

PDD-15-01(A) Staff Memo-Second Reading of Ordinance



To:	Shannon Mattingly – Planning and Development Services Director
From:	Planning & Development Services – Shavon Caldwell, Planner
Date:	December 3, 2019
Re:	PDD-15-01(A)-Impact of Proposed Amendment on Density Requirements and Goals as per the Comprehensive Plan and Applicant Response

Summary and Background

At their regular meeting on November 19th, City Council voted 4-3 in favor of Amendment #1 to the Trace PDD as presented. At the November 19th meeting, some councilmembers expressed concerns that the amendment would result in a less dense development at this location. In response to these concerns, staff has reached out to the applicant to see if they would be agreeable to setting a minimum density per acre and the applicant has indicated that it would be challenging to do this, especially with the desired two-story product.

Clarification

Is there currently a minimum density requirement in the Trace Planned Development District?

No, there is not. The PDD designates maximum units per acre and maximum allowable units for each Planning Area but does not designate a minimum density. On average, the maximum allowed density for single-family development in Trace is between 4-6 units per acre and the maximum allowed density for multifamily development is 24 units per acre. Similarly, besides the prohibition of single-family residential uses in certain zoning districts, the San Marcos Development Code does not include a minimum density requirement.

What level of density does the Comprehensive Plan call for in this location? Does the proposed product align with the City's vision for development in the Comprehensive Plan?

The subject property is located in the High Pointe (Trace) *Medium Intensity* Zone as per the Preferred Scenario Map. The San Marcos Development Code defines Medium and High Intensity Zones as “areas of change intended to accommodate the City’s future growth and expansion where people can meet their daily needs within a short walk, bike, transit trip or drive”. The San Marcos Development Code directs the intensity of development in various areas of the City as directed in the Comprehensive Plan. In this location, the San Marcos Development Code considers development that is consistent with those standards in the City’s Character District zoning designations to be appropriate. Character Districts 1-5 allow for the development of a variety of residential options, including both townhouse and apartment building types.

What would the change in density be due to this amendment?

It's unfortunately not possible to determine this. The PDD designates a maximum density of 24 units per acre but does not designate a required minimum density. Similarly, the section that the applicant is requesting be amended (Section 6.2.2 Multi Family Residential Building Design) requires that combinations of two, three, and four-story buildings be used to create visual variation but does not specify how many two, three, or four-story buildings are required on the site to meet this requirement. The original intent of Section 6.2.2 was to ensure residential compatibility with the adjacent single-family residential use and to ensure visual interest through articulation and variation in roof lines. The requirement was not intended as a mechanism to regulate density.