

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA
PUBLIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
MARCH 5, 2026

A meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Peoria, Arizona, convened at 8351 W Cinnabar Avenue, Peoria, AZ, in an open and public session at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Layla Villasenor, Vice-Chair Emilio Gaynor, Commissioners Nate Cottrell, Julie Egea, Tony Feiter, Shawn Hutchinson, and Joysaphine Waitman-Powell.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Chris Jacques – Planning Director, Lorie Dever – Deputy Planning Director, Cody Gleason – Planning Manager; Austin Kennedy – Assistant City Traffic Engineer; Chris Kleminich - Assistant City Attorney; Tim Eiden – Deputy Director of Communications; John Lutz – Digital Media Audio Video Specialist; and Christie Duffy – Management Specialist.

Audience: Planning Staff Deanna Benton, Eric Cook, and Jacob Herrera; and 10 members of the public.

Note: The order in which items appear in the minutes is not necessarily the order in which they were discussed in the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA: All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine or have been previously reviewed by the Commission and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commission member requests; in which event the item will be removed from the General Order of Business and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

1 C Disposition of Absence

Discussion and possible action to approve/excuse the absence of Chair Layla Villasenor from the February 19, 2026, meeting.

2 C Minutes

Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2026, meeting.

COMMISSION ACTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Cottrell and seconded by Commissioner Feiter, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Villasenor, Gaynor, Cottrell, Egea, Feiter, Hutchinson, Waitman-Powell.

NAYS – None.

ABSENT – None.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 3 R **Rezone, Peoria Innovation Core, Lake Pleasant and Lone Mountain Pkwy (Z26-01)**
Discussion and possible action to rezone approximately 7,300 acres from General Agricultural (AG), Suburban Ranch (SR-43), Intermediate Commercial (C-2) and Planned Area Development (PAD) to the Peoria Innovation Core Planned Community District (PCD). The site is located north of Lake Pleasant Parkway and Lone Mountain Parkway.

Chris Jacques, Planning Director, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Rezoning of the Peoria Innovation Core at Lake Pleasant and Lone Mountain Parkway (Z26-01). Information included:

- **Project Overview**
 - 7,341-acre rezoning to PCD
 - Applicants: City of Peoria, ASLD, Amkor, Diocese
 - Goal: cohesive master plan + flexible zoning bank
- **Site & Context**
 - Mostly State Trust Land; largely undeveloped
 - 3 miles of Loop 303 frontage
 - Opportunity to create major jobs center
- **Key Property Factors**
 - River corridors, washes, canals
 - Utility corridors and substations
 - Environmental constraints (~1/3 undevelopable)
- **Existing Land Use & Zoning**
 - Current zoning: AG, SR-43, C-2, PAD
 - General Plan: Employment/Commerce focus
- **PCD Framework**
 - Unified master plan
 - Tailored development standards
 - Zoning bank with 11,000 units (transferable)
- **Core Areas**
 - **Core 1:** Residential focus; transitions near existing neighborhoods
 - **Core 2:** City-owned; Amkor anchor; mixed-use & employment
 - **Core 3:** Long-term mix; industrial + planned community potential
- **Loop 303 Protection**
 - Employment priority
 - Residential limits along corridor
 - Height Overlay for added flexibility
- **Use-Specific Standards**
 - **Data Centers:** Special Use Overlay; no-water cooling; 500' from homes
 - **BESS:** Only in I-1; 600' from homes
- **Special Properties**
 - **Diocese:** Commercial/industrial + religious uses
 - **Amkor:** Existing PAD preserved; within height overlay
- **Edge Conditions (Core 1)**

- Detached single-family only
- 30' buffer + 30' height limit
- Up to 90' separation from existing homes
- **Community Outreach**
 - Engagement with surrounding neighborhoods
- Findings and Recommended Action

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gaynor asked how elevation, washes, canals, and flood flows were considered in planning the site, and how stormwater would move through the area during heavy rains. Planning Director Chris Jacques responded that a master drainage report evaluated drainage patterns, existing washes, and floodplains, and that development must comply with city codes, desert lands protections, and engineering processes that manage drainage and floodplain modifications.

Commissioner Gaynor also asked about potential restrictions on battery storage within industrial warehouses. Director Jacques explained that battery storage systems are permitted within I-1 industrial areas, so long as they have a minimum separation of 600 feet from residential districts. These types of uses are typically located near substations, and must comply with national fire protection standards and additional safety requirements such as hazard mitigation.

Commissioner Cottrell asked whether dwelling units from northern areas could be shifted away from Parcel O along Lake Pleasant Parkway, potentially allowing commercial development. Planning Director Chris Jacques responded that Parcel O within Core 1 is designated only for detached single-family homes, although unused residential units from one core area may be transferred to another core within the development, subject to site constraints and development standards.

Chair Villasenor expressed support for the plan's market responsiveness and emphasis on employment corridors, but noted concerns that data centers and battery storage facilities create limited jobs.

Commissioner Hutchinson noted that data centers provide significant economic benefits, including thousands of construction and maintenance jobs and opportunities for local workers, and stated that the area is well suited to attract such facilities.

Commissioner Waitman-Powell stated that the project is pivotal to the city's rapid growth and emphasized the importance of thoughtful discussion to balance economic opportunities, environmental considerations, and responsible planning.

Commissioner Egea expressed concern that the city's rapid growth could strain essential services such as public safety, water, and roadways, and emphasized the need to ensure infrastructure keeps pace with new development. Planning Director Chris Jacques responded that the city has conducted multiple technical studies addressing these issues and is working to ensure the land plan aligns with infrastructure capacity and service needs.

APPLICANT COMMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Sherri Orr, Peoria Citizen, expressed her concerns over water conditions and zoning height increases.
- Shannon Ciemo, Peoria Citizen, expressed her concerns regarding a prior building height increase associated with ASLD 720..
- Robert Kuhfuss, Peoria Citizen, requested a buffer increase to 60 ft. near the West Wing Pradera Subdivision.
- Paul Gilbert, representing Virtua, which owns two parcels adjacent to Core 1. Mr. Gilbert spoke in support of the plan noting this plan will be compatible with their upcoming proposal.
- Ed Bull, Diocese Representative, stated the Diocese is pleased with the plan.

Commissioner Cottrell asked about allegations regarding zoning height increases, and Planning Director Chris Jacques stated the city follows its codes and ordinances, and that the proposed action would replace existing zoning to allow flexibility for future development.

Commissioner Cottrell asked whether the proposed zoning for Area P in Core One includes a 30-foot buffer and a building height limited to one-two stories along the boundary. Planning Director Chris Jacques clarified that the code limits maximum building height to 30 feet and said additional concessions may be considered later when a specific developer and lotting layout are identified.

Chair Villasenor asked whether the land might have steep hills like those shown in the earlier illustration. Deputy Director Lorie Dever responded that the illustration does not reflect future conditions, noting that the city has minimum landscaping requirements and can use a variety of mitigation measures to address specific neighbor concerns once a developer has been selected and lotting layout are determined.

Chair Villasenor noted the importance of working with property owners to maintain larger setbacks and preserve native plants to protect the area's desert character. Deputy Director Lorie Dever explained that staff considers factors like salvage viability, new planting growth, tree species, and planting density to create effective buffers that meet minimum standards to address privacy concerns from adjacent residents.

COMMISSION ACTION:

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Gaynor and seconded by Commissioner Waitman-Powell, to approve **3R: Rezoning, Peoria Innovation Core, Lake Pleasant and Lone Mountain Pkwy (Z26-01)**, to rezone approximately 7,300 acres from General Agriculture (AG), Suburban Ranch (SR-43), Intermediate Commercial (C-2) and Planned Area Development (PAD) to the Peoria Innovation Core Planned Community District (PCD). The site is location north of Lake Pleasant Parkway and Lone Mountain Parkway.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Villasenor, Gaynor, Cottrell, Egea, Feiter, Hutchinson, Waitman-Powell.

NAYS – None.

ABSENT – None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Call to the Public (Non-Agenda Items): None.

Reports from Staff: None.

5. Upcoming Commission Meetings

Deputy Director Lorie Dever announced that the March 19 and April 2 commission meetings are canceled, with the next meeting scheduled for April 16, 2026. Starting in May, meetings will resume in the new Council Chambers with a short setup and demonstration before the meeting.

6R Reports: None.

Planning and Zoning Commission Updates: None.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Planning and Zoning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.


Layla Villasenor, Chair

May 17, 2026
Date


Submitted by Christie Duffy

5/7/2026
Date