

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 21.1
(ID # 14898)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, May 25, 2021

FROM : TLMA-PLANNING:

SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY/PLANNING: PUBLIC HEARING ON SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 343 AMENDMENT NO. 2, GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 200005, CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 200025, PLOT PLAN NO. 200021, TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 38040– Consider Addendum to Certified EIR No. 470 - Applicant: SoCal Arena Company LLC–Stephen Collins–Fourth Supervisorial District–Thousand Palms Zoning District–Western Coachella Valley Area Plan: Business Park (BP), Mixed Use Area (MUA), Commercial Tourist (CT), Commercial Office (CO), Very High Density Residential (VHDR), Medium High Density Residential (MHDR), Open Space: Recreation (OS:R)–Zoning: SP Zone (Specific Plan No. 343)–Location: northeast of I-10 and Varner Rd., east of Cook St., west of Washington St., south of Chase School Rd.–455.75 Acres (Entire Specific Plan)–REQUEST: The Specific Plan Amendment proposes to amend the existing Specific Plan by adding a Planning Area 11 for the purposes of accommodating a sports and events arena. Existing Planning Area 8 primarily will be reduced in size to accommodate Planning Area 11. The Specific Plan Amendment also proposes to incorporate guidelines for signs, including guidelines for digital signage. The General Plan Amendment proposes to modify the land use designations of the General Plan to match those as proposed by the Specific Plan Amendment and to modify Western Coachella Valley Area Plan Policy 15.4 to allow for alternative standards for free standing signs within Specific Plans. The Change of Zone proposes to modify the Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance text to accommodate the proposed Planning Area 11 and to define the Specific Plan Planning Area boundaries. The Plot Plan proposes to construct and operate a sports and events arena and hockey training facility totaling a maximum of 295,000 sq. ft. on 44.41 gross acres. The Tentative Parcel Map proposes to subdivide a 101.58 gross acre area into 4 parcels – APNs: 695-100-004 through 695-100-014. District 4. [Applicant Fees 100%]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. **CONSIDER** an **ADDENDUM** to **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT NO. 470** based on the findings and conclusions incorporated in the Initial Study that the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment and that none of the conditions described in State CEQA Guidelines section 15162 exist;
2. **TENTATIVELY APPROVE** **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 200005**, which changes the General Plan land use designation of the project site from Community Development: Business Park (CD:CT) to Community Development: Commercial Tourist (CD:CT), updates Figure 3 of the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan and other related tables and figures to reflect the Planning Area boundary changes proposed by SP No. 343A2, in accordance with

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Exhibit 6, and modifies Policy 15.4 of the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan, based on the findings and conclusions incorporated in this staff report;

3. **TENTATIVELY APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 343** to amend the specific plan land use plan and specific plan text for Specific Plan No. 343 to include a Planning Area 11 within the current specific plan boundaries, revise the boundaries of Planning Areas 4, 6b, 7, and 8, and incorporate guidelines for signs specific to Planning Area 11, including guidelines for digital signage, subject to the attached advisory notification document and conditions of approval, and based on the findings and conclusions incorporated in this staff report;
4. **TENTATIVELY APPROVE CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 2000025** to modify the specific plan zoning ordinance to include Planning Area 11 and establish its permitted uses and development standards, including development standards for signs specific to Planning Area 11; and to establish Planning Area boundaries with metes and bounds, based upon the findings and conclusions provided in this staff report;
5. **APPROVE TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 38040**, subject to the attached advisory notification document and conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions provided in this staff report, pending the Board of Supervisors' final adoption of the resolutions for GPA No. 200005 and SP No. 343A2, and the zoning ordinance for Change of Zone No. 1800020; and
6. **APPROVE PLOT PLAN NO. 200021**, subject to the attached advisory notification document and conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions provided in this staff report, pending the Board of Supervisors' final adoption of the resolutions for GPA No. 200005 and SP No. 343A2, and the zoning ordinance for Change of Zone No. 1800020.

ACTION:Policy


John Hildebrand, Planning Director 5/11/2021

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
NET COUNTY COST	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
SOURCE OF FUNDS: Applicant Fees 100%			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	N/A

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 200005 (GPA200005) is a proposal to change the subject site's General Plan land use designation from Community Development: Business Park (CD:CT) to Community Development: Commercial Tourist (CD:CT), update Figure 3 of the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan and other related tables and figures to reflect the Planning Area boundary changes proposed by Amendment No. 2 to Specific Plan No. 343. GPA No. 200005 also modifies Western Coachella Valley Area Plan Policy 15.4 to allow alternative standards for free standing signs for on-site advertising within Specific Plans by including the following provision: "e. the provisions of this policy shall not apply to signs and development located in an approved Specific Plan where the approved Specific Plan has sign design guidelines or standards".

AMENDMENT NO. 2 to SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 343 (SP00343A02) is a proposal to amend the adopted specific plan land use plan and the specific plan text of Specific Plan No. 343 by:

- Including a Planning Area 11 within the existing Specific Plan boundaries for the purposes of accommodating a sports and events arena;
- Reducing the acreage of the existing Planning Area 8 to accommodate Planning Area 11;
- Revising the boundaries of Planning Areas 4, 6B, and 7 to accommodate Planning Area 11;
- Updating the Specific Plan land use plan to reflect Planning Area 11 and changes to Planning Areas 4, 6B and 7; and,
- Incorporating guidelines for signs specific to Planning Area 11, including guidelines for digital signage.

CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 2000025 is a proposal to modify the Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance text to include permitted and conditionally permitted uses and development standards, including standards for signs, for Planning Area 11, make clarifying revisions to the ordinance text and to establish the boundaries of the Specific Plan Planning Areas by metes and bounds.

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TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 38040 is a proposal for a Schedule E subdivision of 101.50 gross acres into four parcels, one parcel for the proposed concurrent arena and related facilities, one parcel including the primary parking area for the arena, one parcel for adjacent Planning Areas 6B and 8, and one parcel for entry road/landscaping from Varner Road.

PLOT PLAN NO. 200021 is a proposal to construct and operate a sports and events arena totaling 273,879 square feet with a maximum height of 58 feet on 44.4 gross acres with 3,000 parking spaces. The arena is planned to host an American Hockey League (AHL) team and provide a venue for other events including other sports events, concerts, cultural events, conferences, and conventions. The arena includes a variety of facilities and services that include but are not limited to, up to 11,700 spectator seating for a concert scenario, concessions, bars, clubs/lounges, meeting rooms, kitchens, retail, team practice facilities, management offices, and media support facilities. A 35,000 square foot hockey training facility is also proposed next to the arena for AHL team practice and the community.

Additional details on each of the components of the Project and analysis by staff and required findings are included in the Planning Commission staff report package.

Public Safety/Fire Response Services

Due to the unique nature of the project, County staff, in particular Fire Department staff, have evaluated the design and operation of the arena, its potential demand for public safety services, the services available in the area, the on-site emergency services and procedures proposed by the applicant, impact fees applicable to the arena and overall Specific Plan, as well as information on emergency service responses for comparable facilities. The determination of the evaluation is for the need for an aerial ladder truck to adequately serve the arena due to the height of the building as well as proportional funding for construction of a new fire station within the City of Palm Desert. County staff proposed and the applicant agreed to conditions of approval that require a \$1.8 million payment to fully fund acquisition of an aerial ladder truck prior to building permit issuance and a \$2.5 million payment for a proportional share of construction of the new fire station prior to building final inspection.

EIR Addendum

The findings in the Planning Commission staff report Environmental Review and Environmental Findings section details the required findings for the Addendum and the Initial Study-Addendum and supporting appendices with technical reports provide the details for each CEQA topic for analysis. EIR No. 470, certified in 2006, was prepared to evaluate the environmental impacts of the NorthStar Specific Plan project. The Project, including an amendment to the NorthStar Specific Plan, the preparation of an Addendum to EIR No. 470 CEQA in accordance with CEQA Section 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 and 15164 is the appropriate approach to the environmental review of the proposed Project. The applicable standard of review is whether the changes to the NorthStar Specific Plan via the Amendment to incorporate the proposed arena component of the Project will result in any new significant impacts or substantially more

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severe significant impacts than were identified in EIR No. 470 for the NorthStar Specific Plan Project.

It is important to note that the Addendum does not fully rely on the information in the 2006 EIR. The Addendum contains fully updated current information and analysis for each topic evaluated in EIR No. 470 to support its conclusions that the proposed Specific Plan Amendment to allow the arena project will not result in any new or substantially more severe impacts than identified in EIR No. 470.

Specific comments regarding the appropriateness and adequacy of the EIR Addendum were raised through public comments submitted. Staff responded to those comments during the Planning Commission hearing process that addresses the comments received at that time and concludes that the EIR Addendum is appropriate and adequate to reflect the proposed Project. Those comments and responses are included in one of the Planning Commission memos included in the attachments.

Planning Commission Action

On May 5, 2021, the Planning Commission recommended the Board of Supervisors approve the project on a 5-0 vote.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

All potential project impacts have been studied under CEQA and noticed to the public pursuant to the requirements of the County.

Additional Fiscal Information

All fees are paid by the applicant. There is no General Fund obligation.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Planning Commission Minutes
- B. Planning Commission Memos
- C. Planning Commission Staff Report Package
- D. Specific Plan No. 343 Amendment No. 2 Document
- E. Plot Plan No. 200021 Exhibits
- F. Tentative Parcel Map No. 38040 Exhibits



Jason Farin, Principal Management Analyst 5/18/2021



Gregory T. Priamos, Director County Counsel 5/13/2021