



39700 W. Civic Center Plaza  
 Maricopa, AZ 85138  
 Ph: 520.568.9098  
 Fax: 520.568.9120  
[www.maricopa-az.gov](http://www.maricopa-az.gov)

**STAFF REPORT****CASE # GPA20-06**

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**Through:** Nathan Steele, Economic and Community Development, Director

**From:** Rodolfo Lopez, Economic and Community Development Deputy Director

**Meeting Date:** September 15, 2020

**REQUEST SUMMARY**

**Minor General Plan Amendment, GPA20-06:** A request by Sketch Architecture Company on behalf of Maricopa Stonegate LLC to amend the General Plan Future Land Use Map of approximately 46.30 acres, from existing Employment (E) to Mixed Use (MU) generally located on the northwest corner of Maricopa Casa Grande Hwy and Stonegate Road. **DISCUSSION ACTION.**

**APPLICANT**

Randolph L. Carter, AIA, NCARB  
 Sketch Architecture Company  
 2454 E. Southern Ave. Suite 110  
 Mesa, AZ 85204

Phone: (480) 668-8015  
 Email: [randy@sketcharchitecturecompany.com](mailto:randy@sketcharchitecturecompany.com)

**PROPERTY OWNER**

Maricopa Stonegate LLC  
 19184 E. Canary Way  
 Queen Creek AZ, 85142

**PROJECT DATA**

- Site Acreage: 46.30 Acres
- Parcel #: 510-12-019E, 001F, 001P, and 001W
- Site Address: N/A
- Existing Zoning: Planned Area Development (PAD) CI-1 Light Industry & Warehouse
- Propose Zoning: Planned Area Development (PAD)
- General Plan Land Use: Employment
- Proposed General Plan Land Use: Mixed Use

**SURROUNDING USES**

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use
North	Single Family Residential (CR-3) Zoning	Glennwilde Subdivision
South	Maricopa Casa Grande Hwy	Roadway
East	Light Industry Ware House (CI-1 PAD)	Vacant Land
West	General Mixed Use (MU-G) Zoning	Vacant Land

## HISTORY SUMMARY

- 2003 - The property was rezoned to Light Industrial (CI-1) PAD; Pinal County case # PZ-017-03 and PZ-PD-017-03.
- 2008 – The property was rezoned under a new PAD, case # PAD08-01 Stonegate
- 2018 – A portion of the property was amended to modify the 2008 PAD for a proposed self-storage facility at the southwest corner of Alan Stephens Pkwy and Stonegate Road.

## SUBJECT SITE



## ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment to the Future Land Use Map from Employment (E) designation to Mixed Use (MU) designation. The applicant is proposing a mixed use development project that will be brought to the Commission through a separate Rezoning and Development Review Permit application. The subject site borders Maricopa-Casa Grande Hwy to the south, Stonegate Rd to the east and Alan Stephens Pkwy to the north. On the southern edge, the site abuts a regional waterway, Santa Rosa Wash and a planned multi-use trail where portion is built fronting The Wells commercial center. As it relates to land use the site is currently designated, per the General Plan, as employment. In 2003, as part of the zoning entitlement for the Glennwilde and Homestead subdivison, this portion of land was slated for multi-family, however was later rezoned and was granted Site Plan approval for a large scale retail center similar to The Wells (Wal-Mart) commercial center adjacent to the site. Since then, the land has sat vacant with no activity of development requests until now.

Under the City of Maricopa adopted General Plan the 46 ± acres of the site is designated as E-Employment and the purpose according to the City of Maricopa General Plan states:

The **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.

Under the proposed request the City of Maricopa General Plan Future Land Map would change 46 ± acres from **Employment** to a **Mixed Use**; the **Mixed Use** designation states:

The **Mixed Use** designation is intended for creative designed developments combining commercial, office and residential uses. Proposed MU projects should provide a true combination of inter-related uses (design and function) with pedestrians in mind.

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](http://www.planningmaricopa.com) for further information. The considerations for the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment considers the Plan Administration section of the General Plan itself. Criteria include the following

**1. Number of acres for land use change and/or**

**Staff Analysis:** Per the General Plan's Land Use Criteria, any designation of 160 acres or less for any proposed designation to another designation does not require a major amendment to the city's General Plan; instead it is considered minor and shall be processed under a minor General Plan amendment.

**2. The capital cost burdens to the City when classifying an amendment as either Major or Minor.**

**Staff Analysis:** The context of the site requires no expansion of infrastructure that warrants costly capital improvements to the area. In fact, the re-designation of the general plan Employment to Mixed Use is considered by staff a downsizing of the land use and will further compliment the city's goals and objective of a village core concept, housing diversity and place-making type areas.

The site emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity. In addition, because the variety of uses within the site will have differing peak hours, traffic accumulation is anticipated to be lower than the "big box" retail use approved in the existing land use. The design also distributes trips to three different roadways, which will mitigate potential impacts to traffic.

Engineering will require a full Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) at the time of the formal Rezoning and Development Review Permit submittal. The TIA will be reviewed for accuracy in background traffic, anticipated traffic impacts, and design alternatives to mitigate those impacts.

Refer to Exhibit A for the project narrative, Exhibit B for site context study and Exhibit C for Land Use Analysis. The submitted exhibits has met staff's satisfaction for clarity and completeness for proposal of a minor general plan amendment.

## **MINOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FINDINGS:**

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As required by the General Plan, the following goals and objectives are of consideration for the proposed request. Refer to Exhibit A Narrative for responses from the applicant of the listed elements applicable to this request.

### **1. Growth Area:**

- a. The subject area is designated as a “Growth Area” in the General Plan 2040.

### **2. Land Use Element, Development Pattern:**

- a. Village Planning & Village Center Development Pattern: “ through the 2040 Vision Strategic Planning process, citizens envision Maricopa developing as a collection of multiple village areas each with mixed-use Village Center cores anchored with commercial and employment centers served by restaurants, retail shopping and cultural opportunities such as art districts and galleries”.
- b. Objective B1.1.2: Encourage certain areas of the City to rezone to mixed-use and higher density housing.
- c. Objective B1.1.3: Incorporate appropriate village center development with various community master plans.
- d. Objective B1.1.4: Develop a walkable community with commercial nodes and amenities for residents.
- e. Objective B1.1.5: Promote commercial and office development in close proximity to neighborhood nodes along arterials, and other appropriate locations.
- f. Objective B1.3.1: Encourage the location of neighborhood commercial and mixed uses adjacent to or within residential communities. Implement 2014 Zoning Code provisions to encourage the infill of existing residential areas with neighborhood serving commercial uses.
- g. Objective B1.3.2: Encourage developers to take advantage of opportunities provided by mixed-use standards especially within the designated redevelopment areas and along transit corridors.
- h. Objective B1.3.3: Promote a variety of commercial and retail spaces to expand opportunities for small businesses.
- i. Objective B1.3.4: Implement mixed-use and transit oriented zoning districts to permit developments with densities and building heights in appropriate locations to create a more sustainable and pedestrian-oriented urban form.

### **3. Environmental Planning & Resource Conservation Element:**

- a. Objective C1.1.4: Encourage means to reduce auto ridership through the use of bicycling, telecommuting for City staff, local transit, and mass transit for Phoenix metro commuters.

### **4. Safety:**

- a. 2040 Vision: Maricopa is a safe and livable community in which citizen involvement supports and upholds the value of being safe and secure in one’s own community.



**5. Circulation & Connectivity Element:**

- a. Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation: Create safe and functional pedestrian ways and bicycle routes as an alternate mode of travel throughout Maricopa.

**6. Economic Development:**

- a. The City of Maricopa is a growing, vibrant community. “The General Plan recognizes the importance of retaining local business and fostering expansion. The community is under-served in most every industry group and currently experiences over \$280,000,000 in retail leakage.” In addition, the General Plan also states, “The 2014 Maricopa Citizen Attitude Survey (performed by Raymond Turco & Associates) identifies that the lack of retail/industry was far and away the most frequent response as to the most important issue facing Maricopa.”

**7. Parks, Recreation & Open Space Element:**

- a. Provide areas of open space and facilities for parks, recreation and leisure that serve the population and its interests through flexible planning and responsiveness to the community.”

**8. Public Buildings, Facilities & Services Element:**

- a. “2040 Vision: Maricopa is a community where residents can gain a true hometown feel; a place where citizens can work and play together and share experiences unique to our City. The City is dedicated to servicing all families, at all ages and stages of life, with professional services and a sense of togetherness.”

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 minor 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 Mixed Use (MU) designation as stated above would enhance the surrounding areas, provide a much needed diversity of land uses to complement the surrounding residential land uses in the area, thereby reducing commute times for future residents and carrying 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 Mixed Use 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 Minor Amendment required per the city's Zoning Code. The Public Participation Plan included a neighborhood meeting which was held virtually at the request of anyone who wished to participate, notification letters to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject area, public notice signs within the subject area, and legal notices in the Maricopa Monitor and the Casa Grande Dispatch. A timeline of the participation event is shown below (refer to Exhibit D for Citizen Participation Report).

- July 10, 2020 - Notification letters sent
- July 18, 2020 - Legal notice published (newspaper)
- July 20, 2020 - Sign posted
- August 4, 2020 - Neighborhood Meeting held
- August 24, 2020 - Planning and Zoning Commission (Hearing/Action)

The applicant did receive general questions and clarifications on the proposed development, refer to Exhibit D, p. 23 for a summary of comments with responses from the applicant.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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On August 24, 2020 the Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously recommended approval of **Minor General Plan Amendment case # GPA20-06**, 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 Minor General Plan Amendment, the applicant shall submit to the city a signed waiver pursuant to Proposition 207.
2. A Traffic Impact Analysis as deemed acceptable by the City Engineer, shall be submitted to the city at the time of rezoning request for the property.
3. At the time of formal Development Review Permit submittal, the development shall be responsible for any offsite and onsite improvements identified by the City's Engineering Division.

Exhibit A – Project Narrative

Exhibit B – Site Context Study

Exhibit C – Land Use Analysis

Exhibit D – Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit E – Proposed Land Use Change Map

-- End of staff report --