



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/21/2025

Agenda Item(s): 4R & 5R

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

THROUGH: Chris M. Jacques, AICP, Planning Director

FROM: Sarah Dircks, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Peoria Residential Multi-Family: General Plan Amendment (GPA24-07) & Rezone (Z24-07)
Northeast corner of 87th Avenue and Northern Avenue

PROPOSAL

The applicant has submitted a Minor General Plan Amendment and Rezoning to facilitate the development of a 72 unit multi-family residential development.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Case Numbers GPA24-07 and Z24-07

Applicant Peter Koliopoulos of Circle West Architects on behalf of Northern Ave Properties LLC

Request(s)

- 1) **Minor General Plan Amendment (GPA24-07):** Request to amend the General Plan Land Use designation from Traditional Residential (2-5 dwelling units per acre) to Urban Residential (12+ dwelling units per acre) on approximately 5 acres.
- 2) **Rezone Request (Z24-07):** Request to modify the zoning from Convenience Commercial (C-1) to Multi-Family Residential (RM-1) on approximately 5 acres.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The subject site is a vacant approximately five (5) acre parcel and generally located at the northeast corner of 87th Avenue and Northern Avenue, as shown in more detail in **Exhibit 2**.

CONTEXT:

North of the site is a property owned by the Salt River Project (SRP) utility company that is encumbered by high voltage power lines. The powerline corridor is approximately 330 feet wide. On the other side of the powerline corridor is the Butler Place single family residential subdivision. To the east of the site is the Brighton Charter School, followed by StorAmerica Self Storage facility. Abutting the subject property to the south is Northern Avenue, which is designated as a limited access parkway. A parkway is intended to convey the highest volumes of traffic with limited access directly to the roadway. On the other side of Northern Avenue is a single-family residential subdivision located within the City of Glendale. To the west of the subject site is 87th Avenue, which is designated as a collector roadway. Collector roadways, often referred to as half-mile roads, serve to take traffic from lower order roadways (local roads) and feed it to the higher intensity arterial roadways. West of 87th Avenue is the Summersett Village single-family residential development.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The proposed development consists of five (5) two-story buildings, with a total of 72 units comprised of 48 one-bedroom units and 24 two-bedroom units. A total of three driveways on 87th Avenue are shown on the Conceptual Site Plan (**Exhibit 7**). Two of the three driveways align with existing streets (Manzanita Drive and Royal Palm Road) across 87th Avenue. Upon entering, the two driveways terminate in front of

common area amenities and guest parking. A third driveway on 87th Avenue is proposed along the northern boundary of the site and is intended to provide vehicular access to the Brighton Charter School. All three driveways are connected by an internal drive running parallel along the length of the property. This internal drive provides access to resident garages, along with access to guest parking. Proposed amenities for community include pickle ball, pool/jacuzzi area, outdoor grills and ramadas, along with a dog run.

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:

Existing Use:	Vacant land
Existing General Plan Land Use:	Traditional Residential (2-5 dwelling units per acre)
Proposed General Plan Land Use:	Urban Residential (12+ dwelling units per acre)
Existing Zoning District(s):	Commercial (C-1)
Proposed Zoning Districts(s):	Multi-Family Residential (RM-1)
Site Area:	Approximately 5 acres

STAFF ANALYSIS

PROPERTY HISTORY:

The subject site was part of a larger annexation approved by the City Council on June 22, 1982 (*Ordinance #82-32*). The property was subsequently rezoned from General Agriculture (AG) to Convenience Commercial (C-1) on October 23, 1984 (*Ordinance #84-93*) (**Exhibit4**). The site has remained vacant since that time.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT:

As with any request to amend a General Plan land use category, staff evaluate the appropriateness of the amendment. This evaluation includes a number of facets such as the physical features of the site, availability of infrastructure, the needs of the community, and the character of the area. These measures are evaluated for compatibility with the City Council priorities which function as a proxy for the will of the citizens.

Land Use Perspective:

A General Plan is a long-range document that provides a vision and policies for the growth and development of the city. For development proposals such as the one in question, the evaluation of the goals and policies comes down to the question of context and whether or not the proposal represents the highest and best land use for the site.

Around 20 years ago, property located north of Northern Avenue, south of Olive Avenue, between 91st and 83rd Avenues was designated on the General Plan Land Use Map as *Low Density Residential*, which was the precursor to the *Traditional Residential* classification designated on the property currently (**Exhibit 3**). Both classification had the same density range at 2-5 dwelling units per acre: however, prior provisions within the General Plan allowed commercial uses within the *Low Density Residential* without the need to amend the map. For this reason, the rezone to Convenience Commercial (C-1) in 1984 did not require a corresponding modification to the General Plan land use map.

Subsequent to the rezoning, the area surrounding the site began to develop. The Summersett Village residential community to the east was platted in 1998, with construction beginning soon thereafter. In 2002, Brighton Charter school was established east of the site. Construction of the self-storage facility began in 2019. In more recent major amendments to the General Plan Land Use Map, the charter school and self-storage land use classifications were altered to better reflect existing conditions; however, the classification for the site remained unchanged.

Analysis:

As noted, the existing zoning designation suggests a light commercial disposition, while the existing General Plan category suggests traditional single-family residential housing product. The feasibility of the site developing a *Traditional Residential* housing product is extremely limited due to the infrastructure improvements necessary for the site and the narrow parcel configuration. Additionally, the layout of the adjacent school limited compatibility with the property directly east of the site. If single family residential were to develop on the subject site, all homes would be forced to front directly on to 87th Avenue which creates a considerable amount of access conflicts on a collector roadway. Given the required infrastructure improvements along both 87th Avenue and Northern Avenue, the resulting parcel dimensions, practical application of requirements for things such as open space area; single family residential is not feasible on the subject site. Likewise, the existing physical constraints and access management requirements for commercial uses adjacent to an arterial/collector intersection significantly impact the viability of any meaningful commercial uses occurring onsite. These aspects are further discussed within the rezoning section below.

With the viability of commercial and single-family residential homes in question, the applicant is instead seeking an Urban Residential Land use designation (12+ dwelling units per acre) as an alternative land use designation to serve as a transition between the school and Summersett Village on the west side of 87th Avenue. In this regard, the proposed community layout and amenity package for the future residents appears to be better suited to work within the existing constraints while still maintaining compatibility with adjacent uses. Further, the proposal aligns with a number of goals and policies within the General Plan as noted below.

Within the adopted Peoria General Plan, several goals and policies aim to promote a diversity of housing types to meet the needs of residents of all income levels, ages, and lifestyles. The proposed request fosters sustainable development practices and integration of diverse land uses. The applicant identifies that the project supports general goals, and policies outlined in the General Plan including:

1. Smart Growth Goal – 4 Sustainable Development

A goal of sustainable development practices is to promote local growth patterns and sustainable development practices that improve quality of life and reduce traffic congestion. The applicant explains, “The site’s proximity to Pioneer Community Park and nearby bicycle trails makes it more appropriate for residential use, which aligns with the city’s focus on livable, sustainable neighborhoods rather than additional commercial space” (Exhibit 5).

2. Community Wellness Goals 10 & 14 - Encourage neighborhoods that support active living through pedestrian-friendly design.

The applicant notes, “The development is designed with walkable streetscapes, shaded walkways, and connections to nearby bicycle trails. This active infrastructure encourages residents to walk or cycle, aligning with Peoria’s active living goals” (Exhibit 5).

3. Land Use Policy LUC-5 - Encourage a diverse mix of housing types and densities.

The applicant identifies, “by providing low-to-medium density housing, the development introduces a new residential option in the area, increasing housing diversity in Peoria. This aligns with the city’s plan to offer varied housing options that can meet a range of needs and preferences” (Exhibit 4). They furthermore identify, “pricing ensures affordability, consuming only about 22% of the average Peoria household income, and meets the “Healthy Housing” goal by providing cost-effective living options without compromising quality” (Exhibit 5).

When analyzing the goals and policies of the General Plan, staff also notes that the proposal advances the following policies and principles:

- Growth and Sustainable Development, Policy GS-2 - Direct dwelling unit density, and employment growth toward infill development sites within the city.
- Housing Stock, Policy HS-1 - Distribute a variety of housing types throughout the City to expand the choices available to meet the financial and lifestyle needs of Peoria’s diverse population.
- Smart Growth Principles: Human Scale / Compatibility – A fundamental component of smart growth communities is design focus on human-scale and the resulting compatibility between land uses. Thoughtful and effective transitions in land use address visual and other impacts associated with land uses of a different intensity or character.

As referenced by the above goals, and policies, the proposed Minor General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Map from *Traditional Residential (2-5 du/ac)* to *Urban Residential (12+ du/ac)* provides an opportunity to address the aforementioned policies by providing a thoughtful transition land use between the residential to the west and non-residential uses to the east. The proposed in-fill project seeks to expand housing choice in the area on a small and challenging parcel. As such, staff find that the requested land use does align with the aforementioned goals and policies of the General Plan.

ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

From time to time, a General Plan will identify a land use category that differs from the permitted zoning on a development. Despite having a *Traditional Residential* land use designation, the subject property has maintained the C-1 zoning for the past 40 years. As identified in the property history, the current commercial zoning was assigned shortly after annexation in the 1980s. In instances where land use designations and zoning districts differ, the development rights of the property follow the zoning district development standards.

In this case, the subject property is located in the Convenience Commercial (C-1) Zoning District. The C-1 District is intended to accommodate neighborhood-scale retail and service establishments that provide the incidental daily necessities for the local residential areas. Permitted uses include variety of small-scale commercial uses. However, when the typical constraints such as building setbacks, access restrictions, parking requirements, drainage, and refuse requirements are placed on a parcel such as this, the potential amount of commercial space supported at this site is likely considerably less than similar zoned parcels. Furthermore, the distance away from more prominently traveled access corridors is seen as a detour and as more visible properties with better access in the area continue to fill in. Given the evolution of surrounding land uses, the community’s needs, and changing market conditions, the applicant argues that C-1 is no longer the most appropriate use for the property (**Exhibit 5**). Instead, the applicant is seeking to rezone the property to Multi-Family Residential (RM-1). The intention is to provide a compatible transition use between the adjacent school and the collector roadway (87th Avenue).

The Multi-Family Residential (RM-1) Zoning District is a district intended to fulfill the need for multi-family residences or attached single-family residences which are compatible with abutting single-family residential districts. Though the proposal under evaluation through case Z24-07 is to simply change the zoning designation to RM-1, there is a companion Site Plan currently under evaluation by City staff. That Site Plan would provide the physical composition of the proposed development in alignment with development standard for the zoning district. The proposed Site Plan includes a total of 72 multi-family units. The unit mix proposed on site includes 48 one-bedroom units and 24 two-bedroom units. The applicant is seeking to comply with the City's existing RM-1 development standards.

Based on the companion Site Plan materials, the buildings will be approximately 34 feet tall and as a result of the proposed placement will comply with all setback and height limitations within the RM-1 Zoning District. At 34 feet tall, the buildings would be similar in scale and height of traditionally single-family homes which have a maximum height of 30 feet. Additionally, as proposed, the development would exceed minimum parking requirements for multi-family development. The building design in the companion Site Plan includes first floor garages, with a second story building overhang that provides some shade to parking on the driveway in front of the garage. Lastly, the proposed range of amenities for the future residents is commensurate with other communities in the area. As a result, staff finds the proposed height, character and development standards to be compatible with area.

Traffic:

The subject site has limited street frontage along Northern Avenue and is not seeking vehicular access to Northern Avenue. The proposed access to the site along 87th Avenue is limited to a few access drives that would feed from 87th Avenue to the internal drive aisle. As proposed, the associated site improvements would meet the City of Peoria Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) and Access Management Guidelines.

Water/Sewer:

Water and sewer facilities exist adjacent to the site and are sized appropriately with available capacity to serve the property as a multi-family use.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Public Noticing:

The application was properly noticed pursuant to the Peoria Zoning Ordinance, which includes notification to all property owners within 600 feet of the site and registered HOAs within one (1) mile, posting of a sign on the site, and placing an ad in the Peoria Times prior to the Public Hearing.

Neighborhood Meeting:

There was a neighborhood meeting for this project held on April 28, 2025, at 6:00 pm. Approximately nine (9) residents, in addition to the Principal of Brighton Charter School, city staff, and the applicant team were present at the meeting. During the meeting, the applicant team provided a PowerPoint presentation and fielded several questions and concerns identified by the public, which are discussed in more depth within the Citizen Participation Report (**Exhibit 8**). The primary concerns from the residents were traffic, property values, crime levels, density, privacy levels for Summersett residents, student access through the site, and potential overflow parking along 87th Avenue. In particular, residents raised safety concerns related to the Northern Avenue and 87th Avenue intersection, pedestrian safety for students between Summersett and Brighton Charter School. After the neighborhood meeting, the applicant modified the layout to include a vehicular connection to Brighton. Where mitigation measures were appropriate or

possible, the applicant has provided a response on how they will address the areas of concern within the Citizen Participation Report .

Support / Opposition:

At the time of this writing, Staff received two (2) letters of written opposition and one (1) letter of inquiry as shown in **Exhibit 9**.

KEY FINDINGS

1. The proposed General Plan Land Use change from Traditional Residential (2-5 du/ac) to Urban Residential (12+ du/ac) represents an improvement to the land use designation for the site by providing context sensitive development on an infill parcel;
2. The proposed land use and zoning changes to the site advances Smart Growth goals and policies in the Peoria General Plan to diversify the City’s housing stock and otherwise enables the development of an infill parcel;
3. The change in zoning designation to RM-1 would provide for development standards that represent an appropriate transition from the adjacent uses to the abutting roadway.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission take the following action:

1. Recommend **APPROVAL** of Minor General Plan Amendment Case **GPA24-07** to the City Council.
2. Recommend **APPROVAL** of Zoning Case **Z24-07** to the City Council, subject to attached **Exhibit 1** Conditions of Approval.

STAFF CONTACT

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