



City of Apache Junction

Home of the Superstition Mountains

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Bryant Powell, City Manager

FROM: Patrick Ainsworth, Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: Consideration of Adoption of the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update

The City of Apache Junction's last downtown master plan was adopted in 2010 and was called the Downtown Redevelopment Implementation Strategy ("DRIS"). The plan provided a framework of proposed public and private improvements. To help organize the recommendations made in this plan, there were three study areas which included the Suburban Zone, Transition Zone, and Core Downtown Zone.

Since it has been some time since its adoption, the City took the approach of conducting a partial update to this plan. In February 2024, after issuing a Request for Proposals to assist with this update, a contract was awarded to Swaback Architects and Planners to lead the efforts of studying the market, engaging the public and various stakeholders for feedback, and coming up with a series of recommendations on how to advance the downtown area of Apache Junction.

That specific geographic area is the same boundary as the DRIS' Core Downtown Zone to assist with plan update continuity. This study area encompasses the Central Arizona College campus, the former Grand Hotel site, several tracts of vacant land, the Apache Junction City Hall Campus, and other downtown area properties. It also allowed the representatives from Swaback and the City to concentrate on what is considered the 'heart of the Apache Junction'. The study area also overlapped with the 10-acre property that the City was acquiring at that time.

After several interviews with stakeholders, two well-attended open houses and several meetings with city staff, it became clear that the focus of the plan is the 16-acre site that housed the former Grand Hotel. As a result of this direction, a draft of the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update, which is attached to the Resolution, comes with a series of recommendations and four aspirational site plans of the former Grand Hotel site to help visualize what the 16-acre site can look like.

The site plan concepts were backed by a market study conducted by ESI Corp., a sub-consultant hired by Swaback. That market study is encompassed within the document to help ensure that the concepts were based on current market data.

Staff reviewed the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update and made comments to ensure that consensus of the public input and findings from the stakeholder interviews were incorporated into this plan. The document attached is the end product for the City Council to review, discuss, and adopt.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff respectfully recommends the city council receive a presentation, discuss, and adopt the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update with Resolution No. 24-30.