



# Planning Commission Agenda Item

Date: October 9, 2024

Item No: 3

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Alfredo Melesio, Jr., AICP, EDFP, Director of Land Development & Community Services  
Prepared By: Summer Roybal

**SUBJECT:** **AMP-05-2024 TUNNEL TO TOWERS (Public Hearing).** Applicant: Tunnel to Towers. Request: An Amendment to the Comprehensive Master Plan to Change the Land use Designation from Community Commercial to Multi-Family. Location: Approximately 270 Feet North of the Northwest Corner of Centennial Parkway and Pecos Road. (APNs 124-24-810-005 and 124-24-810-006). Ward 2. (For Possible Action)

## **RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the Comprehensive Master Plan Land Use Element for the subject parcel from the Community Commercial designation to Multi-Family Residential. The proposed amendment consists of two (2) parcels totaling 5.07 acres and is generally located west of Pecos Road, approximately 270 feet north of Centennial Parkway.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Previous Action
A Task Force meeting was held on August 22, 2024 (TF-31-2024) to discuss the proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to change the land use from Community Commercial to Multi-Family Residential, and to change the zoning from C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District to a PUD, Planned Unit Development District.
A neighborhood meeting was held on August 19, 2024 at 5:30 pm at the Skyview YMCA, located at 3050 E. Centennial Parkway, North Las Vegas. The meeting summary stated that two (2) Council members attended and one (1) member of the community attended. The community member had questions regarding the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. According to the summary, the community member expressed support of the proposed project.
On April 9, 2008, Planning Commission approved T-1317, a tentative map to allow a one (1) lot commercial subdivision on the subject properties and the two parcels to the south of the subject properties.
In 2006, with the adoption of the Comprehensive Master Plan (AMP-40-06) the designated land use was changed to Community Commercial.

### **RELATED APPLICATIONS:**

<b>Application #</b>	<b>Application Request</b>
<b>ZN-16-2024</b>	A property reclassification from C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial District) to a PUD (Planned Unit Development District), for approximately 5.07 acres consisting of 112 multi-family dwelling units.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

	<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Existing Use</b>
<b>Subject Property</b>	Community Commercial	C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District	Undeveloped Land
<b>North</b>	Multi-Family Residential	R-3, Multi-Family Residential District	Multi-Family Subdivision; Undeveloped Land
<b>South</b>	Community Commercial	C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District	Convenience Food Store with Gas Pumps; Retail
<b>East</b>	Single-Family Medium	Open Land District	Detention Basin
<b>West</b>	Community Commercial	C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District	Undeveloped Land

#### **DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Public Works:	No Comment.
Police:	No Comment.
Fire:	No Comment.
Economic Development:	See attached memorandum.
Clark County Department of Aviation:	No Comment.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

The applicant is requesting consideration to amend the Comprehensive Land Use Map from Community Commercial to Multi-Family Residential. The proposed amendment is for two (2) parcels totaling 5.07 acres generally located west of Pecos Road and approximately 270 feet north of Centennial Parkway. The applicant's letter of intent states the land use amendment will allow a 112-unit multi-family residential development,

exclusively for veterans. The amendment process was established to provide flexibility in response to changing circumstances, to accommodate potential change where such change meets the intent of the plan, to reflect changes in public policy, and to advance the general welfare of the City. Such amendments may be approved if the City Council finds that the proposed amendments will not diminish the supply of essential land uses in the City. As explained below, staff recommends denial of the application because Community Commercial is an essential land use for this area of the City, and staff cannot support the reduction of such developable commercial land in this area.

The ideal location for Community Commercial developments is at the intersection of two (2) 100-foot streets or at the intersection of two (2) arterial streets. In addition to vehicular access, these developments should employ principles of pedestrian-friendly design to provide for safe and convenient access for pedestrian, bicycle, and, where appropriate, transit users. The subject site is part of an existing commercial subdivision, Pecos & Centennial Commercial Center, located at the northwest corner of Centennial Parkway and Pecos Road. Both of these right-of-ways are 100-foot arterial streets.

The subject site is located in an area that has been experiencing a high level of residential growth. Previously undeveloped commercial properties have been converted to accommodate this population growth. Since 2017, approximately 81 acres of commercial land uses within one (1) mile of the subject site have been converted to residential land uses, and approximately 108 acres have been converted within two (2) miles. Also within two (2) miles of the site, approximately 102 acres of mixed-use land uses have been converted to residential since 2018. The remaining undeveloped commercial land in the area needs to remain available for commercial development to support existing and future residential developments.

Community Commercial developments provide goods and services to the larger community. Primary uses within Community Commercial include general retail, service business, and restaurants. Secondary uses within this land use designation include offices, parks, and other public or semi-public uses. The subject site is located approximately one (1) mile from the closest grocery store anchored center, and the residential areas east of the subject site between Pecos Road and Lamb Boulevard are approximately two (2) miles. Currently, there is some commercial development occurring along Lamb Boulevard. However, these parcels are narrow and are being developed with convenience food stores, taverns, fast food restaurants, and an auto supply store. Presently, the City has not received any plans that include grocery stores for the undeveloped commercial land along Lamb Boulevard, nor does the land appear suitable to accommodate a traditional grocery store.

The subject site is a portion of a larger commercial center referred to as Pecos & Centennial Commercial Center. The developing center currently consists of four (4) parcels totaling 8.67 net acres. There is a commercial building with multiple suites located on the southwest parcel and a Green Valley Grocery convenience store with gas pumps and a car wash on the southeast corner of the center. The northern two parcels (subject site) of the center are undeveloped. As part of the Pecos & Centennial Commercial

Center, a shared use driveway was established for the subject site and the Green Valley Grocery convenience food store. A portion of the shared use driveway was constructed on parcel 124-24-810-006 (southeast corner of subject site) with the remainder constructed on parcel 124-24-810-002 (convenience food store site).

Located adjacent to the Pecos & Centennial Commercial Center is another community commercial parcel that is approximately 9 net acres. The Pecos & Centennial Commercial Center plus the adjacent commercial parcel is approximately 18 acres of commercial land. Together this commercial area is very similar in size to the Aliante Marketplace which includes a Smith's grocery store, 7-Eleven convenience store with gas pumps and car wash, Starbucks, Sierra Gold Nevada Style Pub, Leslie's Pool Supplies, banks, medical offices, sit-down and quick serve restaurants, ice cream shop, bakery, beauty/nail salons, insurance offices, dance academy, pet groomers and other neighborhood supportive commercial. The combined existing commercial land would be able to serve the immediate neighborhood plus the large residential area located between Pecos Road and Lamb Boulevard.

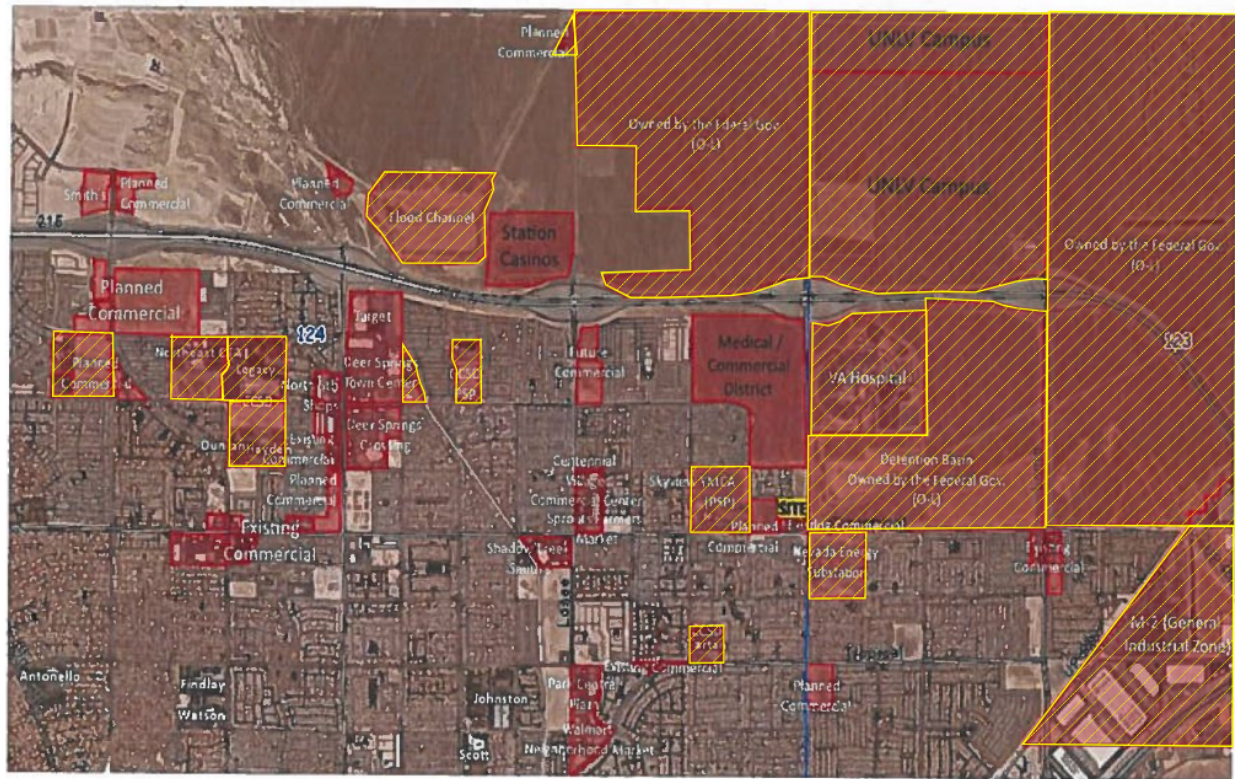
The applicant submitted the following exhibit in support of their request. The intent of the illustration was to show the areas that are considered commercial or "quasi-commercial" in the vicinity of the subject site. These areas are highlighted in red on the exhibit.

*Please note, there is neither a land use designation nor zoning category for a "quasi-commercial" use and the term is not defined by the applicant in their letter of intent.*

[illegible]

The next exhibit is also the applicant's illustrative exhibit with one modification. A yellow hatch has been added to identify the non-commercially zoned parcels and non-commercial PUD (Planned Unit Development) parcels that were identified by the applicant as commercial or "quasi-commercial" use.

Applicant's Illustrative Exhibit Modified:



The yellow hatched areas more specifically include Legacy High School, Northeast Career and Technical Academy, Ruby Duncan Elementary School, Don E Hayden Elementary School, NLVPD North Central Area Command, Tule Springs Regional Park, NLV Fire Station 58, VTS Village 4 Neighborhood Parks, VTS Village 4 future elementary school site, three (3) regional flood control facilities, Skyview YMCA and future park, John Tartan Elementary School, NV Energy Pecos Substation, Nellis Small Arms Range, State of Nevada land, North Las Vegas VA Medical Center, industrial developments including Amazon Fulfillment Center and National Indoor RV Centers, BLM land for future land sales, and the future UNLV North Campus.

In January of 2020, a livable center study was completed for an area known as the Deer Springs District. The study recommends strategies for new development and place-making within the district. The goal of the study was to create a neighborhood that is a vibrant, walkable community with a mix of land uses that offers increased transportation options, encourages healthy lifestyles, and provides improved access to jobs and services. The 18-acre commercial land, containing the subject site, is located near the southeastern portion of the Deer Springs District. In this area, there are only two existing commercial buildings, which provide very limited supportive services to nearby residents. The removal of commercial land will take the City further from the goals set forth in the Deer Springs District Livable Center report, which include providing retail development to enhance the city and serve its residents, and to provide more economic diversity within the city.

Commercial developments typically locate in areas with existing, dense populations. As this area builds out, this land will be needed for commercial development to support the surrounding residents and the residents living southeast of the subject site with even less access to grocery stores. A recent article highlighted how the grocery market in the Las Vegas Valley has been underserved in recent years and how grocery stores are continually looking to expand in the valley as the region continues to grow its diverse population<sup>1</sup>. North Las Vegas's 2023 population was 283,724 residents and is expected to increase by 40% at build out. Ensuring there is a sufficient amount of supportive commercial development for the City's future 400,000 residents is key to planning a complete community.

As the City focuses on developing as a complete community, ensuring convenient access to fresh and healthy foods is a top priority. Presently, there are many neighborhoods within the City that lack access to healthy foods. These areas are referred to as food deserts. As we plan for the future, the City should try to avoid creating additional food deserts or increasing food insecurity rates in our community. Food insecurity is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture as the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food insecurity is associated with numerous adverse social and health outcomes and is increasingly considered a critical public health issue. Feeding America, a nationwide network of food banks, food pantries and local meal programs, estimates Clark County's food insecurity rate at approximately 14.6%. The subject site is located in an area of North Las Vegas with a food insecurity rate of 20.2%, which is substantially higher than the county average. With the knowledge of this area's higher than average food insecurity rate, we recognize that removing more commercial land from this area has the potential to create a food desert and put current and future residents at greater risk.

Many of the City's guiding documents, including the Comprehensive Master Plan, Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, and the Deer Springs District Livable Centers Study stress the need to build complete communities. Complete communities have diverse housing options, increased access to employment opportunities, offer transportation alternatives, provide convenient access to goods and services, and offer vibrant neighborhoods with an abundance of recreational opportunities.

The applicant's letter of intent references a nearby future 135-acre commercial development that could support the area's need for community commercial uses. This area, which was congressionally designated as a job creation zone in 2014, is planned to be a premier research and business campus. On July 17, 2024, the City entered into an agreement with Cambridge Development Services, LLC (Cambridge) for the creation of a health and wellness campus master plan for the 135-acre job creation zone. Cambridge

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<sup>1</sup> Hemmersmeier, Sean, "Las Vegas robust market for groceries, with many new stores planned", Las Vegas Review Journal, 21 June 2024. <https://www.reviewjournal.com/business/las-vegas-robust-market-for-groceries-with-many-new-stores-planned-3072054/>

is a company with specific expertise in planning, developing, marketing and branding health and wellness mixed-use projects. The agreement has a three-year term with an option for an additional year. As the conceptual idea for this area is to house the community's much needed hospital/medical offices, supportive commercial uses in the job creation zone will likely be designed to support the primary medical uses. As the master planning process is just commencing for the job creation zone, it is premature to speculate how much of the 135 acres may be developed with any neighborhood supportive commercial uses.

With the limited supportive commercial in the area to service the current and future residents as described above, staff recommends denial of this request.

### **Approval Criteria: (Comprehensive Plan Amendments)**

Recommendations and decisions on comprehensive master plan amendments may be approved if the City Council finds the proposed amendment will not diminish the supply of essential land uses in the City, including industrial zones that provide a critical employment base for the City, and that the proposed amendment meets at least one of the following:

- (1) The proposed amendment is based on a change in projections or assumptions from those on which the comprehensive master plan is based;
- (2) The proposed amendment is based on identification of new issues, needs, or opportunities that are not adequately addressed in the comprehensive master plan;
- (3) The proposed amendment is based on a change in the policies, objectives, principles, or standards governing the physical development of the City;
- (4) The proposed amendment may result in unique development opportunities that will offer substantial benefits to the City; or
- (5) The proposed amendment is based on an identification of errors or omissions in the comprehensive master plan.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Economic Development Memorandum  
Letter of Intent  
Applicant's Illustrative Exhibit Modified  
Boundary Map  
Neighborhood Meeting Summary Letter  
Clark County Assessor's Map  
Location and Comprehensive Plan Map