



Village Center Redevelopment Plan

Executive Summary

Prepared by.
Michael Baker International

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Introduction

Over the last several years, the Town of Carefree has undertaken a number of public projects and initiatives to encourage development and redevelopment that supports the ongoing success of Carefree's Village Center. Despite this investment and activity, several areas within the Village Center continue to require improvement, particularly in new retail and housing options, but also around infrastructure, transportation, and safety improvements.

This Redevelopment Plan recognizes recent improvements within the Village Center and builds on the area's original Village Center Master Plan (2015) to recommend enhanced strategic initiatives, and in turn, make available additional redevelopment tools that are not currently accessible to improve conditions within the Village Center.

Benefits of a Redevelopment Plan



State Law strictly limits the manner in which Cities and Towns can use public funds for private use as well as the way in which public property can be managed and sold.

A Redevelopment Plan (Arizona Revised Statute 36-1474) enables a special set of tools, where communities can use public resources to leverage private investment. These tools allow:

- The ability for municipalities to have greater control over the disposition of real estate.
- The ability to enter into public/private partnerships, allowing public sector investment in the revitalization of private property.
- Enhanced rules for bond financing of municipal improvements.
- Access to federal grants and loans.

Planning Process & Redevelopment Area:

To establish the Redevelopment Plan and access the redevelopment powers allowable under Arizona law, the Town of Carefree underwent a planning process that included conducting a "Finding of Necessity" and approval of the Plan's formal "Redevelopment Area". The Village Center Redevelopment Area encompasses approximately 81 acres and was formally adopted by the Town Council on August 3, 2022.

Redevelopment Plan Outreach:

As part of the process to prepare this Redevelopment Plan, the following public outreach was conducted:

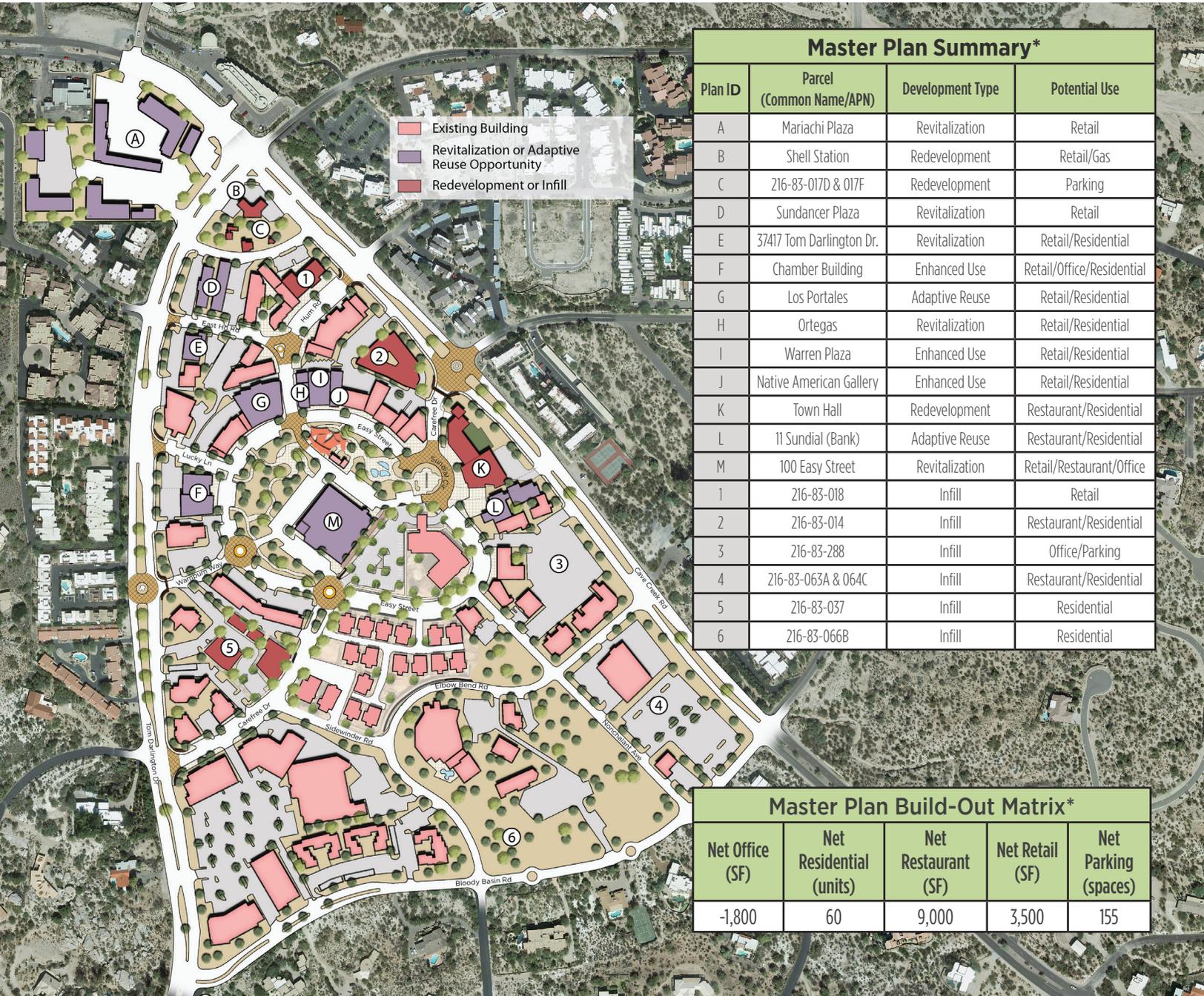
- Multiple public workshops and public meetings were conducted with the Planning & Zoning Commission over the course of this effort.
- To supplement and expand on the feedback provided by the Planning & Zoning Commission, input was also garnered from the Carefree Economic Development

Technical Advisory Panel. This staff level professional advisory panel was comprised of property owners and representatives as well as business owners within the Village Center.

- Along with the opportunity to attend all public workshops and meetings that were conducted with the Planning & Zoning Commission to review this effort, a community open house was also hosted by the Town to inform residents about the project and gain feedback on any aspects of the planning process.

Redevelopment Master Plan

VISION STATEMENT “Carefree’s Village Center is the heart of a forward thinking community that is also a regional magnet for activity. Entry to the Village Center is distinct and beckons visitors and locals alike to wander and discover new goods, services and entertainment within. A diverse mix of specialty shops, art, and dining opportunities leverage the unique design and natural setting of the Village Center to thrive and prosper. Selected cultural amenities and exceptional annual events showcase the authentic character of the community and attract new residents who choose to live in the Village Center and enjoy the true “Carefree” lifestyle.”



* The Master Plan Summary table outlines the redevelopment or new development potential for each Plan ID site. This planning approach was based on evaluating existing conditions along with input from the community, especially regarding density expectations. As a result, the Master Plan Build-out Matrix was prepared to outline the anticipated net change to the Village Center over the anticipated 10-year period of this Redevelopment Plan.

Plan For Action

The following “Plan for Action” establishes the blueprint for achieving the desired enhancements within the Village Center by outlining a framework of **Objectives** that focus on achieving the community’s Vision for this critical area of the Town. Each Objective includes a summary of its importance to the Village Center and key **Strategic Initiatives** toward which planning efforts should be directed. The complete Redevelopment Plan also includes further detailed **Action Steps** that could be undertaken to advance each strategic initiative.

Objective 1

Improve the Village Center’s visibility and access

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Celebrate the points of arrival into the Village Center to counteract the inward facing design.
- ✓ Decrease the number of entry drives along Tom Darlington Drive and Cave Creek Road.
- ✓ Establish a hierarchy of street typologies.
- ✓ Build-upon the Village Center’s pedestrian and bicycle friendly design.
- ✓ Create additional parking opportunities.

Objective 2

Foster development of a strong retail, residential, entertainment, and service core in the Village Center

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Identify and pursue key anchor or cultural center projects in strategic locations that can be a catalyst for economic change.
- ✓ Help foster the growth of existing Village Center business establishments.
- ✓ Revitalize existing commercial areas/buildings through redevelopment, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse.
- ✓ Develop a recruitment campaign targeting specific restaurant and retail business establishments.
- ✓ Establish the Village Center as the next great neighborhood.
- ✓ Consider Town acquisition of available properties to directly guide/seed redevelopment efforts.
- ✓ Modify existing land use policies/development standards.

Objective 3

Enhance the Village Center experience

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Foster characteristics that set the Village Center apart from other places in the Valley.
- ✓ Enhance the Village Center’s prominence through iconic imagery.
- ✓ Create incentives for commercial building and site improvements.
- ✓ Work with businesses to improve their physical presentation as well as enhance the presentation of empty storefronts.
- ✓ Encourage exploration by improving wayfinding and signage.
- ✓ Activate the Desert Gardens during non-event periods.
- ✓ Improve sightlines through the Village Center.

Objective 4

Market and Promote the Village Center

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Create a comprehensive Village Center marketing plan.
- ✓ Encourage businesses and organizations to tie-in their own advertising efforts with those promoting the Village Center in general.
- ✓ Enhance web, social media, and e-marketing campaigns.
- ✓ Leverage local markets to boost the Center’s Commerce.
- ✓ Strategically program and manage the calendar of events.
- ✓ Continue to work towards all businesses being open year-round.
- ✓ Support the Town’s Visitor Center located in the Village Center amphitheater and continue to collaborate with the Cave Creek/Carefree Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Objective 5

Develop a strong organizational structure

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Build and sustain a strong downtown network and organizational structure.
- ✓ Maintain the Marketing and Communication Coordinator position.
- ✓ Maintain consistent communication regarding the Carefree Village Center Redevelopment Plan.

To assure the momentum from planning to implementation is clearly directed and not delayed, a complete framework for implementation is presented in the Redevelopment Plan to detail the timeframe, responsibility, partners, and priority actions/projects for each strategic initiative listed above.