

To: Case File/Application
CC: Orlanitha Henderson, Planning & Zoning Manager
From: Anna Casadei, Planning & Building Director
Date: September 3, 2021
Re: Application for Minor General Plan Amendment

Planning and Zoning staff is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment with two components. These amendments are in support of the Town's Strategic Plan goal to increase workforce housing.

Component 1: Minor General Plan Amendment Criteria

Staff proposes to change the criteria for a Major versus Minor General Plan Amendment. This amendment would allow changes to a Mixed Use land use designation from either High Density Residential or Commercial, and vice versa.

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

General Plan administration is heavily influenced by state law. Arizona Revised Statutes provide procedures for major General Plan Amendments, which may be processed annually, as well as a requirement to have an updated General Plan ratified by the voters every ten years. In addition, state law requires that all rezoning requests be in conformance with the General Plan.

Arizona Revised Statutes 9-461.06-G defines a major plan amendment as a substantial alteration of the land use mixture or balance as established in the General Plan land use element. The municipality's general plan defines the criteria to determine if a proposed amendment to the general plan affects such a substantial alteration.

The Town of Sahuarita defines the criteria for a major plan amendment to be:

- A change to any land use as depicted on the General Plan Land Use map from a residential designation to a non-residential designation, and vice versa.
- Any change involving land over 40 acres in size.
- A change from one residential designation to another residential designation resulting in an increase or decrease in density more than 30% from the existing designation.

State law also requires that the Town's adopted Public Participation Plan be followed for all major amendments to the general plan, and that such amendments may be heard once a year. Major amendments must be approved by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Town Council.

MEMORANDUM

PLANNING & BUILDING

All rezoning requests must implement the General Plan and must be in conformance with it. Requests not in conformance with the plan should be discouraged, but if pursued must come through the plan amendment process prior to consideration by Town decision-makers.

Minor amendments to the General Plan are considered to be technical or non-substantive. After application and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, minor amendments require a simple majority of the Town Council for approval. Minor amendments include:

- Expansions of existing specific plan areas.
- Establishing a new specific plan or special planning area.
- ~~A change from Commercial or High Density Residential designations to Mixed Use for land areas 40 acres in size or less.~~
- Any other change not meeting the criteria of a major amendment.

Amendments to adopted specific plans shall follow the amendment process outlined in the Specific Plan. Modifications to adopted specific plans that do not increase overall intensity or density within the Specific Plan boundaries are not subject to the general plan amendment process.

Any land use change involving one acre or less of land does not require any General Plan amendment.

Component 2: Recommended Zones for each Land Use Designation

Staff proposes to update the recommended zones for each land use designation listed in the General Plan to match the zones in the current zoning code.

Very Low Density Residential

Very Low Density Residential is comprised of single-family residential development that maintains a rural character typified by lots of 3.3 acres and larger and houses of an individual design. Rural commercial uses allowed in the permitted zoning categories are acceptable. Recommended zoning categories are: Rural Homestead (RH), Suburban Ranch (SR), and Major Resort (MR).

Density Range is 0–0.3 residences per acre.

Low Density Residential

Low Density Residential consists of single-family residential development that maintains either a rural or larger lot suburban character. Clustering of uses is permitted to enhance an interconnected open space system or to maximize preservation of existing vegetation and other natural features of the site. Rural, non-commercial uses allowed in the permitted zoning

categories are acceptable. Recommended zoning categories include: Suburban Homestead (SH), R-1 Single Residence Zone, R-2 Single Residence Zone, and R-3 Single Residence Zone.

Density Range is 0.31–3 residences per acre.

Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential is characterized by single-family suburban residential development with a range of subdivided lot sizes. Clustering of uses is permitted to enhance an interconnected open space system or to maximize preservation of existing vegetation and other natural features of the site. Recommended zoning categories include: R-2 Single Residence Zone, R-3 Single Residence Zone, R-4 Mixed Dwelling Type Zone and MH-1 Manufactured and Mobile Home-1 Zone.

Density range is 3.1–6 residences per acre.

Medium High Density Residential

Medium High Density Residential includes primarily single family attached or detached residential development. Clustering or use of the small lot subdivision option is permitted if it adds to an interconnected open space system. Recommended zoning categories include: R-4 Mixed Dwelling Type Zone, R-5 Multiple Residence Zone, and MH-2 Manufactured and Mobile Home-2 Zone ~~and Transitional (TR)~~.

Density Range is 6.1–12 residences per acre.

High Density Residential

High Density Residential consists of multi-family residential developments. Recommended zoning categories include: R-5 Multiple Residence Zone ~~and Transitional (TR)~~.

Density Range is 12.1 or more residences per acre.

Commercial

A Commercial land use designation allows for office and retail development that support the needs of the Town's market area and employment centers. Recommended zoning categories include: ~~Transitional (TR)~~, Neighborhood Commercial (NC), ~~Rural Village Center Mixed-Use (RVCMX)~~, Local Business (B-1), General Business (B-2) and Major Resort (MR).

Employment

Employment opportunities within the Town include uses such as: light industrial, assembly/manufacturing, transportation logistics and distribution centers, hospital and medical facilities, research and development, technology and innovation, educational campuses including higher education and vocational trade schools, corporate headquarters, traditional office,

business support and services, and warehousing uses. Recommended zoning categories include: General Business (B-2), Campus Park Industrial (CPI), Light Industrial/Warehousing (I-1) and General Industrial (I-2). When part of an employment campus, higher density residential uses may be permitted.

Institutional

Institutional uses include public and quasi-public uses such as government services, schools and religious institutions that provide the basic human services are permitted in all zones.

Mixed Use

Mixed use allows for residential and compatible non-residential development in a compact development pattern, including entertainment, cultural uses and community gathering spaces, creating opportunities to live, work, learn and recreate in a pleasant, walkable setting integrated with parks, trails and open space. Allowable uses include Medium High to High Density residential, commercial, employment, hotel and resort uses, public spaces, governmental/institutional uses. Vertical and horizontal mixed-use is encouraged. It is strongly recommended that specific plans be utilized to implement the mixed-use concept. Otherwise, recommended zoning categories include R-5 Multiple Residence, [Neighborhood Commercial \(NC\)](#), ~~Transitional (TR)~~, [Mixed Use \(MX\)](#) and Local Business (B-1). General Business (B-2), Major Resort (MR), Campus Park Industrial (CPI) and Light Industrial/Warehousing (I-1) are recommended only when subject to strict design standards ensuring compatibility with neighboring uses.

Resource Conservation/Open Space

Resource Conservation/Open Space includes -parks and open space to serve the needs of the Town. Existing parks and open space are identified on the General Plan Land Use map. Policies for future parks are addressed in the recreation and open space element. Parks and open spaces are allowed in all zoning categories.

Resource Industrial

Mining operations and sand and gravel extraction sites as identified on state-provided maps pursuant to ARS 9-461.05.C.1.g. Sand and gravel extraction is necessary for all construction and reconstruction activities within the Town and must continue to be a valid recognized use. The Town recognizes that it is important not to create land use conflicts adjacent to these uses and has designated these areas as Resource Industrial. These lands may be available for re-planning and development but not likely during the life of this General Plan.