

Planning Staff Analysis

MPC25-0001a/Hunter Ranch MPC

City Council District #4

REQUEST:

To rezone approximately 19.677-acres from Master Planned Community (MPC) Zoning District to Master Planned Community with a Base Zoning District of Mixed-Use Regional (MR) and make corresponding amendments to the Hunter Ranch MPC Development Map and related exhibits to expand the boundaries of the district to include the additional subject property for a total of approximately 3,187.40-acre tract of land within the Hunter Ranch MPC (Ordinance MPC19-0001c).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the request as it complies with the criteria in Subsection 2.4.5.E the Hunter Ranch MPC (MPC19-0001c) for approval of all applications.

SITE DATA:

The Hunter Ranch MPC comprises approximately 3,167.72 acres and is generally located west of I-35W, south of FM 2449, bounded by FM 2449 and Vintage Boulevard to the north, Robson Ranch Estates and Cole Ranch MPC to the west, Robson Ranch Road to the south, and bounded on the eastern side by John Paine Road south of I-35W and S Bonnie Brae Street south of Vintage Boulevard. While the MPC and associated agreements refer to the property as Hunter Ranch, plats for Phase 1 of the development now refer to the project as Landmark.

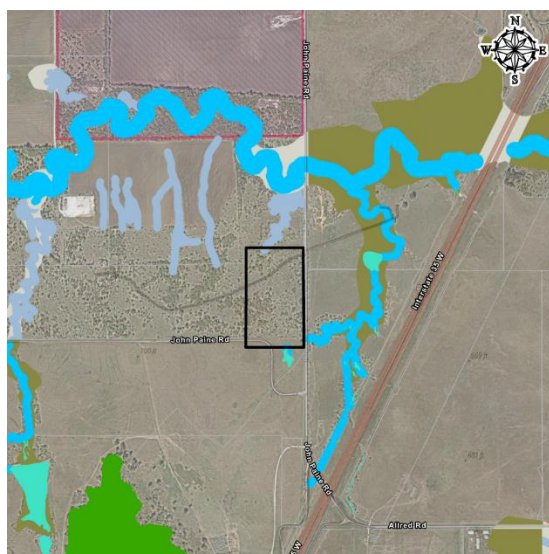
The proposal is to rezone approximately 19.677-acres from MPC Zoning District (based on the 2008 Cole Ranch MPC ordinance) to MPC with a Base Zoning District of MR and make corresponding amendments to the Hunter Ranch MPC Development Map and related exhibits (see Exhibits 9 through 11) to expand the boundaries of the district to include the additional subject property for a total of approximately 3,187.40-acre tract of land within the Hunter Ranch MPC. The area to be added to the Hunter Ranch MPC is generally located west of John Paine Road, approximately 2,200 feet north of I-35W. The intent of the amendment to the Hunter Ranch MPC, as well as, to rezone the subject property from the current MPC zoning assigned to it in 2008, when the land area was a part of Cole Ranch, and which is currently unenforceable by staff, to Master Planned Community with an MR base zoning will help reduce potential conflicts for staff when trying to enforce certain development standards on the subject property and further support the transition area between the Hunter Ranch MPC and the Cole Ranch MPC, located directly to the



west and northwest. The MR base zoning is supported by the City's Mobility Plan, which shows the future intersection of Allred Road, a Proposed Primary Arterial (represented by the red-dashed line), and John Paine Road, a future Secondary Arterial (represented by the green-dashed line), directly southwest of the subject property, serving as a natural commercial corridor supported by MR base zoning to the north, northeast, and east and an MN base zoning to the southwest of the future intersection. The base zoning districts within the Cole and Hunter Ranch MPCs can be seen on the revised MPC Exhibits included as Exhibits 8-11 to this report.

The general area's arterial street network includes the following:

- **I-35W:** The I-35W corridor is a north-south roadway and designated as a freeway on the City's Mobility Plan. This roadway runs through the eastern portion of the Hunter Ranch development but would serve as a primary access corridor to the subject property via connections at John Paine Road via FM 2449.
- **John Paine Road:** John Paine Road currently runs along the east side of the subject property. The City's Mobility Plan indicates John Paine Road as a future Secondary Arterial on the City's Mobility Plan. The alignment of the roadway is proposed to change, running north-south from Robson Ranch Road to the new Loop 288 extension.



The subject property consists of open pasture. Additionally, the subject property contains along its southern edge confirmed Riparian Buffer Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), following the limits of the Roark Branch Tributary, and along its northern edge, potential Riparian Buffer ESA (see inset map of ESAs to the left).

Surrounding the subject property to the northeast, east, southwest, south, and southeast exists undeveloped portions of the Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC. To the west, northwest, and north exists undeveloped portions of the Cole Ranch MPC.

SURROUNDING ZONING AND USES:

Northwest: Zoning: Cole Ranch MPC (MN Base) Use: Undeveloped Land	North: Zoning: Cole Ranch MPC (MN Base) Use: Undeveloped Land	Northeast: Zoning: Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC (MR Base) Use: Undeveloped Land
West: Zoning: Cole Ranch MPC (MN Base) Use: Undeveloped Land	SUBJECT PROPERTY	East: Zoning: Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC (MR Base) Use: Undeveloped Land
Southwest: Zoning: Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC (MN Base) Use: Undeveloped Land	South: Zoning: Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC (MN and MR Base) Use: Undeveloped Land	Southeast: Zoning: Landmark (Hunter Ranch) MPC (MR Base) Use: Undeveloped Land

CONSIDERATIONS:

A. Section 2.4.5.E of the Hunter Ranch MPC provides approval criteria applicable to all applications.

1. General Criteria

- Unless otherwise specified in this MPC, City review and decision-making bodies must review all development applications submitted pursuant to this subchapter for compliance with the general review criteria stated below.*

The review criteria were applied as required.

- b. *The application may also be subject to additional review criteria specific to the type of application, as set forth in sections 2.5 through 2.9.*

Section 2.7.3. of the MPC does not include specific review criteria for a Major Amendment to the MPC. Therefore, the application was reviewed against the general criteria for approval only as the criteria applies to all applications.

- c. *If there is a conflict between the general review criteria in this section and the specific review criteria in sections 2.5 through 2.9, the applicable review criteria in sections 2.5 through 2.9 controls.*

There are no conflicts as the Hunter Ranch MPC does not contain specific review criteria for a Major Amendment.

2. *Prior Approvals*

There have been several prior approvals related to this development. As detailed in Exhibit 1, the subject property was annexed into the City Limits in 2006. In 2008, the subject property was rezoned to an MPC and used the 2002 DDC as a base zoning and regulatory document. In 2020, following the adoption of the 2019 DDC, a major amendment to the MPC was adopted, transitioning the base regulatory documents and Development Plan Map to match the newly adopted code and base zoning districts. In addition, an Operating Agreement, Rezoning, Project Agreement and Public Improvement District were approved in April 2020 and specify the infrastructure, parks, and other public obligations associated with the development. On November 16, 2022, a preliminary plat was approved for Phase 1 of the MPC, with a final plat approval for Phase 1 on June 26, 2024. The subject property was excluded from the MPC updates to both Cole Ranch and Hunter Ranch in 2020, leaving the property under a repealed 2008 zoning ordinance.

The proposed amendment to the MPC boundary and additional base zoning acreage shown on the MPC's Development Plan Map and related exhibits is consistent with prior approvals applicable to the site as no changes to the overall unit count, roadway network, or other public improvement obligations are proposed. The proposed MR base zoning is consistent with what was approved for surrounding land area in the MPC and supports the proposed commercial corridor proposed at the intersection of John Paine Road and Allred Road, and the commercial corridor to the north towards the future Loop 288 extension.

3. *Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Other Applicable Plans*

The decision-making authority:

- a. *Shall weigh competing goals, policies, and strategies.*

There are no competing goals or policies within the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan that affect this property.

- b. *May approve an application that furthers the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan even if the development does not match the future land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan.*

Per the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM), the subject property is designated as Master Planned Community. The Master Planned Community category denotes large-scale developments that are guided by separate development approvals, which establish the land uses, densities and intensities of development, and character. These developments typically provide for mixed uses that balance residential and non-residential uses and provide connectivity to other development throughout the city.

The proposed amendment to the Development Plan Map and related exhibits adds additional land to the Hunter Ranch MPC and shifts the land distribution within the MR base zoning district; however, the mixed-use nature of the development is consistent with the Future Land Use designation in the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that at the time of the adoption of the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the Plan recognized that some areas zoned MPC are associated with development plans that may not reflect future needs and preferences and that it would be in the best interest of the City to anticipate and provide for flexibility in regard to the MPCs.

Furthermore, the proposed MPC Amendment is consistent with Action Item 2.11.1: *Establish a process to facilitate revisions to the land use mix and design of approved MPCs including:*

- *Design that furthers the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Preferred Growth Concept and the Preferred Land Preservation Plan.*
- *A mix of housing types to reflect changing demographics and housing preferences.*
- *Appropriate siting of schools, civic buildings, and community amenities.*
- *Adjacency to existing transportation infrastructure systems.*
- *Conservation development where appropriate.*
- *Incorporation of compact, mixed-use, and walkable development patterns.*
- *The integration of area-wide trails, greenways, and green infrastructure elements.*
- *Developable acreage that is in balance of overall development of the city.*

Specifically, by amending the Development Plan Map to add additional acreage and increase the area of MR base zoning district, the MPC Amendment will facilitate appropriately scaled mixed-use development between the Hunter Ranch MPC and the Cole Ranch MPC. Furthermore, the expansion of the MR base zoning district will allow for a variety of housing options able to respond to changing demographics and housing preferences as the development progresses, while still maintaining the maximum unit count approved for the MPC. The adopted MPC allows for a maximum 7,000 single-family units and 3,250 multifamily units, and again, these counts are not changing with this proposed MPC amendment.

Population Projections

Per the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the City's population is projected to increase from 139,869 residents in 2020 to 229,192 residents in 2040, requiring the addition of 37,094 total housing units, including 19,808 additional detached residential dwelling units (Table 1.3).

The proposed development is consistent with the overall need for additional housing to meet the projected needs of the growing population by adding no more than 7,000 single-family and 3,250 multi-family units to the City. This addition of the subject property to the MR district of the Hunter Ranch MPC does not affect the maximum unit count for the development but does provide for more options as to the form and location of those units within the MPC.

Housing and Neighborhoods

The Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan recognizes that, “With housing demand expected to increase over the next five years, providing diverse housing options in a variety of densities, styles, and price-points is critical to increasing the affordability of housing in Denton.” The amendment to the MPC’s MR base zoning district is consistent with the housing goals within the City, including:

Goal HN-1: Develop and maintain a housing stock that meets the needs of all residents with a diverse array of choices in type, cost, and locations.

Preferred Land Preservation Plan

The Preferred Land Preservation Plan reflects the City’s intent to preserve ESA and floodplain areas. By complying with the City’s codified standards for floodplain and ESA preservation as provided for in the MPC, development can occur in a manner consistent with the goals of the Preferred Land Preservation Plan in the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The subject property contains confirmed and potential areas of Riparian Buffer Environmentally Sensitive Areas on the site, with the southern confirmed area following the limits of the Roark Branch Tributary.

This zoning change to the subject property’s base zoning district and amendment to the Hunter Ranch MPC does not affect the developer’s obligation to meet ESA, floodplain, and tree preservation requirements. Given the size of the Hunter Ranch MPC and timeframe for build-out, detailed site-planning for the overall development has not yet occurred. As development occurs within the Hunter Ranch MPC, any development where ESAs are verified is subject to the requirements within MPC Subsection 7.4.7.A; any work beyond what is permitted in the MPC would require approval by City Council through the Alternative ESA process, which requires mitigation be proposed to offset impacts to disturbed areas of ESA.

4. *Compliance with this DDC (MPC Ordinance)*
 - a. *The proposed development shall comply with all applicable standards in this MPC, unless the standard is to be lawfully modified.*

This request is for a Major Amendment to amend the Development Plan Map, and consequently the Phase and District Boundary Map, Park Plan Map, and Environmentally Sensitive Area Map, of the Hunter Ranch MPC. All subsequent development must comply with applicable standards in the MPC, including, but not limited to, minimum lot size and dimensions, building coverage, parking, street trees, buffers, and architectural design.
 - b. *Compliance with these standards is applied at the level of detail required for the subject submittal.*

Compliance with the MPC has been analyzed at the level of detail necessary for an amendment to the Development Plan. Amending the Development Plan Map and related exhibits to add the additional approximately 19.677-acre parcel to the MPC development and the established MR district does not include a full review of all development standards within the MPC. If the proposed map amendments are approved, detailed development review will accompany all required future development applications for the site including Specific Use Permit or zoning compliance plan, platting, engineering, tree preservation, and building permit submittals.

5. *Compliance with Other Applicable Regulations*

The proposed amendment is consistent with all other applicable regulations of the MPC. Additionally, the development will be required to comply with the City's criteria manuals for roadway, utility, and drainage improvements, as well as TxDOT requirements.

6. *Consistent with Interlocal and Development Agreements*

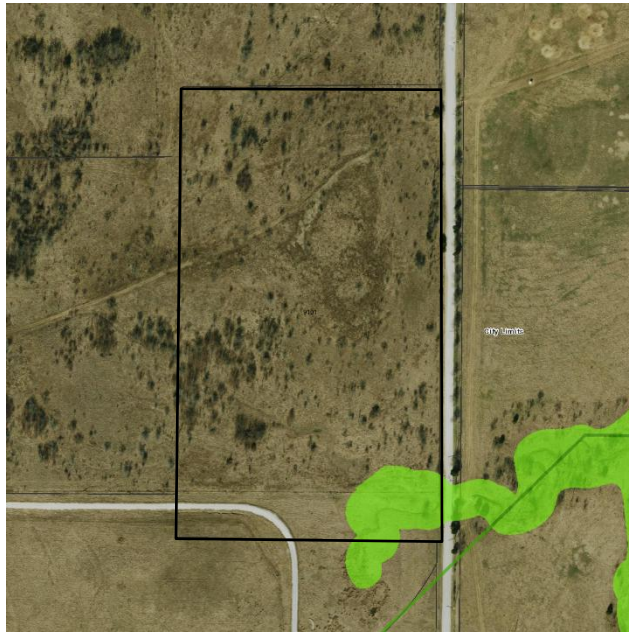
The Development Plan Map amendment is consistent with and does not impact the terms of the Operating and Project Agreements for the Hunter Ranch MPC.

7. *Minimizes Adverse Environmental Impacts*

As discussed above under Section A.3.b, the Preferred Land Preservation Plan and Official ESA map show confirmed and potential areas of Riparian Buffer Environmentally Sensitive Areas on the subject property. Development of the subject property will be required to comply with the MPC regulations related to ESAs, including an environmentally sensitive areas field assessment. Additionally, any development of the subject property would be subject to the MPC's standards for tree preservation, stormwater, and landscaping to ensure environmental impacts are minimized. By rezoning the property and incorporating the subject property under current MPC rather than the previous 2008 MPC standards, the ESAs on the site will be protected at a higher standard.

The Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan established Key Action item #127: "Identify and map wildlife corridors throughout the City to be addressed within three years of Plan adoption." The creation of this map was accomplished in 2023, providing a useful informational resource for the City to understand paths wildlife are likely to utilize throughout the City based upon two factors: first, the locations of existing natural resources such as ESAs which have been mapped as "greenspace," and second, direct paths that link greenspaces throughout the City and that may be useable by wildlife, which are shown as the "wildlife corridors".

The City's Wildlife Corridor Map indicates the presence of greenspace (see light green



shading on inset map) at the southeast corner of the subject property. The identified area of greenspace is consistent with the boundaries of the potential and confirmed ESA. While there is not yet a development plan submitted as part of this request, areas of identified greenspace and wildlife corridors would still be protected by the MPC's ESA regulations, which require either protection of these areas or approval of an Alternative ESA plan to establish mitigation for most encroachments within these areas.

8. Minimizes Adverse Impacts on Surrounding Property

If approved, the zoning change and the amendment Hunter Ranch MPC Development Map and related exhibits is not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on surrounding property. The proposed amendment to the Hunter Ranch MPC maps to reflect the area with a base zoning of MR does not introduce any new base zoning districts nor land uses to the Hunter Ranch MPC. Because the proposed rezoning and subsequent development is not expected to introduce any new activities to the area, the proposal is not anticipated to create adverse impacts on the surrounding property. Additionally, the amendment contemplates an increase the land area of the MR base zoning district, which will increase a mixed-used base zoning district west of the future alignment of John Paine Road and Allred Road, which will improve the area of transition between the Hunter Ranch MPC and the Cole Ranch MPC, directly to the west and northwest, and further support the proposed commercial corridor.

In order to mitigate potential impacts and ensure compatibility within the Hunter Ranch MPC, compliance with the MPC's site design standards will be required for all phases of the development, including the following:

- Tree Preservation (MPC 7.7.4): A minimum of 35% of all Heritage and Quality Trees within the MPC shall be preserved (may be reduced to 25% with increased mitigation).
- Minimum Landscaping and Tree Canopy Coverage: Minimum percentages of required landscaping and tree canopy coverage are prescribed based upon base zoning designation as detailed in MPC Table 7.D.
- Compatibility Landscape Buffer Requirements (MPC 7.7.6): Compatibility buffers are required to mitigate or minimize potential nuisances such as noise, light, glare, dirt, litter, signs, parking, or storage areas and to provide a transition between incompatible uses.
- Site and Building Requirements (MPC 7.10): Site and building design requirements are applicable to the development of all new construction within the MPC. The site and building requirements and are intended to ensure compatibility, mitigate negative impacts, enhance streetscapes, and provide variety and interest in building design.

9. *Minimizes Adverse Fiscal Impacts*

In 2020, a detailed Fiscal Impact Analysis Report was prepared for the entire Hunter Ranch (now Landmark) and Cole Ranch project areas. Over a 40-year time period, the two Master Planned Communities are projected to have a \$498,520 net positive impact on the General Fund. The net positive impact is noted to primarily be derived from sales tax and property tax revenue from the development.

Based upon the Fiscal Impact Analysis report, sales tax revenue from retail and office spaces were projected to generate \$4.56 and \$1.51 per square foot. Thus, the increase in the available land area for mixed-use and commercial development within the Hunter Ranch MPC is not anticipated to have a negative fiscal impact on the overall development.

10. *Compliance with Utility, Service, and Improvement Standards*

This proposed Development Plan Map amendment will not negatively affect utilities, services, or other improvements. Given the size and location of the Hunter Ranch Development, significant public infrastructure improvements will be required of the developer in order to develop the subject property. The obligations have been outlined and recorded in the Hunter Ranch Operating and Project Agreements, which are not affected as part of this amendment.

11. *Provides Adequate Road Systems*

The arterial roadways identified on the City's Mobility Plan exist within and in proximity to the Hunter Ranch MPC, as detailed in the site data summary earlier in this report.

The additional approximately 19.677-acre to the Hunter Ranch MPC is not anticipated to negatively impact the roadway systems within and surrounding the Hunter Ranch MPC as there is adequate roadway capacity to serve the development. However, with the development of new phases of the MPC, additional traffic studies will occur to ensure minimal impact.

As part of the Project Agreement, the developer for Hunter Ranch Improvement District No. 1 is responsible for the construction of public improvements, including roadway construction necessary to serve the project area, unless otherwise specified in the Operating Agreement.

12. *Provides Adequate Public Services and Facilities*

This proposed Development Plan Map amendment will not negatively affect public services and facilities. As part of the Hunter Ranch MPC, and the Operating and Project Agreements, the developer is responsible for conveyance or dedication of park land, and conveyance of land for a future fire station. In addition, the MPC identifies several possible future school sites to serve the development.

13. *Rational Phasing Plan*

The MPC is proposed to be developed in four major phases, with subphases within each. Given the size of the development and the significant public improvements required, the phasing plan is appropriate and is not being modified as part of this request other than to include this area within the adjacent Phase 4.