affordable. Local real estate economists, The Cromford Report and Elliot Pollack, cite lack of Housing as being a key driver in the fast pace of rising housing prices. Maintaining the zoning to 1 acre per dwelling will not do enough to provide the area with adequate housing. While I understand this development alone will not alleviate the housing shortfall on its own, the City of Phoenix has a responsibility to balance the current need for housing with this minor requests for rezoning to a somewhat higher density.

I understand and support the need to preserve the natural habitat and corridors for wildlife. I want that for the community and my own friends and family. I believe Taylor Morrison has thoughtfully planned the community to allow for both the community to exist alongside the preserve and wildlife corridors. I am very excited to access the south side of the preserve from a connected trail with the north.

Sincerely,

--

Kara Nicholls
480 246 1605

From: [S. Altieri](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Verdin Development
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2022 10:43:41 AM

Dear Jim Waring and Julianna Pierre,

As a Desert Peak resident, I have researched the proposed, single-family, master-planned community, Verdin, and am providing a statement of support.

We have resided in the Desert Peak community since 2018. The primary reason we selected this community is its proximity to the Apache Wash Trailhead and other recreational areas that are within a short drive from home. We use the trails most weekends, volunteer as City of Phoenix Park Stewards, and we have become loyal customers of the businesses that require traveling to and through the scenic areas that surround Desert Peak, allowing us to enjoy a beautiful, desert drive while running errands. We could not imagine living in any other community in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area...until we learned about Verdin.

The area surrounding Desert Peak has changed dramatically since 2018, and with the rapid and ongoing population growth and increasing number of employment opportunities nearby, there is a need to offer housing options to support the growth. For the Valley to continue to be a destination for homeowners and employers, challenges with limited housing options will need to be addressed. When we moved to the area, we recognized that changes would occur. Verdin will not only lend to providing housing options, but as a homeowner to future communities that will become neighbors to Desert Peak, I welcome a neighboring development like Verdin that celebrates the characteristics of the desert environment. Verdin intends to integrate public trail corridors, view corridors, paseos and edge open area spaces. The approach to the development incorporates sensitivity to the native plants, wildlife, landforms and climate. Over seven miles of community paths and trails will encourage community members and visitors to enjoy the outdoors and cherish the desert environment as part of their daily lives. Plans for the development also include following design guidelines for Verdin to become a National Wildlife Federation Certified Community. As an individual with heightened interest in wildlife protection, this is among the most admirable of the features of Verdin.

Although we love our Desert Peak community and have no intentions of moving, as homeowners, we are now envisioning a future community that aligns precisely with the values that we uphold. Verdin celebrates all that we appreciate about the area and look forward to seeing this development progress to completion.

Warm Regards,

Sara Altieri

From: [David George](#)
To: [Jim Waring](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Verdin
Date: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 11:47:29 AM

Please accept this letter as a statement of support for Taylor Morrison's Verdin project along Sonoran Desert Drive.

I live in the Sonoran Gate community, which was also built by Taylor Morrison and is the closest residential subdivision to the Verdin project. I have met with the development team to learn about the project. I welcome another Taylor Morrison community to the area as I have enjoyed my home and community. Additionally, although Taylor Morrison is proposing additional homes in the area, they are also proposing significant roadway investments that benefit the larger community.

I would like to see the Verdin project approved as I know from personal experience the quality that Taylor Morrison will bring with this development and the associated roadway improvements. Please distributed this email to the members of the North Gateway Village and Desert View Village.
Thank you,

David George
31311 N 1st Place
Phoenix AZ 85085

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March 29, 2022

Re: Verdin Project, North Phoenix

Dear Councilmember,

I am writing this letter to express my support for the Verdin Project in the North Phoenix area.

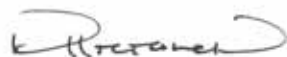
As a resident of North Phoenix and Sonoran Gate, I believe Taylor Morrison's Verdin proposal is not only an appropriate land use for this existing piece of private property, but it will also set the right example for future development along Sonoran Desert Drive. As I understand it, there are several thousand acres of State Land in the area that will be sold for development. Verdin sets the bar for how these properties will and should be developed in a sensitive desert environment and thoughtful way.

I especially appreciate the developer's integration of public trail corridors and trailheads that will enhance and protect public access to the Sonoran Preserve - a preserve my family uses regularly and benefits from. I'm also pleased about the developer's partnership with the National Wildlife Federation.

I much prefer the addition of high-quality single-family home communities along Sonoran Desert Drive vs. higher density multi-family condominium and apartment projects such as those planned/approved further to the west along the 1-17 corridor. Also, Sonoran Desert Drive is already much traveled by surrounding residents and those further outside the area, such those commuting through from Anthem and Vistancia, therefore, the significant roadway investments proposed by Taylor Morrison will help to benefit the larger community.

As someone who cares about the future of this area and how it will be developed, I would like to see the Verdin project approved, and, for future development to be held to the same high standards.

Sincerely,



Karen Hrtanek

From: [Jane penny](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#); [Jim Waring](#)
Subject: Verdin project
Date: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 10:40:13 AM

We are writing this letter to voice our support for the new Taylor Morrison project on Sonoran Parkway. We live in the Sonoran Gate Community, also built by Taylor Morrison and the closest subdivision to the Verdin project. We love our home and our community, and we are impressed with the thoughtful treatment of the desert surroundings. After looking at the proposed project we feel Verdin will set the bar for any future development in our beautiful desert.

Bill and Jane Penny
Sent from my iPad

From: [Vashti Supplee](#)
To: [Steve Bowser](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Verdin Project
Date: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 10:08:07 AM

Hello Steve and Julianna-

I am writing as myself and I am not representing any entity. I have been keenly interested in public trail connectivity for the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve north and south of Sonoran Desert Parkway. I have had the opportunity to meet with Alex Stedman, planner for the Verdin project. I made some suggestions to improve the project in terms of edge protections on the east adjacent to Cave Creek Wash and public access. The Verdin team has largely adopted these suggestions

I am unable to attend the upcoming Village Planning meeting on April 4th and I have the following comments for the record.

The Verdin project team has been very responsive to suggestions that will contribute to the desert character of the development, including a 25 foot natural area buffer on the east edge of the property adjacent to Cave Creek. There will be public access along Mesquite Wash and through the pedestrian Paseos to Phoenix Sonoran Preserve and Cave Buttes Recreation Area land.

I support the following stipulations as part of PUD approval:

STIP #1: Public trail access easements, as approved by the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department, shall be provided for the Mesquite Wash Corridor Trail, and the Community Paseo Paths that provide a connection to future trail connections to the Sonoran Preserve as identified on the Verdin Pedestrian Circulation plan dated June 3, 2019 included within the Verdin PUD, to ensure permanent public access through the Verdin community to the Sonoran Preserve. The public access shall be designed in a way to restrict unauthorized motor vehicle access, as approved by Parks. The specific location, design and timing of construction of the public trail connections shall be coordinated with and approved by the Parks and Recreation Department.

STIP #2: A minimum 25 foot open space tract shall be provided along the eastern boundary of the Verdin property to provide a transition to the Cave Creek Wash corridor. The open space tract shall be considered a Certified Area Type "B" – Natural Revegetated Area with plant material from the Approved Plant List: Green List.

Yours in Conservation,
Vashti "Tice" Supplee
918 W. Roosevelt Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007
vsupplee25@gmail.com

Julianna Pierre

Subject: FW: April 5 Desert View Village Planning Committee

From: Wiele, Larry <LARRY.WIELE@aecom.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:38 PM
To: Anthony M Grande <anthony.grande@phoenix.gov>
Subject: April 5 Desert View Village Planning Committee

Anthony

I am a resident of the Sonoran Foothills development, located just to the west of the area that is being proposed for rezoning and changes to the requirements that would be required for development.

While I understand that this area is privately owned, and is subject to development, I want to encourage you to not change the zoning requirements or reduce the desert character that has been intended for this area. These requirements have been in place for many years, and the owners of the land have been aware of these requirements. These requirements are for the good of the community as the whole, while reducing these requirements benefits only the owners of this land, and in fact increasing the number of homes in this area will have a negative impact on the current residents in this area.

I request the Desert View Planning Committee members vote against the items on the April 5 Planning Committee Agenda.

Larry Wiele
2413 W Horsetail Trail
Phoenix, AZ 85085

From: [James G. Gaston II](#)
To: [PDD Desert View VPC](#); [Council District 2 PCC](#); jim@jimwaring.com; [Joshua Bednarek](#); [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Verdin/McEwan 480 Project
Date: Friday, April 1, 2022 2:47:24 PM

As a local resident, I am against any realignment/zoning amendment of Phoenix's Master Plan for the Sonoran Preserve as it relates to Taylor Morrison's request for the Verdin/McEwan 480 Project, Z-62-18-2. Key objection elements of the amendment include:

1. Remove the Desert Character Overlay requirement
2. Build homes outside of existing infrastructure
3. Massive up zone, 3–5 houses per acre

The developer is seeking to transform the Desert Character Overlay around the Preserve. Moving it north of Sonoran Desert Drive is actually *removing* it because north of Sonoran Desert Drive is the Preserve itself.

Regardless of previous statements, if all Plan Amendments proposed are passed, the development will *not* be "truly unique." Nor will it be as the developer committed, ". . . a context-sensitive community that sets the bar high for any future development in the area." It seems all the developer sees is growth, not thoughtful development, or sustainability. This Plan Amendment only benefits the developer and not the community or the Preserve.

I am not a "recreational activist," as cited on a recent local newscast. My objections seek to:

- a. Maintain the Master Plan as originally proposed
- b. Recognize the dismal condition of the Valley's current and future water supply
- c. Maintain the overlay as the effective way to control development in the entire Preserve area

James Gaston
Cave Creek, Arizona

From: [Anthony M Grande](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: Taylor Morrison Development North Gateway, Sonoran Preserve
Date: Friday, April 1, 2022 5:19:55 PM

Anthony Grande
Planner II – Village Planner
City of Phoenix
Planning & Development Department
Long Range Planning
Office: 602-256-5648
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003

-----Original Message-----

From: Jill Hoffman <jillchoffman123@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022 4:55 PM
To: PDD Desert View VPC <desertviewvpc@phoenix.gov>
Cc: Council District 2 PCC <council.district.2@phoenix.gov>; Mayor Gallego <mayor.gallego@phoenix.gov>
Subject: Taylor Morrison Development North Gateway, Sonoran Preserve

I was saddened to hear of the committee vote of 4-1 to allow all of Taylor Morrison's requests in changing the zoning and the North Gateway overlay previously planned. I was hoping that the density would not change, but at the very least they would keep the desert character overlay that all the other neighborhoods in the area adhere to, per city of Phoenix. I'm also very worried about the infrastructure in place now, will not support any more population, not to mention the lack of schools in the area. My youngest will finish high school next year, but the overcrowding in our schools in the North Gateway neighborhoods is horrible. We are not sending our kids to Barry Goldwater because there is "room", and I assure you Boulder Creek does not have the room for the added population. That school has a hard enough time getting teachers to drive so far north for the students they have now. The approval of all things building, is not making an ideal neighborhood. The fact that 7 new apartment complexes are coming to North Gateway, 5 of them in one area, proves you are not looking out for the interests of the current residents. Schools and roads are not in place. These builders need to pay for the upgraded infrastructure and schools, just like 50% Norterra Canyon was paid for by the builder. Sonoran Foothills School came 8 years after promised, and has been over capacity since the 3rd year it was open. The saddest part, is you are allowing a desert jewel you have been entrusted with, to turn into urban sprawl. Along the I-17 corridor is where building was planned 30+ years ago, not Phoenix's beautiful Sonoran Preserve. We can never get it back. It takes a strong person to stand up for the land, be that person for the generations to come.

Jill Hoffman
North Gateway resident since 2005

From: [Christine M Pedersen](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: Save Our Sonoran Preserve - Rezone Proposal
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 3:17:08 PM

Good Afternoon Julianna,

Please see below.

Thank you,
Christine

From: Sonoran Preserve <saveoursonoranpreserve@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 2, 2022 1:28:02 PM
To: Council District 2 PCC <council.district.2@phoenix.gov>
Subject: Save Our Sonoran Preserve - Rezone Proposal

Dear Councilmember Waring,

Recently I wrote to you about a test mailing Save Our Sonoran Preserve was doing to gauge public support for retaining the Desert Character Overlay District. The mailing was made to a sampling of 400 of the nearly 12,000 voters living near the Preserve. The test area is highlighted green in the map posted at: <https://app.box.com/s/bnui5b5w5ufyqidem2mmwfg0jofh1c6f> [app.box.com].

I am pleased to report that the test mailing is showing an unusually high degree of deeply felt support for the Sonoran Preserve among nearby voters.

We mailed the letter at the following link to 400 registered voters, half of which were Republican and half Democrat: <https://app.box.com/s/3wp1f022c56vu1j566ph0kdcmbztdh8> [app.box.com].

The mailing to 400 voters has thus far generated 118 signatures of the petition at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sonorapreserve> [surveymonkey.com].

A map showing the location where supporters live is at: <https://app.box.com/s/t0am8a0717ksk0o1sdalrgdc19zhicdk> [app.box.com]. As you'll see support is coming from voters living up to four miles from the Sonoran Preserve. And support is about equal from Republicans and Democrats.

Nearly all of the petition signers provided the reasons for why they want the Sonoran Preserve safeguards of the Desert Character Overlay District retained. These reasons can be viewed at: <https://app.box.com/s/405n9bnddchk192qj29j1x1m0yx8xhun> [app.box.com].

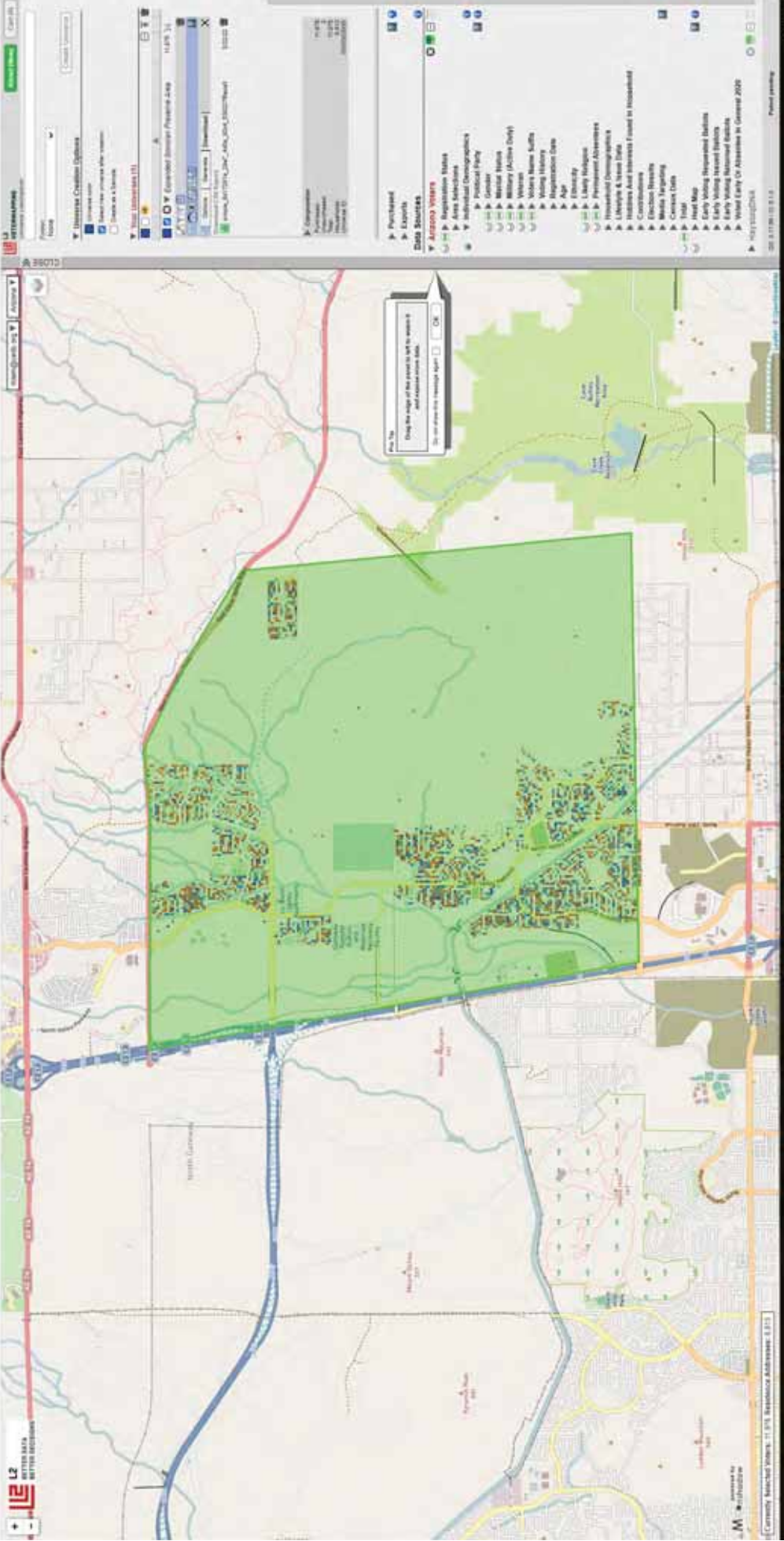
We anticipate that this test mailing will eventually result in a total of 150- to 200-petition signers.

Suffice to say, this test indicates a high degree of support among area voters for your efforts to

safeguard the Sonoran Preserve. I suspect though that supporters may be open to modifying the areas in the bottom 2/3 of the Verdin property while keeping Desert Character Overlay in the top 1/3 so as to create a win-win compromise for both parties.

We are now planning a second survey mailing to 6,000 of the 12,000 nearby voters. Once we have these results we will again share our results with you. Thank you again for working and meeting with us this important issue.

Respectfully,
Dr. Gary Kirkilas
Save Our Sonoran Preserve
708-369-4566



SAVE OUR SONORAN PRESERVE

Dr. Gary Kirkilas, Chair (708) 369-4566
21001 N Tatum Blvd STE 1630-238 saveoursonoranpreserve@gmail.com
Phoenix, Arizona 85050 supportpubliclands.com/arizona/save-our-sonoran-preserve



March 8, 2022

«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address»
«City», Arizona «Zip»

Dear «MrMs» «LastName»:

I understand that you, like me, live in the vicinity of the Sonoran Desert Preserve shown in the map on the other side of this letter. I assume that you, like me, treasure living near this fantastic natural area and the opportunities afforded for hiking, biking, or just a pleasant drive along Sonoran Desert Drive. If this is true then please consider signing the petition at the following address: ceds.org/sosp or scan the QR code to the right with your phone or tablet camera then tap open 'surveymonkey.com'. *Every signature we get goes a long way.*



At issue is a proposal to double or triple the number of housing units that can be built on the Verdin site (*see map*). Development in this area is guided by the Desert Character Overlay District which allows growth but with a number of measures to safeguard those Sonoran Desert Preserve values we treasure.

The Verdin development company has asked the Phoenix City Council to ignore the Desert Character Overlay District. If granted, Sonoran Desert Drive traffic volume could go from 8,300- to more than 20,000-trips/day from this one development. Other potential growth along this corridor could raise Sonoran Desert Drive traffic to nearly 50,000 trips/day or more!

Sonoran Desert Drive traffic volume is already at a point where additional bike safety measures are needed. While there are proposals to add these measures, there is a point where traffic volume becomes so great that cycling or just walking is no longer enjoyable.

Doubling to tripling the number of nearby homes would detract from the true wilderness essence of the Preserve. Additionally, abandoning the Desert Character Overlay District is like turning our back on the beloved Sonoran Preserve - eliminating the protections that were thoughtfully placed to maintain the uniqueness and beauty as well as ensure maximum conservation of the incredible ecosystems while allowing a reasonable amount of development.

It is for these reasons that I ask you to sign the Save Our Sonoran Preserve petition urging Jim Waring and other Phoenix City Council members to require that Verdin and other development fully comply with the Desert Character Overlay District safeguards.

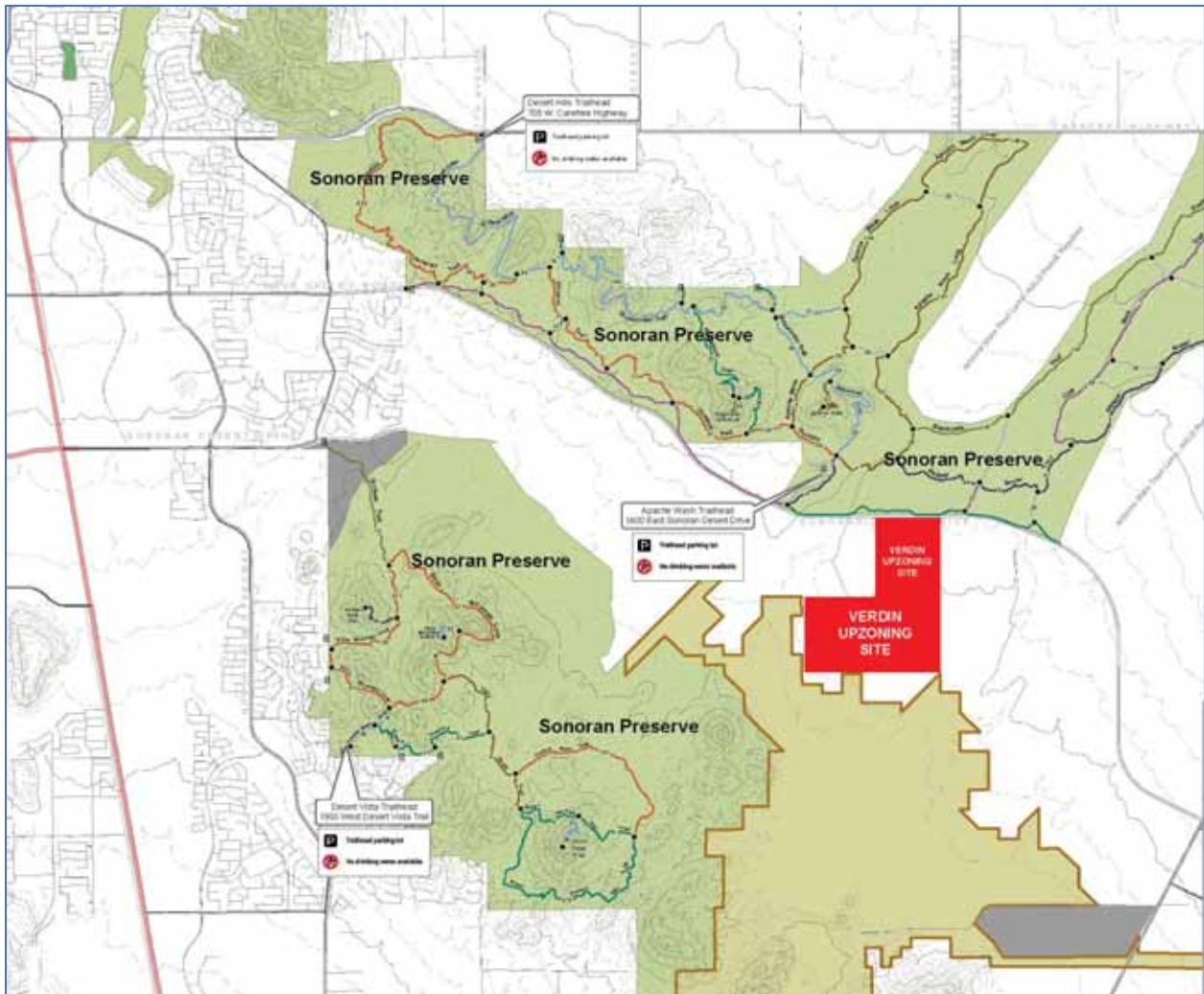
Over, please →

Please contact me at saveoursonoranpreserve@gmail.com or (708) 369-4566 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

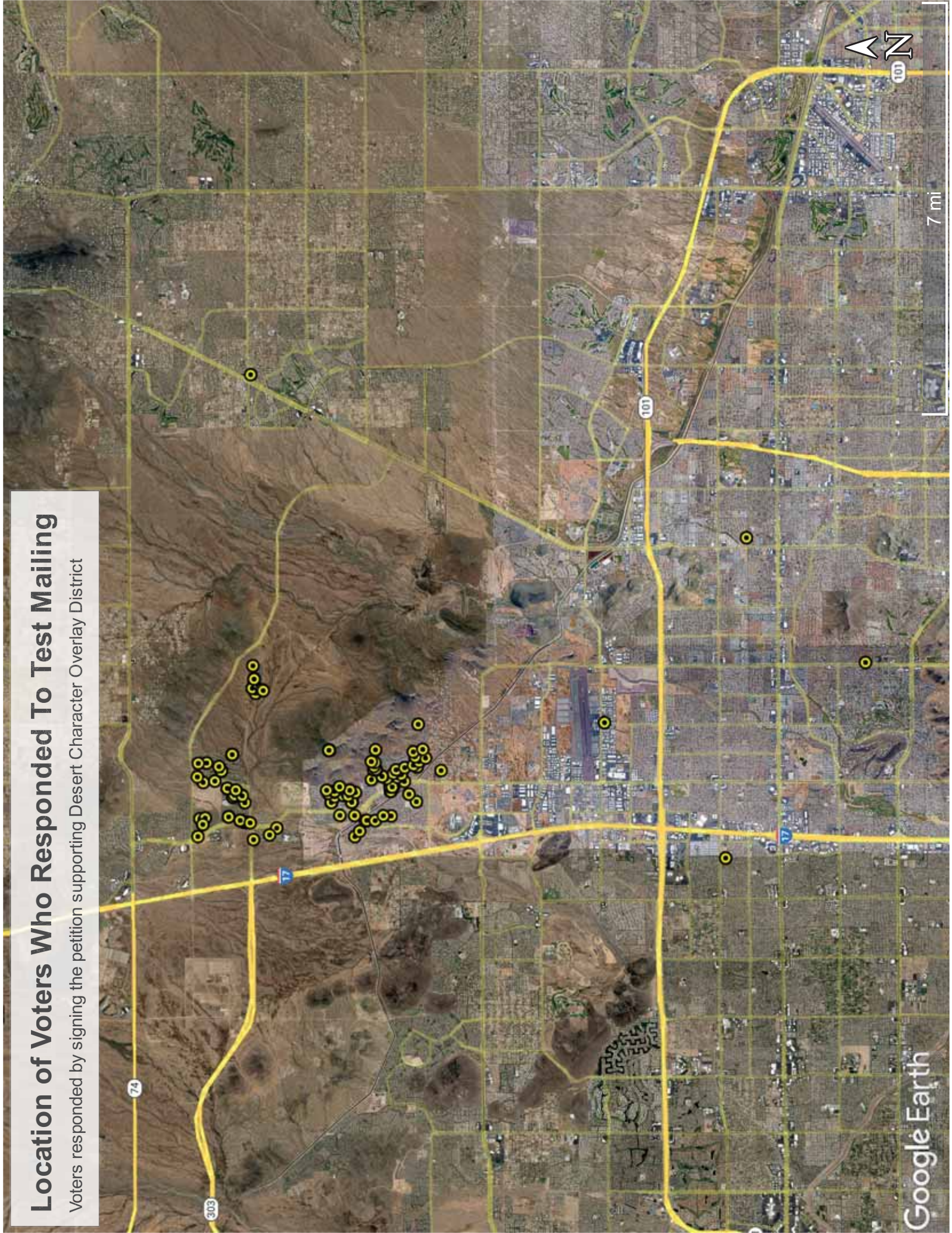


Dr. Gary Kirkilas, Chair



Location of Voters Who Responded To Test Mailing

Voters responded by signing the petition supporting Desert Character Overlay District



Reasons Provided By Phoenix Residents for Why They Signed the Save Our Sonoran Preserve Petition at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sonorapreserve>

We need to do everything we can to protect the Sonoran Desert Preserve. There shouldn't be lots of homes there. We've already taken so much of the natural habitat and developed it. We need to leave large chunks alone so that those animals that live in the desert have a place. I love having the wilderness nearby and untouched. Increasing the number of homes near the preserve is asking for trouble and displacing so many of the desert animals. I bought out here to be close to nature not to bring the downtown traffic here.

Traffic on the preserve road is already quite busy during rush hour. Adding more homes will increase the danger of the road and damage the beautiful desert.

I love driving on the Sonora Desert Dr. and seeing our beautiful desert. I and my family members also enjoy hiking and biking on the trails.

I have lived in this area for over 16 years and am a native Arizonan. The City has done a wonderful job on Sonoran Desert Drive, in terms of incorporating areas to recreate and enjoy the unbelievable desert scenery within the Sonoran Preserve. I have hiked the area and marvel at the beauty. Increasing the planned housing units by multiples of two or three will significantly detract from the area's beauty and tranquility and add an unsustainable amount of traffic and introduce ecological damage to the area. There is a reason so much land was designated as a preserve all those years ago. It should stay that way.

The Phoenix Sonoran Preserve is one of the finest uses of tax payer dollars. The ability to hike and mountain bike on miles and miles of trails is one of my favorite parts of living in North Phoenix. We are already inundated with apartment complexes and home developments with plenty of inventory. Plus, there is plenty of land available for developers to build on that won't wreck one of the best things that the City of Phoenix has done in the past couple decades.

The infrastructure is not setup for a development of this size and the tax payers shouldn't bear the cost to

I drive this road regularly and it's already getting over populated with traffic with the current development. More housing and construction will take away the natural beauty of the Sonoran desert preserve and will also increase unwanted traffic.

We live in the area, have hiked these trails, our two boys attended nearby CCUSD Horseshoe Trails elementary school, and I'd say that in general we have a strong desire to act as good stewards of this land and therefore have a vested interest in maintaining the beauty of the Sonoran desert preserve and our balance with nature.

This city is growing so fast & we need to preserve some of the beautiful desert landscape. If we keep building more houses, we will have nothing left. We don't need more houses!!

We do not want this new development because we love the natural desert we chose to live near. In addition, we do need the excessive amount of traffic that such a development would cause.

As a resident of a nearby community I am concerned that the traffic that will be generated by the proposed Verdin community will present many safety concerns. The Preserve provides a tranquil environment that will most likely change dramatically in character if this densely populated community is built. I don't mind some building along the route but only if it is not populated as densely as some of the surrounding developments.

Our house backs up to the desert. We bought that house because it backs up to the desert, I want to to keep our view and our slower simple lifestyle there and not turn its into a big city feel.

Would cause an overpopulated area that is meant to be preserved for nature. Would ruin hiking and biking do to the amount of traffic and would become dangerous. Would effect the views and the ability for people enjoy the scenery. Would also effect the wildlife pushing the coyotes and javelinas into residential areas. Which they belong in the desert.

This would cause pollution dust noise and would be harmful to our health

There is no need for additional housing in our area specifically so near a protected preserve. There is not enough water so support the additional homes and businesses that come with a development such as this.
Natural beauty along with reduced noise, traffic and night lights.
We live in the Sonoran Gate community. I'm also a cyclist. We moved here to escape congestion and enjoy the outdoors. All of that is threatened with this current building frenzy. Why would we abandon the express purpose of these Preserves, so carefully planned and uniquely executed?! And where are we finding a sustainable water supply for this unbridled development? This is madness.
No wanting any more home developers tearing up the preserves. With the additional Verizon zone site there will be to many dangerous EMF's in the community
The beauty of the Sonoran Preserve will be replaced with urban area???? During the hike or bike ride are we supposed to admire the houses???
This is the last strip of Sonoran Desert left in Phoenix. I'm sorry the preserve doesn't border Dove Valley. What's done is gone do not make it worse by 3X the number of people
No need for more development eating up our desert.
I am very concerned about the additional traffic volume that will be a result of large Verdin community. I am a triathlete who uses Sonoran Desert Dr. daily for training and with the increased traffic I fear for my safety. In addition, we moved to this area (85085) for the beauty of the desert. Abandoning the Desert Character Overlay District will eliminate the protections that were placed to ensure conservation of the ecosystems in the area while still allowing for some development. The large number of homes the Verdin development company proposes to squeeze into this area will detract from the wilderness and beauty of the Preserve. Yet, another area of concern would be the overcrowding of schools in the Deer Valley School district.
We need to protect our beautiful desert. There are many other areas to build on so we can all appreciate the scenery. After all this is why we live here.
Keeping some semblance of the desert lifestyle is why we moved here. Do not ignore the safeguards. Reduce the number of housing units. Why do you want to do business with a company which clearly does not respect nature, but only the economic bottom line -\$
Enjoy bicycling through the preserve. The road is too narrow for the traffic already using the parkway.
This zoning would be uncharacteristic of the Sonoran preserve and city park surrounding the site.
I travel Sonoran Desert Drive every day because I live right off of it. It is a beautiful drive, but also one that is very serene and peaceful. I am concerned that allowing the Verdin community to be built at the requested density it will cause a great impact and stress to the drive through the Preserve. Even if the road is expanded to more lanes, this road will become a dangerous route for the bikers and hikers in the area, not to mention the drivers. Please do not allow the density for this new community as requested!
We need more open space and already have enough homes!
We selected this area to live, in part, based on the feeling of being closer to nature. The Sonoran Preserve played a big part in that feeling. The loss of any Preserve open space or the increase in traffic thru the Preserve will diminish that feeling. Please require all developers to comply with existing develop restrictions and do not "lessen" those restrictions. - Thank you...
I have lived in this area for twenty years and it is getting so crowded and overbuilt. We must preserve open outdoor space for people to enjoy the peace of the desert and recreation areas that are our Arizona treasures
The beauty of this Preserve area should be PRESERVED. There is a reason why the DCOD exists.
Traffic congestion, pedestrian and bicycle safety. Preserving this area from development, as envisioned by the Desert Character Overlay District.
Too much housing buildout, let's slow it down
Too much housing buildout, need to slow down a little
I want to protect the wilderness and essence of the preserve. I thought this land was protected from future housing development

<p>This area is important to us as we hike and bike. Knowing that preserve will always be here made buying our home easy. We would like for all development to mind and take care of our desert spaces. There is a reason the Desert Character Overlay District was created. To ignore this would be a tragedy.</p>
<p>It is very important to retain our natural desert and the Sonoran Preserve.</p>
<p>We specifically moved to this area b/c of the preserve and the peacefulness that it brings to our lives and neighborhood. District guidelines are in place for a reason and should not be adjusted for a greedy developer.</p>
<p>This is my neighborhood..I live here. I hike these beautiful trails five times a week. There are plenty of acres of desert in other areas. People come from all over the valley to hike and bike here.This land has been set aside for this and should not be taken away.</p>
<p>The growth in this area is already at an all time high. This small area of desert PRESERVE is why many of us moved to the area. The PRESERVE is used by hikers and bikers as a beautiful getaway that is in our backyard. Every other inch has already been developed by apartment complexes. Enough!! Leave our PRESERVE alone!!</p>
<p>I live around the corner in Sonoran Foothills community and one of the reasons we moved here was to be able to bike on Dove Valley and Sonoran Desert, as we train for Triathlons year round. Every car you add to these roads makes this more dangerous for us. I have almost been hit twice by cars coming out of Sonoran Gate community. The proposed development of over 1400 homes will destroy this very special area.</p>
<p>Traffic is my main issue. As a Sonoran bike route it is becoming more and more dangerous for bikers. School traffic on main roads and through neighborhoods also has become more dangerous. Wilderness can never be recaptured once homes are built so we have a once in a lifetime duty to save land for conservation and wildlife.</p>
<p>as a third generation native zoney, I have seen too much of our beautiful desert turned over to developers. We must preserve the very asset that draws so many to move to our wonderful state- find a better balance between growth and preservation. I recently moved to a home in Sonoran Foothills to enjoy this beautiful area. Please do not allow the greed of developers overbuild our desert.</p>
<p>I absolutely love the beauty of the desert and the opportunity we have to get out in the preserve to hike, run and bike. I am an avid trail runner and hiker and would be devastated if we lose that ability just to make way for more houses.</p>
<p>I live in Sonoran Gate. I hike Apache Trail.</p>
<p>I love hiking in the preserve. Anyone who intends on building anywhere close to it needs to follow the rules. Our desert is at risk. We need you to protect it by requiring the builder to do the right thing.</p>
<p>I moved here in 2007 to be near this great preserve and to live in a quiet community. Adding this much housing developments will forever impact this natural environment</p>
<p>It's imperative to preserve and protect the wildlife and their natural habitat. This area is already exploding with growth & traffic.</p>
<p>The reason we moved here was the beauty and tranquility of the desert. We were not aware of the proposed 'city like' community Verdun wishes to build.</p>
<p>The Sonoran Desert Drive is a beautiful natural area that needs to be preserved for future generations. There are plenty of other places to develop closer to the I-17</p>
<p>The Sonoran Preserve along Sonoran Desert Drive allows us close appreciation of the scenic desert and its thriving ecosystem. Other parts of the valley are better equipped for growth and infill. We need to embrace density where the city is more prepared to support it. This patchwork sprawl into the outer reaches of the desert chops up the expanse of habitat unnecessarily. If it continues, we can only look forward to small patches of desert brush between homes as opposed to miles of our unique desert that we can all enjoy.</p>
<p>There has been enough development in this area. Stop crowding out the wildlife.</p>
<p>This area needs to be preserved as originally designed in order for the members of this community to enjoy a place to get away from all the over development.</p>

We moved up to this area to enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the area. Now it is being threatened. We moved up to this area to see our beautiful dessert in its natural habit, and now it's being threatened. We moved up here because it was a great dream come true, and now that dream is again being threatened by those wishing to make many dollars off the land and environment that belongs to us all. Please, please let's stop this travesty. Thanks for reading my input. We just so love it up here and hope for no more growth and development.

With all the apartments being built on the west end between Dove Valley & Sonoran Desert Drive, the traffic will become just like the city streets—noisy and congested. Verdin proposing additional homes will make it that much worse. In addition, we moved to this area because of the Sonoran Desert Preserve which is becoming non Conservation will protect the wildlife. Driving them out of their natural habitat could put some animals at risk of extinction. There are other desert areas/land that could be built on. Preserving will help reduce our footprint and help reduce traffic and pollution.

Everywhere near Sonoran preserve and desert drive constructions are happening, it's a very beautiful hike place to enjoy quality time with family and friends, as a neighborhood resident I would like to keep it beautiful and not have homes after homes getting built there... there are hardly any community park getting built in the area..

I am an avid hiker. I enjoy being able to see nature, plants and animals. We are already taking so much natural habitat from desert life. Overcrowding the preserve area increases pollution by humans and their machines. Furthermore, light and noise pollution create additional issues. Please conserve our preserve.

I am an avid hiker. I enjoy being able to see nature, plants and animals. We are already taking so much natural habitat from desert life. Overcrowding the preserve area increases pollution by humans and their machines. Furthermore, light and noise pollution create additional issues. Please conserve our preserve.

I frequently recreate in the area - it is frequented by a lot of people. Both on the road with limited traffic and on the trails. It would be detrimental to the foundation of the Phoenix Preserves to take away land dedicated to open space and letting developers tear it apart. Developers can get land further out on the outskirts of town to develop - not areas already dedicated as open space for all to recreate now and future generations.

I hike thru the preserve almost everyday. It is a beautiful and peaceful area amid the city. Losing this area to Korea housing would be awful. There is so much development everywhere so these special areas are becoming all the more important to spare or not over develop. Once it is gone it can not be replaced. Please don't let this wonderful area be ruined by more over development!

It is a very peaceful place to hike. My family goes there frequently. The beauty of Sonoran Desert Dr is so beautiful it should not be disturbed.

It's vital to keep the preserve natural and untouched for the use of hiking and supporting outdoor activities. Without the regulations in place there would be no preserve to use and admire. The animals in the preserve would be greatly affected by a larger population crowding them.

it's a natural treasure that is special and needs to be protected.

Living by the beautiful Sonoran Mountain Preserve area and Sonoran Desert Drive, allows people to interact positively with nature and the environment. This is necessary for people's physical and mental well being, which we all rediscovered during the pandemic when it was one of the few things people were allowed to do. The Mountain Preserve allows people to connect with nature and enjoy the peaceful outdoor environment. The people in the area love the open spaces and serenity that the Sonoran Desert Mountain Preserve provides. They walk, bike or hike in the neighborhood everyday. If these developers are allowed to over develop this beautiful area it will be a detriment to the already established neighborhoods by increased population through clustered housing, traffic, safety, noise levels, over crowded schools, and a host of other issues. This mountain preserve is vital to the well being and safety of people who chose to live for here for a better quality of life. Please don't allow these developers to destroy the Mountain Preserve. Thank you

Maintain desert preserve, congestion, quality of life, safer place to enjoy desert with exercise.

My family and I love hiking in the Sonoran Preserve. It's how we spend our weekends. We would hate to lose anymore of the land, the atmosphere, the animals. Please save the land. Thank you

My husband and I moved into the area specifically for the trails and wilderness of the Sonoran Preserve. We hike the trails at least twice a week with our dogs. Please do not allow more encroachment just for the sake of making more money! I am a retired registered nurse and served the indigent populations and can't afford to move again. Please stop this!

Myself and so many of my neighbors and friends hike this area on a regular basis! There is a nest that an owl comes back to every year! There are beautiful fees of the amazing area in which so many of us call home! Please don't destroy an area we love and cherish

Need to preserve as much of our beautiful mountains as possible

Our family enjoys the scenic drive down Sonoran Desert Drive. I'm saddened to hear they already have plans to develop some of that land. The dessert landscape and easy access to trails from Fireside are unique to living in Norterra and I would hate to see that change. It's already becoming over crowded up here and traffic is effected. Please consider preserving our beautiful desert landscape.

Our wildlife is being displaced and soon will not have a place to live. People want them killed as they are afraid of them! We will live in a denser area and it will soon feel like NY City! We must find a balance for all.

Quality of Life will be destroyed! Let us start with habitat destruction. Then let's discuss the water shortage. September 2021, it was reported that the Bureau of Reclamation has declared a water shortage on the Colorado River, which means that Arizona, along with Nevada and Mexico, will get less water than normal by 2022. If we continue to destroy our desert with unnecessary development for the sake of the almighty dollar then we might as well lift all restrictions. When will it end? When is enough growth enough? Maricopa County was the number one county in the nation for growth in the past year. This needs to stop! We are destroying our human habitat by allowing these developers to bully their way into these areas. Now let's discuss safety? Look at our Police Dept or lack thereof. We can't sustain this ridiculous growth. Please do what you can to help preserve our beautiful Sonoran Preserve!

Quality of Life will be destroyed! Let us start with habitat destruction. Then let's discuss the water shortage. September 2021, it was reported that the Bureau of Reclamation has declared a water shortage on the Colorado River, which means that Arizona, along with Nevada and Mexico, will get less water than normal by 2022. If we continue to destroy our desert with unnecessary development for the sake of the almighty dollar then we might as well lift all restrictions. When will it end? When is enough growth enough? Maricopa County was the number one county in the nation for growth in the past year. This needs to stop! We are destroying our human habitat by allowing these developers to bully their way into these areas. Now let's discuss safety? Look at our Police Dept or lack thereof. We can't sustain this ridiculous growth. Please do what you can to help preserve our beautiful Sonoran Preserve!

So many animals will get displaced from there natural habitats.

The Donoran a preserve is a peaceful area used by many people for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. Adding more houses will increase the number of people using the trails as well as create more traffic in

The preserve gives us hiking trails and allows everyone to enjoy the beauty of the Arizona desert and wildlife. It would also dramatically decrease property values for the people voting for you to remain in office.

This area is greatly used for hiking, biking, trail running, and outdoor recreational activities. We do not want over development to ruin the natural aesthetics, significantly increase noise, or pollution that would degrade the value of the true remaining wilderness in the Sonoran Desert Preserve. Please seek to enforce and uphold the Desert Character Overlay District toward the Verdin project and other subsequent proposals.

This is a beautiful and vibrant part of our community. Don't destroy it by adding additional residential development. Once those houses get in there, they are going to be complaining and advocating for commercial development because they don't want to drive 20 minutes to shops and restaurants. Before we know it, all of the preserve will be gone. The hiking trails, the nature, and the area is pristine.

This is a designated Desert Sonoran Preserve. The established trails are used by thousands and the preserve hosts habitat for Arizona wildlife including javelina, bobcat, coyote, raccoon, ground squirrel and many more. There are a variety of bird and reptile species Gila Monster, great horned owl, roadrunner, gambles quail, Inca dove, Cardinals, spotted whip tail and chuckwalla lizards to mention a few. This area of Phoenix cannot be expanded into a legislated preserve. Too many apartments in the area has already increased crime, drugs and traffic congestion. Any additional housing and apartment development requests in the north Phoenix area must be denied. Respectfully, Bill Shackelford. Voting Resident

Use that area to bike the trails. Want to keep the space natural beauty not filled with homes.

Want to keep area lower traffic

We love the beauty and tranquility of the desert.

We love the beauty of the Sonoran Preserve. Please protect what is left and save the beauty of the dessert.

We love to hike this beautiful area. Also the drive down Sonoran parkway is incredible. We must preserve this desert not only for human enjoyment but also the wildlife that call it home

We need to keep as much nature untouched and beautiful.

We need to preserve the beauty of our natural habitats. There are already plenty of places that are zoned for building. Please do not let greed ruin our neighborhood.

We need to preserve the beauty of the Sonoran Preserve.

We need to preserve the open spaces that attract so many to the area for recreation. There is a lot of building of high occupancy units and housing underway. Schools are already at capacity, new services are being built on Jomax to ease the influx, road infrastructure needs to be in consideration to.

While the continued expansion of homes and building into this area is inevitable and needed, the maintenance of the Desert Character Overlay is important to keep the beauty and feel of this area. The residents who live here moved here for a reason, and we appreciate the forethought that went into the Desert Character Overlay originally. Please do not abandon this. It would be one thing if the builder were building reasonably priced homes to assist with the affordable housing shortage, but they are not. This request is purely for the financial advantage of the builder and the detriment of our community.

Becausue we hike the trails regularly and the feeling of being lost in nature so close to home is special. It should be protected and I hope my daughter can enjoy it the same way one day.

I live in the Sonoran desert north of Phoenix, Don't want it destroyed by continuing building. Leave it in it's natural state, so we can enjoy the desert for generations please .

Please preserve the beautiful desert.

With all the planned development in the area, I have a major concern about the infrastructure, and even planned expansion, being able to support the additional housing in the preserve. Part of the appeal of our area is the desert beauty, so additionally, overturning district safeguards not only damages the natural environment, but risks all those that already live/work in this community.

I believe there are multiple reasons for keeping our views for all to enjoy - to preserve the desert and the animals - so we can enjoy the solace in this wonderful area by walking, biking, driving or just plain relaxing in the outdoors. Also driving on this Sonoran stretch of road currently needs more restrictions - such as traffic lights at all intersections for turning. Much speeding - need to have more monitoring of speed requirements. Adding more housing is just going to add to a lose of the desert preserve and impossible street/road conditions. When we built our home here, we were told that there were restrictions to keep our desert preserved.

With the amount of traffic on Sonoran/Dove Valley today, when we pull out of Sonoran Gate Community, it is taking a chance on your life when needing to turn left. Why would anyone approve more home building to get more traffic? Also cars - and trucks - are speeding between 55-70 miles an hour on this stretch. You should have traffic lights at all intersections for turning traffic. Also, Let's Save Our Desert Views - that's why we built a home

I believe honoring the meaning of the preserve is of utmost importance.

<p>My family hikes and mountain bikes several times per week on these trails. We truly appreciate this land and would not want its inhabitants to be disrupted any further than they already are.</p>
<p>The scenery is beautiful along Sonoran Desert Drive and to see sections of it being developed for housing projects will take away from the beauty that we have all come to love about this area.</p>
<p>As a resident living at Fireside, I have seen javelinas (up to a dozen at a time) and other wild animals come up to our home looking for food and emptying garbage at night. By tearing down more natural and wild habitat for additional homes will only increase the existing problems for the animals in the desert when more of their natural habitat is torn down. Stop tearing in to the natural surrounding preserve.</p>
<p>We moved to our current home to enjoy the benefits of having access to the Sonoran Preserve. The Desert Character Overlay District was created to preserve the integrity of this precious commodity, if it is ignored, the beauty and recreational benefits of the preserve will be significantly reduced.</p>
<p>I participate in running and hiking in the area and treasure the natural beauty of the desert landscape.</p>
<p>We have overpopulated the North Phoenix area already with many dense residencies, namely apartment complexes and townhomes. I believe we need to slow down and consider expansion in a different direction so that we don't lose many of our beautiful mountain and nature parcels that we need to save. I feel this is being rushed and has not been thoroughly reviewed and vetted.</p>
<p>I've lived in the preserve area since I was very little. We need to keep the desert a desert, our native animals are continually being forced to co habitate with humans and it's not going welk. Continue to give them their space so that we can all live together without hostile interaction</p>
<p>Hiking and the overall access to the outdoors</p>
<p>My concern is for public safety first and foremost. In addition to the widening of the Sonoran roadway and the disregard for the serenity of the desert. Finally I feel the City is growing too fast with little regard for Public Safety and infrastructure growth.</p>
<p>This is so important to protect the natural beauty, wildlife, ecosystems, and quiet quality of life that draws people to the area and the state in general. Please act to prevent the potentially irreparable damage discarding these safeguards could cause!</p>
<p>We need to maintain the beauty of the valley. Areas need to be protected and respected so all can enjoy.</p>
<p>I use the Sonoran preserve almost daily to get a brief reprieve from the overcrowding of Phoenix. The ability to briefly enjoy the desert views without seeing endless developments and choking smog of cars is why we decided to live in this area.</p>
<p>Please follow the Desert Character Overlay District plan. Keep traffic low and undeveloped land so we can enjoy the preserve.</p>
<p>The Sonoran preserve is a spot where I hike, bike and run 5-6 times per week. I truly enjoy the beautiful natural preserve this area has. The animals I see during my adventures is also priceless. I truly hope this petition makes a change !</p>

From: [Anthony M Grande](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: Z-TA-5-18-2 (Companion Cases Z-62-18-2, Z-75-18-2, and GPA-DSTV-1-18- 2)
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 9:54:09 AM
Attachments: [CB_itr_2019_cmt.docx](#)

Anthony Grande

Planner II – Village Planner
City of Phoenix
Planning & Development Department
Long Range Planning
Office: 602-256-5648
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003



From: Mandy Fellows <mandy.fellows12@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 7:17 AM
To: Anthony M Grande <anthony.grande@phoenix.gov>
Subject: Z-TA-5-18-2 (Companion Cases Z-62-18-2, Z-75-18-2, and GPA-DSTV-1-18- 2)

Dear Mr. Grande,

In regards to the above subject items scheduled at Desert View Village Meeting on 4/5/22.

First, I have attached a letter written by Dr. Sullivan in 2019 regarding this immediate area. He and a team from ASU have spent the past 32 years study the elite wildlife and fauna. I would like his letter distributed, again, to the Village committee. It was given to participants in 2019 when this same Development was presenting at that time. The letter speaks for itself

Second, I would like to formally request a FEMA study of this Floodplain Designated area prior to the topsoil being disturbed. Any movement of this Floodplain will create significant increases into Apache and Cave Creek washes that surround this proposed development. In addition, the bridges on Sonoran Parkway for these two washes need to be re-evaluated for increased flow! Their bottom of girder elevation is just at the FEMA 100 year flood flow and they could potentially be wiped out with increased water activity. These two bridges, if wiped out during a massive monsoon rain, would strand any homeowners as the access roads out of the development are only between these two bridges.

Lastly, I would like the committee to understand that the Desert Character Overlay has been in place since the Sonoran Parkway was put in and needs to be adhered to, as does the current and long standing Zoning. Just because Taylor Morrison doesn't like it does not make it appropriate to rezone!! They should be required to alter the development to fit within all those ordinances!! Why should it be the other way around?? Thousands of Sonoran Preserve wildlife and fauna will be ruined to put in massive utilities and that is unacceptable as well! A smaller, more elite developer could build homes on 1 acre sites, less traffic and less utilities! They could sell for 1M+ and no ordinance changes would be needed. Taylor Morrison is only out for greed and if these ordinances are changed for them they will surely only want more and more.

The Village and City Planning MUST enforce the DCO and Zoning requirements put in place after millions of dollars of studies!!

Thank you for your attention and distribution of this letter to the Village for tomorrow's meeting.

Sincerely,

Mandy Fellows

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android \[go.onelink.me\]](https://go.onelink.me)

15 March 2019

Desert View Village Planning Committee

Dear Committee Members:

I understand that as a committee, you will consider a proposed rezoning ("Z-62-18-2") of a parcel of land immediately north of Cave Buttes in northern Maricopa County. I contact you to respectfully request that you oppose this rezoning. By so doing you will act both to protect the natural resource value of the entire Cave Creek watershed and to subsequently promote additional acquisitions rather than additional development.

I hope to draw your attention to the biological resources available in Cave Buttes, Maricopa County, resources used by scientists and students, bikers and hikers, bird watchers and nature enthusiasts, as well as simple residents in their everyday lives. By placing a high value on the natural diversity of the Cave Buttes area, by insuring that your actions contribute to the preservation of that area to the fullest extent possible, I think that you will maximize the use and enjoyment of those areas by all Phoenix area residents over the coming years of continued growth and coincident incursions into the surrounding landscapes. I provide my comments as a scientist, resident of the area, and concerned citizen. More specifically, as a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, I have been working in Cave Buttes over 40 years, and in the past ten years have been conducting continuous long-term studies of a number of wildlife species in the area (e.g., desert tortoises, horned lizards, spadefoot toads, and others). I know it well.

Rezoning of the parcel in question will have two major and immediate impacts: 1) loss of unique valley floor and small wash habitats due to development; and 2) loss of a critical wildlife corridor connecting the current mountain preserves through the central valley floor (north and south), and some degree of impact on adjacent corridors in nearby washes (Apache and Cave creeks). These losses are outlined in greater detail below.

Habitat loss: flats or valley floors and small washes are unique additions to biotic diversity of mountain (i.e., upland only) preserves. The specific area in question represents prime habitat between the southern and northern Union Hills, as it contains numerous small "feeder" washes between the major drainages of Cave Creek (to the east) and Apache Wash (to the west). The adjacent floodplains ("flats) and these washes contain unique habitats not contained within the current mountain preserves (Sonoran Preserve, north and south). As documented in the Sonoran Preserve Master Plan (Anonymous, 1998) and the original vegetation surveys (1996, 1998), these wash habitats are botanically rich, and used by a variety of wildlife species. The valley floor in this area also contains remnant grassland species (eg, Tobosa, Pencil Cholla and Cane

Cholla) rarely encountered in the Phoenix metro area (more commonly associated with the Agua Fria Grasslands to the immediate north).

Corridor impacts: The loss of this much habitat adjacent to the Parkway further degrades the corridor potential over and above that resulting from the Parkway alone. These connections or corridors allow for critical population exchange. A number of species, including Sonoran Desert tortoises, javelina, mountain lion and many others, use the valley floors as corridors. For example, desert tortoises only rarely leave the uplands, but they must be able to traverse valley floors to maintain a series of connected populations, genetically speaking. Faced with the prospect of even larger numbers of local residents, the current connectivity between north and south preserves would be further compromised.

The most immediate need is for larger areas of valley floors and washes to be preserved adjacent to the existing mountain preserves, providing both additional habitat absent from the upland slope areas already protected, AND providing important linkages for wildlife traveling between these preserves. The broad, historic floodplain between Apache Wash and Cave Creek, precisely the area to be developed, is the most desirable acreage to serve the purposes described above (maintain diversity, promote gene exchange and population connectivity). Ideally, if additional development **MUST** occur, it should be moved to the east or the west along the parkway, leaving this high quality habitat intact.

I can safely state that I have spent more time in Cave Buttes than anyone over the past ten years. I urge you to use your advisory power to promote protection of this land and to aid the city of Phoenix in upholding its duty under the public trust to preserve the value of the land for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian K. Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Brian K. Sullivan, PhD
Professor of Herpetology and Evolutionary Biology
Arizona State University

References:

Anonymous, 1998. Sonoran Preserve Master Plan. City of Phoenix., Burke, J. and J. Ewan, primary authors. 57 pp.

Ewan, J. M., R. Fish Ewan, T. Craig, and S. Scheiner. 1996. Cave Creek Wash preservation boundary study. Herberger Center for Design Excellence, ASU, Tempe.

Ewan, J. M., and R. Fish Ewan. 1998. North Phoenix Wash vegetation study. Herberger Center for Design Excellence, ASU, Tempe. 43 pp.

From: [Ann Wilde](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#); [Anthony M. Grande](#)
Subject: Z-TA-5-18-2
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 10:09:23 PM

Please distribute the comments below to members of the Desert View Planning Committee.

Not long ago I was at the Whitewater Draw and saw a Nature Note posited by Arizona Game and Fish Department:

In part the Note read, "The primary threat to the existence of any wildlife population is the loss or degradation of its habitat. . . .Take away the lifeblood of an ecosystem, and in time, the ecosystem also dies."

On the VerdinPhoenix.com website one reads:

"As State Trust land surrounding Sonoran Desert Drive is auctioned off in the future for employment, commercial, and residential uses to support . . . this growth, our goal is that Verdin will set a stunning precedent for desert-sensitive development adjacent to the Sonoran Preserve."

Also stated:

"Our vision for Verdin is to create an authentic desert community that brings the wonder and peace of nature into daily life."

The two statements conflict with the request to amend (or move away from the proposed project) the provisions that protect the desert ecosystem. Once the ecosystem is altered in a major way, it won't recover. Unintended repercussions may develop in coming years. For many years the area currently proposed for development has been zoned for a housing density that was determined suitable for the area.

Please hold firm to the vision in place when it was written that "the Desert View Village has "land uses [that] compliment the equestrian ranch properties, with vast amounts of open space and large lot single-family residences."

The desert maintenance overlay Sub-District A does not have to be amended or removed for development to occur--only for development to occur as currently proposed for the Verdin project.

The existing and current zoning requiring lower density housing supports better preservation of habitat and movement of wildlife.

The City of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance Section 653A states that "[the] Desert Maintenance Overlay Subdistrict A is the least intensive with regards to density allowed and the most restrictive in order to maintain the fragile undisturbed areas and the wildlife corridor along Cave Creek Wash."

The ordinance continues in 653B to state "[It's] purpose . . . is to guide development that will blend with the undisturbed desert environment rather than dominate it."

The advantages of maintaining the desert maintenance character overlay:

-provides guidance for new development to occur within the context of the fragile undisturbed desert;

-encourages development that will blend with the undisturbed desert rather than dominate it;

-natural washes and the surrounding area are protected.

As an ordinary person who lives in the general area and values nature and the desert, I support keeping the desert maintenance character overlay as it currently exists along Sonoran Desert Drive.

I respectfully request that you give serious consideration to supporting development at the lower housing density supported by the Desert Maintenance Character Overlay. I realize that housing is needed; more housing requires more water and infrastructure; and growth will not be stopped. Hopefully, with your recommendation, growth will occur in a measured manner that supports maintaining a desert character, rather than a large master planned community with triple the number of homes imposed on a fragile ecosystem.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these thoughts.

Ann Wilde

From: [Anthony M Grande](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: Letter to the Desert View VPC for the Verdin Project (Formerly MacEwen 480)
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 12:55:25 PM

Anthony Grande

Planner II – Village Planner
City of Phoenix
Planning & Development Department
Long Range Planning
Office: 602-256-5648
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003



From: Keeli Keeler <keeli.sahn@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 12:52 PM
To: PDD Desert View VPC <desertviewvpc@phoenix.gov>
Subject: Letter to the Desert View VPC for the Verdin Project (Formerly MacEwen 480)

As a local resident in the area and concerned citizen I would like to reach out to you, the Desert View Village Planning Committee, as you prepare to meet this evening to discuss and vote on the Verdin Project. **I am not opposed to development of the property off of Sonoran Desert Drive across from the Preserve, however, I am opposed to the realignment and zoning amendments that Taylor Morrison is seeking approval for in relation to the Verdin/MacEwen 480 Project, Z-62-18-2.**

Development is bound to occur as people continue to move to the Phoenix area and more housing is needed. However, I ask for you to consider the overwhelming presence of residents living in the area, outdoor enthusiasts who frequently bike and hike in the area, and people invested in the preservation of this land from all across Phoenix that were in such strong opposition to these same proposed changes back in 2019. I appreciate that after such a strong opposition that Taylor Morrison went back to the drawing board to address some of the concerns of traffic and partnered with the National Wildlife Foundation to address some of the preservation concerns. **However, they are still requesting to remove other protective measures that were put in place to help preserve the beauty of this land and surrounding preserve.** It is a unique piece of land that is directly across from the Preserve, and should be treated as such. **Decisions made for development today will impact future development along this corridor** when state trust land is sold off to developers. The community and the VPC are in a unique position to keep developers accountable for responsible

development in such a unique and beautiful part of the valley.

This property in consideration was a privately owned parcel that was sold to Taylor Morrison and does in fact currently allow for development of homes. However, the **current zoning would restrict Taylor Morrison to 1 home per acre**. Under current zoning, these would be estate properties similar to some of the other unique and protected areas around Northern Phoenix like the Boulders, Spur Cross Ranch, etc., and would support the initial intent of zoning in this area to minimize impact to the surrounding desert. However, *Taylor Morrison is not in the business of estate-type properties, but instead the business master planned communities with as many homes as possible*. Taylor Morrison's attorney has gone so far as trying to convince everyone that by adding in some open edges, homeowner classes, and by creating trails to join to the preserve that it will not change how the desert looks or impact any of the surrounding wildlife, plants, and preserve by increasing the zoning to allow 3-5 homes per acre. While these are all nice things to add to the community that came from suggestions by the NWF, it is **absolutely false as rezoning to allow that many homes will in fact impact the surrounding desert, wildlife and strain resources**. Rezoning the parcel in question will have some major and immediate impacts: 1) negative impact to the habitat from development and destruction of the unique valley floor 2) negative impact to the wildlife corridor, and 3) subsequent impact on adjacent land, flora, fauna and wildlife. Taylor Morrison is a business - the business of building as many homes for as much profit as they possibly can - these requests for rezoning are nothing more than that. For them it isn't about the environment or the community, but profits and opportunities to maximize growth. **I strongly request the VPC to consider the impact that the rezoning request would have and vote NO on the portion of the request.**

Taylor Morrison is also requesting to move and/or completely remove the desert character overlay from the property in question. Their attorney and council has tried to create a story that the initial plan for the desert character overlay was only the intent for that time period versus a well thought out effort to help protect an important habitat from massive future development. Additionally, Taylor Morrison's legal representative has also tried to state that it should be moved because of the change in where the road was put through instead of the initial plan of where the road was anticipated to go. Based on the research that I was able to do and comments from others who were around when the group was formed to create the initial desert character overlay, the intent of the desert character overlay took into account the future intent to develop in the area and was created to in fact help protect vital areas of the desert to minimize impact to the Preserve. **Taylor Morrison's attorney has created a false narrative in order to benefit a developer who has attempted to appear like they are invested in sustainable and thoughtful development, but by all attempts of removing protections in place is the exact opposite**. Attempts to move the desert character overlay north of Sonoran Desert Drive actually removes the desert character overlay completely from the Taylor Morrison property for the Verdin project, and is completely useless as that area is preserve land and as such is protected. By allowing a change/removal of the desert character overlay to happen, it would also have major impacts to the surrounding desert and wildlife, and only benefits the developer to allow more homes in an area in which they were never intended. **I strongly request the VPC to consider the impact that the desert overlay request would have and vote NO on the portion of the request.**

At the North Gateway VPC meeting last month, Taylor Morrison had some of their homeowners who live in the neighboring Sonoran Gate community speak up in support of this development. The sole argument from the two homeowners in support was the need for affordable housing in Phoenix and how great it would be to have affordable housing in such a unique location so that people can enjoy it. While it is true that Phoenix can use some additional affordable housing and that this is indeed a unique piece of land in a unique area next to the preserve, **any efforts to create "affordable housing" will not exist in this area despite the lot size or number of homes just based on proximity to the preserve and surrounding views. Additionally, this argument in support fails to consider the impact that allowing this development to markedly change zoning requirements to add at least 3-4 times the amount of homes in the intended area will have on the surrounding desert as well as the future development** that will follow as the state trust land is sold off to other developers, which will completely negate any argument of people being able to enjoy it. People can currently enjoy it by visiting the Apache Wash Trailhead to bike, hike, horseback ride, enjoy the scenery and the wildlife. Mass development will impact the environment, wildlife, views, and therefore make the area less of a beauty to enjoy. The Verdin / MacEwen 480 project will set a precedent for how future development will go. **Please help us stand in opposition to a massive development right next to the preserve and support the intent of the current desert character overlay and zoning to uphold responsible and sustainable development along this corridor.**

As I had mentioned prior, development is bound to occur based on sheer need, but the **decisions that are made now can either help support responsible development in such a unique location or solely benefit this developer and the others to come without taking into account the community and Preserve.**

I would request that the Desert View VPC:

- 1) Maintain the Master Plan as originally proposed within the current zoning
- 2) Maintain the desert character overlay to effectively control development surrounding the entire Preserve area
- 3) Recognize the impact that the desert, Preserve, wildlife, flora and fauna, strain on resources, and stress on infrastructure that massive development would have within the corridor.

Sincerely,

Keeli Keeler
Homeowner in Sonoran Foothills (Phoenix 85085)

From: [Council District 2 PCC](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Fwd: Sonoran preserve. Let's actually preserve it!
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 1:35:58 PM

Please add to the public record

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From: Dawn M <dawnmannon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 1:10 PM
To: Council District 2 PCC
Subject: Sonoran preserve. Let's actually preserve it!

Jim,

As a local resident, I am against any realignment/zoning amendment of Phoenix's Master Plan for the Sonoran Preserve as it relates to Taylor Morrison's request for the Verdin/McEwan 480 Project, Z-62-18-2. Key objection elements of the amendment include:

1. Remove the Desert Character Overlay requirement
2. Build homes outside of existing infrastructure
3. Massive up zone, 3-5 houses per acre

The developer is seeking to transform the Desert Character Overlay around the Preserve. Moving it north of Sonoran Desert Drive is actually removing it because north of Sonoran Desert Drive is the Preserve itself.

Regardless of previous statements, if all Plan Amendments proposed are passed, the development will not be "truly unique." Nor will it be as the developer committed, "... a context-sensitive community that sets the bar high for any future development in the area."

It seems all the developer sees is growth, not thoughtful development, or sustainability. This Plan Amendment only benefits the developer and not the community or the Preserve.

I am not a "recreational activist," as cited on a recent local newscast. My objections seek to:

- a. Maintain the Master Plan as originally proposed
- b. Recognize the dismal condition of the Valley's current and future water supply
- c. Maintain the overlay as the effective way to control development in the entire Preserve area

Kindly,
Dawn Mannon
Phoenix, Az

From: [Anthony M Grande](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: preserving the Sonoran preserve
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 1:16:24 PM

Anthony Grande

Planner II – Village Planner
City of Phoenix
Planning & Development Department
Long Range Planning
Office: 602-256-5648
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003



From: Dawn M <dawnmannon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 1:13 PM
To: PDD Desert View VPC <desertviewvpc@phoenix.gov>
Subject: preserving the Sonoran preserve

As a resident of Phoenix (for almost 50 years), I have seen mass destruction of our beautiful desert. I employ you to keep the desert overlay at the Sonoran Preserve. Please do not build massive amounts of homes in our desert.

thank you,

Dawn Mannon
Phoenix, AZ

From: [Susanne Rothwell](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Cc: [Patrick and Eileen McMullen](#)
Subject: FW: Final PMPC Letter (and contact info if helpful!)
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 10:52:39 AM
Attachments: [FINAL 2022_03_31 Letter to City of Phoenix re VERDIN Applications11.docx](#)
Importance: High

Hello Julianna and the Desert View Village Planning Committee,

Please read the attached letter from Phoenix Mountains Preservation Committee (PMPC) President Patrick McMullen and the PMPC board.

It is in regards to the proposed Taylor Morrison 'Verdin' re-zoning case coming before the Committee tomorrow.

It is late so hoping that you will have some time to read it, as it is a particularly important issue for the PMPC.

Kindest regards,

Susanne Rothwell
PMPC



PMPC SUMMARY - APRIL 3, 2022

The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization charged with the protection of the Phoenix Mountains Preserves write to you with our strong support and encouragement to engage and monitor the Verdin Development of the 480 acres situated to the west of Cave Creek Wash and to the south of the Sonoran Parkway. The Verdin location abuts to Sonoran Preserve.

The attached legal research conducted by the PMPC Attorney, lists our concerns and we hope that you and City departments will continue to take them seriously and will apply the sections of the zoning Ordinance that were written and included into the Ordinance to protect these Preserve adjacencies and to ensure that the Preserves will remain available to the public and enjoyable as well.

PMPC understands that Phoenix is a rapidly growing city and that large numbers of the new population must be accommodated. A great effort was undertaken in past decades to have the Sonoran Preserve acquired by the City at tax payer expense, with a large effort by PMPC to identify and help to support the City efforts. We therefore are very dedicated to keeping the Preserves available to the local citizens, and the Desert Character Overlay continued and appreciated.

The Verdin Development planning team has taken important steps in the linking up of the Sonoran Preserves, emphasis on desert plant maintenance, protection of plants and animals, and meaningful public access to the Desert Preserves surrounding the new Verdin development. What is needed is a more formal arrangement between the City of Phoenix, Phoenix Citizens and the Verdin 480 Acre Development project team.

As a remembrance; On February 17, 1998, the [City] Council also voted unanimously to adopt the ***Sonoran Preserve Master Plan*** and to move forward in acquiring this open space. In doing so, the Council continues a time-honored precedent for protecting and preserving desert open space within the city and for ensuring recreational access for our citizens."

PMPC is intensely interested in the pending development of the Verdin 480 acre site, as it is an early project in the development of this corridor, and especially important for the continued Desert character Overlay District enforcement.

Sincerely,
Patrick McMullen, PhD
Patrick McMullen, PhD
PMPC President

March 3, 2022

Mayor Kate Gallego
Phoenix City Hall
200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Phoenix City Councilmembers
Phoenix City Hall
200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Re: Objections of the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc. (PMPC) to the Four Applications Submitted for “Verdin” Development Proposal (GPA-DSTV-1-18-2, Z-75-18-2, Z-TA-5-18-2 and Z-62-18-2)

Dear Mayor Gallego:

This letter is submitted by the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc. (PMPC) in opposition to the proposed Taylor Morrison “Verdin” housing development project south of Sonoran Desert Drive between the 16th Street and 32nd Street alignments, just west of Cave Creek Road in northern Phoenix (formerly “MacEwen 480”). We understand that developer Taylor Morrison has filed several applications in furtherance of this development including two zoning amendments, a General Plan Amendment, and a Planned Unit Development application (hereinafter the “four applications”).¹ We understand that these four applications were simultaneously approved by the North Gateway Village Planning Committee on March 10, 2022², and the Desert View Village Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on these four applications on April 5, 2022.³

PMPC strongly objects to any actions, at any level, that would advance the four applications as written, for reasons stated herein. First – the Desert Maintenance Overlay District should not be modified but must remain intact, ensuring that washes, sensitive species and their habitats, and the delicate desert ecosystem remain protected. The rezoning is not simply a “technical clean-up” as the developer casually asserts,⁴ but rather, this rezoning would be an unprecedented rollback of protections carefully researched and thoughtfully added to the Phoenix Zoning Code for this specific area decades ago – protections that were specifically adopted to protect this desert area from the very type of development pressure that is presented here. Second – simultaneous consideration and approval of these four applications is contrary to the law and City of Phoenix policy. Furthermore, public notice has been deficient.

¹ General Plan Amendment (GPA-DSTV-1-18-2); Zoning Amendments (Z-75-18-2 and Z-75-5-18); and Planned Unit Development (Z-62-18-2).

² See [Notice of Results](#), North Gateway Village Planning Committee Meeting (March 10, 2022).

³ See [Notice of Public Meeting](#), Desert View Village Planning Committee (April 5, 2022).

⁴ See Letter re Z-75-18-2 Zoning Map Amendment (December 17, 2021), p.2

On behalf of PMPC, I ask that these applications **not** be approved as written but that the Desert Maintenance Overlay District remain wholly intact, ensuring that protections to washes, sensitive species and their habitats, and the delicate desert ecosystem remain as intended.

About PMPC

The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc. is an organization founded in 1970 by Arizona visionaries dedicated to the protection of Phoenix's Mountain Preserve system. For the last 50 years, PMPC and its members have worked tirelessly to preserve, protect, and advocate for the precious Mountain Preserve system, and to monitor and address the rapid growth and development surrounding these important public resources. For much of Phoenix's modern history, our PMPC membership has worked hard alongside hundreds of concerned Phoenix citizens and City staff to ensure that the Sonoran Desert Preserves are protected and maintained as a valuable resource for all citizens of Phoenix.

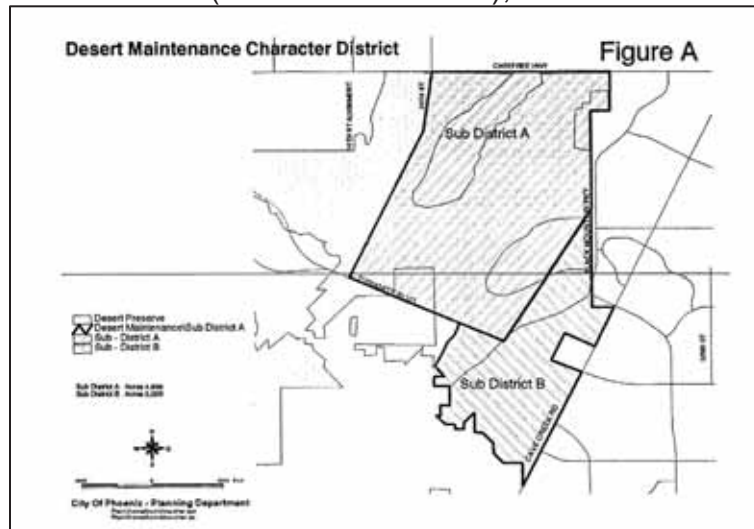
I. The Desert Maintenance Overlay District Must Not Be Altered

For many decades, protecting and preserving the unique desert features of the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve and the surrounding area has been a priority for the City of Phoenix. The PMPC and its members were involved in and supported the development and adoption of the Desert Maintenance Overlay District ("DMOD" or "DMOD Overlay") at Section 653 of the Zoning Ordinance in 2001, and the related working groups and charettes involved with that process, as well as the formation and expansion of the Phoenix Mountain Preserves. We support the critical protections carefully enacted by the City of Phoenix to prohibit intense development in and around the Cave Creek Wash area outlined in the DMOD Overlay, which must remain intact.

The true history of how the DMOD Overlay was developed is compelling. It is a landmark instance of how land planning and landscape ecological principles can be integrated as part of policy drafting processes. It should be a point of pride for the City of Phoenix, and an asset worth protecting. Furthermore, the history shows that the DMOD Overlay area and its boundaries were not simply dictated by road alignments (as the developer incorrectly claims), but instead were carefully studied and thoughtfully drafted in a manner integrating ecological considerations with planning structure, as part of one of the most robust and widely supported Phoenix endeavors, to date. Finally, the owner(s) of the "Verdin" property have owned this land for at least the last half-century, and have had ample time and opportunities to challenge its classification over the last several decades. The DMOD Overlay must not be altered.

History of the Desert Maintenance Overlay District (DMOD)

On July 5, 2001, the approximately 6,724-acre DMOD was added to the Phoenix City Zoning Ordinance at Section 653 (Sub-Districts A & B), shown on the following page.⁵



[City of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance Section 653](#) (Desert Character Overlay Districts)

It was carefully constructed by a large, interdisciplinary collaborative effort over several years to study and understand the unique and sensitive characteristics of this area, and protect those characteristics from the pressures of development. Historical city documents and studies, reports, articles, and other research materials describe this history, as summarized below.

1980s

On January 19, 1985, a large portion of northern Phoenix (including the current DMOD Overlay area) was annexed into the city.⁶ Tensions between increasing development and impacts on sensitive desert areas were rising during this time. Spurred in part by these tensions and concerns over the proposed development at Tatum Ranch,⁷ the City Council developed a plan for this larger area, then called the peripheral Areas C and D Areas, with “extensive” community assistance from a Council-appointed Citizen’s

⁵ See [Zoning Ordinance Section 653](#) (Desert Character Overlay Districts).

⁶ See [North Land Use Plan](#) (May 1997), at 4; see also [City of Phoenix Annexation Map](#).

⁷ See Quay, Ray. [“Bridging the Gap Between Ecological Research and Land Use Policy: The North Sonoran Collaborative”](#) *Urban Ecosystems*, 7:283-294 (2004). Tatum Ranch was one of the first developments to use groundwater and wastewater, opening the doors for more development north of the CAP canal.

Advisory Committee, as well as support from the State.⁸ The Peripheral Areas C & D Plan was adopted in 1987.

The Peripheral Areas C and D Plan was intended to direct the City of Phoenix on future land use and development densities “to ensure that development in the area was compatible with and complementary to the unique and environmentally sensitive characteristics of the area.”⁹ The Peripheral Areas C & D Plan describes this new proactive approach: “Normally, the City is placed in a reactive role with respect to guiding growth of a developing area. These northern areas; however, are largely undeveloped and provide the City with a unique opportunity to anticipate growth and to establish an overall framework to guide physical development.”¹⁰ Even at the time, the City recognized that more work would be needed towards developing future protections, such as an ordinance.¹¹

1990s

Development continued to increase in northern Phoenix during the early 1990s. Subsequently, concerns about density and form of development within the ecologically sensitive desert areas came to a critical point. A diverse group of public and private planners, designers, environmental scientists, landscape architects, university departments, as well as representatives from state agencies, private consultants, the City of Phoenix, and State of Arizona began collaborating on a variety of studies, plans, and charrettes for this area during this time.¹² This group (called the North Sonoran Collaborative), formed and met regularly to address the gap between managing growth and the ecological data needed to accomplish these goals. Their research was organized into a multi-disciplinary GIS database,¹³ one of the early instances of GIS usage by the city and significant part of the group’s success.

The City of Phoenix began the process of revising the General Plan with detailed objectives and design standards for this area during this time. The absence of ecological

⁸ See [General Plan: Peripheral Areas C and D](#), City of Phoenix Planning Department, October 1987.

⁹ See City of Phoenix Planning Department Staff Report No. 58-01-02 (June 13, 2001), recommending approval of the DMOD Overlay, at 2. Obtained *via* Public Records Request.

¹⁰ See FN 8 at 1.

¹¹ See FN 9 at 2.

¹² See FN 9 (p.2); *see also* FN 7; *see also* [“ASU Program Stresses Ecological Approach to City Planning”](#), University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center Newsletter, November-December 1999, at 9.

¹³ See Ward, B., Burke, J., Ewan, J., Fish Ewan, R., Miller, W., Quay, R., Steiner, F. 1999. [“A Collaborative Approach to Planning.”](#) ASU School of Planning & Landscape Architecture.

information about the Northern Sonoran Desert was quickly recognized as a major barrier,¹⁴ so the City turned to the North Sonoran Collaborative and Arizona State University (ASU) School of Planning and Landscape Architecture to conduct this much-needed work. The city funded a detailed study of the Cave Creek Wash by ASU, the success of which led to several additional studies of other nearby washes.¹⁵ The Cave Creek Study also helped build momentum for the acquisition of 15,000 acres of Preserve lands including along the Cave Creek Wash corridor.

As a result of these extensive studies, a radical departure in methodology was forming. “Basing preservation boundaries on ecosystems rather than topography or land ownership is new to Phoenix. In the past, boundaries did not reflect the ecological systems inherent in the landscape and so the impact of preserve size, shape, and constitution on plant and wildlife habitats were not considered nor well understood.”¹⁶

These and other processes led directly to the North Land Use Plan (adopted 1996) and the Sonoran Preserve Master Plan (adopted 1998). Based in part on interviews with neighbors in the area, the North Land Use Plan identified three Character Areas – the Desert Preserve (today’s DMOD Overlay), the Rural Desert, and Suburban Desert – and required that zoning overlay districts be created for each area “to provide clear development standards which reflect community desires for each area.”¹⁷

It is worth highlighting that the Desert Overlay development process was so unique and ambitious that an entire session series of presentations were devoted to it at the 1999 American Planning Association’s National Conference held in Seattle, Washington.¹⁸ Presenters included ASU professors, City of Phoenix Planning Deputy Director James Burke, Assistant Director Ray Quay (all Collaborative members) who traveled from Arizona to Washington to present their work to planners across the United States.

In a conference paper presented to planners nationwide, Terry Newton of the Phoenix Planning Department noted that “the process for developing the three overlay

¹⁴ See FN 8.

¹⁵ This study was reportedly conducted by a team of ecologists and biologists from the ASU Schools of Planning and Landscape Architecture and Life Sciences Department, Northern Arizona University, the Desert Botanical Gardens, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Their report on the biological values of Cave Creek Wash entitled “[Cave Creek Wash: Preservation Boundary Study](#)” was published in 1996.

¹⁶ See [Sonoran Preserve Master Plan](#) (1998), at 16.

¹⁷ See [North Land Use Plan](#) (May 1997), at 19.

¹⁸ See [1999 APA National Planning Conference](#) file (WorldCat record); see [1999 APA National Planning Conference Table of Contents](#) (see Session Series on [The North Sonoran Collaborative](#), five papers linked).

ordinances is unlike any the city has undertaken in the past.” He continued, saying that these guidelines could “set a new standard for the city’s approach to development in natural desert areas for the city.”¹⁹ He further described the specific acreage targeted for protection:

“Much of the area identified by Subdistricts A and B is included in the Arizona Preserve Initiative (API) application which is currently being pursued by the city. **Of the approximately 5,000 acres identified as Subdistrict A, only 900 acres are outside of the API area.** Subdistrict B consists of approximately 1,700 acres with 1,500 acres falling outside of the API area. Assuming the API area as currently identified successfully becomes a preserve, approximately 2,400 acres in Subdistricts A and B would remain for possible development. **This is the area addressed by this Overlay.**” (Emphasis Added).

For reference, the current proposed rezoning applications submitted by developer Taylor Morrison propose to remove approximately 218 acres of the 900 acres of developable non-Preserve area from Subdistrict A, or about 24%.²⁰ While the number of developable acreages may have shifted since this time, it is crucial to note that the Overlay was developed to specifically target these developable acreages for protection from intense development – including the intense residential development presented by the “Verdin” project.

2000s

On June 13, 2001, the City Planning Commission met to consider and recommend adoption of the DMOD Overlay to the City Council. On June 27, 2001, the City of Phoenix granted the request as recommended, adopting the DMOD Overlay into the City Zoning Ordinance.²¹ Minutes from the June 13th Planning Commission hearing reveal the robust community input and public involvement that supported writing the DMOD Overlay text.²² Staff Report No. 58-01-2²³ recommending approval states:

¹⁹ See Newton, Terry, City of Phoenix Planning Department. [Desert Character Overlay Zoning District](#), Conference Paper presented to the American Planning Association, Seattle, WA. 1999.

²⁰ See [Staff Report – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Z-TA-5-18-2](#) (March 9, 2022) at 12.

²¹ See FN 9. See *also* Application No. Z-TA-3-99-2 (to add the Desert Character Overlay District at Section 653 of the Zoning Ordinance); see Zoning Application No. Z-58-01-2 (establish the Desert Maintenance Overlay District, one of three character districts authorized under Section 653); see Ordinance No. G-4380 and RCA35880 dated July 5, 2001 (adopting Ordinance).

²² See [City of Phoenix Planning Commission Minutes](#) (June 13, 2001) at 62; see *also* FN 9 at 2.

²³ See FN 9.

“The area has a high scenic value containing stands of dense native vegetation, which support a delicate and fragile eco-system. Within the proposed overlay is Cave Creek Wash, a unique wash system which is designated for incorporation into the City of Phoenix Sonoran Preserve. **The Desert Maintenance District is intended to provide a buffer/transition between this environmentally sensitive area and existing development.** This is an area with many washes of varying size which are tributaries to Cave Creek Wash. **It is an area of high habitat value that is critical to the survival of numerous small mammals and a variety of birds, as well as reptiles. Maintenance of the Sonoran Desert in this area requires sensitive development strategies.”**

City of Phoenix Planning Department Staff Report No. 58-01-02 (June 13, 2001), recommending approval of Z-58-01-2 and Z-TA-3-99-2. (Emphasis added).

The DMOD Overlay was codified in the Zoning Ordinance at Section 653. Within its very first paragraph: “The Desert Maintenance, Rural Desert and Suburban Desert Overlay Districts are designed in response to existing undisturbed conditions and pressures placed on them by increased development.”²⁴

The DMOD Overlay is split into Subdistricts A and B. Subdistrict A requires minimum lot sizes of 35,000 square feet or greater, or 0-1.2 dwelling units per acre.²⁵ Subdistrict B requires minimum lot sizes of 18,000 square feet or greater, or 2-5 dwelling units per acre.²⁶ Section 653(A) explains why development densities are more restrictive in Subdistrict A (where a portion of the proposed “Verdin” project lies and which is the subject of the rezoning applications) as follows:

“With the many washes to be maintained in an undisturbed condition crossing this area, Subdistrict A is intended to provide a transition from the preserve to areas with greater density. A very low density, scale and intensity of residential development characterize this area. The Desert Maintenance Overlay Subdistrict A is the least intensive with regards to density allowed and the most restrictive in order to maintain the fragile undisturbed areas and the wildlife corridor along the Cave Creek Wash. Subdistrict B is characterized by low density development which may be sited in clusters along with provision for an area to allow access to the Cave Buttes Recreational Area. Through clustering of development in this

²⁴ See FN 5 at Section (A).

²⁵ See FN 5 at [Section 653\(B\)\(5\)](#); see also FN 9 at 3.

²⁶ See FN 5 at [Section 653\(B\)\(6\)](#); see also FN 9 at 3.

area the ability to maintain large connected undisturbed areas and washes becomes possible.”

The DMOD Overlay is the only one of these three overlays completed to date. For reasons not stated, the remaining two Desert Character Overlay Districts (Rural Desert Overlay, Sec. 653(C) and the Suburban Desert Overlay, Sec. 653(D)) were never added to the Desert Character Overlay District (Sec. 653), but have remained “Reserved” for the past two decades.²⁷

While development has continued throughout the city, the thoughtfully formulated Overlay at Section 653 of the Zoning Ordinance has stood the test of time. Since adoption in 2001, it has never been amended. However, granting the rezoning proposed by the Taylor Morrison “Verdin” development to lift the DMOD Overlay will set a disastrous precedent, allowing a developer to carve themselves out of the protective, robust Overlay to facilitate their more dense (and thus more profitable) development plans. Removal of these protections sets a chilling precedent for the survival of Sonoran Preserve and the remaining acres of sensitive desert habitat and wash systems. The “Verdin” project should not be exempted from the protective DMOD Overlay.

The “Technical Clean-Up” Road Alignment Argument Is Wrong

In a transparent effort to side step the powerful history and compelling reasoning behind the Overlay, the developer claims that the requested rezonings (Z-75-18-2 and Z-TA-5-18-2) to remove the DMOD Overlay from their property are just a “technical clean ups”²⁸ to change the Overlay boundaries to align with Sonoran Desert Drive instead with the Northeast Outer Loop alignment contemplated in the Peripheral Areas C & D Plan. This is not true. The DMOD Overlay was never intended to move with any changes to the proposed roadway.

The Sonoran Preserve Parkway route alignment involved a complex process that included area residents, PMPC, the State Land Department, and Preserve and Parks Committee study partners studying multiple alternatives.²⁹ After extensive public review, one alignment was selected out of five. During a presentation to the Parks & Recreation Board meeting, it was discussed that the selected Parkway alignment was chosen to maintain existing wildlife corridors in the area, among other things. At the meeting Board Chairperson Jim Holway asked “if there was a reason why the alignment had not been

²⁷ See [Zoning Ordinance Section 653](#) (Desert Character Overlay Districts), Subsections C & D.

²⁸ See Letter from Susan Demmitt to Desert View Village Planner Julianna Pierre re Zoning Map Amendment application Z-75-18-2 (December 17, 2021). Received via Public Records Request.

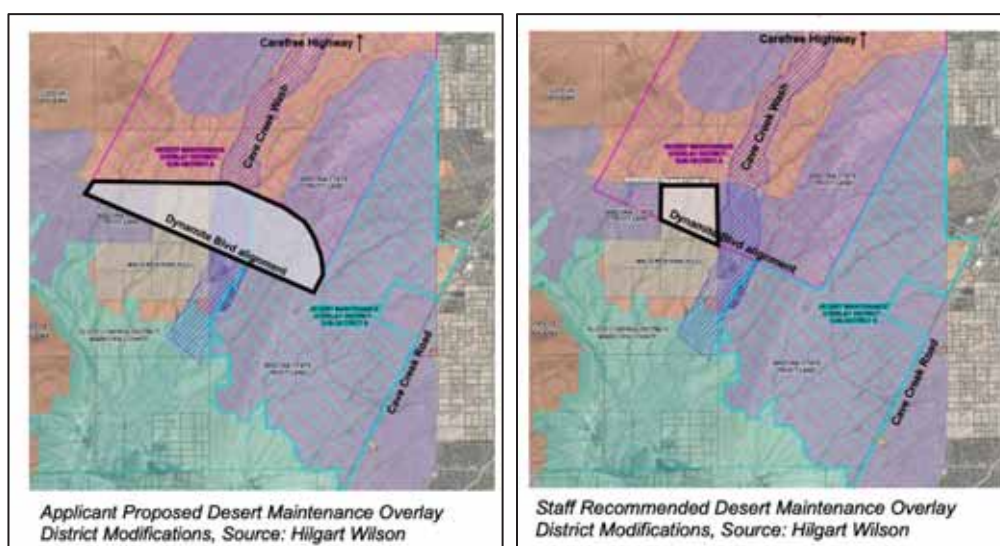
²⁹ See [Sonoran Desert Drive Alignment Study Fact Sheet](#).

brought to the edge of the preserve.” Staff and Parks & Preserve Administrator Sarah Hall explained that this was due to “major wash crossings” in the area, among other things.³⁰

A City Council Report recommending approval of the final Sonoran Parkway alignment similarly states: “Special care was taken to maintain views of the surrounding terrain, minimize scarring, preserve existing vegetation, and provide for wildlife crossings. Provisions for future trail crossings have been incorporated and structure designs include aesthetic treatment with native colors and textures to blend into the adjacent desert landscape. Segments of the alignment will abut future Mountain Preserve and serve as a buffer between the Mountain Preserve and adjacent development.”³¹

Never, in any part of the extensive Sonoran Parkway alignment review process, was there ever a mention that the new alignment was intended to redraw the boundary of the recently-adopted DMOD Overlay. Rather, the Sonoran Parkway alignment was not intended to redraw the DMOD Overlay, it was intended to traverse it. The alignment was specifically chosen to be harmonious with sensitive ecological features, not to pull back protections for these features as the developer seems to suggest now.

Even the City of Phoenix³² appears to reject the developer’s “technical clean-up” roadway claim. Below (left) is the applicant’s proposed rezoning, reducing the DMOD Overlay over a large swath. Below (right) is the City’s proposed modification, which exempts just the “Verdin” property from the DMOD Overlay. Plainly, from these maps, the “technical clean-up” roadway claim does not stand.



³⁰ See [Phoenix Parks & Recreation Board Meeting Minutes](#) (June 26, 2003) at 9-10.

³¹ See [City Council Report](#), Transportation, Parks & Seniors Subcommittee (June 8, 2006).

³² See [Staff Report Z-62-18-2 – Verdin PUD](#) dated March 9, 2022.

The proposed “Verdin” project lie underneath Mesquite Wash, an important habitat for many desert species, which runs through the heart of the property. Removal of the DMOD Overlay would entirely remove the protections to Mesquite Wash. The “Verdin” project would also intrude on Cave Creek Wash to the east, an important wildlife corridor between the existing Preserve lands located to the north and south. A development more dense than currently allowed would threaten the integrity and cut off connectivity of these wildlife corridors. Indeed, one of the smallest birds native to the Sonoran Desert known as the “Verdin” makes its home in wildlife corridors and washes including those that would be threatened by the proposed “Verdin” development.

A blatant carve-out of the “Verdin” property from the DMOD Overlay to enable more dense development is inappropriate. This flies in the face of so many years of hard work, thoughtful community input and public review, careful research, and proactive good planning. It is directly contrary to the intent of the DMOD Overlay, which exists to proactively protect the sensitive desert ecosystem from developmental pressures, not react to their desires. It also sets an awful precedent, opening the doors for future developers to make similar requests, rendering the DMOD Overlay effectively meaningless.

II. ISSUES REGARDING PROCESS

Simultaneous Consideration of All Cases Is Not Permitted

These four applications were simultaneously presented on, discussed, and approved for recommendation through a vote by the North Gateway Village Planning Committee on March 10, 2022.³³ The Desert View Village Planning Committee is scheduled to meet and take action on these “companion cases” on April 5, 2022.³⁴ This is not permitted under City of Phoenix processes and the law.

The City of Phoenix’s General Plan Amendment Planning Process Guide³⁵ notes that simultaneous review of rezoning applications and requests to amend the General Plan is prohibited. It specifically states:

May my rezoning application be reviewed simultaneously with my application to amend the GENERAL PLAN?

No. Current City policy requires that action on a rezoning application is separate from the procedure to amend the General Plan as State law requires that all rezoning be consistent with and conform to the adopted

³³ See FN 2.

³⁴ See FN 3.

³⁵ See [City of Phoenix General Plan Amendment Planning Process Guide](#) (rev. 08/12/2021)

General Plan. A hearing on the rezoning application is to occur subsequent to a determination on the change to the General Plan. However, you may file your rezoning application and be scheduled for a hearing agenda following action on the General Plan amendment. Note: This requirement can be waived by the Planning and Development Director upon written request for special circumstances.

General Plan Amendment Planning Process Guide, at p.2

[A.R.S. § 9-462.01\(F\)](#) states in relevant part that “[a]ll zoning and rezoning ordinances adopted under this article shall be consistent with and conform to the adopted general plan of the municipality”. It is the intent of the Legislature that revisions to the General Plan must occur prior to, not simultaneous with, zoning and rezonings. This is an important process as it protects the integrity of the General Plan and the processes involved in its revision, including (but not at all limited to), ongoing public notice and participation.

Exceptions to this requirement have not occurred and do not apply here. Scheduling of a hearing agenda following action on the General Plan is not occurring here, as the Verdin Minor General Plan Amendment Submittal (Case No. GPA-DSTV-1-18-2) admits that “[t]his Amendment is being processed concurrently with applications to change the zoning on the Property...”³⁶ Finally, there has been no indication that developer Taylor Morrison has ever requested a written waiver of this explicit requirement.

In addition, the General Plan Amendment Planning Process makes clear that the contents of a General Plan Amendment hearing and a Rezoning hearing are quite different.³⁷ For instance, certain zoning issues are “not appropriate for discussion” at a General Plan Amendment hearing, including setbacks, elevation, open space, amenities, and other topics. Simultaneous consideration of all of these applications, and consideration of all of these topics at one single hearing, is inappropriate and contrary to Phoenix City policies and Arizona laws governing municipal planning.

All Procedures for the Cases Must Be Complied With

On December 7, 2021 and December 9, 2021, the four applications were presented and discussed at the Desert View Village Planning Committee and the North Gateway Village Planning Committee regular monthly meetings, respectively.³⁸ On

³⁶ See Verdin Major General Plan Amendment Submittal (December 17, 2021), p.5 (obtained via public records request).

³⁷ See FN 34 at 2-3.

³⁸ See [Desert View Village Planning Committee – Notice of Results](#) (December 7, 2021); see [North Gateway Village Planning Committee – Notice of Results](#) (December 9, 2021).

December 17, 2021 and after these informational meetings, the General Plan Amendment Application was resubmitted to the Planning & Development Department (the first submittal having occurred over three years prior).³⁹ However, no further presentation and discussion of this resubmittal occurred prior to voting meetings.

Neighborhood notification and meetings are also a requirement of the General Plan Amendment process. Specifically, applicants are required to meet with property owners within 600 feet of the subject site to present the proposal, and attempt to address resident concerns. Furthermore, the General Plan Amendment Process Guide⁴⁰ requires:

“The results of that meeting shall be summarized and forwarded to the village planner in whose village the case is located. No hearings shall be scheduled without submittal of the following information:

- Date, time, and location of the meeting
- Number of participants
- Issues that arose during the meeting
- Plan to resolve the issues, if possible”

It is unclear whether this requirement has been met. Furthermore, if such a meeting has occurred, it is important to determine whether the meeting occurred prior or subsequent to the major resubmittal in December 2021. This is critical. Fundamental to the planning process are ample, advance public notice allowing time for meaningful review, engagement and participation.

For reasons stated above, the bundling of these four cases (rezoning applications, request to amend the General Plan, and Planned Unit Development) is improper and prohibited by the City of Phoenix’s own policy. Progression of these cases must stop on this basis alone.

Public Review Opportunities Have Been Insufficient

The City of Phoenix Staff Report for Verdin PUD was not finalized until March 9, 2022, and was not posted on the [Planned Unit Development Case List](#) until just before the North Gateway Village Planning Committee voting meeting on March 10, 2022.⁴¹ Similarly, the City of Phoenix Staff Analysis for the General Plan Amendment was not finalized until March 9, 2022.⁴² Bafflingly, it is posted on the [General Plan Amendment](#)

³⁹ See FN 35.

⁴⁰ See FN 34.

⁴¹ See [Staff Report Z-62-18-2 – Verdin PUD](#) dated March 9, 2022.

⁴² See [Staff Analysis GPA-DSTV-1-18-2](#) dated March 9, 2022.

[Case List](#) under the year “2018” and not under “2022”, making it highly unlikely that an interested citizen would easily be able to locate and review it (if they even knew it was there). The City of Phoenix Staff Report for the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment was also not finalized until March 9, 2022.⁴³ Also bafflingly, it is posted on the [Rezoning & Text Amendment Case List](#) under the year “2018” and not under “2022.” This stymies the good-faith efforts of even the most persistent interested citizen, and certainly stifles public participation.

Additionally, revisions to the Verdin PUD Narrative have repeatedly been resubmitted by developer Taylor Morrison over the past three months. The most recent resubmission was on March 3, 2022, a few short days before the North Gateway Village Planning Committee voting meeting on March 10, 2022.⁴⁴ No notification of this updated draft (or the specific changes it contains) was received in advance of the March 10th meeting.

No notification or alert was ever received that these reports or updates were even available, leaving no time for any meaningful public review (or even awareness of their existence) prior to the first Village voting meeting. This is made more egregious by the fact that there are significant public concerns with this development, which have been repeatedly raised throughout the years. In fact, public concern about this project has been expressed since the project was first proposed as “MacEwen 480” in 2018.⁴⁵ As the City is likely aware, the organization known as Save Our Sonoran Preserve was formed by residents in response to these very threats from this project and SOS has fiercely advocated for protection of the Preserve and DMOD Overlay ever since.

Although the Public Meeting materials included allotted time for “Public Comments”, this opportunity is not meaningful, when the public is not given sufficient time to review the relevant documents in advance of key voting meetings. Proper time for public participation and notice are required components of the public process for all of these cases. As you know, [A.R.S. § 9-461.06\(C\)](#) directs municipalities to provide for “effective, early and continuous public participation” with respect to General Plan amendment processes.

⁴³ See [Staff Report – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Z-TA-5-18-2](#) dated March 9, 2022.

⁴⁴ See Verdin PUD Narrative.

⁴⁵ See [“1,420 homes may line 9,671 acres of preserved north Phoenix desert”](#) (AZCentral, January 12, 2022); see [“Hikers upset home builder may redevelop part of North Phoenix desert”](#) (AZFamily, February 28, 2022); see [“Preserve at odds with high density housing”](#) (Sonoran News, May 15, 2019); see [“Outdoor enthusiasts blast plan for 1,400 homes near Phoenix Sonoran Preserve”](#) (AZCentral, May 14, 2019).

Disclosing key materials on the same day as scheduled decision-making meetings does not allow for meaningful public review and participation, and unfortunately, whether or not intended, diminishes its importance. We sincerely hope that this will no longer be the case moving forward.

III. CONCLUSION

The robust protections developed and codified in the Desert Maintenance Overlay District have stood unaltered for the past 21 years. Erosion of these protections, if allowed once, may not stop. Simply put, the Desert Maintenance Overlay District must be preserved intact and not modified.

What we are asking for here is not radical. PMPC does not oppose a reasonable development on the McEwen Ranch LLC property consistent with current development standards and zoning requirements. Phoenix has already spoken with the approval of the DMOD Overlay, which reflects the years of hard work put into development of the DMOD Overlay by so many dedicated citizens and professionals.

Anything short of preserving the DMOD Overlay as-is will seriously degrade fragile desert ecosystems in the area, sever connections between the Preserves, and set a dangerous where developers can easily bypass important protections for our unique landscapes across Phoenix.

Yours Truly,

Dr. Patrick McMullen, PhD, President
Phoenix Mountain Preservation Council, Inc.
Email: pmpcaz@gmail.com

CC: Director, Phoenix City Planning & Development
Phoenix City Planning & Development Department (zoning@phoenix.gov)
North Gateway Village Planning Committee
Desert View Village Planning Committee
Executive Board, Phoenix Mountain Preservation Council, Inc.

From: [Sonoran Preserve](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: Re: Message to VPC Members
Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022 3:43:19 PM

Hi Julianna,

I wanted to say thank you for all your assistance for the past couple years on this project. Obviously, I'm a bit heartbroken and feel very gutted about the result of the vote, in particular the removal of the Desert Character Overlay, something that I have felt so passionately about.

I was hoping to post a recap to our members again so if you could forward the minutes when you get a chance that would be appreciated.

Also can you forward the below letter to Desert View VPC members:

Dear Desert View VPC,

First, I want to thank you for all your attention to the MacEwan 480/Verdin project over the past several years. It's hard to believe that we were discussing this case since 2018. It is taxing enough for me to sit in on those meetings every once in a while and you fine people do it for our community once a month! So thank you for your time and service.

Second, obviously I'm a bit heartbroken and feel very gutted over the result of the vote this week. I put so much time and effort in defending the Preserve and it's zoning laws.

It seemed that back in 2018 and 2019 everyone was in unison (both Committee members and 82 letters that you received in opposition) about how massive this up zone was, the location of this up zone and the asking of the removal of limit line and the Desert Character overlay. It was sad to see peoples opinions changes. Perhaps we're all tired of hearing about it.

At any rate, please consider me an ally in helping preserve open places like the Sonoran Preserve and it's zoning laws. For me it's the heart of what make Arizona and our beautiful village truly unique.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gary Kirkilas
708-369-4566
Save Our Sonoran Preserve

On Apr 5, 2022, at 8:20 AM, Julianna Pierre <julianna.pierre@phoenix.gov> wrote:

Thank you for sending this over, Gary. I'll make sure I have this updated version available.

Thank you,
Julianna Pierre, Planner II – Village Planner
Office: 602-534-5829



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
**PRESERVE
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City of Phoenix
► Planning & Development Department
Long Range Planning
200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Mission: Planning, Development and Preservation for a Better Phoenix

From: [Council District 2 PCC](#)
To: [Julianna Pierre](#)
Subject: FW: Verdin development proposal
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:30:53 AM

Please add to the public record.

From: Ron Orozco <wbwarrior81@yahoo.com>
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at 8:25 AM
To: Council District 2 PCC <council.district.2@phoenix.gov>
Subject: Verdin development proposal

Dear Councilman Waring,

I'm writing to you today because I know you are a man of integrity and a man of the people. I had the pleasure of meeting you a few times when you were the state senator from my district. I am deeply concerned about the proposal Verdin development has on the table to basically ignore the Desert Character Overlay District standards for development on lands adjoining the Sonoran Preserve. This is literally my backyard now and the impact to the ecosystem of overdevelopment would be irreversible. I am an avid trail runner with great respect for our desert home. This proposal is a very bad idea and in direct conflict of the standards put in place to prevent overdevelopment. No amount of 'planning' to build 'conforming with the natural environment' can make up for doubling or tripling the number of homes in this area, and with future development almost assured, sets a very bad precedent. In fact, it's hypocritical. I urge you to do the right thing and deny this proposal. Keep this area zoned as it was intended, and protect the environment and the livelihood of all who currently live here and enjoy the beauty of the Sonoran Preserve.

Sincerely,
Ron Orozco
District 2 Republican
602-469-0715

Sent from my iPhone
