

# La Cholla Commons

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## Narrative for Major General Plan Amendments

September 22, 2014

**Prepared for:**

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## **A. Project Summary**

The La Cholla Commons property is located along the west side of La Cholla Boulevard between Glover Road and Lambert Lane. The General Plan currently contemplates a mix of uses including 5 RAC residential, commercial/office, and public/semi-public facilities. The proposal is to comprehensively plan this 1.5 mile frontage of La Cholla Boulevard. The designation of the entire corridor is proposed as Master Planned Community, with the intention of allowing future rezoning for a mix of residential, neighborhood commercial, and office uses. Future uses would be oriented to provide convenient and appropriate services to the surrounding neighborhood as well as future residents.

This amendment proposal is to change the designated land use from Medium Density Residential (MDR), Rural Low Density Residential (R-LDR), Public/Semi-Public (PSP), and Neighborhood Commercial/Office (NCO) to Master Planned Community (MPC). The Master Planned Community Designation is best suited for this location because it will allow a complimentary mix of uses and ensure cohesive, well planned development along length of La Cholla Boulevard

The proposed amendment in land uses is supported by several factors, including its location on La Cholla Boulevard (a major, regional arterial roadway with future widening to a four-lane divided arterial with sidewalks and multi-use paths), location adjacent to two major signalized arterial intersections, and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

The General Plan envisions this area as a mix of non-low density residential and commercial uses. The Master Planned Community will continue that vision but in a comprehensive manner.

## **B. Property Data**

*Location:* The property is located immediately west of La Cholla Boulevard, south of Glover Drive, and north of Lambert Lane.

*Area of Properties/General Plan Amendment:*

North of Naranja Drive: 19± acres.

South of Naranja Drive: 202± acres

*Assessor Parcel Numbers:*

North of Naranja Drive: Portions of 224-11-061J, 224-11-061H, 224-11-061G, 224-11-060A, A portion of 224-11-038C

South of Naranja Drive: Portions of 224-20-001B, 224-20-001C, 224-20-002B, 224-20-002D, 224-20- 002E, 224-23-001A

*Existing Land Uses:* The proposed development surrounds the Casas Adobes Baptist Church and school, which will serve as a core for future development. The remainder of the site is vacant.

*Existing Zoning:* The property is currently zoned Single Family Residential District, R1-144.

*Existing Oro Valley General Plan Designations:* Various portions of the property are designated as Rural Low Density Residential (R-LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Public/Semi-Public (PSP), and Neighborhood Commercial/Office (NCO).

*Requested Oro Valley General Plan Designations:* The requested land use designation for the property is Master Planned Community (MPC).

### **C. General Plan Amendment Criteria**

In accordance with Section 22 of the Oro Valley Zoning Code Revised, the disposition of the General Plan amendment proposed shall be based on consistency with the vision, goals, and policies of the General Plan, with special emphasis on compliance with the following criteria:

#### **1. The proposed change is necessary because conditions in the community changed to the extent that the plan requires amendment or modification.**

- The Town of Oro Valley is growing, not only in size but also in desirability. Since the year 2000, the population of Oro Valley has increased 25%, to just over 40,000 residents (*Source: US Census*). Along La Cholla Boulevard, residential developments are in various stages of construction and platting, including the neighboring developments of Saguaros Viejos (118 lots) on the north side of Naranja Drive, Meritage on Naranja (120 lots) on the south side of Naranja Drive, and Rancho de Plata (50 lots) and Rancho del Cobre (68 lots) to the north near Glover Rd. Over the last 12 months (August 2013 to July 2014) over 180 residential building permits have been pulled within Town limits (*Source: Orange Reports, The Sales and Permit Report – August 2014, Volume 319*). Real Estate websites such as Zillow and Movoto, show home prices having increased 5-7% over the last 12 months (*Source: [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) – 9/19/2014*); coupled with The Town of Oro Valley recently being ranked as one of the top 10 safest suburbs, and continually providing a nationally ranked education system, it is clear that increased market demand within the community will need to be addressed through land use amendments to the General Plan.
- In the subsequent year following the approval and adoption of the Town of Oro Valley 2005 General Plan, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) was formed as part of the 2006 Pima County Transportation Bond initiative. The RTA is currently in the Design Phase to improve La Cholla Boulevard to a four-lane desert parkway between Overton Road and Tangerine Road. The La Cholla Corridor, as it is referenced, is one of the Region's key north-south corridors presented and approved in the 2006 Pima County, Transportation bond initiative passed by the voters; connecting Tangerine Road to Interstate 10 (through an improved connection at Ruthrauff Road). In 2013 the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) counts were approximately 7,400 along La Cholla

Boulevard between Naranja Drive and Lambert Lane. Future Traffic Conditions (2040), established by the RTA, place the ADT counts for La Cholla Boulevard between Naranja Drive and Lambert Lane at 21,830, and 23,164 for La Cholla Boulevard between Naranja Drive and Tangerine Road. The formation and implementation of the RTA, and the changing transportation condition of La Cholla Boulevard to a major north-south corridor, will increase the viability and accessibility of the site, creating demand for a variety of uses along its route.

- The rise in popularity, and the increased desire for communities to establish a live, work, play environment, leads to the need to adjust land uses to allow for flexibility and variety in each land use aspect. Locating neighborhood scale commercial in close proximity to residential users can encourage more walking and biking, reducing vehicle miles traveled in the community, and increasing employment opportunities.

## **2. The proposed change is sustainable by contributing to the socio-economic betterment of the community, while achieving community and environmental compatibility.**

- If approved, the property will be designated as a Master Plan Community. The Master Plan will set standards and themes to ensure that the development is compatible with the surrounding uses. It is anticipated that Naranja Drive on the north and Lambert Lane on the south will be improved as part of the project. La Cholla Boulevard improvements are planned as part of the 2006 Regional Transportation Authority's (RTA) initiative which once completed will adequately accommodate traffic associated with the proposed land uses. Public facilities and infrastructure already exist, and/or are planned to be constructed nearby, thus accounting for the additional burden on public infrastructure that may be associated with this project. This development will contribute to the long-term socio-economic betterment of the community by providing convenient retail and offices uses close to existing consumers and future residents.
- This proposed development will achieve community and environmental compatibility by providing open space in and along the washes and recreational areas throughout the site. Connections to the proposed trails through the development and connecting to the existing trail/path system will be provided. It is intent of the owner that future development fully comply with the requirements outlined in the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ESLO). The development will also include landscape buffers to further soften the appearance of future development from neighboring residents. The proposed natural and functional open space trails combined with walkable land uses will result in synergy, and the promotion of the desired live, work, play environment.
- The Master Plan will include aesthetic themes and standards which will ensure future development is compatible with its surroundings.
- The Master Plan provides a transition in density from east to west. On both the south and western boundaries larger lots, a buffer yard, or a combination of both will provide a transition from this development to the larger lot developments nearby.

**3. The proposed change reflects market demand which leads to viability and general community acceptance.**

- As part of 2006 Pima County Transportation Bond, approved by the voters, the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) modeled future trends to determine the transportation needs of the region. In 2005, the use of census information along with conventional transportation models led to the development of Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ). Pima County was divided into 859 TAZ's. Using historical trends in housing, employment, and land use, PAG anticipated the needs for the year 2040 for each TAZ. Between Overton Road and Moore Road, along La Cholla Boulevard, there are 8 zones (*Refer to Traffic Analysis Zones Exhibit*). The table below displays each of the 8 TAZ, their respective 2005 population, their expected 2040 population, their respective 2005 employment total, and their expected 2040 employment total:

<b>Zone #</b>	<b>2005 – Population</b>	<b>2040 – Population</b>	<b>2005 – Employment Total</b>	<b>2040 – Employment Total</b>
689	178	3,286	4	1,051
681	291	446	46	6
656	104	811	169	278
651	2,576	2,311	85	49
<b>621</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>642</b>
617	2,634	2,928	305	512
584	2,745	3,057	214	307
564	1,459	2,291	151	182

Source: Pima Association of Governments

- The data above demonstrates that total housing along the La Cholla Corridor between Overton Road and Moore Road is anticipated to increase over 55%, while total employment is anticipated to increase almost 210% along the same stretch. The proposed Master Planned Community site is within Zone #621. This zone in particular, shows significant increases in both housing and total employment by the year 2040.
- The proposed change in land use accurately reflects the anticipated demand that will follow the future development of the La Cholla Corridor as demonstrated in the planning models conducted by the Pima Association of Governments. The transformation of La Cholla Boulevard into a major north-south arterial will lead to increased viability of the site, and demand a variety of uses, both residential and commercial, to not only serve those residents within the immediate vicinity, but those traveling both north and south to other destinations.

**4. The amendment will not adversely impact the community as a whole, or a portion of the community without an acceptable means of mitigating these impacts through the subsequent zoning and development process.**

- This General Plan amendment request seeks to change the existing land use designation to Master Planned Community, allowing for neighborhood scale flexibility and innovative planning of a mix of residential and commercial uses. The site is located along a future north-south corridor, La Cholla Boulevard, and between two major arterial roadways, Lambert Lane and Naranja Drive. Specific impacts along the projects perimeter will be addressed during the rezoning phase of the entitlement process or during subsequent detailed development proposals.
- This property is ideal and appropriate for neighborhood scale commercial and residential development with the location between two major arterial roads.
- The General Plan envisions this area as a mix of non-low density residential and commercial uses. The Master Planned Community will continue that vision but in a comprehensive manner.

**D. *General Plan Policy Conformance***

A number of Oro Valley’s General Plan policies will be met by this development. Below are a few key points:

**1. Land Use**

- This proposed commercial development will not encroach into the wash areas and leave these areas as natural undisturbed open space. (Policy 1.1.3)
- This development will be low scale, neighborhood oriented, and compatible with surrounding current and future residential uses. La Cholla Boulevard is proposed to be improved by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to a four lane desert parkway. These improvements have the ability to support the human-scale commercial development proposed, while providing the Town with sales tax revenue. (Policy 1.2.1)
- The area surrounding the subject property has been largely developed with single family residential uses. Locating compatible activity centers and residential neighborhoods are encouraged. (Policy 1.3.1)
- The southeastern and northeastern corners of the site are located at two major intersections along the La Cholla Boulevard arterial. The General plan encourages the development of commercial and higher density residential units near major arterials. (Policy 1.3.2)
- The General Plan encourages the clustering of commercial development at specific nodes or villages. The location of the site at the intersection of La Cholla Boulevard and Naranja Drive would provide an ideal location for neighborhood oriented commercial development. (Policy 1.3.4)

- The Town encourages the use of Master Planning. This request is part of a larger overall area to be designated as Master Planned Community. The location, fronting 1.5 miles along La Cholla Boulevard, is ideal for the use of comprehensive planning consistent with the General Plan. (Policy 1.3.5)
- The project will decrease density from east to west. The project will include buffer yards, larger lots, or a combination to minimize impacts to the surrounding properties to the west and south across Lambert Lane. (1.4.7)
- **The Town will require master planning for projects which exceed 40 acres in size. (1.4.11)**

## 2. Community Design

- Once the land use is designated as a Master Plan Community, the use of a Planned Area Development (PAD) zoning designation will be pursued. The purpose of Planned Area Development (PAD) zoning is to improve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare by pursuing unified planning and development and provide for development proposals, which are superior to that which may occur under conventional zoning regulations. Elements associated with a PAD include architecture, landscaping, and site design standards to ensure a consistent and quality design along the corridor and throughout the site. The designs will take into consideration the surrounding neighborhoods, and current Town of Oro Valley Design Guidelines to ensure that future development is compatible. (Policy 2.1.1)

## 3. Economic Development

- With the location along La Cholla Boulevard, and proximity to established residential units, the proposed neighborhood oriented commercial development will not only help to prevent expenditure leakage, but also provide local options for residents (both current and new) to obtain basic services without the need for a vehicle. (Policy 3.1.1)

## 4. Cost of Development

- The dedication for right-of-way along La Cholla will be donated for the La Cholla corridor improvements. As previously mentioned, the RTA will improve the La Cholla Boulevard corridor. The development will provide required widening and improvements along both Naranja Drive and Lambert Lane. (Policy 4.1.1 and Policy 4.1.4)

## 5. Public Facilities, Services, and Safety

- Municipal facilities are already located nearby, and therefore able to service this development without imposing a significant burden. (Policy 6.1.1)
  - Below are the driving distances to public facilities from the subject property:
    - Fire Stations
      - 1.3 miles southeast - Golder Ranch Fire Station 376
      - 2.1 miles northwest - Northwest Fire Station 339
      - 2.7 miles northeast - Golder Ranch Fire Station 375
    - Police Stations
      - 1.0 mile east - Oro Valley Main Police Station
    - Schools
      - 0 miles - Casas School
      - 0.3 miles northwest - Wilson K-8 School
      - 0.5 miles west - Ironwood Ridge High School
      - 1.6 miles east - Copper Creek Elementary School
      - 2.8 miles northeast - Painted Sky Elementary School
    - Town Hall
      - 1.0 mile east
    - Parks
      - 0.5 miles east - Lambert Lane Park (undeveloped)
      - 1.5 miles south - Linda Vista Neighborhood Park
      - 1.8 miles east - Naranja Town Site Park
      - 2.0 miles east - CDO River Front Park
      - 2.8 miles southwest - Arthur Pack Regional Park
  - Additionally, utilities are already available to the property.
  - Efficient and safe vehicular and non-motorized traffic circulation is a primary design consideration and amenity to the proposed master planned community. (Policy 5.1.5)
  - The Town encourages development design and orientation that promotes and facilitates multi-modal transportation access, particularly in and around major activity centers. The proposed Master Plan will promote multi-modal transportation access by providing a walking and biking friendly community. Facilities such as sidewalks, trails, bikes lanes and paths will be evaluated with the plan.

## 6. Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation

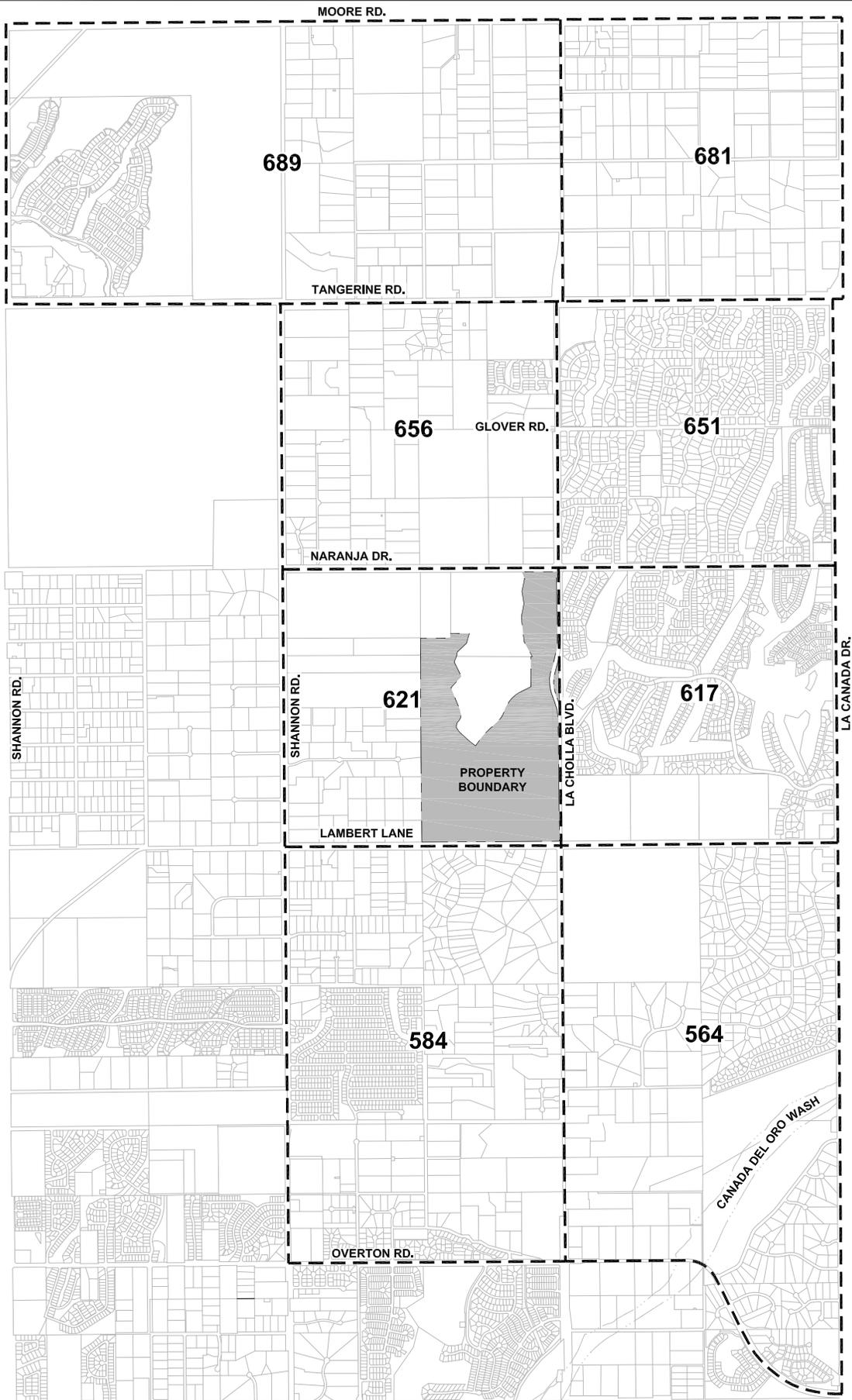
- The site designates the multiple washes as Critical Resource areas. The remainder of the site is designated Resource Management Area Tier 2 or is already developed. The site will comply by leaving the washes and additional areas on-site as natural undisturbed open space. (Policy 11.2.7)
- The future development will locate buildings, parking, and associated amenities outside of the wash areas to the greatest extent possible. Other open space areas will be provided and will enhance the pedestrian mobility of the Master Plan Community area. (Policy 11.2.9)
- The future development will comply with the requirements contained in the ESLO, by providing adequate buffers consistent with the site characteristics. (Policy 11.2.12)
- The future development will only use vegetation on the Recommended Plant List and prohibit certain invasive, allergenic, and nuisance species within the development. (Policy 11.2.15)
- This development will meet the Native Plant Preservation Plan guidelines from the Town. (Policy 11.2.16)
- To protect the views on Naranja Drive and La Cholla Blvd., both of which are designated scenic corridors by the Town of Oro Valley, the future building masses and heights will be evaluated to ensure view protection is consistent with Town policies. (Policy 11.3.1)
- This proposed development maintains the character of the views along Naranja Drive and La Cholla Boulevard by providing landscape buffers and underground utilities. (Policy 11.3.2)
- To ensure the proposed development blends and/or enhances the natural environment, all utilities will be placed underground. This will help protect the views from surrounding properties and roads. (Policy 11.3.3)
- To protect the scenic night sky in the community, the proposed development will meet the requirements established in the Town of Oro Valley Outdoor Lighting Code. To control obtrusive aspects of outdoor lighting usage, this proposed development will have reduced and/or shielded lighting. Additionally, the surrounding public will benefit from portions of the open space on-site not receiving active illumination at night. (Policy 11.4.2)

## 7. Water Resources

- The wash areas on the site will be designated as open space in compliance with the ESLO. (Policy 12.1.1)
- This development will be served by Oro Valley Water Utility, which participates in the Central Arizona Project (C.A.P.) and other regional groundwater protection initiatives. (Policy 12.2.1)
- Future development will include water conservation features, including water efficient irrigation system and drought tolerant vegetation. (Policy 12.3.2)

# EXHIBITS







Ironwood Ridge  
High School

MERITAGE ON  
NARANJA  
(NOT A PART)

CASAS  
CHURCH  
(NOT A PART)

CROSS RD

LA CHOLLA BLVD.

CANADA HILLS DR.

NARANJA DR.

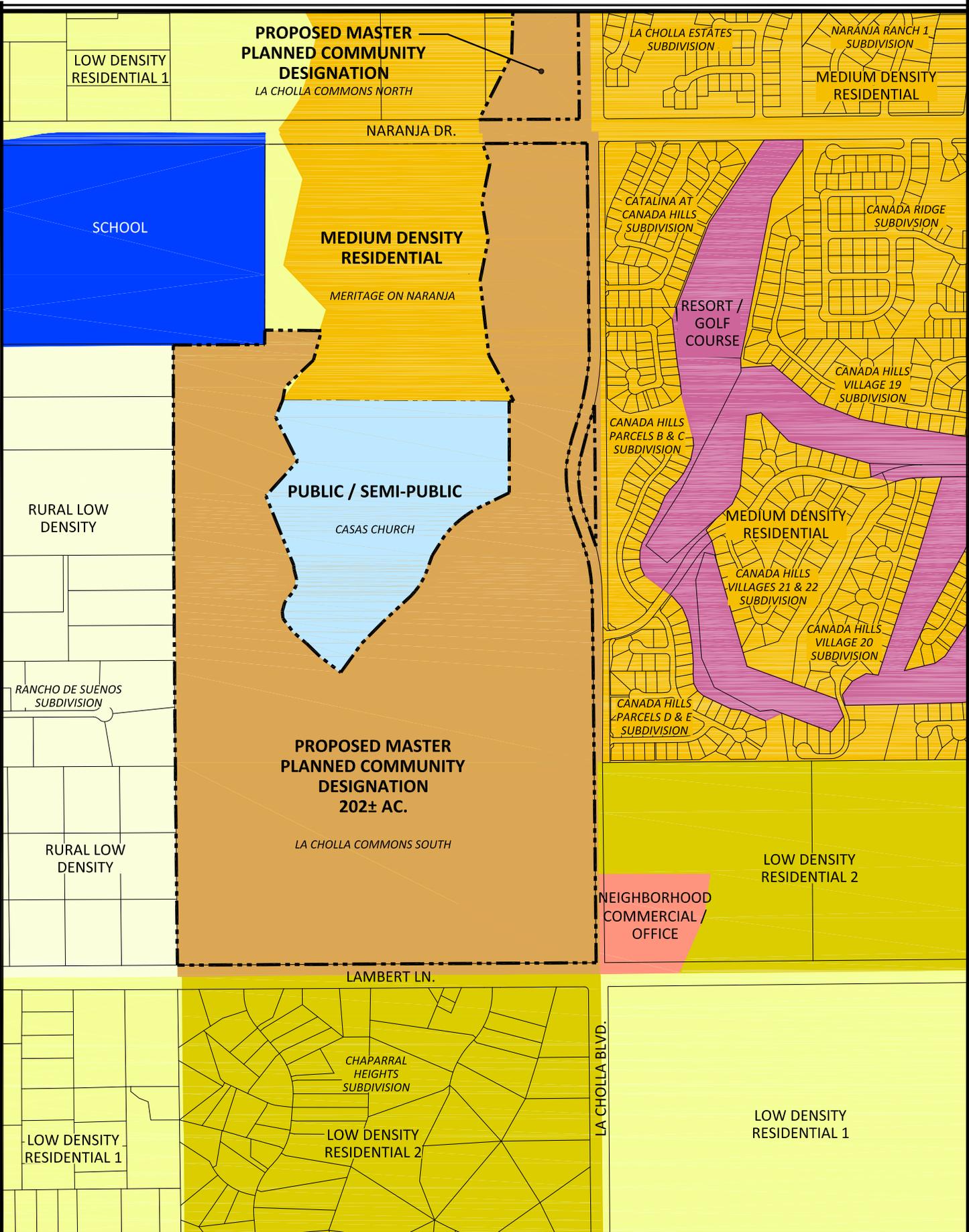
LAMBERT LN.



0'



800'



**PROPOSED MASTER  
PLANNED COMMUNITY  
DESIGNATION**  
*LA CHOLLA COMMONS NORTH*

LOW DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL 1

LA CHOLLA ESTATES  
SUBDIVISION

NARANJA RANCH 1  
SUBDIVISION

MEDIUM DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL

NARANJA DR.

SCHOOL

MEDIUM DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL

*MERITAGE ON NARANJA*

CATALINA AT  
CANADA HILLS  
SUBDIVISION

CANADA RIDGE  
SUBDIVISION

RESORT /  
GOLF  
COURSE

CANADA HILLS  
VILLAGE 19  
SUBDIVISION

RURAL LOW  
DENSITY

PUBLIC / SEMI-PUBLIC

*CASAS CHURCH*

CANADA HILLS  
PARCELS B & C  
SUBDIVISION

MEDIUM DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL

CANADA HILLS  
VILLAGES 21 & 22  
SUBDIVISION

CANADA HILLS  
VILLAGE 20  
SUBDIVISION

CANADA HILLS  
PARCELS D & E  
SUBDIVISION

RANCHO DE SUEÑOS  
SUBDIVISION

**PROPOSED MASTER  
PLANNED COMMUNITY  
DESIGNATION  
202± AC.**

*LA CHOLLA COMMONS SOUTH*

RURAL LOW  
DENSITY

LOW DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL 2

NEIGHBORHOOD  
COMMERCIAL /  
OFFICE

LAMBERT LN.

CHAPARRAL  
HEIGHTS  
SUBDIVISION

LOW DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL 1

LOW DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL 2

LA CHOLLA BLVD.

LOW DENSITY  
RESIDENTIAL 1



**LA CHOLLA COMMONS SOUTH  
PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

2014.04.29  
WLB No. 110028-A-002





AREA REMOVED FROM G.P.A. APPLICATION

150' Open Space Buffer  
Single-Story Only within 300' of Existing Homes

- Plan Policies**
1. Lands outside ESL Critical Resource Areas shall be considered Resource Management Area 2.
  2. "MPA 1" parcels allow professional/medical office, urgent care/clinic, senior living/care, medium density residential, high density residential, and expansion of Casas Church's campus.
  3. "MPA 2" parcels allow professional/medical office, senior living/care, and medium density residential.
  4. "Neighborhood Commercial / Office" parcels have a back-up designation of "Medium Density Residential".
  5. Planning unit boundaries are shown graphically. The actual boundaries extend to the centerline of adjacent rights-of-way or property boundaries.
  6. Proposed roadway alignments are subject to change.
  7. Recreation areas provided within the Master Plan shall count toward the recreation area acreage required by Town Code for residential development within the Master Plan.
  8. This Master Plan area will comply with the Oro Valley Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance. As such, the outdated General Plan S.R.A. designation will be removed.