

Meeting Minutes

Planning and Zoning Commission

Study Session

August 21, 2024 | 4:00 p.m.
Chandler City Council Chambers
88 E. Chicago Street, Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Heumann at 4:08 p.m.

Roll Call

Commission Attendance

Chair Rick Heumann
Commissioner Michael Quinn
Commissioner Rene Lopez
Commissioner Charlotte Golla
Commissioner Ryan Schwarzer

Absent

Vice Chair Sherri Koshiol - Excused
Commissioner Kyle Barichello - Excused

Staff Attendance

Matthew Dunbar, Budget and Policy Director
Kevin Mayo, Planning Administrator
Lauren Schumann, Principal Planner
Alisa Petterson, Senior Planner
Mika Liburd, Associate Planner
Darsy Omer, Associate Planner
Taylor Manemann, Associate Planner
Thomas Allen, Assistant City Attorney
Julie San Miguel, Clerk

Scheduled/Unscheduled Public Appearances

Members of the audience may address any item not on the agenda. State Statute prohibits the Board or Commission from discussing an item that is not on the agenda, but the Board or Commission does listen to your concerns and has staff follow up on any questions you raise.

Briefing

A. City Capital Project Funding/Bond Election discussion.

Budget documents were presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission as visual aids to the presentation.

CHAIR HEUMANN announced the Study Session will start with a Briefing on the City's Capital Project Funding/Bond Election.

MATTHEW DUNBAR, BUDGET AND POLICY DIRECTOR introduced himself and stated he was present to provide an update on the capital project funding issues the city was encountering along with the potential for a bond election. He provided an outline of the topics he planned to cover and presented a video that explained the purpose of bonds and bond elections. He emphasized that bonds are essential to Chandler's current capital plan for the next ten years, which relies heavily on bond funding for 2.5 billion dollars' worth of capital projects. He explained that 68% of the plan is funded by general obligation or geo bonds and excise tax revenue obligations, with the rest coming from current revenues (22%), grants (7%), and system development fees or impact fees (2%). He further explained the reason the city needed additional geo bond authorization is due to inflationary impacts on steel, concrete, asphalt, and copper. He stated the previous bond authorization in was expected to last seven or eight years, but due to inflation, the authorization will only last four years. He presented a timeline and pointed out where the city could run into issues with the existing bond authorization. He explained that typically the city sells bonds every two years and pointed out the documents presented on the dais lists all categories with amounts needed over the years. He further stated which categories would be short on authorization and require additional authorization from voters by 2027. He advised of the possibility of a bond election in 2025 or 2026, noting that 2026 is the latest that this could go before the voters if the city continues to use secondary property taxes as a funding mechanism. He further stated the fall of 2026 would be a busy election year with the Mayor's seat, Council Member seats, charter amendments, and home rule on the ballot, which could lead to voter fatigue and having too much on one ballot. He stated it is the city's preference to go forward with a bond election in 2025 that could last seven to eight years, depending on what is determined through a subcommittee process. He reviewed Chandler's bond election history, noting that historically, the city went to voters every three or four years for additional authorization except in 2008 where due to the great recession many projects were put on hold and the authorization lasted fourteen years. The last bond election in 2021 provided \$272 million in authorization and while it was anticipated to last 7-8 years, it will only last 4-5 years. He emphasized the city's success in past bond elections and the importance of the Bond Exploratory Committee in helping to educate voters. He explained the Bond Exploratory Committee was put together by mayor and council and was made up of 49 members of the community, who would listen project details, visit sites, and spread the information to neighbors and other community members. He mentioned mayor and council have asked to do something similar as what was done in the last authorization and outlined the timeline for a potential bond election in 2025. He mentioned other cities in Arizona who were facing similar challenges with capital project funding and were considering bond elections or other funding mechanisms. He concluded by explaining that he is visiting Boards and Commissions to find out if there is any direct feedback or if anyone had interest in volunteering. He stated that he is available for any questions and thanked the Commission.

COMMISSIONER GOLLA asked what is the cost difference between holding an election in a non-election year versus an election year and if the city went forward in 2025 if they could share costs with Chandler Unified School District (CUSD) if they were to hold a bond election at the same time.

MATTHEW DUNBAR, BUDGET AND POLICY DIRECTOR pointed out there would be a cost difference and stated an election in 2026 would coincide with the county and general elections, which would lower costs for the city. He stated that an unsplit election in 2025 would cost around \$200,000, but the city could split costs with other entities like CUSD or other school districts. He further stated that the costs would not be a 50/50 split as some of the costs go to a pamphlet that we have to produce, but some of the actual election costs themselves could be split.

CHAIR HEUMANN asked if the city was still refinancing bonds, given the current interest rates.

MATTHEW DUNBAR, BUDGET AND POLICY DIRECTOR confirmed the city was still looking into refinancing bonds where possible, though many of their bonds were issued during times of very low interest rates, making it harder to find opportunities to save money. He mentioned that Chandler's AAA bond rating allowed them to secure very favorable rates.

CHAIR HEUMANN confirmed there were no further questions or comments from the Commission Members and thanked the Budget and Policy Director for his presentation.

B. Presentation of the Chandler Downtown Region Area Plan Update.

CHAIR HEUMANN announced the next Briefing will be on the Chandler Downtown Region Area Plan Update.

ALISA PETERSON, SENIOR PLANNER introduced herself and outlined her presentation. She explained the difference between the general plan, which provides city-wide guidance on future development, and area plans, which are more specific and implement general plan goals through defined objectives and policies. She emphasized that the area plan would be based on community input, reflecting what citizens want for the future development of the downtown region. She presented the existing related plans, such as the 2016 Chandler General Plan and the 1995 Chandler Redevelopment Element and mentioned newer plans, like the 2006 South Arizona Avenue Entry Corridor Plan and the 2010 South Arizona Avenue Design Guidelines, along with others related to transportation, water infrastructure, and economic development. She displayed maps showing the Chandler Redevelopment Area and the South Arizona Avenue Corridor Area Plan, stating that the current proposed area plan map encompassed the region from Ray Road in the north to the 202 Freeway in the south, and from Alma School Road to McQueen Road. She explained that certain areas were excluded from this effort and pointed out the area for reconsideration are divided into five districts: Northern, San Marcos, the Historic

Downtown, Eastern, and Southern districts. She detailed the goals of the plan, including identifying unique characteristics, aligning with existing community goals, and creating flexibility for redevelopment while incorporating adaptive reuse. She assured the commissioners that the historic downtown would not undergo any zoning changes or boundary shifts. She presented the timeline for the project, which began in February of 2024 and is expected to conclude with final approval from the council in January 2025. She pointed out staff is currently gathering feedback from the community, and this will be ongoing through surveys and continuous community outreach. She stated that events will be held to engage the community with upcoming workshops scheduled for September at the Downtown Library and November at the ASU Innovation Center. She stated the latter event will featuring an augmented reality (AR) immersion event to provide attendees with a 3D experience of the proposed environments. She concluded the presentation by describing the AR immersion event, which would allow attendees to experience 3D renderings of the downtown area and provide feedback on elements such as density and setbacks. She stated the event is designed to ensure that the city is aligned with what the community desires for the downtown region's future.

CHAIR HEUMANN thanked Alisa for the presentation and asked if the plan would come back to the Planning and Zoning Commission or go directly to the City Council.

ALISA PETERSON, SENIOR PLANNER deferred the question to the Planning Administrator.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR confirmed that the plan update would come back before the Planning Commission for a formal briefing and deliberation on what had been gathered from the community. He explained that the Briefing this date is to make the Commission aware of the update and the process. He emphasized that the Downtown Region Area Plan Update will ultimately be the community's plan as it will be shaped by their input.

CHAIR HEUMANN expressed his appreciation for the efforts of staff and commented on the ongoing conversations about expanding the downtown area in various directions. He asked if eminent domain would be discussed as part of the plan.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR stated while eminent domain was occasionally necessary it is not favored by the city. He stressed the area plan update is a guiding document focused on planning policy, and eminent domain was not a significant aspect of this effort.

CHAIR HEUMANN presented statements regarding eminent domain not being an option unless absolutely necessary.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR mentioned the timing of the plan update was perfect due to the changes in the market and pointed out the differences between the 1995 and 2006 plans. He stated the original plan anticipated large-scale redevelopment, but what had emerged

was smaller, adaptive reuse projects. He identified the different districts and explained that the updated plan would address these market shifts and define the character of each district.

CHAIR HEUMANN presented concerns of Chandler becoming like downtown Tempe, filled with high-rises. He asked if there would be limits on building heights in the plans for each district

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR replied that is an option and while the current plan does not specify height limits, it did include goals to ensure compatibility between new developments and existing neighborhoods. He envisioned that the updated plan would continue to emphasize compatibility and proper transitioning between buildings of different heights instead of the use of specific height limits.

CHAIR HEUMANN mentioned that earlier plans for the south area used staggered building heights and stressed the importance of avoiding abrupt height transitions.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR pointed out that the plan used words and graphics to clearly communicate the intent behind guidelines.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ asked if the plan would change any allowances for adaptive reuse or expand those allowances as it is his understanding that it is restrictive in the downtown area.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR explained the adaptive reuse overlay policy was adopted by ordinance and the area plan update, which is adopted by resolution is not strong enough to overwrite it. He mentioned staff anticipates elements of the adaptive reuse policy being included in the new plan.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ questioned why Ray Road was chosen as the northern boundary for the area plan update and whether adaptive reuse could be extended north into other parts of Chandler, therefore houses on the main street can be used as businesses.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR responded that Ray Road was chosen due to feedback from businesses and property owners who felt that area needed identity like Uptown. He stated this area is closer to downtown than to Uptown Chandler, which led to the decision to include it in the plan.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ asked if the plan would take advantage of federal dollars for the economic redevelopment region or adaptive reuse for troubled properties.

KEVIN MAYO, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR responded that staff has yet to look at the overlap between the federal economic redevelopment map and the area plan, but it was something staff can consider and look at.

CHAIR HEUMANN confirmed there were no further questions or comments from the Commission Members and thanked staff for the briefing.

Consent Agenda and Discussion

1. June 5, 2024 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

Move Planning and Zoning Commission approve Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes of the Study Session of June 5, 2024, and Regular Meeting of June 5, 2024.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no questions or comments from the Commission Members.

2. July 23, 2024 Design Review Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

Move Planning and Zoning Commission approve Design Review Committee meeting minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 23, 2024.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no questions or comments from the Commission Members.

3. PLH22-0056 TIPSY EGG & THE UNCOMMON

MIKA LIBURD, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Entertainment Use Permit time extension to continue to allow live indoor and outdoor entertainment, at 1 E Boston Street, generally located ¼ mile south of the southeast corner of Arizona Avenue and Chandler Boulevard.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no questions or comments from the Commission Members and pointed out there are several similar items on the agenda this evening and emphasized the importance of being sensitive to the neighborhood and ensuring stipulations, such as having a contact phone number, were in place. He stated given the distance of the property from homes; he did not foresee any issues on this case.

4. PLH23-0065 MAGNOLIA

DARSY OMER, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Preliminary Development Plan approval for single-family housing product to be constructed in a new subdivision that is generally located ¼ mile east of the northeast corner of Cooper Road and Riggs Road.

An Addendum Memorandum was presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission with a revised stipulation per the Applicant's request.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN recalled discussions during the Design Review Committee (DRC) meeting about optional features, such as garage doors. He asked if the garage doors shown were optional or standard.

DASRY OMER, ASSOCIATE PLANNER deferred the question to the Applicant.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN requested the Applicant come forward to answer the question.

BRENNAN RAY, APPLICANT confirmed what is marked as optional in the exhibits is indeed optional and what is marked standard is standard. He assured the Commission that it is not the Applicants intention to present materials or something for garage doors and then build something different. He clarified that it is the Applicant's intention to build something that is consistent with discussions held in Design Review Committee (DRC).

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN suggested the Applicant review and provide details before the Regular Session instead of a full presentation.

BRENNAN RAY, APPLICANT agreed and thanked the Commission.

5. PLH24-0006 PONDEROSA DISPENSARY

DASRY OMER, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Use Permit time extension to continue to allow for the colocation of an ancillary Medical Marijuana Facility in conjunction with its affiliated onsite Medical Marijuana Cultivation Site and Medical Marijuana Infusion Food Establishment located at 318 S. Bracken Lane.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ stated the first time this came through there were parking concerns and asked if there were any issues with parking.

DASRY OMER, ASSOCIATE PLANNER confirmed there were no issues with parking.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN noted the one-year time limitation was a legal requirement and there was no option to extend it beyond that.

DASRY OMER, ASSOCIATE PLANNER confirmed the one-year term was set by code.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no further questions or comments from the Commission Members.

6. PLH24-0007 SAWTOOTH BAR AND GRILL

MIKA LIBURD, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Entertainment Use Permit time extension to continue to allow for live indoor entertainment, speakers and tv screens, at 4929 W Ray Road, generally located at the southeast corner Ray and Rural roads.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no questions or comments from the Commission Members.

7. PLH24-0008 FUN FUSION LEARNING CENTER

Move Planning and Zoning Commission withdraw PLH24-0008 Fun Fusion Learning Center, Use Permit to allow residential childcare for up to 10 children in an existing single-family home as requested by the applicant. (APPLICANT REQUESTS WITHDRAWAL)

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no questions or comments from the Commission Members and mentioned the request for Use Permit has been withdrawn.

8. PLH24-0013 LEGENDS SHOWCASE BAR & GRILL

MIKA LIBURD, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Entertainment Use Permit approval to allow for indoor live entertainment, speakers and tv screens at 2386 N Alma School Road, generally located north of the northwest corner of Alma School and Warner roads.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were further questions or comments from the Commission Members.

9. PLH24-0014 CELONI HOSPITALITY, LLC DBA RECREO CANTINA

MIKA LIBURD, ASSOCIATE PLANNER presented details regarding the request for Entertainment Use Permit time extension to continue to allow live indoor and outdoor entertainment, at 28 S San Marcos Place, generally located ¼ mile south of the southwest corner of Arizona Avenue and Chandler Boulevard.

CHAIRMAN HEUMANN confirmed there were no further questions or comments from the Commission Members.

10. Notice of Cancellation of the September 4, 2024, Planning and Zoning Commission Hearing

Move Planning and Zoning Commission cancel the September 4, 2024 Planning and Zoning Commission Hearing.

Action Agenda Item 11 and Discussion

11. PLH24-0009 Chandler and Cooper Retail/ Shops A

Request Preliminary Development Plan approval for a new drive-through building located at the northwest corner of Cooper Road and Chandler Boulevard.

Move Planning and Zoning Commission recommend denial of Preliminary Development Plan, PLH24-0009 Chandler and Cooper Retail - Shops A for a new drive-through building.

Alternative Motion:


Move Planning and Zoning Commission recommend approval of Preliminary Development Plan, PLH24-0009 Chandler and Cooper Retail - Shops A for a new drive-through building, subject to the conditions as recommended by Planning staff.

Calendar

The next Study Session will be held before the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, in the Chandler City Council Chambers, 88 E. Chicago Street, Chandler, Arizona.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.



Kevin Mayo, Secretary



Rick Heumann, Chairman