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# Rancho Vistoso Parcel 10-J

## Oro Valley, Arizona

### Narrative for Major General Plan Amendment Application

1st Submittal

April 29, 2016

**Prepared For**

Vistoso Highlands Property LLC  
6420 E. Tanque Verde Road  
Tucson, Arizona 85715

**Prepared By**

The WLB Group, Inc.  
4444 East Broadway Blvd.  
Tucson, Arizona 85711  
Contact: Paul Oland  
520.881.7480  
gpoland@wlbgroup.com

WLB No. 185050-VH-01

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### Exhibits

- Location Map
- Existing General Plan Land Use Designations
- Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations
- Conceptual Land Use Plan

## **A. Project Summary**

Rancho Vistoso Neighborhood 10 Parcel J is a proposed residential subdivision located at the northwest corner of Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive. As a master planned community, Rancho Vistoso appropriately included abundant commercial land to meet the needs of its anticipated population. However, over the years Rancho Vistoso has developed at roughly two-thirds of its originally envisioned residential density. A commensurate drop in need for commercial land has resulted, which has caused this property to remain undeveloped. As Rancho Vistoso rapidly approaches build-out, the prospects grow dim that enough additional homes will be built in the area to support the development of the smaller, neighborhood-level commercial lands such as this one within the PAD. Of course, the General Plan's future land use designations reflect the original PAD design, and not the market reality that has manifested since then. This General Plan amendment request proposes to allow residential land uses to replace the current commercial entitlements due to the longstanding lack of commercial interest in this property's immediate vicinity.

The subject property is approximately 18.5 acres, and this amendment proposal is to change the designated land use from Neighborhood Commercial / Office (NCO) to Medium Density Residential (MDR). The proposed amendment in land uses is supported by several factors, including its proximity to existing commercial developments, compatibility with surrounding land uses, and adjacency to two arterial roadways. The anticipated overall gross density of Rancho Vistoso Parcel 10-J will be approximately 2.1 dwelling units per acre.

In order to make this project a reality, the appropriate land entitlements must be acquired for the property. The property owner is focused on acquiring the necessary entitlements in the Town of Oro Valley, and the first step in achieving these necessary land entitlements involves a major amendment to the Oro Valley General Plan. The current Oro Valley General Plan land use designation for this property is not consistent with historic, current, or anticipated market demand; as such, this application for a major amendment is being submitted.

## **B. Property Data**

*Location:* The property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive.

*Area of Property:* 18.5± acres.

*Area of General Plan Amendment:* 18.5± acres.

*Assessor Parcel Number:* 219-20-004M and 219-20-0041L.

*Legal Description:* A portion of the SW ¼ of Section 24, Township 11 south, Range 13 east.

*Existing Land Uses:* The property is vacant.

*Existing Zoning:* The property is currently zoned as Rancho Vistoso PAD: C-1 Commercial.

*Existing Oro Valley General Plan Designations:* The property is designated as Neighborhood Commercial / Office due to the fact that the PAD's zoning pre-dates the General Plan. The General Plan's land uses are based on the PAD's original design.

*Requested Oro Valley General Plan Designations:* The requested land use designation for the property is Medium Density Residential (MDR) which is similar to surrounding developments.

### **C. General Plan 2020 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 2020, 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 language of this criterion presupposes that the General Plan's land uses pre-date and are the basis for the property's current entitlement when, in reality, it is entirely the opposite. It is therefore ironic that we must now provide evidence as to what conditions have changed since "the plan" was formed. This longstanding and unfortunate paradox could easily be rectified if the whole PAD were appropriately redesignated as Master Planned Community (MPC). If not for successful master plans such as Rancho Vistoso, for what then was the General Plan's MPC designation intended? Regardless this property has been zoned commercial since the mid-eighties when the Rancho Vistoso P.A.D. was adopted. The demand for commercial in this immediate area has not materialized since that time, and consequently the land sits un-utilized. Over the years Rancho Vistoso has developed at roughly two-thirds of its originally envisioned residential density, and as such there is less commercial demand than originally anticipated for this area.
- Rancho Vistoso started out with above average commercial entitlements. For example, the PAD included 4,020 square feet of commercial land per residential unit, whereas Oro Valley overall only has roughly 1,740 square feet of commercial land per residential unit. In the years since the General Plan was approved, and especially since the previous amendment request on this property, low to mid-density development is proceeding on the parcels representing the last opportunity for significant density to be achieved in the area (Maracay & Mattamy). With the relative underdevelopment of these parcels the last hope is lost for commercial viability in the area.

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

- This property has sat vacant since Rancho Vistoso's inception. If rezoned for residential land use, this property will be designed and constructed to the same high standards as the surrounding Rancho Vistoso neighborhoods. Public facilities and infrastructure already exist nearby, so this development will not place additional burden on public infrastructure. In fact, this development will contribute to the long-term socio-economic betterment of the community by providing convenient high quality housing for employees of Oro Valley's businesses.
- This proposed residential development will achieve community and environmental compatibility in several ways. This development will contain landscape buffers and provide open space along the wash to the west. In addition, this development will be tied into the nearby sidewalks and bicycle lanes, allowing residents to easily access Oro Valley's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- The guidelines of the Rancho Vistoso PAD will apply to this development. It will therefore look and feel very similar to the surrounding Rancho Vistoso neighborhoods. This includes similar landscaping, architectural themes, and open space treatment.

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

- As discussed above, changing the designated land use of the property from commercial to residential will result in utilization of this infill site. This is a viable residential land use that is similar to, and compatible with, the surrounding uses. The existing commercial designation has never been, is not, and now appears unlikely ever to be viable.

**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 from commercial to residential. Currently, the site has been vacant since its creation. This proposal is to allow residential uses similar to the existing residential properties neighboring the site. Any impacts will be addressed during the P.A.D. amendment phase or during subsequent detailed development proposals.
- The sort of residential development as proposed is generally accepted to be less impactful to nearby homeowners than such commercial developments as could be built under the existing zoning.

- Demand for single-family detached housing is strong in Oro Valley. This property is ideal for residential use since residential land uses already border the site, and were developed according to the same PAD standards to which this project will be held.

**D. *Your Voice, Our Future General Plan Amendment Criteria***

In accordance with Section 7.4.2 of the Your Voice, Our Future General Plan, the disposition of the General Plan amendment proposed shall be consistent with the vision, guiding principles, goals and policies of the General Plan, with special emphasis on compliance with the following criteria:

**1. Implement effective public outreach efforts to help identify neighborhood concerns and respond by incorporating measures to avoid or minimize development impacts, and mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts.**

- Since the start of this project we have held several meetings with surrounding HOA boards in the project vicinity, including the Vistoso Highlands HOA, Monterey at Vistoso HOA, and the Stone Gate HOA. These meetings were held prior to the required neighborhood meetings in order to increase public awareness of the proposal and identify any initial concerns that surrounding neighborhoods may have with the development of this property. Generally all the feedback received so far has been supportive of this project. It is generally accepted that a commercial corner in this area is no longer practical; and that by amending the General Plan to allow for medium density residential, this property will fit the character of the area very well.
- The first formal neighborhood meeting was held on April, 25<sup>th</sup> 2016.

In accordance with Section 7.4.2 of the Your Voice, Our Future General Plan, the disposition of the General Plan amendment proposed shall be consistent with the vision, guiding principles, goals and policies of the General Plan, and the request shall not:

**1. Significantly alter existing development character and land use patterns without adequate and appropriate buffers and graduated transitions in density and land use.**

- The guidelines of the Rancho Vistoso PAD will apply to this development. It will therefore look and feel very similar to the surrounding Rancho Vistoso neighborhoods. This includes similar landscaping, architectural themes, and open space treatment. This development will contain landscape buffers around the entirety of the project and will provide open space, including 100 percent preservation of the onsite Critical Resource Area. In addition, this development will be tied into the nearby sidewalks and bicycle lanes, allowing residents to easily access Oro Valley's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The proposed density of 2.1 Du/Ac. is comparable with surrounding developments and will provide a nice

density transition between the higher density developments to the south and east and the lower density developments to the north and west.

**2. Impact existing uses with increased infrastructure without appropriate improvements to accommodate planned growth.**

- With this development being on the corner of Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive, utility infrastructure is already in place to accommodate this project. There are existing sewer and water stub-outs in place to serve this property, and the developer will pay for any required infrastructure extensions. As such, this development will have a net positive long-term fiscal impact to the Town and its taxpayers. The proposed ingress/egress points are located at existing curb cuts and are aligned with existing median cuts to allow for basic traffic movements into and out of the site. Impacts to existing infrastructure are expected to be minimal, especially considering that the roads and utilities in Rancho Vistoso were designed to accommodate significantly greater intensity development.

**3. Impact other public services including police, fire, parks, water and drainage unless careful analysis and explanation of anticipated impacts is provided to the Town.**

- The location of this development and the 38 proposed home sites will not negatively impact public services such as police, fire and parks. Once developed the site will have several small detention basins that will retain storm water runoff and meter it out at pre-developed conditions. The site has also been designed to take full advantage of existing storm water culverts beneath Vistoso Highlands Drive which have the capacity to carry storm water runoff from this site.

**4. Impact the natural beauty and environmental resources without suitable mitigation.**

- Prior to development, this site will be inventoried for all significant vegetation. Plant material that meets the requirements of the Oro Valley Zoning Code will be transplanted on site and be included within the buffer yards and other open spaces of the site. Plants that are not suitable for transplanting will be mitigated. The entire Critical Resource Area on the west side of site will be preserved in its natural condition.

## **E. 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 residential development will have direct access to two arterial roads: Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive. (Policy 1.3.2)
- This development looks comprehensively at the subject property and all adjacent areas. The proposed residential use of this property will be completely compatible with the surrounding Rancho Vistoso neighborhoods. (Policy 1.3.5)
- There is a demand for single-family detached housing in Oro Valley. Conversely, the demand for commercial development in this immediate area is non-existent. (Policy 1.4.3)
- According to the General Plan, the Town shall ensure that areas appropriately zoned and planned for neighborhood commercial use are developed. This property has been zoned for commercial uses for over 30 years without achieving development. In addition, the General Plan states that the Town needs to consider the financial stability and infrastructure efficiency. As such, the subject property and the Town will benefit from the proposed high-quality residential development. (Policy 1.2.1 and 1.5.4)

### **2. Community Design**

- This development will be designed and constructed to the existing Rancho Vistoso PAD guidelines. This will be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with surroundings by using natural desert colors. (Policy 2.1.1)
- This development will conform to the landscape guidelines in the Rancho Vistoso PAD guidelines. This will provide and maintain landscaping that is consistent within the community. This will include similar entry monuments to the surrounding Rancho Vistoso neighborhoods. (Policy 2.1.9)
- This proposed development will use the existing architectural guidelines approved in the Rancho Vistoso P.A.D. This will provide a consistent architectural character in the community while encouraging creative architectural expression for the development. (Policy 2.1.11)
- To ensure the maintenance of dark skies in Oro Valley and the safety of all residents, this new residential development will meet the provisions listed in the requirements of the Rancho Vistoso PAD in addition to the Town of Oro Valley Outdoor Lighting Code. (Policy 2.3.1)
- 2.1.11 (The PAD's architectural design guidelines are foundational to the Town's architectural character).

### 3. Economic Sustainability

- The demand for single-family detached housing and the lack of commercial interest in this subject property since first zoned in the 1980's reflects the community's economic desires. The future population of this proposed development will also help attract and retain desirable business in the surrounding area. (Policy 3.1.1)

### 4. Cost of Development

- The infrastructure is already provided near the site, and the developer will pay for any required infrastructure extensions. As such, this development will have a net positive long-term fiscal impact on the Town and its taxpayers. (Policy 4.1.1 and Policy 4.1.4)

### 5. Public Facilities, Services, and Safety

- This proposed residential development is filling in a gap between existing residential developments. Municipal facilities are already located nearby, and therefore are cost effectively able to service this development. (Policy 6.1.1 and Policy TS.6)
  - Below are the driving distances to public facilities from the subject property:
    - Fire Stations
      - 1.5 miles northeast - Golder Ranch Fire Station 374
      - 2.0 miles south - Golder Ranch Fire Station 375
      - 4.3 miles southwest - Golder Ranch Fire Station 376
    - Police Stations
      - 3.5 miles southwest - Oro Valley Main Police Station
      - 1.5 miles northeast - Sun City Vistoso Police Station
    - Schools
      - 3.6 miles northeast - Coronado K-8 School
      - 1.3 miles south - Painted Sky Elementary School
      - 2.5 miles south - Copper Creek Elementary School
      - 3.5 miles southwest - Wilson K-8 School
      - 4.5 miles southwest - Ironwood Ridge High School
      - 3.7 miles southeast - Basis Oro Valley
    - Town Hall
      - 3.5 miles south
  - Additionally, utilities are already available to the property.

### 6. Housing

- This development will be a high quality neighborhood while simultaneously protecting the integrity and context of the existing neighborhoods. This proposed residential development will include a landscape buffer, and allow the same uses as

the adjacent residential properties. In addition, this development will comply with the guidelines set forth in the Rancho Vistoso PAD. (Policy 7.1.1)

- This development provides safe vehicular access for residents by including two ingress/egress points as well as giving adequate distances between access drives. In addition to motor vehicles, this proposed development ties into the sidewalks and bicycle lanes on Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive. (Policy 7.1.5)
- This development will complement the diverse range of housing types and price ranges within the Oro Valley community. (Policy CC.7)
- This development provides existing and future Oro Valley businesses with nearby high quality housing for their employees and customers. (Policy 7.3.1 and Policy CC.8)

## **7. Parks and Recreation**

- This proposed residential development contains sidewalks that will tie into the existing sidewalk system on Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive. In addition, the subject property also ties into the existing bicycle lanes on Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive. By providing this convenient connectivity, future residents of this development can easily access municipal and regional parks located along the pedestrian and bicycle network. (Policy 8.2.1 and Policy CC.3)

## **8. Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation**

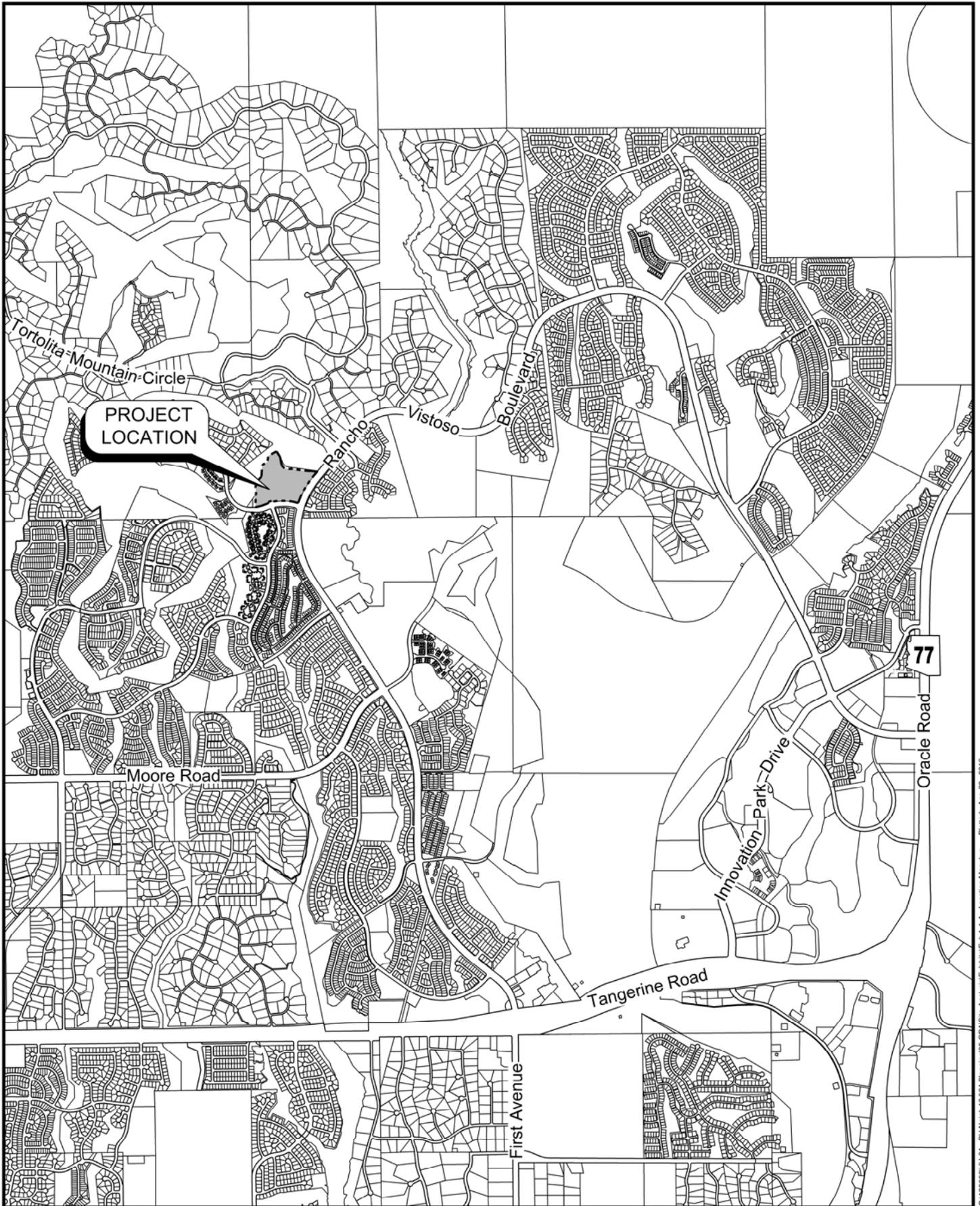
- This development will preserve 100% of the Critical Resource Area onsite in its natural condition. It will also set aside portions of the property for open space, in addition to approximately 50% open space already set aside in Rancho Vistoso. (Policy 11.1.11 and Policy SD.2)
- This proposed development will only use the landscape material approved in the Rancho Vistoso PAD. Drought-tolerant vegetation is included in the Rancho Vistoso Recommended Plant List, as well as prohibiting certain invasive, allergenic, and nuisance species in the development. (Policy 11.2.15)
- This development will meet the Native Plant Preservation Plan guidelines from the Town and conserve healthy native vegetation during the development process. (Policy 11.2.16 and Policy SD.4)
- This proposed development maintains the character of the scenic corridors and viewsheds along Rancho Vistoso Boulevard and Vistoso Highlands Drive by providing landscape buffers and underground utilities. (Policy 11.3.2 and Policy SD.6)
- To ensure this 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)

- This development can supply workers to the nearby employment centers in Oro Valley, resulting in less automobile emissions. (Policy 11.3.4 and Policy CC.8)
- To protect the scenic night sky in the community, this proposed development will meet the stringent lighting requirements of the Oro Valley Outdoor Lighting Code. Restrictions will include minimizing wasted energy while not compromising the safety, security, and well-being of residents engaged in night-time activities. To control obtrusive aspects of outdoor lighting usage, this proposed development will have reduced and/or shielded lighting.

## **9. Water Resources**

- This proposed development will utilize an alternative to groundwater by connecting to Oro Valley Water Utility, which participates in the Central Arizona Project (C.A.P.). (Policy 12.2.1 and Policy WR.3)
- This development will include water conservation features, including a water efficient irrigation system and drought tolerant vegetation. There will be two types of irrigation systems in this development: one system for the common areas, and individual irrigation systems on the lots. This project will meet the water conservation standards in the Rancho Vistoso P.A.D. as well as the water conservation standards in the Oro Valley Town Code, Chapter 15, Section 18. (Policy 12.3.2)
- This development will have a series of small first flush detention basins to help protect the public and environment from stormwater surges and contaminants from runoff. (Policy SD.10)

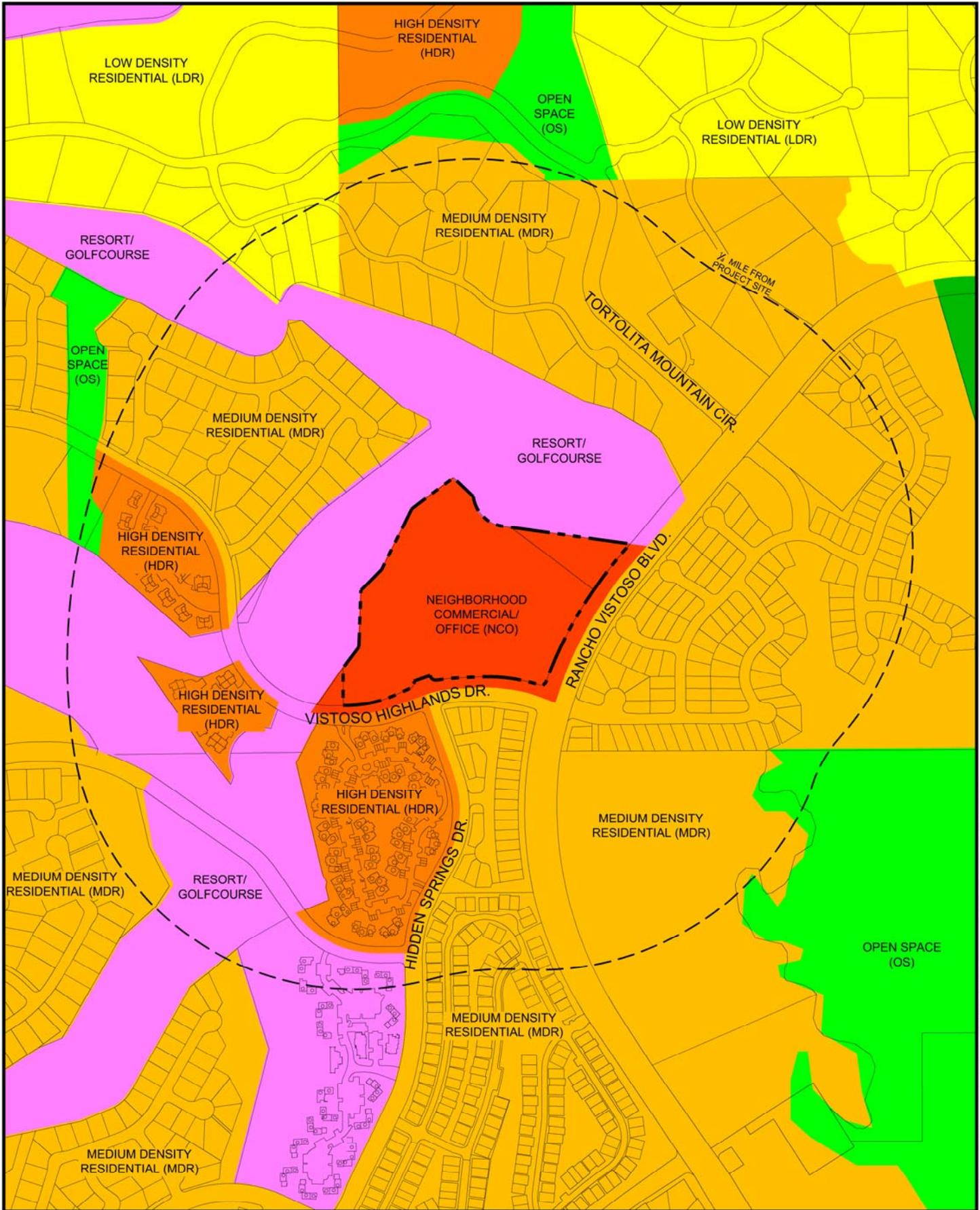
# EXHIBITS



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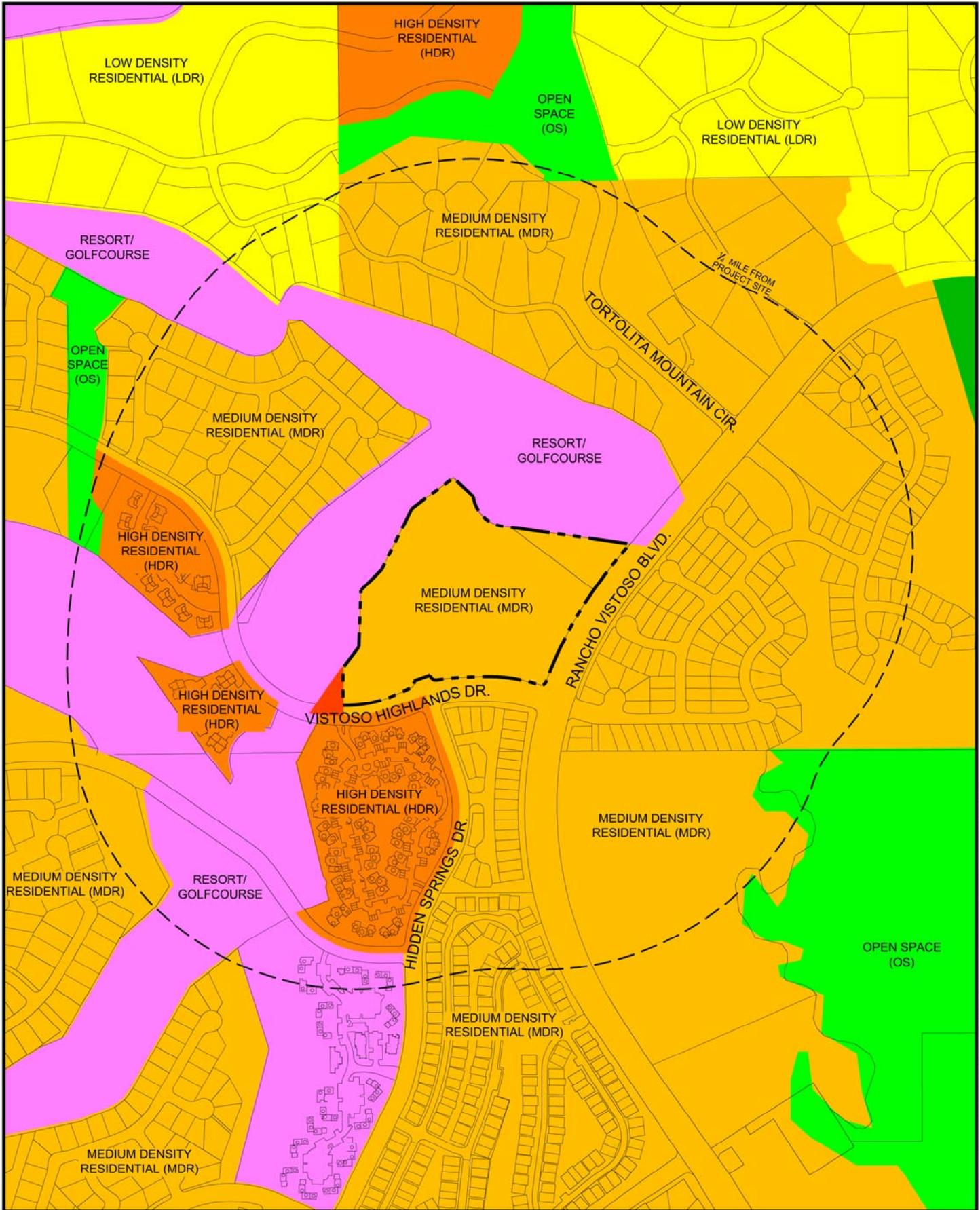
# LOCATION MAP





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# EXISTING GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS



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# PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS



**SITE DATA:**

- PARCEL SIZE: 18.5± AC.
- EXISTING ZONING: COMMERCIAL (C-1)
- PROPOSED ZONING: MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR)
- PROPOSED MINIMUM LOT SIZE: 70' x 125'
- PROPOSED DENSITY: 2.1 Du/AC.
- PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHT: SINGLE-STORY

