

Planning and Zoning Report

Date	March 11, 2026	
Case No.	GPA26-00147	
Project Name	Rio Salado 25	
Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor General Plan Amendment from Local Employment Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy to Urban Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy 	
Project Location	Located at the northwest corner of West Rio Salado Parkway and North Cubs Way	
Parcel No(s)	135-38-001N and 135-38-001M	
Project Area	3.1± acres	
Council District	District 3	
Existing Zoning	General Commercial (GC)	
General Plan Designation	Local Employment Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy	
Applicant	Jonathan Boyd, Boyd Development	
Owner	Rio Salado 25, LLC	
Staff Planner	Josh Grandlienard, Senior Planner	



Recommendation

Staff finds that the Proposed Project furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the 2050 Mesa General Plan, including the General Plan Amendment criteria outlined in Chapter 5.

Staff recommends adoption.

Project Overview

Request:

The applicant is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment to change the Placetype for 3.1± acres from Local Employment Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy to Urban Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy (Proposed Project).

The subject request is made concurrently with a rezoning, Council Use Permit and Site Plan Review application (ZON25-00942). The proposed Minor General Plan amendment is necessary to support the requested rezoning from General Commercial (GC) to General Commercial with a Bonus Intensity Zone Overlay (GC-BIZ).

The purpose of the Local Employment Center Placetype, is to provide areas that support a variety of low-intensity business operations that are compatible with residential uses. The subject property was previously developed as a Maricopa County Animal Shelter, which was consistent with the Local Employment Center Placetype, however, the animal shelter has since been removed and the site razed. The applicant is redeveloping the site for uses more compatible with and complimentary to the baseball fields and Spring Training activities at Sloan Park. The applicant is proposing a hotel and a multiple residence development for player housing, neither of which are consistent with the Local Employment Center Placetype. Therefore, the applicant is requesting approval of a Minor General Plan Amendment to Urban Center to facilitate the redevelopment of the subject site.

The intent of the Urban Center Placetype is for compact, mixed-use areas where many people live, work and play. Typically located near transit, major arterial roadways, or other destination amenities, such as Sloan Park, their compact form supports pedestrian-oriented development and vertical mixed-use. Entertainment and Recreation uses, such as a hotel, are identified as a Principle Land Use in the Urban Center Placetype while the Multi-Family Residential is identified as a Supporting Land Use.

Concurrent Applications:

- **Rezoning, Site Plan Review and Council Use Permit:** The Planning and Zoning Board hearing is scheduled for March 10, 2026, to review the request for a Rezoning from GC to GC-BIZ, Site Plan Review and Council Use Permit to allow for a hotel and multiple residence use in a commercial district. (ZON25-00946).

Site Context

General Plan:

- The applicant is requesting to change the Placetype designation from Local Employment Center to Urban Center.
- The purpose of the Urban Center Placetype is to provide for compact, mixed-use areas where many people live, work and play. Typically located near transit, major arterial roadways or other destination amenities, their compact form supports pedestrian-oriented development and vertical mixed-use.
- The Proposed Project, and concurrent rezoning and site plan review, is consistent with the Urban Center Placetype and furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategies of the 2050 Mesa General Plan.

General Plan Amendment Approval Criteria Analysis:

Approval Criteria – Chapter 5 of the Mesa 2050 General Plan (pg. 135):

- 1. Whether the proposed amendment will result in a shortage of land for other planned uses, such as, whether the change will result in a substantial and undesirable reduction in the amount of available land for employment or housing:** The proposed amendment will not result in a shortage of land for other planned uses. While it reduces the amount of land identified as Local Employment Center in the immediate area, there are approximately 30± acres of land designated as Local Employment Center adjacent to the Loop 202 Freeway, north of Sloan Park. This 30± acres is identified as an office development, which is consistent with Local Employment Center Placetype. The Riverview and Sloan Park area has developed as an entertainment and recreation destination, which is incompatible with many of the uses identified in the Local Employment Center, including light industrial and medical facility uses. The proposed amendment supports the General Plan policies of creating opportunities for placemaking and in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place as well as encouraging infill and redevelopment to meet the needs of the city.
- 2. Whether events after the adoption of the General Plan have changed the character or condition of the area, making the proposed amendment appropriate:** In the time since the adoption of the 2050 Mesa General Plan, Maricopa County has demolished the animal shelter previously in place on the site. The adoption of this requested Minor General Plan Amendment will help to further the vision of the Sloan Park area as an entertainment and recreation destination.
- 3. The degree to which the proposed amendment will impact the whole community or a portion of the community by:**
 - a. Altering acceptable existing land use patterns in a significant way that is contrary to the Vision, Guiding Principals, or Strategies identified in the General Plan:** The Proposed Project will not significantly alter existing land use patterns; rather it will support and reinforce the land use patterns in the area. The proposed change furthers the Vison, Guiding Principles and Strategies identified in the 2050 Mesa General Plan.
 - b. Requiring larger or more extensive improvements to roads, sewer or water systems than are necessary to support the prevailing land uses which may negatively impact development of other lands:** The Proposed Project, concurrent rezone, site plan review and Council Use Permit will not require more extensive improvements to roads, water systems or sewer. Cubs Way and Rio Salado Parkway are fully improved, and the existing utility infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate this request.
 - c. Adversely impacting existing uses due to increased traffic congestion that is not accommodated by planned roadway improvements or other planned transportation improvements such as nonmotorized transportation alternatives and transit:** The Proposed Project will not adversely affect surrounding development due

to increased traffic congestion. Cubs Way and Rio Salado Parkway, in their existing condition, have the capacity to service the anticipated number of lots.

4. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Strategies of the General Plan: The proposed amendment is consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the Mesa 2050 General Plan. Specifically, Strategies:

- N2. Promote adaptive reuse and infill as tools to rejuvenate and revitalize established neighborhoods.
- LU2. Create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place.
- LU3. Encourage infill and redevelopment to meet the community's strategic needs.
- HAC4. Expand Mesa's reputation as an arts and culture tourism leader in Arizona.
- ED5. Promote Mesa as a regional commercial, entertainment, and tourist destination.

5. Whether the proposed amendment constitutes an overall improvement to the General Plan and the City of Mesa: The proposed amendment constitutes an overall improvement to both the General Plan and the City of Mesa by facilitating the redevelopment of an underutilized property.

6. The extent to which the benefits of the proposed amendment outweigh any of the impacts identified by these criteria: The Proposed Project represents a significant reinvestment in the area. The addition of a high-quality hotel and multiple residence development in this area helps to fulfill a number of strategies identified in the General Plan by creating additional housing opportunities and bringing renewed vibrancy to a transitioning corridor.

Citizen Participation

The applicant conducted a Citizen Participation process, notifying surrounding property owners, HOAs, and registered neighbors.

Required Notification:

- Property owners within 1,000 feet, HOAs within ½ mile, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the subject site were notified of the public hearing.
- Staff received general questions about the use during the Design Review Board process, where concerns about the proposed traffic were raised. Staff will update the board on any additional comments received after writing of this report.

Staff Recommendation

The requested Minor General Plan Amendment to change the Placetype designation from Local Employment Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy to Urban Center with an Evolve Growth Strategy furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles,

Strategies, and applicable elements of the 2050 Mesa General Plan, and conforms with the General Plan amendment criteria outlined in Chapter 5.

Staff recommends Adoption

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2 – Project Narrative

Exhibit 3 – Site Plan

Exhibit 4 – Landscape Plan

Exhibit 5 – Elevations

Exhibit 6 – Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 7 – Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit 8 – Power Point Presentation