

Wednesday, October 15, 2025
6:00 pm

A **Regular Meeting** of the Planning Commission of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive, Avondale, AZ 85323 in open and public session at 6:00 p.m.

1. **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chair White called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

The following members and representatives were present.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Chair Larry White
Vice Chair Alex McBurney
Commissioner Julia Jewell
Commissioner Shaun Grimm
Commissioner Mary Guzman
Commissioner Olivia Pineda

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED ABSENT

Commissioner Ryan Benson
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jodie Novak, Development Services Director
Catherine Lorbeer, Deputy Director of Planning
Josh Orton, Lead Senior Planner, AICP
Monika Smriti, Senior Planner
Mary Grace McNear, Attorney II
Arrianna Ramirez, Administrative Specialist

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair White called for a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Pineda made a motion to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for June 18, 2025, seconded by Commissioner Guzman.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0

4. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

a. AVONDALE TECH CENTER – MINOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT – APPLICATION PL-25-0120

b. AVONDALE TECH CENTER – REZONING – APPLICATION PL-25-0121

Monika Smriti, Senior Planner, provided an overview of Application PL-25-0120 Avondale Tech Center Minor General Plan Amendment and Application PL-25-0121 Avondale Tech Center Rezoning. The 38 net acre site that was annexed in July 1976, is located at the northwest corner of Corporate Drive and 117th Avenue. To the north of the property is a vacant county island zoned for commercial development; to the east and south there are multi-family developments; and to the west is Fairway 10, an industrial development zoned Avondale 50 Planned Area Development (PAD).

The minor General Plan amendment (GPA) is to amend the land use designation from Mixed Use to Business Park. The rezone request is to change from City Center District (CCD) to Avondale Tech Center PAD with underlying zoning of Commercial Park (CP). This is the only site in Avondale with the CCD classification, but the proposed deviations are consistent with Commerce Park zoning districts, which are the four exceptions noted below. Along with a proposal to increase the maximum building height from 35 feet to 55 feet, the following deviations are requested:

1. Motion picture productions changes from Conditional Use Permit to Permitted Use
2. Retail Sales that primarily support the business and employees of the commerce park and not the general population changes from Conditional Use Permit to permitted Use
3. Warehousing changes from Accessory Use to Permitted Use
4. Wholesaling changes from Not Permitted to Permitted use

The site plan proposes an advanced technology campus to support light industrial warehousing with office space, three buildings with an area of over 200,000 sf on site, and 720 total parking spaces. A detailed review of the site plan will occur during the administrative approval process for the site plan and design review. Semi-truck traffic will be routed to Fairway Drive Interchange using 119th Street and Corporate Drive to minimize any impacts on residential areas. To support transportation needs from I-10, the developer will contribute an agreed upon amount toward the construction of a traffic signal at the intersection of Corporate Drive and Fairway Drive.

Staff analysis finds the proposed minor GPA meets all four required findings established in the General Plan 2030, the Business Park Designation supports employment generating uses and aligns with the City's economic development goals, development is compatible with and complimentary to existing uses in the area and will meet necessary infrastructure requirements.

The proposed PAD rezone meets all required findings established in the zoning code and development is consistent with the land use and economic development goals of General Plan 2030. The project will meet Commerce Park standards with requested deviations, and development shall follow the zoning codes and subdivision regulations, design manuals, and other regulations unless modified.

A neighborhood meeting was held on September 9, 2025, with one attendee aside from the applicant's team and staff. Discussion topics included potential tenants, truck circulation, proposed amenity area, and project timeline. One public comment has been received noting the site was being advertised for lease and questioning the need for a public hearing if the project appears already approved.

Staff recommend approval of the applications for the reasons set forth in the staff report.

Steven Anderson, Esq. with Gammage & Burnham in Phoenix, Arizona spoke on behalf of the applicant, Jagger Everett, Vice President of Development at Creation Equity in Phoenix, AZ. They are comfortable with the 10 stipulations that have been worked through with staff and the applicants. A presentation was given at the community meeting, although only one citizen was in attendance. There appears to be a lack of interest that could be attributed to the isolated property, concealed from surrounding uses, and arterial streets. The site plan depicted an employment amenity area that was a pickleball court, which will be open for community use, but there are many other employee amenity areas throughout the site.

Vice Chair McBurney inquired about the timeline for installation of the traffic signal at Corporate Drive and Fairway Drive. Attorney Anderson explained that the area required for the traffic signal is only partially owned by the City, with a portion under private ownership. As such, a right-of-way acquisition process will be necessary before construction can move forward. A brief review of the stipulation indicates if the traffic signal does not get built the developer receives their contribution back. Ms. Smirti noted there is a 10-year timeline for the traffic signal to be built.

Chair White questioned the height of the surrounding buildings in relation to the requested deviations. Ms. Smirti noted the requested height is compatible with the surrounding buildings within Fairway 10, being between approximately 40 and 48 feet, and the multi-family building is similar.

Chair White opened the public hearing for 4a and 4b, noting there was one request to speak from Steven Anderson, Attorney for the developer who has already spoken. There being no additional public comments, Chair White closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Jewell moved to approve Application PL-25-0120, a request for minor General Plan amendment to change the land use designation from Mixed Use to Business Park, for the reasons set forth in the staff report. Second, by Commissioner Pineda.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0.

Commissioner Guzman moved to approve Application PL-25-0121, a request for rezone from City Center District to Avondale Tech Center Planned Area Development with underlying zoning of Commerce Park, subject to ten (10) conditions of approval, for the reasons set forth in the staff report. Second, by Commissioner Pineda.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0.

c. ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS – CHAPTER 28, ARTICLE 1 (ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES); ARTICLE 5 (SPECIAL DISTRICTS; OVERLAYS) – APPLICATION PL-25-0189

Joshua Orton, Lead Senior Planner, provided an overview of Application PL-25-0189 for Text Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1951, and the last updates were approved by the City Council in November 2024. This amendment would align the BLVD District with the Economic Development initiatives and trends that have been introduced to the City along with adding some definitions and uses that support implementation of the BLVD Specific Plan.

- Section 28-15 amendment adds definitions that will allow more retail entertainment and service opportunities to come into the BLVD, as well as modify some conditions for existing allowed uses.
- Section 28-91(e) amendment revises the land use matrix to allow more development to come into the BLVD and adjust allowed uses for new definitions that will be added.
- Section 28-91(f) amendment removes the conditional use permit requirement for gas stations, which will only be allowed as an accessory use to a grocery store and grocery stores exceeding 36,000 sf in floor area. Along with modifying the requirement for grocery stores to contain certain components and reducing that number from four to two. Standards related to lighting and sound amplification for outdoor concert facilities or commercial recreation entertainment uses will be added.
- Section 28-9 (i) amendment revises the minimum distance from 400 feet to ¼ mile for on-street, off-street surface parking, and parking structures to be located from commercial uses. Allowing more flexibility for new uses to derive their required parking from public parking facilities.

The BLVD subdistricts affected by the amendments include Gateway, Park Avenue, Village, and Promenade. This stays away from the residential areas to the northeast and the southeast corner of Van Buren and Avondale BLVD.

All required public notifications were completed with a posting on Avondale Connect. To date, no comments or questions have been received. Staff are recommending approval of Application PL-25-0189 for reasons set forth in the staff report.

Commissioner Grimm inquired about ADA compliance with the distance and undeveloped areas. Mr. Orton explained the commercial site is required to have ADA parking per specific requirements and they can use public parking when their parking lot is full. Ms. Lorbeer noted all ADA parking would remain in the appropriate proximity, and this amendment provides the ability for new projects to count some of the garage parking spaces toward their project.

Commissioner Grimm sought clarification on how the counts are being taken and if the parking spaces are being double counted. Mr. Orton noted this is part of the intent of the urban design, being they would park the car in one location, but walk to multiple commercial opportunities.

Chair White opened the public hearing. There being no public comments, Chair White closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Jewell moved to approve Application PL-25-0189, a request for text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for the reason set forth in the staff report. Second, by Commissioner Grimm.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye

Commissioner Olivia Pineda
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey

Aye
N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0

d. GENERAL PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT FOR MIDDLE HOUSING – APPLICATION PL-25-190

e. ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS – CHAPTER 28, ARTICLE 1 (ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES); NEW ARTICLE 14 (MIDDLE HOUSING) – APPLICATION PL-25-0188

Monika Smriti, Senior Planner, provided an overview of Applications PL-25-0190 and PL-25-0188 for Text Amendments. The amendments are in response to HB2721, which allows duplex, triplex, fourplex, or townhome as a permitted use on a lot zoned for single-family (SF) residential use within one mile of the City’s Central Business District (CBD) and at least 20 percent of a new development of more than 10 contiguous acres zoned for SF residential use, referred to as “Middle Housing”. The regulations are required to be adopted by January 1, 2026, otherwise the middle housing would be allowed on all parcels zoned SF residential use without any limitations.

The City has proposed the following three steps to comply with the State law.

- Designation of CBD for Middle Housing purposes by Resolution
 - Establish the definition of CBD that also aligns with the State law.
 - Rezone three nonresidential areas of the BLVD for City Council to consider adopting as CBD Middle Housing by Resolution.
 - Gateway, Village, and Park Avenue are centrally located and have been selected as they best align with the State’s definition of a CBD.
- Amend the General Plan 2030 to incorporate the CBD designation
 - *“The Gateway, Village, and Park Avenue Districts have been designated as the Central Business District for Middle Housing, to comply with ARS § 9-462.13 as amended.”*
- Amend the Zoning Codes to adopt the Middle Housing regulations as required by State law.
 - Establish a new article specifically for Middle Housing.
 - The Article includes four subsections:
 - ◆ Eligibility criteria, Development Standards, and Design Standards
 - Update the definition section of the code, including new and updated terms related to Middle Housing and maintain consistency of said definitions throughout the code.
 - Private covenants, conditions, and restrictions by Homeowner Associations (HOA) governing single family zoned property will remain a private matter.

All required public notifications have been completed and staff recommends approval.

Chair White opened the public hearing. There being no public comments, Chair White closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Guzman moved to approve Application PL-25-0190, a request for text amendments to the Avondale General Plan 2030, for the reasons set forth in the staff report. Second, by Commissioner Jewell.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0

Commissioner Jewell moved to approve Application PL-25-0188, a request for text amendments to the Zoning Code, for the reasons set forth in the staff report. Second, by Commissioner Pineda.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0

5. COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

None presented.

6. PLANNING DIVISION REPORT

Ms. Lorbeer advised as of September 30, 2025, there are 130 active planning applications, of which 30 are new for September, indicating a continued healthy amount of activity.

7. CALENDAR

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2025.

8. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Commission, Chair White called for a motion to adjourn.

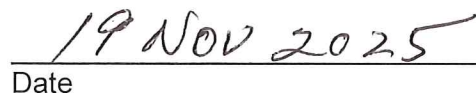
Commissioner Jewell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chair McBurney.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Vice Chair McBurney	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Shaun Grimm	Aye
Commissioner Ryan Benson	N/A
Commissioner Mary Guzman	Aye
Commissioner Olivia Pineda	Aye
Alternate Crystal Lopez-Davey	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 6 to 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.


Chair, Larry White


Date