



STAFF REPORT

CASE # GPA21-02

To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
Through:	Rodolfo Lopez, Development Services, Acting Director
From:	Byron Easton, Development Services, Senior Planner
Meeting Date:	November 16, 2021

REQUEST SUMMARY

PUBLIC HEARING: Major General Plan Amendment, GPA21-02 Kelly Ranches: A request by Norris Design on behalf of Cowley Companies to amend the General Plan Future Land Use Map for approximately 100 acres from existing Commercial (C) (+/- 90 gross acres), OS - Open Space (+/- 9 gross acres), and E – Employment (+/- 1 gross acres) to M – Medium Density Residential for the future development of a residential community, generally located at the southeast corner of Porter Rd and Maricopa- Casa Grande Highway. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION.**

APPLICANT

Cowley Companies
 Rory Blakemore
 1242 E Jackson Street
 Phoenix, Arizona 85034
 602.385.4213
rblakemore@cowleyco.com

PROPERTY OWNER

Owen and Shirley Kelly
 PO Box 213
 Maricopa, AZ 85139
 602.694.2550

PROJECT DATA

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Site Acreage: | 100 +/- gross acres |
| • Parcel #s: | 510-12-018E, 510-30-0040 and 510-49-0040 |
| • Site Address: | N/A |
| • Existing Zoning: | (GR) General Rural, (CI-2) Industrial Zone |
| • General Plan Land Use: | Commercial, Open Space and Employment |
| • Proposed General Plan Land Use: | Medium Density Residential |

HISTORY SUMMARY

- 1962 – The site was zoned CI-2 Industrial (Planning Case #PZ-7-63 and PZ-Q-62)



SURROUNDING USES

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use
North	State Land	Vacant
South	Industrial Zone (CI-2)	Agriculture/Vacant
East	Single Family Residence (CR-3)	Agricultural
West	General Business (CB-2) & (CR-3)	Residential/ Day Care

ANALYSIS

The city’s General Plan is intended to provide a framework for all of the interrelated functions of the City of Maricopa. The General Plan is an expression of the preferences of residents and property owners, a statement of City policy designed to achieve the citizen’s vision, a framework for future decision making and a means of enhancing the quality of life of the citizens. The General Plan is not a tool to promote special interests, not a rigid document so it is adaptable, it is not a detailed policy or ordinance for specific properties or areas, it is not a Capital Improvement Plan and it is not a zoning map. Refer to www.planningmaricopa.com for further information.

The applicant is requesting a Major General Plan Amendment to the Future Land Use Map to convert 90 +/- acres Commercial (C), 9 +/- acres Open Space (OS) and 1 +/- acres Employment to Medium Density Residential (M), for a future single-family residential and/or mixed-use development. A separate Planned Area Development (rezone) application will be reviewed in the near future and will be brought to the Commission later for review and possible approval. The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway and Porter Road and is currently bordered on the north by the Union Pacific Railroad, the south by the Santa Rosa Wash, the west by Porter Road, and the east by vacant land which is planned as the future Eagle Wing development.

Under the City of Maricopa adopted General Plan, the site is designated as **Commercial (C)**, **Open Space (OS)** and **Employment (E)** the purpose for each land use according to the City of Maricopa General Plan states the following:

- **Commercial** land use category provides for commercial nodes on individual parcels. The intent is to provide neighborhood and community scale shopping, offices, medical facilities, and subordinate multi-family residential uses which incorporate pedestrian and neighborhood needs through site planning, architecture, access, lighting and parking design. Single-family residential uses are not supported. For larger parcels, over 40 acres, regional retail development is anticipated in this designation.
- **Open Space** land use category designation identifies open-space sites and corridors intended for public recreation and resource conservation. The General Plan Future Land Use map does not locate individual neighborhood park sites. The General Plan recognizes the need for parks, recreational areas and open areas, which add to the attractiveness of the community and to the quality of life of the residents. The need for future parks is addressed in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of this General Plan. Larger open space tracts are identified as future preserves and potentially regional parks, including substantial federal land reserves along the western and southern edges of the planning area. The O/S designation is consistent with the State's Open Space Planning law where applied to private and State Trust Lands and includes a maximum development intensity of 1 residence per acre.
- **Employment** land use category is a broad designation to accommodate numerous types of development. Preferred uses include lighter industrial use such as light manufacturing and business park development, professional offices, medical facilities, etc.

The proposed request would change 90 ± acres from **Commercial**, 9 ± acres from **Open Space** and 1 ± acres from **Employment** to **Medium Density Residential**. See descriptions of the **M** designation below.

- **Medium Density Residential** provides for a suburban lifestyle with planned, single-family residential neighborhoods, which include significant open space, recreation and cultural opportunities, including schools, churches and neighborhood facilities. Medium density residential developments are expected to contribute to off-site infrastructure needs for which they create a demand including roadways, bridges and grade separated crossings. Medium density residential areas comprise the majority of residential land in the City. The density of this land use category is between 2.0 to 6.0 du/ac.

The considerations for the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment considers the Plan Administration section of the General Plan itself. Criteria include the following:

- **Land Use Criteria**

Staff Analysis: Per the General Plan's Land Use Criteria, any land use change that moves from a Commercial to a Residential Use shall result in a Major Amendment. In addition, a designation of 40 acres or more from Commercial designation Residential requires a major amendment to the city's General Plan.

Per the applicant's narrative, the proposal of Medium Density Residential designation is based on findings of the city's adopted Housing Plan for more diverse and attainable housing choices. Per the General Plan, residential growth through 2025 is encouraged for areas in Maricopa west of White and Parker Road, which includes the subject property. A variety of housing types is needed to support projected residential growth rates and because the site is not located within or immediately adjacent to a planned Village Center per Figure 7: Future Land Use in the General Plan, higher density and

more intense commercial and mixed-use development would not be appropriate for the site. Refer to Exhibit A, Conceptual Land Use Plan, p. 12. The applicant has justified the following for the requested land-use change:

- The proposed Kelly Ranches community will provide additional new housing within the City of Maricopa, adjacent to existing and planned future development. Per the General Plan, the projected growth rate for the City and annual new home permit averages suggest that the City's current single family home inventory could be depleted between 2025 and 2031. More housing projects will be required to keep pace with the City's growth patterns and to support expected employment growth within the City. A land use modification to Medium Density Residential for the subject property will assist with bringing additional housing to the area southwest of Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway, complimenting the current and planned housing options in this area of the City.
- Given the current rate of housing growth and suitability of nearby vacant planned commercial sites appropriately sized to meet current and immediate future commercial needs, the subject property is likely to develop more quickly, attracting additional residents to the City and generating valuable tax revenue for Maricopa, under a residential land use category (Medium Density Residential) than under its current land uses of Commercial, Open Space, and Employment.
- Residential development of the subject property furthers the City's desires to have appropriate sequencing of growth and development in a designated Growth Area, as identified within the City's General Plan. With the availability of existing infrastructure and utilities, the site is a logical extension of development and the future Kelly Ranches community will provide a compatible use to existing and proposed development in the vicinity.

On September 27th, 2021 the Planning and Zoning Commission had the opportunity to review the proposal and had a few comments and/or concerns. These can also be found in **Exhibit C**.

Commissioner Yocum's comments;

- a) In the general plan, it is strongly discouraged to have residential adjacent to a railroad corridor. Questioned – is 150' of open space enough?
- b) Concerned if the city keeps depleting areas of commercial (proposed), where would they be able to accommodate in the future

Commissioner Frank's comments;

- a) Erosion of commercial land is a concern
- b) Asked if Staff had studied if there is still enough commercial after amendments have been made to the 2016 adopted plan
- c) Mentioned he knew there was commercial planned with Eagle Shadow

5. Chair Huggins' comments

- a) Would like to know before the next public hearing how much commercial land is in Maricopa
- b) Wanted to know 1st responder time and would like fire and police to review and sign off on the request
- c) Would like to know where Maricopa sits with industrial land

In response to these comments, the Applicant is preparing a Land Use Inventory Analysis that will be added to the Exhibits when received and will be labeled **Exhibit D**.

MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FINDINGS:

As required by the General Plan, the goals and objectives are of consideration for the proposed request. Refer to Exhibit A; Land Use Analysis, p. 7, for responses from the applicant of the listed elements applicable to this request. Through staff review of the project many aspects of this amendment were analyzed; i.e. surrounding land uses, circulation, impacts on surrounding areas as well the region, and found that this proposed major amendment would have no adverse impact and will meet and fulfill various goals and objectives stated in the city's adopted General Plan. Further, the Medium Density Residential (M) designation, as demonstrated in this report, would enhance the surrounding areas, complement the surrounding residential land uses in the area and carry forth Maricopa's Vision stated within the General Plan. After reviewing the application and the request for a Major Amendment, it is in staff's opinion that the City of Maricopa General Plan Future Land Use Map be amended to reflect a Medium Density Residential (M) land use on the proposed site.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

Before recommending the General Plan Amendment's approval, the applicant provided a public participation plan to demonstrate the materials used to inform surrounding property owners of the proposed General Plan Major Amendment required per the city's Zoning Code. The Public Participation Plan included a neighborhood meeting which was held at the request of anyone who wished to participate, notification letters to all property owners within 600 feet of the subject area, public notice signs within the subject area, and legal notices in the Maricopa Monitor and the Casa Grande Dispatch. Two set of notices went out, first advertising the neighborhood meeting followed by a second notice advertising the scheduled Planning and Zoning Public Hearings and City Council date. A timeline of the participation event is shown below (refer to Exhibit B for Citizen Participation Report).

- July 26, 2021 - 1st Notification letters sent
- July 16, 2021 - 1st Newspaper legal notice published
- July 21, 2021 - 1st Sign posted
- August 11, 2021 - Neighborhood Meeting held
- August 31, 2021 - 2nd Notification letters sent
- September 27, 2021 - P&Z Commission #1 (Public Hearing only)
- October 25, 2021 - P&Z Commission #2 (Public Hearing and Action)
- November 16, 2021 - City Council (Discussion and Action)

Furthermore, the Major General Plan Amendment has state statutes that further enhance the outreach to include neighboring jurisdictions and state agencies. This notification was completed by staff on July 26, 2021 and the City's website has provided up-to-date information, attachments, and public meetings regarding the proposal.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At the time of writing this report staff has not received any comment for the request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of **Major General Plan Amendment case # GPA21-02**, subject to the conditions of approval stated in this staff report, and as amended by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

1. Prior to the City Council approval of the Major General Plan Amendment, the applicant shall submit to the city a signed waiver pursuant to Proposition 207.
2. Future Zoning cases, if any, shall be subject to set procedures within the City's Zoning Code and other adopted policy documents at the time of the request including, but not limited to submitting a Traffic Impact Analysis to the satisfaction of the City Engineer.
3. At the time of the formal platting submittal, the property owner shall be responsible for any off-site and on-site improvements identified by the City of Maricopa. No action at this time. Staff will present a formal recommendation at the next scheduled Planning and Commission meeting.

Exhibit A – Project Narrative

Exhibit B – Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit C – Notes from last P & Z Commission

Exhibit D – Land Use Inventory Analysis

-- End of staff report --