



# Cathedral City

## Legislation Text

---

File #: 2016-430, Version: 1

---

**City Council**

**MEETING DATE: 10/26/2016**

**TITLE:**

**Rio Vista Village Specific Plan Amendment**

Specific Plan No. 97-55B

General Plan Amendment No. 16-003

Change of Zone No. 16-003

**FROM:**

Pat Milos, Community Development Director

David Leonard, Contract Project Planner

**RECOMMENDATION:**

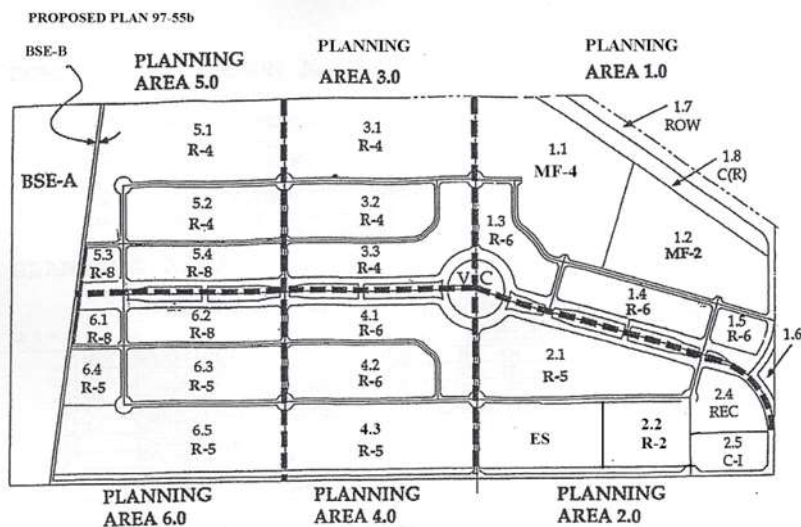
Staff and Planning Commission recommend the City Council adopt a Resolution approving a Negative Declaration and approving the associated General Plan Amendment No. 16-003 to facilitate adoption of the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan Amendment; and waive further reading, read by title only and introduce for first reading an Ordinance adopting Change of Zone No. 16-003 to amend the text of the MF-4 Zone of the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan and the City's Zoning Map from R-6 to R-2 in Planning Area 2.2; and waive further reading, read by title only and introduce for first reading an Ordinance adopting Specific Plan Amendment No. 97-55B (RVVSP).

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Cathedral City initiated an application for the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan (RVVSP), including an amendment to the text of the MF-4 Zone and a Negative Declaration in February 2016. The project involves Planning Areas 1.1 and 2.2 of the RVVSP located north of Verona Rd. and west of Landau Blvd.

"Verano" at Rio Vista Village is a residential development guided by the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan (Specific Plan) originally approved in 1997. The Specific Plan sets forth land use requirements, development standards, design guidelines, and implementation plans to guide development within the Specific Plan area. Portions of the Verano development have been constructed since adoption of the Specific Plan.

Tract 28639-1 was recorded over the entire Rio Vista Village project area to organize the project area based on the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan, Land Use Plan. In some cases, Tract 28639-1 combined multiple Planning Areas into individual tract lots. The map also facilitated the relocation of the elementary school site contrary to the location shown on the specific plan land use map.



The City Council adopted the 2013-2021 update to the City's Housing Element in November 2013. It was then forwarded to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for their review of its conformance with state law. HCD indicated in June 2014 that further action by the City was needed to fully address the requirements of state law.

These actions included revising the General Plan High Density Residential (RH) land use designation to include up to 24 dwelling units per acre (DUA) and to require a minimum of 20 DUA within the Specific Plan's MF-4 land use category. On December 10, 2014, the City Council approved these actions and, by its adoption of Ordinance 745, designated Planning Area 1.1 within the Specific Plan as MF-4 (SPA 97-55A). HCD subsequently certified the City's Housing Element.

## **DISCUSSION:**

**FINDINGS:** The Findings for all actions are included in the City Council Resolution (Attachment No. 1) and Ordinances (Attachment Nos. 2 and 3).

The City Council is being asked to consider approval of the following applications:

### **1. California Environmental Quality Act**

An Initial Study was prepared that concluded that no additional mitigation measures are needed based on the analysis contained in previous environmental studies for the project. A Negative Declaration is recommended.

### **2. Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) 97-55B / Text Amendment**

The Rio Vista Village Specific Plan is unique in that it limits the maximum number of residences that may be developed within the overall Verano Community to 1,362 units even though the range of units designated within each residential category totals more than 1,745 units. The Specific Plan originally provided this flexibility to address changing market conditions. Designating Planning Area 1.1 as MF-4 under the revised requirements restricts the intended flexibility and places an undue burden on the property. It is recommended that the MF-4 land use category regulations be amended to delete the minimum dwelling unit requirement while retaining the maximum ("not to exceed") number of dwelling units allowed per acre, consistent with the other residential land use categories in the Rio Vista

## Specific Plan.

### 3. Density Transfer

The proposed text revision would also enable a density transfer under this proposed amendment. The density within Planning Area 1.1 would be reduced by 29 units and the density within Planning Area 2.2 would be increased by 29 units. The resulting density within Planning Area 1.1 would be reduced from 20 units per acre to 18.4 units per acre. The total number of units allowed within this Planning Area would be 333 units. The MF-

4 Land Use Category would not change. The density within Planning Area 2.2 would be increased from 6.5 units per acre to 8.21 units per acre for a total of 58 units. The Land Use Category for the site would change from R-6 (5.5 du/ac) to R-2 (15 du/ac). This request is justified by existing development on adjoining lands that includes an elementary school and a community recreational facility and the presence of adequate infrastructure to support the additional 29 units. This proposed density transfer would concentrate population within walking distance to these facilities while not exceeding the overall maximum number of units of 1362.

It should be noted that under Tract 28639, Planning Area 2.2 was combined with Planning Area 2.5 as Lot 293. Planning Area 2.2 includes a 13,264 SF retention basin and Planning Area 2.5 consists of a retention basin and entry landscaping. Both basins must remain under any future development plan.

### 4. General Plan Amendment (GPA) 16-003

Traditionally, specific plans stand on their own with customized land uses, regulations, and guidelines. In this instance, City-wide General Plan designations are applied to the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan area. The current designation for Planning Areas 1.1 and 2.2 is Low density Residential (RL) having a density range of 2 to 4.5 units per acre. The proposed amendment would establish the High Density Residential designation on Planning Area 1.1 and Medium Density Residential on Planning Area 2.2.

### 5. Change of Zone (CZ) 16-003

The zone change reflects a text amendment for PA 1.1 of the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan to remove the word minimum density, and the Cathedral City Official Zoning Map would be amended to reflect a change in the Planning Area 2.2 Zoning District from R-6 to R-2.

## REVIEW PROCESS:

1. Environmental Review: An Initial Study (IS) was prepared to analyze potential impacts that could result from the proposed project. A Negative Declaration was recommended for approval. A Notice of Intent to approve the Negative Declaration was advertised on August 7, 2016. No comments were received.

2. ALUC REVIEW: The site lies within Zone E of the Palm Springs International Airport Influence Area. A review has been performed by Airports Land Use Commission staff and they determined that the project is CONSISTENT with the Palm Springs Airport land Use Compatibility Plan subject to conditions contained in Attachment 4.

3. Consistency with Senate Bill (SB) 18 and Assembly Bill (AB) 52: The project was circulated in compliance with SB 18. No significant issues were identified that required consultation with recognized tribal entities. The Agua Caliente Tribe requested copies of any cultural resource surveys and to monitor grading of the site. These requests will be applied at the subdivision map stage.

4. PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION: The project and environmental determination were noticed in accordance with CEQA and the Cathedral City Municipal Code (Attachment 5).

SUMMARY: The Rio Vista Village Specific Plan Amendment improves the framework within which the project area can continue to develop. The Amendment carries forward the policies and guidelines established by the Rio Vista Village Specific Plan for a walkable community.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The objective of the Specific Plan Amendment is to enhance market demand by offering housing products at densities that would appeal to the local home buyer. Continued development within Rio Vista Village would generate increased revenues to maintain parks, open spaces, and public services in that community.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 City Council Resolution certifying the Negative Declaration; and approving General Plan Amendment No. 16-003

Attachment 2 Ordinance Approving Change of Zone No. 16-003

Attachment 3 Ordinance approving Specific Plan Amendment No. 97-55B

Attachment 4 Airports Land Use Commission Finding

Attachment 5 Public Hearing Notice