

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA  
June 20, 2019

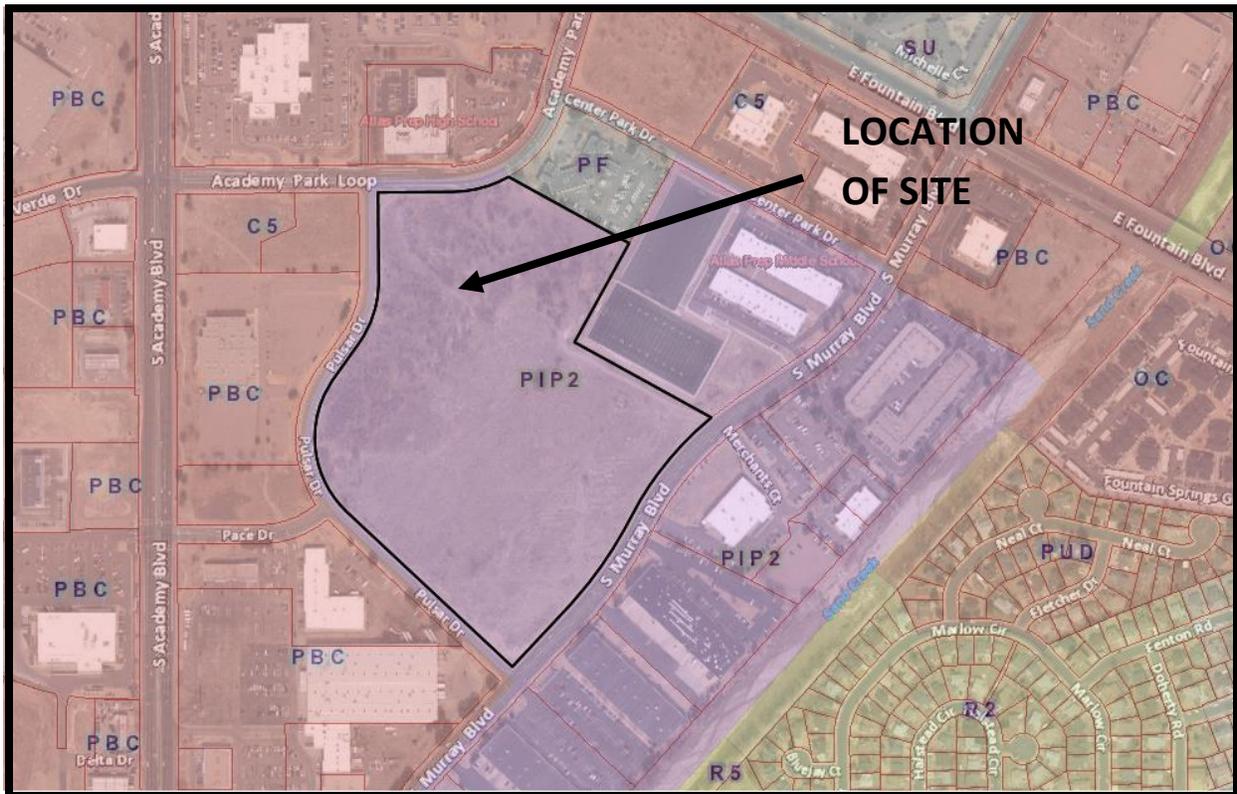
STAFF: RACHEL TEIXEIRA

FILE NO:  
CPC CU 19-00043 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

PROJECT: ATLAS PREPARATORY ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPLICANT/OWNER: ATLAS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

CONSULTANT REPRESENTATIVE: FBT ARCHITECTS



**PROJECT SUMMARY**

1. Project Description: This is a request for a conditional use to allow for a new elementary charter school with gymnasium buildings and track and field site in the PIP-2 (Planned Industrial) zone district. (**FIGURE 1**) The property is zoned PIP-2/cr/AO (Planned Industrial Park with conditions of record and Airport Overlay), located at 1750 South Murray Boulevard, and consists of 25.43 acres.
2. Applicant's Project Statement: (**Refer to FIGURE 2**)

**BACKGROUND**

1. Site Address: 1750 South Murray Boulevard
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: PIP-2/CR/AO (Planned Industrial Park with conditions of record and Streamside Overlay)/vacant property
3. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:

North: PF & PIP-2/Police Department & Charter High School

North (of Academy Park Loop): C5/Auto Sales & Charter Middle School

West (of Pulsar Drive): PBC & C5/Movie Theatre & Vacant Commercial Lot

East (of South Murray Boulevard): PIP-2/Manufacturing, Distribution and Storage Warehouses

South (of Pulsar Drive): PBC/Auto Sales & Warehouse Distribution

4. Annexation: Pikes Peak Park Addition #10 April 1971
5. Master Plan: The Centre in Gateway Park Master Plan
6. Zoning: Conditions of record were established for the area lighting and screening of mechanical equipment.
7. Subdivision: Atlas Preparatory Charter School Filing No. 1A
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: None
9. Physical Characteristics: The 25.43-acre property is currently undeveloped, and relatively flat with some existing landscaping on the west and northwest areas of the site.

### **STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT**

City Planning Staff noticed 75 property owners within a 1,000 foot buffer distance. There was no written communication in response to the postcard mailing and the property posting.

Staff sent the plans to the standard internal reviewing agencies for comments. Those commenting agencies included Colorado Springs Utilities, Traffic Engineering, City Engineering Development Review, Landscape Architect, City Surveyor, ADA, Enumerations, Water Resources, Fire, and Airport.

Water Resources Engineering is the only city agency comments need to be finalized. The final drainage report must be re-reviewed and approved by Water Resources prior to stamping the site plans approved.

### **ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA/MAJOR ISSUES/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & MASTER PLAN CONFORMANCE**

#### **1. Review Criteria/Design & Development Issues**

Background:

The proposal is to develop a 25.43-acre site into an elementary charter school for Atlas Preparatory School, along with construction of new gymnasium buildings with a track and field site. The property is currently vacant and about 15.0 acres of the undeveloped 25.43-acre site is to be disturbed. A separate final subdivision plat application is required to replat this property from one lot into two lots and this request will be reviewed administratively.

This project will complete the final development for the Atlas Preparatory School site. Their high school site is across the street to the north on Academy Park Loop, and the middle school area is adjacent to the east, off of Center Park Drive and South Murray Boulevard.

The elementary charter school is to serve grades K thru 4<sup>th</sup> grade with 375 students, and that is with a 22,874 sq. ft. school building, and a 15,405 sq. ft. gymnasium building. The gymnasium will serve for all three campuses, elementary, middle and high schools.

The site plan illustrates the school buildings with two new curb cuts off Pulsar Drive for vehicular and pedestrian access for the elementary school building. There is also a new curb cut off of Academy Park Loop to provide a direct access to the new gymnasium building and to provide a future connection to the existing the middle school parking lot.

The elementary school building has adequate parking provided on-site. The school provides 54 standard parking spaces and two ADA spaces. The parking standards require a total of 30 parking spaces, based on two spaces per classroom with a total of 15 classrooms. Traffic Engineering reviewed and evaluated the traffic stacking and queueing for the school pick-up and drop-off consisting of a lane distance of 320 feet from the curb cut entrance to the beginning of the drop-off

and pick-up area. The applicant has addressed Traffic Engineering's concerns for the school's traffic stacking and queue. Traffic Engineering has stated that they will work with the applicant on the proposed crosswalk at the intersection of Academy Park Loop and Pulsar Drive, and this crosswalk will need to be discussed with City Traffic Engineering for safety issues.

The remaining portion of the site is for the new track and field which will serve as a shared facility for the elementary, middle and high schools. There is an area south of the track and field designated for a proposed detention/water quality pond that is to capture the drainage and water from the site.

One city agency has outstanding comments that are to be finalized; Water Resources. The final drainage report must be re-reviewed and approved by Water Resources before the site plans can be stamped approved. There is list of missing and deficient report checklist items for the drainage report to be resubmitted prior to approving the conditional use site plan. City Planning Staff does not review the building permit for the school site, only Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD) inspectors and the Fire Department.

The State of Colorado allows public and charter school site shorter timeframes to review school proposals for city/town staff. School projects do not have a typical four-week review with a letter providing the outstanding comments that need to be addressed. City Staff is allotted a two-week comment deadline with recommendations, instead of the standard four-week review process. The school project is either approved with recommendations or forwarded to the City Planning Commission for a decision, if the zone requires conditional use or use variance approval. The applicant representing the school project then applies for a building permit with the State of Colorado or with PPRBD. The Inspectors at PPRBD and the Fire Department staff are the only reviewers for the building permit. City Planning does not review the building permit for the school site.

2. Criteria for Granting a Conditional Use

A. **Surrounding Neighborhood: That the value and qualities of the neighborhood surrounding the conditional use are not substantially injured.**

City Planning Staff finds that the conditional use will not injure the value and quality of the surrounding neighborhood. The site is surrounded by a variety of commercial, office, industrial and educational land uses.

The Atlas Preparatory Charter School is expanding their existing educational program from the middle and high school to include an elementary school. The proposal includes a new elementary school building with a new gymnasium serving the elementary, middle and high schools, and a track and field area. The middle and high schools are adjacent to the proposed elementary school to allow for every grade level to share the school campus amenities.

B. **Intent of Zoning Code: That the conditional use is consistent with the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code to promote public health, safety and general welfare.**

The conditional use proposal is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Code to promote public health, safety and general welfare. The request is allow for a new elementary charter school and gymnasium buildings with track and field use.

The elementary school will serve grades kindergarten thru fourth grades with a total of 375 students. The middle and high school buildings are adjacent to the proposed elementary school. This will allow for the entire school campus to share the facilities.

Staff supports the conditional use request and recommends approval with the one condition of record as noted under Staff's recommendation. The elementary charter school will not disrupt and impact the neighboring properties.

C. **Comprehensive Plan: That the conditional use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the City (PlanCOS).**

The proposed elementary charter school use and conditional use site plan conforms to two of the themes of the City Comprehensive Plan (PlanCOS). This elementary school project is an extension of the existing middle and high schools that will complete the educational program for Atlas Preparatory School.

3. Conformance with the PlanCOS

PlanCOS, the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan, is a high level and visionary document as a theme based approach to alignment of development intentions for the City. The charter school conditional use development plan application appears to be consistent with the envisioned land use patterns for the subject parcel as it relates to several themes in PlanCOS. Two of six themes are especially pertinent to this project, Unique Places, and Vibrant Neighborhoods. **(FIGURE 3)**

Vibrant Neighborhoods

The Vibrant Neighborhoods Chapter of PlanCOS identifies the associated area for development as Changing Neighborhoods within the Vision Map. The Plan's first goal of Vibrant Neighborhoods (VN-1), "Increase neighborhood identity, inclusion, and participation throughout the city for residents, employees, and visitors". This proposal does increase the neighborhood's identity given that the elementary charter school project is an extension of the existing, middle and high schools located adjacent to the site. It is located within a diverse neighborhood comprising of educational institution, storage/warehouse, commercial retail, and administrative and safety services. In addition, the project supports the unique and innovative community design elements that encourage the existing neighborhood plans and initiatives that reflects the changing neighborhood identity. PlanCOS also indicates reinvestment in order to create community, vibrancy, and address the community's specific vision and needs (Goal VN-3), which this proposal does satisfy.

Unique Places

PlanCOS lists ten common desired elements for Unique Places, such as "a uniquely identifiable character and design that reinforces a sense of identity, focus and place". This Atlas Preparatory Elementary Charter School site proposal is recommended to meet these common desired elements. The site is identified with Typology 2: Community Activity Centers. Community Activity Centers, which is to reinforce and create desirable places that provide the day-to-day needs of subareas of the city and their surrounding neighborhoods. Listed under Typology 2: Community Center, there are several recommendations listed, including "Reinforce connections to residential areas" and "Support wide range of uses". This proposal meets these recommendations as it supports the extension of the existing, adjacent middle and high schools

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

CPC CU 19-00043 – CONDITIONAL USE

Approve the conditional use development plan for a school within a PIP-2/cr/AO (Planned Industrial Park with conditions of record and Airport Overlay) zone based upon the findings that the request complies with the three review criteria for granting a conditional use as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.704, and the development plan review criteria in City Code Section 7.5.502 with the following condition:

Condition:

1. The final drainage report must be approved by Water Resources prior to City Planning Staff stamping the conditional use site plans approved.