



City of Maricopa

Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning & Zoning Commission

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Chair Robert Klob
Vice Chair Robert Brems
Commissioner Robert Rowe
Commissioner William Robertson
Commissioner Maurice Thomas Jr.
Commissioner Chad Whittle
Commissioner Ted Yocum

Monday, April 27, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. **Call To Order**

Chair Klob called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The invocation was led by Commissioner Yocum, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rowe.

2. **Roll Call**

Present 6 - Commissioner Maurice Thomas Jr., Commissioner Ted Yocum, Commissioner William Robertson, Commissioner Chad Whittle, Chair Robert Klob, and Commissioner Robert Rowe

Absent 1 - Vice Chair Robert Brems

3. **Call to the Public**

No members of the public approached the podium during the call to the public. No speaker cards were provided by the public.

4. **Minutes**

4.1 [MIN 26-29](#) The Commission shall approve Minutes from the March 23, 2026, meeting.

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the March 23, 2026, meeting. No comments or questions were raised.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Yocum and seconded by Commissioner Whittle. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Agenda and Public Hearings**

5.1 [GPA26-01](#) Public Hearing Major General Plan Amendment, GPA26-01 Advancing Maricopa 2026 General Plan Update: The Planning and Zoning Commission shall discuss and take action on the state mandated, Advancing Maricopa, 2026 General Plan Update. Discussion and Action.

Rick Williams, Planning and Zoning Division Manager, introduced the item, noting that this was the second of two state-mandated public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Advancing Maricopa 2026 General Plan Update. He described the effort as approximately 18 months in the making, with the Public

Participation Plan having been adopted by council in early December 2024. Mr. Williams then turned the presentation over to Matthew Klyszeiko of Michael Baker International, the project consultant.

Mr. Klyszeiko provided a comprehensive overview of the general plan update. He began by explaining the foundational purpose of a general plan: it is a state-mandated policy document, not a law or ordinance, that establishes a long-range vision, roadmap, and direction for the city through goals and policies. He clarified that every city and town in Arizona is required to have a general plan, updated every ten years.

Mr. Klyszeiko outlined the three phases of the update process — Recognize, Enrich, and Achieve — and noted that the project's extended timeframe was largely driven by statutory requirements, including a 60-day public review period and a 120-day window before any election. He confirmed that the Commission was currently in the Achieve phase, with a recommendation from the Commission needed to move the plan forward to City Council.

Mr. Klyszeiko then summarized the robust public engagement effort that underpinned the update, which included three community workshops, a project website, press releases, community event outreach, and multiple surveys that collected over 700 responses and more than 2,000 individual comments. He outlined the creation of the General Plan Advisory Committee, a cross-section of residents, business owners, and agency representatives who contributed over 200 volunteer hours across five sessions.

Mr. Klyszeiko highlighted the primary themes emerging from community feedback were implementing transportation solutions, expanding career-advancing employment options, improving local healthcare services, and developing a wider range of housing and retail opportunities.

Mr. Klyszeiko noted that, in terms of plan structure, the update refined the prior plan's 83 goals and 363 policies into 44 more focused goals and 242 policies, eliminating redundancy and siloed chapters, while expanding the implementation action strategies from 16 to a larger set of actionable items intended to move goals forward concretely. He explained the plan is organized into six primary chapters addressing all state-required elements as well as elective elements such as economic development and arts and culture.

Mr. Klyszeiko briefly described key components of the updated plan, including the land use plan map, growth area identification, the transportation plan (developed in coordination with the city's ongoing Transportation Master Plan), housing diversity goals, economic development objectives, and an updated parks, trails, and open space section. He clarified that the land use map encompasses both the current municipal limits and the broader planning area — land that may eventually be annexed — which is currently under the jurisdiction of Pinal County.

Mr. Klyszeiko concluded by outlining the next steps: with a recommendation from the Commission that evening, the plan would proceed to a City Council work session on May 19, followed by a Council public hearing on June 2. He added that if approved by Council at that hearing, the plan would be positioned for the November 3, 2026, general election ballot for voter ratification, as required by state law.

Commissioner Thomas inquired about the state-mandated elements reflected in the plan, and Mr. Klyszeiko clarified that the plan addresses the full complement of required elements as specified by Arizona statute, noting that the city had proactively

included all elements in its prior update even when not yet required by law due to population thresholds.

Commissioner Thomas also asked what would happen if the plan did not receive approval that evening, or if it failed at public ratification. Mr. Klyszeiko explained that any delay would have a ripple effect on the ability to meet the 120-day statutory deadline before the November election. He also noted that if the plan were not ratified by voters, state law requires the city to continue refining and resubmitting the plan until it is approved. Commissioner Robertson added that continuing to operate under the existing ten-year-old plan would be problematic given the city's rate of growth and demographic change.

Chair Klob raised a concern about public misconceptions regarding the scope of the general plan map, particularly the large planning area shown relative to the city's actual municipal limits. He suggested that the plan would benefit from maps with a more focused view of the city proper, and that the digital version of the plan — which Mr. Klyszeiko confirmed was being developed and would allow users to zoom in and out — would help address this. Mr. Klyszeiko also clarified that the broader planning area, including Hidden Valley and Thunderbird Farms, remains under the jurisdiction of Pinal County, and that the city's general plan only identifies where growth may occur, not where it is being directed. He clarified that Pinal County's comprehensive plan governs land use decisions in unincorporated areas.

Chair Klob also raised the topic of housing diversity, noting that as a commission, they frequently see housing proposals that do not reflect a diverse range of product types and that having updated plan language would provide a stronger policy tool to advocate for such diversity. Mr. Klyszeiko agreed and noted that the updated goals and policies directly support that direction, and that following adoption, the zoning code would be the next instrument for implementing those goals in a legally binding way.

Commissioner Yocum, who had participated in the 2015 general plan update process, acknowledged that no plan is perfect and that some goals will inevitably go unmet, but expressed confidence in the quality of the document before the Commission. He affirmed that the plan should be viewed as a living document, subject to refinement at the next update cycle.

Commissioner Robertson asked Mr. Klyszeiko to walk through the annexation process as it relates to the expanded planning area, particularly to address concerns raised by residents. Mr. Klyszeiko confirmed that state law requires any annexation to be contiguous with existing municipal limits, and — critically — that property owners within an area under consideration for annexation have a say in whether they wish to be annexed. Chair Klob added that some pre-development agreements are already in place that include annexation provisions for certain subdivisions within the planning area.

Commissioner Robertson also expressed concern about the expectation that specific revised language would need to be crafted at the meeting itself in order to move forward. He stated he felt "painted into a corner," given that meaningful public comments had just been received. Tina Vannucci, City Attorney, clarified that the Commission could recommend approval of the general plan as presented, while separately directing staff and the consultant to prepare a summary of all public comments raised that evening for presentation at the May 19 Council work session.

Tina Dugan, a long-time Maricopa resident, acknowledged the considerable work that

went into the plan and offered four areas for potential strengthening: clearer alignment between growth and infrastructure timing; greater specificity in economic development strategies; phasing language for mixed-use and village center concepts to guard against partially developed areas; and continued emphasis on water resource planning. She also flagged a broken link when searching for the plan online and asked whether public comments submitted during the process — particularly those from external agencies — were available for public review.

Ron Angerame expressed concern that the plan, while rhetorically strong at 427 pages, lacked measurable financial targets and timelines for its goals. He used the example of job creation language supported by a \$16 million land acquisition budget and asked how many jobs could be expected and by when. He also raised a specific public safety concern about the traffic signal at Casa Blanca and State Route 347, presenting data suggesting it was the site of more accidents than the three next-worst intersections in the city combined. Mr. Angerame noted that future development projections, including large master-planned communities south of Maricopa, would funnel additional traffic through that intersection and urged that a specific plan to eliminate the signal be incorporated. He requested that all goals in the plan include quantifiable, measurable benefit expectations and time frames.

Britney Pisola, a 12.5-year Maricopa resident, expressed concern that the city's infrastructure and commercial services have not kept pace with housing growth, citing areas like Tortosa and Sorrento as communities that function as islands without nearby grocery stores or gas stations. She also raised concerns about the accessibility of the plan to the public, noting that she had received very little advance notice of the library community workshop and had been unable to access the meeting recording. Ms. Pisola asked that the plan more explicitly address pedestrian safety — particularly the increased rate of accidents involving children in areas such as near Porter Road — and noted a desire for expanded programming for youth and seniors. She expressed a broader sentiment, echoed by others on social media, that residents do not want Maricopa to become a "mini Phoenix" and do not want to see Hidden Valley or Thunderbird Farms incorporated into the city.

Susan Buonsante, who owns property both within Maricopa and in the Hidden Valley and Thunderbird Farms area, spoke about transparency concerns regarding the planning area boundary. She noted that the boundary shown in the proposed plan appears substantially similar to the one in place for the last ten years. Ms. Buonsante raised concern that approximately 46 subdivisions had already been approved between 1997 and approximately 2005 in the planning area south of the city, representing a potential addition of roughly 240,000 residents, and expressed that this information had not been made sufficiently transparent to the public. She stated that the residents of Hidden Valley and Thunderbird Farms do not wish to be incorporated into Maricopa.

James Singleton, a former Planning and Zoning Commission chair who had prepared a 32-page written feedback document distributed to council members, commissioners, and department heads, acknowledged the plan's real strengths — including the industrial triangle, village center framework, hospital land, and SR 347's placement on ADOT's five-year plan — and encouraged the Commission to recommend approval while pushing for greater specificity. He urged the final plan to be more definitive on five areas: a designated downtown with binding design standards; a distinct city identity; a publicly reported measurable performance framework; housing diversity beyond single-family; and a medical district plan treating the Copper Sky area as a beginning rather than an end point.

Nicholas Andreski, Maricopa resident and Arizona State University student, commented on the importance of sustainability, suggesting mechanisms to retrofit older parts of Maricopa with more sustainable design standards. He highlighted the need to make Maricopa a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly city, noting it is currently very car-centric in a manner that he attributed to the planning norms of an earlier era. He also suggested consideration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for the city to adopt going forward.

Mr. Klyszeiko responded to the public comments collectively. He addressed the concern about goals "canceling each other out," explaining that the general plan intentionally avoids prioritizing one goal over another because decision-making bodies — the Planning Commission and City Council — need the flexibility to weigh competing goals on a case-by-case basis as applications come before them. He noted that community-identified priority themes will naturally carry greater weight in those deliberations.

On the topic of specificity regarding dollars, timelines, and programmatic detail, Mr. Klyszeiko acknowledged the desire for more detail but explained that general plans are deliberately broad to avoid painting the city into a corner with commitments that may prove infeasible. He directed residents to the implementation action table in the plan, which he described as the bridge between broad goals and near-term action. He also pointed to parallel planning processes — including the Transportation Master Plan, the CIP, an eventual update to the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan, and potential village center area plans — as the appropriate venues for the level of detail requested by public commenters.

On the traffic signal at Casa Blanca and SR 347, Mr. Klyszeiko directed residents to participate in the Transportation Master Plan process currently underway, noting that the Green Road Loop is referenced in the general plan but will be analyzed in greater detail in that document.

Regarding public accessibility of the plan and its associated comment record, Mr. Klyszeiko confirmed that all public outreach materials, surveys, and comments are documented on the project website at maricopagp.com, and that the public outreach summary report would be updated to include comments received through the Planning Commission process for Council's review.

Motion to recommend approval of the Advancing Maricopa 2026 General Plan Update (GPA26-01) was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Yocum. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye, 5 - Commissioner Thomas, Commissioner Yocum, Commissioner Whittle, Chair Klob, and Commissioner Rowe

Nay, 1 - Commissioner Robertson

6. Reports from Commission and/or Staff

Mr. Williams reported that due to the second Planning and Zoning Commission meeting in May falling on a holiday weekend, only one meeting is planned for May — on May 11, 2026. He noted that one item is currently tracking for that meeting and that commissioners would be notified as soon as it was confirmed whether the item would meet noticing deadlines.

7. Executive Session

No executive session was conducted.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Yocum, seconded by Commissioner Whittle. The motion passed unanimously.