

HOUGHTON ROAD CORRIDOR
TUCSON, ARIZONA
STRATEGIC ZONING ASSESSMENT

Prepared for

Arizona State Land Department

Task I-A-6 Deliverable

UPP No. 47-111563

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INTRODUCTION

EDAW, Inc. has been retained by the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), through the Westcor Company II, LP (the Permittee), pursuant to an Urban Planning Permit, to prepare this *Strategic Zoning Assessment* for the Houghton Road Corridor (HRC) project, an approximately 12,000-acre Plan Area, owned by the State of Arizona (State) and located in the City of Tucson, Arizona (City).

The Permittee's objective is to investigate the applicable planning processes and opportunities for development of a state-of-the-art master planned community in the City's Houghton Road Corridor area, which is expected to include the development of homes, offices, other employment-oriented and public uses such as parks, fire and public safety facilities and schools, together with regional, community and local serving retail. The HRC project provides a truly groundbreaking opportunity for the Tucson marketplace, allowing for master planning on a large-scale, thereby opening the door for progressive approaches and planning solutions tailored to the future needs and plans of the City. The vision is for a community with a vibrant mix of housing types and densities, one that lends itself to walkable inviting neighborhoods and that embraces transit-oriented development, sustainable development and rich community character principles.

This report describes an entitlement process and strategy intended to lead to the realization of this potential through application of a clear and realistic vision while allowing for flexibility in accommodating market and other changes in the future. It is recognized that the strategy, which must be shared by the City, needs to convey the best in contemporary town planning-including the unique attributes of the proposed community in the tradition of other successful communities discussed further in the Master Planned Community Case Studies section of this report.

The HRC Plan area is located within the City's identified growth area and encompasses approximately 18.5 square miles of land surrounding a key City intersection, Houghton Road and Valencia Road. It is bounded by Irvington Road on the north, the City of Tucson corporate boundary on the east - approximately three miles east of Houghton Road, extends about one mile to the west and extends south of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and south of Interstate Highway 10 (I-10). The vast majority of the Plan Area is undeveloped. Figure 1 shows the location of the Plan Area within the City of Tucson.

Approximately 8,000 acres of the Plan Area is within the boundary of the Houghton Area Master Plan (HAMP), a document prepared by the City of Tucson with the stated intention of addressing growth along the Houghton Road Corridor. The HAMP, as is the case with all adopted Area Plans, is a guiding

document that provides clear policy direction for the evaluation of future re-zoning applications but does not provide for any sort of legal entitlement. Figure 2 shows the Plan Area's relationship to the HAMP boundaries. The HAMP was adopted by the Mayor and Council on June 7, 2005; however, it has not

been implemented by way of any significant pattern of subsequent rezoning applications. With the initiation of the larger HRC project, the HAMP will need to be amended to, at a minimum, expand the boundaries of the current HAMP area to include the entire HRC Plan Area.

Figure 1 Regional Vicinity

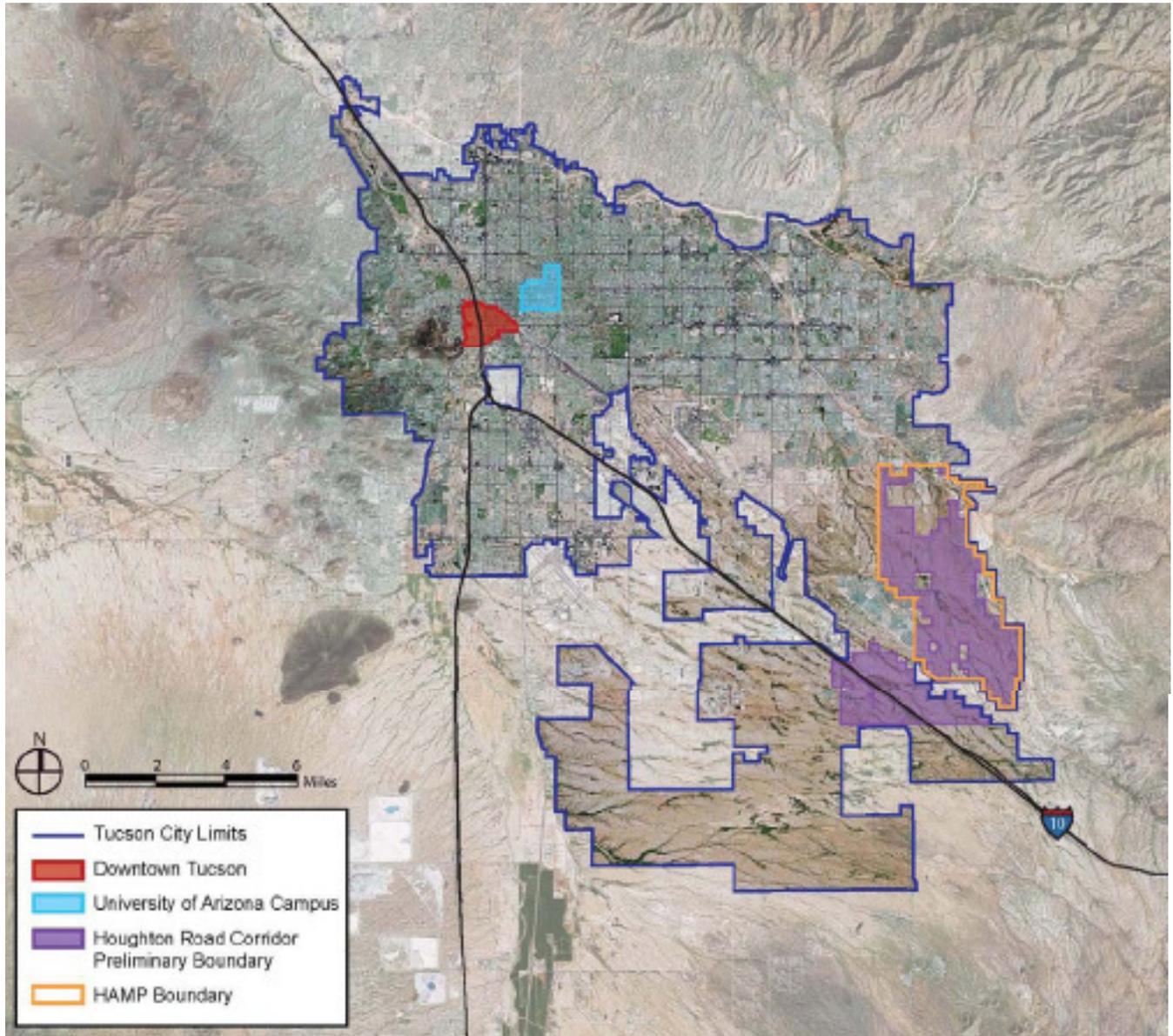
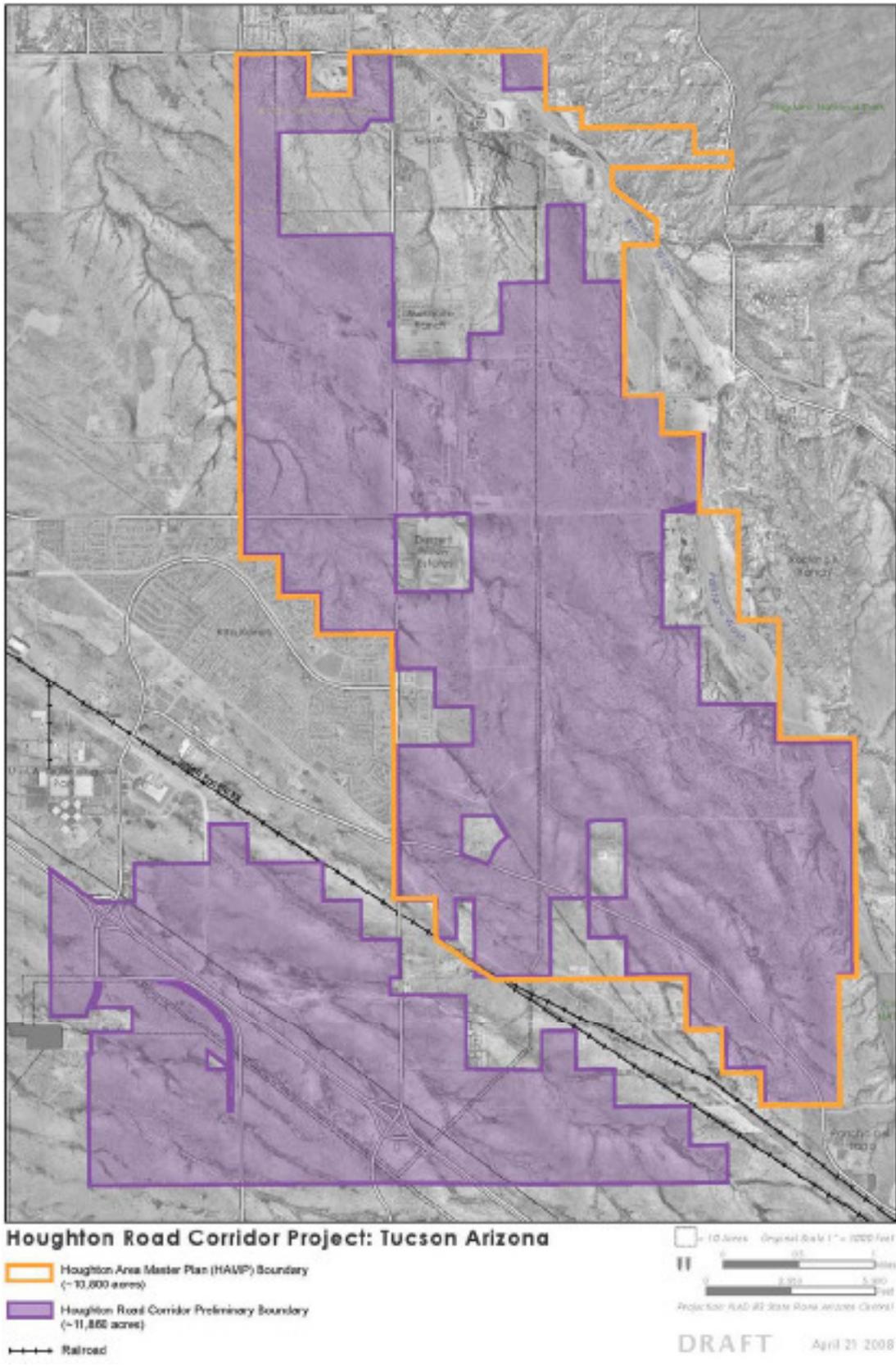


Figure 2 Houghton Road Corridor Plan Area & Houghton Area Master Plan



Given the size of the HRC Plan Area and the desire to provide a cohesive master planned community in a timely, orderly and sustainable fashion, the next step required to realize the HRC project will be to file a Planned Community Development (PCD) rezoning application with the City of Tucson. These key regulatory processes, as well as other factors that could influence project approval, are outlined in this report.

Executive Summary

This report provides a preliminary strategic assessment of the zoning and entitlement requirements necessary to facilitate development of the HRC Plan Area. This report also contains recommendations regarding the strategies that could be pursued by ASLD and/or the Permittee to address such issues. Relevant notes are included from meetings attended by the Permittee related to zoning and entitlement.

The HRC Plan Area is wholly contained within the City of Tucson jurisdiction and is on State of Arizona property, which owns the land in trust for the designated beneficiaries. The ASLD is the state agency charged to administer and dispose of the land. The Commissioner is the appointed state official that heads the ASLD and is responsible for key decisions concerning the planning and disposition of state trust land. Existing City plans, including the Houghton Area Master Plan (HAMP) and Special Area and Regional Plans, as well as existing zoning, are in place within the Plan Area. Given this unique set of circumstances, this report describes the most appropriate zoning and entitlement vehicle for the HRC project and outlines the process which this would be required to re-plan and re-zone the Plan Area. Relevant City planning documents have been reviewed and summarized in this report.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our initial policy analysis and discussions with City staff members and other stakeholders, it is apparent that the HRC Plan Area is both favorably situated for (and in the path of) new development, ideally as a master planned community, from a market, political and land use planning perspective. Given the reality that this Plan Area will ultimately be developed, the primary purpose of this report is to provide a preliminary and strategic assessment of the zoning and entitlement issues affecting the master planned development of the HRC.

Given ASLD's express desire that the zoning secured for the HRC project allow for a mix of commercial, employment, and residential uses, coupled with the fact that the approved zoning construct must provide the inherent flexibility needed to respond to changing market conditions and preferences over a 40-50 year build-out period, the City's relatively new Planned Community Development (PCD) ordinance represents the most appropriate (currently available) entitlement vehicle for the HRC project. As the HRC Plan Area is likely to be the first project that proceeds under the PCD ordinance, there may be opportunities to refine the ordinance and its planning protocols as the project moves forward.

A formal amendment to the HAMP will also need to be processed in order to 1) expand the HAMP boundary to include the entire 12,000-acre HRC Plan Area; and 2) to incorporate additional policy guidance into the HAMP, most likely through a series of special-area policies, to better facilitate the future PCD filing and the proposed HRC development program detailed therein. This HAMP amendment process may be done so concurrently with the PCD application, if necessary, with both applications ultimately proceeding to the Mayor & Council in a combined public hearing. However, City staff has suggested that it may be prudent to proceed with the HAMP amendment ahead of the PCD application, as doing so might better "set the table" for staff's subsequent evaluation of the PCD and create a better environment for the PCD'S public-participation process.

As the PCD is the best available option for pursuing HRC's desired zoning and entitlements, we recommend that the applicant, acting on behalf of the State, pursue the filing of a PCD application with the City of Tucson - the first step of which is the preparation of a Master Development Plan. As discussed in earlier sections of this report, the MDP is essentially prepared at a general plan level, including an overall concept illustrating a range of land uses, as well as circulation and backbone infrastructure, but which is not representative of detailed site planning or design. Within this MDP, several Development Area (DA) districts will be identified wherein more detailed planning will eventually occur.

When designating land uses and intensities within individual Development Areas (DAs), it will be important to set a series of ranges pertaining to floor-area ratios (FAR's), density or total number of dwelling units, as well as a range of total acres for each land use type. Based on our experience and as seen in other communities, these practices, common in many new master planned communities, allow the requisite flexibility to be built into the Master Development Plan over the life of the project, while preserving the overall project vision.

Certain aspects of the City's current PCD, particularly those detailed under its Amendment Procedures (and discussed earlier in this document), could prove to be excessively restrictive over the long-term development horizon for HRC. While some flexibility is allowed under the current ordinance, it is recommended that a series of special-area policies be incorporated into the HAMP plan amendment so as to provide the full-range of flexibility required for a project with a 40 to 50 year potential buildout. These special-area policies would apply only to HAMP (and, by extension, only to HRC) and so would not undermine or alter the PCD ordinance in other areas of the Tucson metropolitan regions

Considering that sustainability is a major component of this project, it is important to note that recent developments within the Planning profession have resulted in different modeling tools (such as INDEX and SSIM) that can contribute empirically to the objective of sustainable development that is comprehensive and accounts for economic realities and appropriate cost/benefit scenarios. These tools are invaluable in the analysis/comparison of alternative potential land use plans, providing insight into their respective affect on key factors such as water quality, energy use, air quality, and other pertinent considerations.

Drawing from the case studies presented in this report, it is apparent that there is a desire within the land-planning and development professions to rethink new masterplanned communities and the key elements which comprise them, including the establishment and functional interconnection of core districts that provide a mix of land uses and densities. The HRC project has the opportunity to be planned in a cohesive, timely, and sustainable manner. To facilitate the same, the applicant must work closely with City staff on an on-going basis, to define a planning process which is flexible enough to meet the long-term challenges of a project of this scale, yet binding enough to maintain a cohesive overall vision.