

**MINUTES OF THE AVONDALE
CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION
JOINING WORK SESSION
CITY OF AVONDALE, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
November 7, 2022**

A **Joint Work Session** of the City Council and the Planning Commission of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Kenn Weise; Vice Mayor Veronica Malone; Council Members Tina Conde, Bryan Kilgore, Mike Pineda, Gloria Solorio; Planning Commission Chair Chris Thompson; Planning Commission Vice Chair Lisa Osborne; Planning Commissioners Alisha Meginnis; Denise Stanfield; Larry White; and Alternate Commissioner Julia Arnette.

Members Absent (Excused Absence): Council Member Curtis Nielson.

Members Absent (Unexcused Absence): Commissioners Alan Agundez Castillo and Linda Warren.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Liz Barker Alvarez, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Corey Larriva, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Jodie Novak, Development Services Director; Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director; Michael Wallace, IT Desktop Technician III; and Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director.

Audience: Approximately ten members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2. GENERAL PLAN UPDATE - CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

City Staff and consultants from Michael Baker International conducted a City Council and Planning Commission Work Session as part of the General Plan Update. The Work Session provided City Council and Planning Commission with an opportunity to provide guidance and direction for updates to the General Plan 2030 document reflecting the City's vision and goals for the City's future growth and development.

Jodie Novak, Development Services Director, presented the following:

Ms. Novak stated that the purpose of the session is to provide an overview of the General Plan update process. The General Plan was ratified by voters with 78 percent approval.

The land use map was created in conjunction with this process. The General Plan comprises the City's general comprehensive long-range statement of goals and policies. It is hoped that the current planning process will be concluded in August of 2023. A brief overview of the timeline was provided. Questions for the joint session include what goals and trends should shape the City's future. The General Plan 2030 document is a long-term document. In 2021, the City worked to adopt a strategic plan and the General Plan update should align with the City's strategic goals. Staff welcomes comments regarding areas of interest, including land uses and various other categories.

Vice Mayor Malone inquired as to the total mileage of county land and what amounts will be annexed into Avondale. Ms. Novak said she did not immediately have the figure, but would work with staff to determine an estimate.

Ms. Novak stated that in 2020, the projected population of Avondale was 86,698. This has been surpassed to total 89,334 as of 2021. The projection for 2030 is over 101,000. This does not take into consideration the area south of the Estrella Mountains. Currently, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), estimates that 76 percent of residential units in Avondale are single family homes, 20 percent multifamily residential units and 4 percent mobile home. Council Member Pineda asked for the date that the data was pulled. Ms. Novak said it was from January, 2021. Mayor Weise commented that many years ago, during a Council discussion, it was stated that at build-out north of the Estrellas would be approximately 160,000 residents. While changes have been made since that estimate was derived, it seems likely that buildout will be between 140,000 to 160,000.

Vice Mayor Malone asked for an estimated number of building permit refund requests by developers who have cited current market conditions as the reason. Ms. Novak clarified that this has occurred only in the last couple of months. There was one builder and one master plan community that submitted permits and then requested a refund.

Vice Chair Osborne asked if staff has contacted the Arizona Multi-Housing Association to gather data on the total number of units. Ms. Novak stated that MAG works with the Arizona Multi-Housing Association to track these figures.

Council Member Conde asked for clarification on the 20 percent multi-family residential statistic for Avondale. Ms. Novak stated that the figure includes multi-family developments that have had a building permit and actually been constructed. Simply having a multi-family zoning designation with actual construction does not mean it is included in the 20 percent figure.

Ms. Novak stated that north of Southern Avenue, in the vicinity of SR30, nine percent of the land is vacant and 91 percent built-out. Buildout is only based on land legally annexed into the City's jurisdiction. South of Southern Avenue is two percent of vacant land and 98 percent of it is built-out. Currently, included parcels annexed in the City, 60 percent of land is vacant and 94 percent built-out. Additional annexation through developers will change these figures.

Vice Chair Osborne referenced water allocation credits. She asked whether the City obtains credits when it annexes property from the County. Ms. Novak stated that the City does not acquire credits for whatever the County had in its portfolio. Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director, added that if the City annexes a portion from Maricopa County, the expectation is that the developer would bring the water rights with them. The developer would be required to determine how it would acquire necessary water, either through a water right or purchase of credits.

Mayor Weise commented that Wigwam, for example, owns its own water and has an SRP canal. They are free to do whatever they wish with their water. If they were to sell the property, they would sell the water rights with the property.

Ms. Novak asked Council members and commissioners to identify locations or features in Avondale that they wish to focus on in the future. Current hot topics include SR30, the Gila River area and the Estrella Mountain area.

Mayor Weise asked Ms. Novak to comment on Rio Reimagined. Ms. Novak stated that it involves the Gila River. It was John McCain's vision that the river from the City of Phoenix through Tempe, going through Tolleson, Avondale, Goodyear to Buckeye would be preserved and restored to its original habitat. Avondale, Buckeye and Goodyear previously discussed a partnership regarding enhancement of the river corridor. Mayor Weise noted that ASU has taken the lead in terms of its design project. Each city looks at its master plan to internally develop a set of a guidelines through the process. This is an aggressive and creative way of preserving these areas. From his perspective, the Avondale portion of Rio Reimagined is very much in line with Tres Rios with some recreational differences.

Mayor Weise commented that SR30 will build from the outer parts of the 303 in and from the 202 in. The potential timeline is for funding to commence in 2026 with Avondale construction beginning in 2028 or 2029. It is unusual for a city to have three highways running through it. There should be a mix of industrial and commercial, as it is developed into an incredible transport corridor. He envisions the area south of the Estrellas as half-acre to five acre properties. The challenge is the level of infrastructure necessary, which will require partnerships with the City of Goodyear and the Gila River Indian Community.

Council Member Conde asked about a healthy percentage of multifamily developments in the City. Ms. Novak stated that there is not a set percentage that each city follows. A general rule of thumb identifies 23 to 25 percent of total housing. Avondale will need to determine the needs of specific areas in the community. Mayor Weise commented the City's focus has been on apartments or single family rental units. Townhouses, condos and workforce housing each play important roles.

Mayor Weise asked Mr. Chapa to touch on financing for the multifamily housing market. Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director, stated that the multifamily developments currently in the pipeline will be constructed. However, there also appears

to be a bubble in the pipeline and it is of unknown duration. Industrial and medical developments are expanding greatly at this time.

Mayor Weise asked for an opinion on sectors that may be lacking in the City and could be addressed in the future. Mr. Chapa stated that freeway corridors lend themselves to the development of industrial warehouses. There are also major opportunities for retail development and sales tax revenues. The City should remain flexible as to what should come in next to the freeways.

Council Member Pineda suggested allowing the development of retail and entertainment sectors to beef up before introducing more multifamily housing. He cited a segment of the vision statement referring being respectful of the City's rich history. He noted that many individuals who invested in property in the southern portion of the City did so with a desire to escape urban areas that existed in the 1970s and 1980s. The City should be mindful of this as it moves forward with development.

Mayor Weise cited the Avondale Commons at the northwest corner of Avondale Boulevard and McDowell, which includes apartments, commercial, retail and restaurants, as a possible model for integration of multifamily and retail. Mr. Chapa agreed with an approach to stress the mixed use component.

Vice Chair Osborne commented that from an industry perspective, 20 percent is considered a good mix. With the passing of the pandemic, vacancies are beginning to rise. Council Member Conde concurred and also referred to Council Member Pineda's comments regarding the need for retail and restaurants to support the already existing population. The City would also benefit from executive style housing with a larger acreage to attract higher income individuals.

Mayor Weise noted that housing demands go through cycles, from a focus on single family homes with yards, to other options. Chair Thompson commented that all of this relates to diversity. The City currently lacks large-acre lot options in communities. However, it is also important to provide infrastructure for existing housing units.

Council Member Solorio asked Mr. Chapa about development requests for grocery stores. Mr. Chapa stated that the site selection matrix for grocers has changed significantly since 2008 and development decisions are now made on much more significant number of factors than ever before. The City has been approached by potential stores, but some are at a pause at the current time. Vice Mayor Malone commented that she has heard about a potential grocery store in Tolleson on 99th Avenue and Van Buren.

Mayor Weise thanked everyone for their participation and input. Much of the discussion will be affected by the upcoming election.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Kilgore moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting; Council Member Pineda seconded the motion.

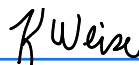
Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 11 to 0.

Planning Commissioners Alisha Meginnis	Aye
Planning Commissioners Denise Stanfield	Aye
Planning Commissioners Larry White	Aye
Planning Commission Chair Thompson	Aye
Planning Commission Vice Chair Lisa Osborne	Aye
Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye
<i>Alternate Planning Commissioner Julia Arnette</i>	<i>Not eligible to vote</i>

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.


Chris Thompson (Dec 6, 2022 14:46 MST)

Chris Thompson, Commission Chair


kenn weise (Dec 7, 2022 10:46 MST)

Kenn Weise, Mayor

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Joint Work Session of the City Council and the Planning Commission of the City of Avondale held on the 7th day of November. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.


Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk

December 5, 2022

Date Approved by City Council