

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION**  
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - YUMA CITY HALL  
ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA  
**January 14, 2025**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Mayor Nicholls** called the Regular City Council Worksession to order at 5:30 p.m.

Councilmembers Present: Morales, Smith, McClendon, Morris, Watts, Martinez, and Mayor Nicholls  
Councilmembers Absent: None  
Staffmembers Present: Acting City Administrator, John D. Simonton  
Executive Director of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area,  
Cathy Douglas  
Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services, Alyssa Linville  
Fire Chief, Dusty Fields  
Director of Building Safety, Randy Crist  
Director of Utilities, Jeremy McCall  
Director of Engineering, Dave Wostenberg  
Various department heads or their representatives  
City Attorney, Richard W. Files  
Deputy City Clerk, Janet L. Pierson

**I. YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA UPDATE**

**Douglas** presented the following Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA) update for the federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024:

- 2024 Major Goals Achieved
  - Completed Sunset View Wildlife Area – a two-acre nature park development at Yuma East Wetlands
  - Completed an eight-acre West Wetlands Park development project
  - Department of Interior investing \$8.6 million to protect and maintain Yuma East Wetlands
  - Yuma East Wetlands awarded the Environmental Excellence Award for Natural Environment Preservation from Arizona Forward
  - Selected to receive \$398,000 in Community Directed Spending funding for exterior preservation of Historic City Hall – pending final FY 2025 budget
  - Continued to successfully operate and maintain the 380-acre Yuma East Wetlands, Yuma Territorial Prison, and Colorado River State Historic Parks
  - Expanded educational programming and cultural and community events
  - Developed new Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessible sidewalk project and new exhibits at Yuma Territorial Prison
- Financials At a Glance – FY 2024 Revenue and Expenses
  - Revenue - \$3,410,000
    - Grants and Private Donations - \$1,456,000
      - Includes 16 federal, state and foundation grants totaling \$1.4 million

- Operating and Maintenance Contracts - \$893,000
    - Comprised of 10% share of City 2% Hospitality Tax
  - State Park Admissions and Gift Shop Revenue - \$715,000
  - Special Event and Rental Revenue - \$170,000
  - Miscellaneous Gains and Other Revenue - \$176,000
  - Expenses - \$3,470,000
    - Expenses over revenues of nearly \$60,000 mainly stemming from loss of the historic Freight Depot building
- East Wetlands
  - Operations
    - YCNHA operates and maintains the 380-acre East Wetlands with a staff of five
    - Partnership with the City of Yuma, the Quechan Indian Tribe, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
    - Signed a new five-year funding agreement in 2024 with the BOR for site maintenance funding
      - \$208,000 funding in 2024
    - Secured additional \$96,000 in grant funding from the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management for invasive vegetation removal in 2024
      - \$124,000 funding for 2025
  - Improvements
    - Sunset View Wildlife Area
      - \$500,000 grant funded two-acre development
        - Includes \$300,000 American Rescue Plan Act subgrant from the City
      - Connecting trails, shaded wildlife viewing overlook, and habitat improvements
  - Funding and Award
    - \$8.6 million Bipartisan Infrastructure Act funding for East Wetlands to improve efficiency of operations and to replace capital infrastructure
    - Awarded state Environmental Excellence Award for Natural Environmental Preservation from Arizona Forward
- West Wetlands
  - Improvements
    - YCNHA secured \$250,000 grant from Arizona Office of Tourism
    - Partnered with City Parks and Recreation Department
    - Eight-acre park development
    - Additional parking, landscaping, trails, and shade ramadas
- State Parks
  - Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Parks
    - Ongoing Management
      - YCNHA has been successfully operating and maintaining Yuma's two state parks since 2009/2010 with seven full-time and three part-time/seasonal staff
      - 60,335 park visitors generated \$715,000 in admissions and gift shop revenue
      - Yuma Territorial Prison is the biggest tourist attraction in Yuma
        - Voted #4 Best Haunted Destination in the U.S. by USA Today readers in 2024

- Expanded educational and historical programming
  - 352 group and general public tours for 3,954 people
  - 38 outreach, educational and historical programs for 178 people
- 70 park and event volunteers contributed 2,458 hours of service, valued at \$78,000
- Pending Multi-Million Dollar Sally Port Historic Restoration
  - Historic Structures Report for adobe restoration and building repair at the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park completed in 2024
  - State is proceeding with design work for the Sally Port restoration
  - Funding for this project is a work in progress
- New Exhibits
  - Stamped concrete sidewalks and a new cemetery exhibit have been installed, and 10 new exhibit panels are in production and will soon be displayed throughout the Colorado River State Historic Park
- Educational Programming
  - Received fourth annual grant from the National Park Foundation to support the free Yuma Live History field trip program to the East Wetlands and Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Park for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders
    - 80% of Yuma County schools are participating
  - Provided 60 in-person and 43 virtual educational programs for 4,847 students and 501 adults
- Historic City Hall Exterior Restoration
  - \$398,000 Community Directed Spending funding request selected by Senators Kelly and Sinema, pending final federal budget approval
    - Working with City Administration to find required non-federal matching funds
  - Project includes exterior façade restoration and new windows and front entry door
- Loss of Historic Freight Depot
  - This property was donated to YCNHA by the Union Pacific Foundation, and was destroyed in a fire in March 2024
- Cultural and Community Events
  - These events not only provide cultural enrichment and bring visitors to the parks, but they also serve as fundraisers for needed maintenance and preservation work
  - FY 2024
    - Hosted 13 cultural and community events for nearly 3,500 guests, including:
      - Haru Matsuri Festival
      - Dia de los Muertos
      - Prison to Prison Beer Run
      - Christmas at the Crossing
  - FY 2025
    - Wild West Days is a new event that will be taking place on January 25<sup>th</sup> at the Yuma Territorial Prison
- 2025 Goals
  - Work with Yuma East Wetlands partners to help facilitate capital improvement projects funded by the Department of Interior's \$86 million investment
  - Ensure successful implementation of historic City Hall renovations should \$398,000 Community Directed Spending be approved

- Continue to successfully operate and maintain the 380-acre Yuma East Wetlands and the Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Parks
- Continue to expand and implement educational programming and cultural and community events to increase traffic to the State Parks and to raise funds for operational and historic preservation projects
- Complete a new historic downtown walking tour, partially funded with Union Pacific Foundation grant

### Discussion

- Christmas at the Crossing is a family friendly event, with activities for children as well as food vendors and a bar for adults (**Mayor Nicholls/Douglas**)
- Autentico Sapore Italiano, an Italian restaurant, operates in the Colorado River State Historic Park under an annual lease (**Morales/Douglas**)
- The school field trips are provided at no cost to schools, funded through a National Park Foundation grant and fundraising campaigns (**Smith/Douglas**)
- Trail and walkway maintenance involves continuously cleaning up trash, removing fire hazards, and trimming trees; some areas that may appear to be overgrown have purposely been left in a more natural state to provide habitats for animals (**Morris/Douglas**)
- Christmas at the Crossing was a collaborative effort made possible by contributions from Shelley Mellon, RL Jones Insurance, the Yuma Anti-Drug Coalition, and the Yuma Mental Health Coalition, and the help of 50 volunteers each night (**Watts/Douglas**)
- Removal of invasive plants is an ongoing effort supported by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management grant; the focus has been on removal of salt cedar phragmites that use up a large amount of water (**Watts/Douglas**)

## **II. ATTAINABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE**

**Linville** presented the following overview of the recommendations identified by the Attainable Housing Committee:

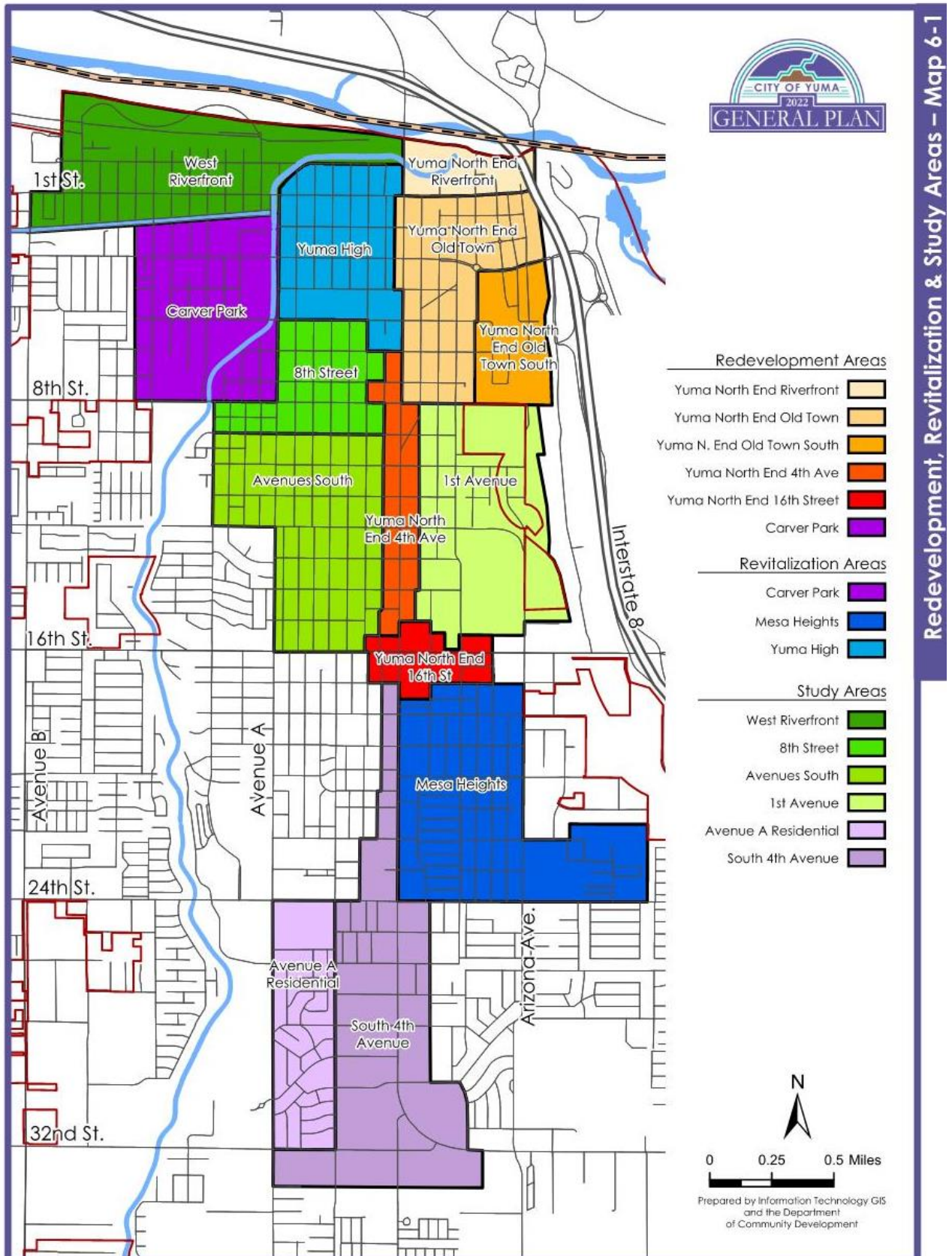
- Attainable Housing Committee
  - Committee Purpose
    - Mission
      - The Attainable Housing Committee aims to address the growing needs for access to all housing types within our community
    - Key Objectives
      - Advocate for policies that promote housing development
      - Collaborate between local government, developers, and stakeholders to identify practical solutions
      - Research housing trends, challenges, and opportunities to inform City Council
    - Vision
      - To ensure policies and regulations support the development of all types of housing

○ Committee Schedule

Meeting Date	Meeting Objective
May 21, 2024	Project Kick-Off
June 18	Zoning: Review options for duplexes in R-1-6 (Infill), review recent legislation (accessory dwelling units and middle housing)
July 23	Zoning: Review affordable housing, inclusionary zoning, infill incentives outside of the district
August 20	Building: Review energy efficiency, fire sprinklers, use of residential code for up to 4 units
October 1	Engineering: Review residential roadway designs and development/impact fees Utilities: Review development and connection standards for water and sewer
November 5	Review Proposed Recommendations
December 17	Finalize Proposed Recommendations
January 14, 2025	City Council Briefing (Worksession)

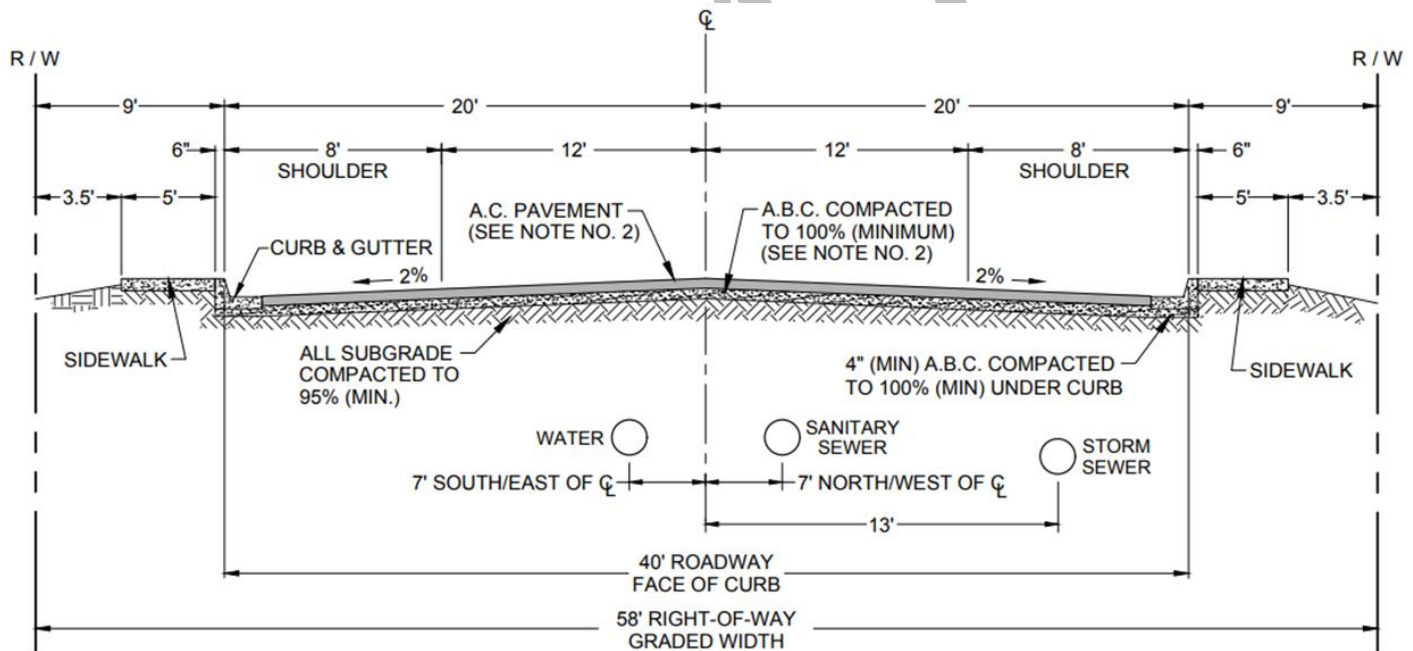
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) have been permitted within the City since 2017, and were intended to allow property owners to gain income while allowing the community to have access to affordable housing within traditional neighborhood settings.
  - Setbacks
    - Current Setbacks
      - Follow typical side (seven-foot) and rear (10-foot) setbacks unless accessed from the alley, which allows a reduced rear yard setback of five feet
      - Located behind the midpoint of the primary residence
        - To avoid the appearance of two units on one property, which might negatively impact the character of a neighborhood
    - Proposed Setbacks
      - Allow attached units to meet typical front yard setback
        - Expand opportunities to property owners who do not have room for an ADU in their rear yard
      - Reduce the rear yard setback for single-story units to five feet
  - Density
    - Current Density Standard
      - Currently permits one ADU on a lot which features a single-family residence
      - No additional parking required
    - Proposed Density Standard
      - Allow the construction of a second ADU on lots which are 10,000 square feet or larger
      - One unit attached and one unit detached
  - Parking
    - Current Parking
      - No additional parking is required for an accessory dwelling unit so long as the parking for the primary residence still exists
    - Proposed Parking
      - One additional parking space needs to be provided for a second ADU

- Design
  - Current Design Standard
    - Requires ADU to incorporate design features similar to the primary residence, including exterior colors, architectural detailing, and exterior materials (such as windows and roofing)
  - Proposed Design Standard
    - Require ADU to incorporate design features similar to the primary homes within the surrounding neighborhood
- Occupancy
  - Current Occupancy Standard
    - Requires owner to reside in one of the dwelling units
    - Deed restriction required
  - Proposed Occupancy Standard
    - Remove occupancy restrictions, allowing all units to be utilized for rental purposes
      - There is some concern with removing this requirement because it can become difficult to contact owners when upkeep is needed, especially if the owner lives outside of Yuma
- Utilities
  - Current Utility Standard
    - Requires a property owner to upgrade an existing 4" sewer lateral to allow the construction of an ADU
    - Upgrade from a 4" sewer lateral to a 6" sewer lateral
  - Proposed Utility Standard
    - Utilize sewer lateral assessments to determine if an existing 4" sewer lateral has sufficient capacity to support the construction of an ADU
- Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
  - Density
    - Current Density Standard
      - Requires the average lot size to meet the minimum of the underlying zoning district
    - Proposed Density Standard
      - Remove minimum lot size standard and allow the density limitations to determine the allowable lot sizes
- Middle Housing
  - Infill District
    - Proposed Density Standard
      - Allow two to four units to be built on properties zoned for single-family
  - New Development
    - Proposed Density Standard
      - Allow two to four units to be built on properties zoned for single-family
      - New development project of 10 acres or more
      - Maximum of 20% of the development to be utilized for middle housing
      - Identify middle housing lots during the subdivision phase



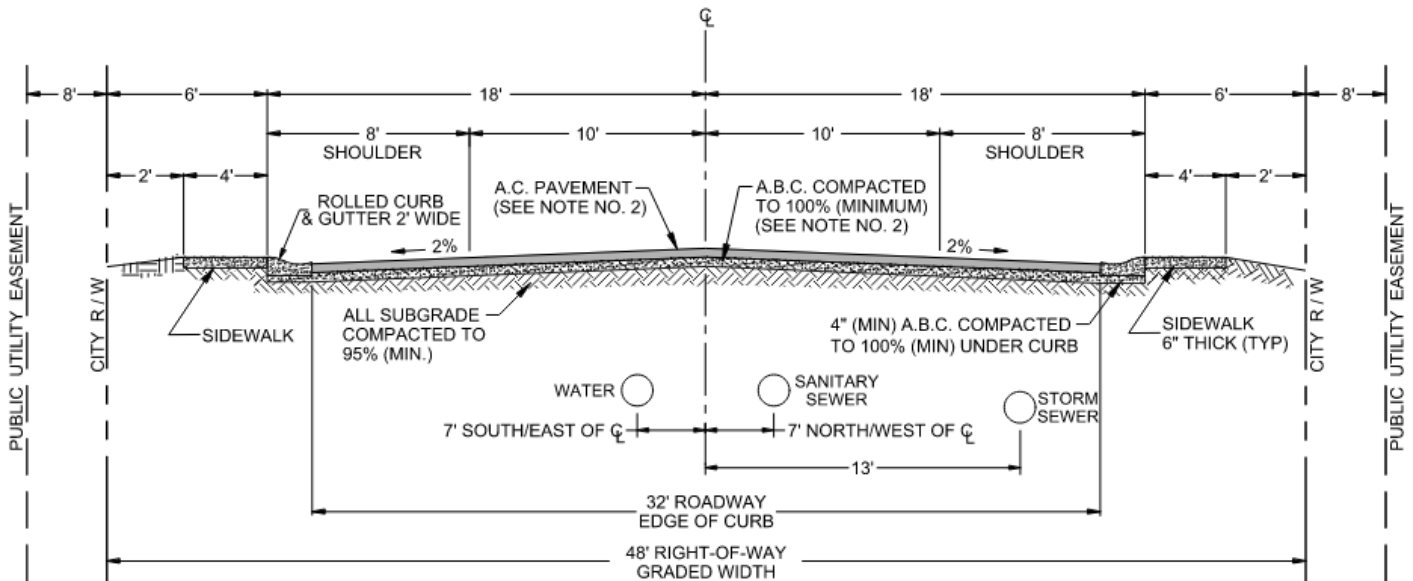


- Building Safety
  - International Residential Code (IRC)
    - Support and encourage the use of the IRC for the construction of up to four residential units on one property
    - Recommend adding language in the zoning code supporting the use of the IRC for middle housing
  - Fire Protection
    - Committee supports the need to provide fire protection in new residential construction of three or more attached units
- Inclusionary Zoning
  - Proposed Standard
    - Allow 20% of development project to be set aside for Affordable Housing units, in exchange for an increase in density up to 20%
    - Affordability period
      - For Sale: seven-year affordability period
      - For Rent: 20-year affordability period
    - Optional for all residentially zoned developments
- Residential Streets
  - Local Street Detail
    - Current Local Street Detail





■ Proposed Local Street Detail



Discussion

- Considering the catastrophic fires that have been taking place recently in California, it may be wise to take some time to discuss whether to reduce the rear yard setback to five feet (**Mayor Nicholls**)
- The five-foot rear yard setback is permitted by the IRC without a fire wall; combined with the rear yard setback of the adjacent property, there would be at least a 10-foot separation between structures (**Morris**)
- The Yuma Fire Department would speak up if any of the recommendations would jeopardize the safety of the community; in 2006, the IRC increased the required fire separation from three feet to five feet (**Watts/Linville/Fields/Crist**)
- Design standards for the aesthetics of attached units can be considered (**Morales/Linville**)
- Allowing attached units to meet the typical front yard setback is appreciated, but the safety of the five-foot rear yard setback should be further evaluated (**Smith**)
- There are property owners whose backyards are not large enough to accommodate an ADU under the current requirements that might benefit from the reduced rear yard setback; currently properties that are adjacent to an alley that is utilized for access to a proposed ADU can reduce the rear yard setback to five feet (**McClendon/Linville**)
- Reduced setbacks up to zero feet are allowed for accessory structures such as sheds, patios, and detached patios based on the size of the structure; in the Infill Overlay District, a five-foot side yard setback is allowed for residential development (**Morris/Linville**)
- Maximum lot coverage is increased by 5% for an accessory dwelling unit; if the zoning is Low Density Residential (R-1-6), the lot coverage could increase to 60% (**Mayor Nicholls/Linville**)
- While an additional meter can be purchased for an ADU, the meter currently at the property – typically a three-quarter inch meter – is sufficient for both structures (**Smith/McCall**)
- ADUs are a permitted use, and notification is not required to surrounding property owners; only 60 ADUs have been permitted since 2017 (**Watts/Linville**)

- If an additional required parking space is required for a second ADU, utilizing the front yard setback (driveway) for the additional parking space could be an option (**Mayor Nicholls/Morris/Linville**)
- With the proposed ADU design standards, additional units would not need to match the primary home but would be required to incorporate design elements similar to primary homes in the surrounding neighborhood; the definition of “surrounding neighborhood” is to be determined, but would likely be within the street or block where the property is located (**Mayor Nicholls/Morris/Morales/Linville**)
- Overall removal of the ADU requirement that the owner reside on the property looks to be a change that will help bring more affordable housing to Yuma (**Mayor Nicholls/Morris/Morales**)
- There are developers who have already expressed interest in offering ADUs upon construction of a new home, and the rental income that could be earned from an ADU can help potential buyers qualify for the purchase of a home (**Smith/Linville**)
- A sewer lateral assessment would determine whether the existing lateral is suitable for the intended use; a four-inch lateral will typically support up to four dwelling units without the need to upgrade to a six-inch lateral (**Mayor Nicholls/Morris/McCall/Crist**)
- PUDs encourage different design standards, such as reduced setbacks, to help developers increase densities; the proposed change would help developers hit maximum densities based on the land use designation instead of being limited by average minimum lot size requirements (**Mayor Nicholls/Linville**)
- The main differences between middle housing and ADUs is that middle housing allows up to four dwelling units per lot with no restriction on lot size, while the recommendation for ADUs is for up to three dwelling units per lot with a 10,000 square-foot minimum lot size required for a second ADU (**Mayor Nicholls/Linville**)
- It is not uncommon to find triplexes in the Infill Overlay District, so middle housing units would also fit in well in those areas (**Morris**)
- It would be helpful to see a visual representation of what middle housing might look like, to understand how it would fit in amongst single-family homes (**Smith**)
- Reduced setbacks, increased density, and multi-family housing are common themes throughout this presentation because they all lead to an increase in units per lot, which brings down the cost of housing and makes it more attainable (**Morris**)
- Outreach, including the use of visual examples, will help the community understand how the proposed changes may impact their neighborhoods and gain their support (**McClendon**)
- Attainable housing relies on increased density, but care needs to be taken with regards to location as higher densities may make sense in some areas but not others (**Watts**)
- Middle housing is typically two to four units, but the City could define it however best fits the community (**Linville**)
- Specific notification requirements for middle housing have not been recommended; while identification during the planning phase would provide potential homebuyers with information that may impact their decision making, requiring developers to identify specific lots early in the planning phase would limit their flexibility (**Mayor Nicholls/Morris/Smith/McClendon/Linville**)
- Developers have indicated that middle housing units would be designed to blend into the surrounding neighborhood (**Morales/Linville**)
- The distribution of the 20% middle housing was not specifically discussed; some communities incorporate middle housing throughout a neighborhood, while others group units together (**Mayor Nicholls/Linville**)

- In the past the IRC has been used for single family homes and duplexes, while anything larger utilized the International Building Code (IBC); however, a new state law allows the IRC to be used for triplexes and quadplexes (**Morris/Crist**)
- Housing constructed using the IRC can install a National Fire Protection Association 13D fire sprinkler system instead of the 13R system that is required under the IBC; the 13D system can use a domestic water line, as long as it is sized appropriately, and does not require a Fire Department Connection (**Morris/Crist**)
- An eight-foot shoulder with a 10-foot lane may not be wide enough for cars to comfortably park on the street; if a mountable curb is used, drivers will likely park partially on the sidewalk which will reduce accessibility (**Mayor Nicholls/Wostenberg**)
- Outreach may be needed to remind drivers to park carefully and not block sidewalks; enforcement is too late when an issue has already impacted accessibility (**Mayor Nicholls/Morales/Wostenberg**)
- An 11-foot lane could be made by reducing the area between the sidewalk and the utility easement to one foot; upgraded pavement markings at exits and speed limit signs will also be added to subdivisions (**Wostenberg**)
- The City's traffic calming policy is being reviewed, and additional measures such as speed tables, chicanes, low pop-outs, and roundabouts could potentially be added to slow traffic on residential roads; speed bumps are not a preferred traffic calming measure as they slow down emergency response, can cause problems with lower vehicles, and require additional maintenance (**Mayor Nicholls/McClendon/Wostenberg**)
- For collector and arterial roads, external to subdivisions, the City will be asking for additional right-of-way from developers to allow for the construction of multi-use paths on one side of the road, separated from traffic by a landscape buffer (**McClendon/Wostenberg**)
- Once finalized, these changes will be implemented through zoning code updates as well as revisions to Engineering Department standards and specifications (**Morris/Linville/Wostenberg**)
- The City has spent a lot of time refining Yuma's zoning codes over the last 10 years to better serve the community, and this is another great example of that effort (**Mayor Nicholls**)

### III. REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA OF JANUARY 15, 2025

Motion Consent Agenda Item C.1 – First Amendment to Design-Build Services Contract (amend the design-build construction contract with Willmeng Construction and add American Ramp Company to the extended warranty and bonding requirements for the Kennedy Skate Park (Skate Park) improvements) (Parks & Rec)

#### Discussion

- The Skate Park will be inspected daily by Parks and Recreation Department staff, and weekly by Engineering Department staff; Willmeng Construction and American Ramp Company will be notified of any cracks that become potential hazards so those sections can be removed and replaced (**McClendon/Wostenberg**)
- The Yuma Click and Fix app can be used to report any concerns regarding the Skate Park; there have been discussions about posting QR codes at the Skate Park and other City parks and playgrounds that will direct community members to the Yuma Click and Fix app to facilitate better communication between park users and the City (**McClendon/Morales/Wostenberg**)

Introduction of Ordinance O2025-002 – Rezoning of Property: Northwest Corner of 34<sup>th</sup> Street and DeVane Drive (rezone approximately 9.74 acres of property from the General Commercial/Aesthetic Overlay (B-2/AO) District to the Medium Density Residential/Planned Unit Development (R-2/PUD) District) (ZONE-43328-2024) (Plng & Nbhd Svcs/Cmtty Plng)

Discussion

- The applicant initially objected to the requirement of the Traffic Impact Statement, but agreed to provide the statement as requested at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting (**Smith/Linville**)
- The proposed development is for 60 lots with an average lot area of 5,104 feet, which meets the minimum average lot area of 4,500 square feet per dwelling unit as required by the R-2 District (**Mayor Nicholls/Linville**)

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** (Morales/Smith): To adjourn the meeting to Executive Session. Voice vote: **approved** 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

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Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

APPROVED:

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Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor

Approved at the City Council Meeting of:

City Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_