

TOWN Of PARADISE VALLEY



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Stanton and Town Council Members

FROM: Andrew Ching, Town Manager
Chad Weaver, Community Development Director

DATE: May 14, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Community Development
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AGENDA TITLE: Zoning Code Update Check-in

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Michael Baker will report on progress of the zoning code update project.

BACKGROUND

There have been approximately 140 text amendments to the Town's Zoning Ordinance since the Town's incorporation on May 24, 1961. The first Zoning Ordinance was modeled after Maricopa County at the time of incorporation with the first Town Council adopted Zoning Ordinance approved in October 1961.

The next major changes to the Zoning Ordinance occurred in the early 1970s. This included the readoption of the Zoning Map in October 1972 (due to the original being lost), adoption of hillside building regulations in May 1973, and a readoption of the Zoning Ordinance in March 1974.

The next notable text changes to the Town's Zoning Ordinance occurred in the 1980 decade. This included the R-10 District (for approximate ¼-acre lots) in June 1984 in response to the annexation of the Colonia Miramonte subdivision near the Camelback Inn resort. The hillside building regulations were modified in September 1984, with a full repeal and replacement of these provisions in November 1989. July 1985 added wall and fence regulations (beyond the requirements for subdivision walls and fences). The decade closed with the addition of the R-175 District (minimum 4-acre lots).

The 1990 decade included several minor revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, with more substantive changes during the 2000 decade. This included the repeal and replacement of the nonconforming use regulations in September 2001, hillside building regulations in October 2003, and Special Use Permit regulations in November 2005. The 2005 amendments also included an overhaul of the subdivision regulations, modifications to walls and fences, and reorganization (in part) of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

The Town made a few amendments during the 2010 decade. These amendments included modifications to the Special Use Permit process in November 2012. There

were also modifications to the lighting provisions in June 2017 and the inclusion of small wireless service facilities (as required by state statute) in August 2017. The decade closed with another repeal and replacement of the hillside building regulations in May 2018, along with some minor changes in 2019 to the Managerial Special Use Permit process and the cluster plan zoning (in response to the Ironwood Golf Villas subdivision off Scottsdale Road at the Indian Bend wash).

The predominant amendments to the Town's Zoning Ordinance in the present 2020 decade include changes to align with state statute on marijuana establishments and the provision of a Managerial Special Use Permit process for personal wireless service facilities.

In 2023 an item was added to the Community Development Budget for a 'Unified Procedural Manual' that was intended to improve building and development experiences for all users. The \$200,000 item has appeared in the FY24 and FY25 approved budgets.

During the past two years some other efforts have also been in process that assisted in the overall goal of improving user experience. Accela system development has, and continues to improve access to process and information, while adding efficiency to staff reviews. SOP's (standard operating procedures) and checklists are also being created to assist in understanding various processes and their required order of operations. Additionally, the Town website updates and planned major improvements continue to be used to clarify requirements of development processes.

When considering the utility and planning for a procedural manual, staff has considered all of the component parts. Some changes already in process are mentioned above, but a desire to consider the zoning code itself became task one needing evaluation. In order to facilitate a swift and thorough check of needs and issues, staff entered into a Professional Services Agreement (No. CON-25-012-ENG) on September 12, 2024 with Michael Baker International, Inc. This consultant was selected based upon their knowledge of zoning codes generally, and previous experience with the Town and our zoning code

Based upon information obtained, interviews with staff, and their own review, the attached Zoning Ordinance Analysis was provided in December of 2024. Their work considered supporting documentation, the General Plan and the content, wording and organization of the code itself.

Based upon the review, the consultant recommended a suggested action plan that includes changes required for legal compliance, refinements and clarifications to ensure maximum usability and clarity, updates based upon user experience and best practice and overall document reorganization to better match the Town code and more typical municipal codes.

UPDATE

The last Town Council check-in on the zoning code update project was December 11, 2025. The Council discussed the public outreach strategy. Two particular issues Council expressed a desire to see considered will be presented as well, pickleball courts and construction site signage. There was consensus for the consultant to present a draft of the reorganized Code to the Town Council prior to holding public outreach. Public engagement should include specific examples of real-life impacts of the changes on properties. Council requested the following at the next update: (1) More clarity on the reorganized and renamed Articles which is provided in the preliminary draft (Attachment C) (2) A detailed timeline for public outreach and public hearings (Slide 24 of Presentation) 3. Identification of conflicts or inconsistencies in the current code and proposed text clarifications (Attachment C).

NEXT STEPS

Consultant team and staff will answer questions and accept feedback. Staff will proceed with outreach as directed and return with suggestions on requested changes and additions based upon previous Council direction. These will then be incorporated into the final draft documents.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Staff Report
- B. Zoning Ordinance Analysis
- C. Preliminary Draft
- D. Presentation