



# MEMORANDUM

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DATE: July 3, 2019  
For July 18, 2019 Hearing

TO: John Iurino  
Zoning Examiner

FROM: Scott Clark  
Planning & Development Services  
Director

SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXCEPTION LAND USE  
PLANNING & AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT  
Mayor and Council Special Exception Procedure  
SE-19-14 Verizon – 6161 E. Grant Road, R-3 (Ward 2)

**Issue** – This is a request by Nancy Smith of Wingspan Wireless on behalf of Verizon Wireless, for approval of a wireless communication facility (WCF). The special exception site is located approximately 1,500 feet north of Grant Road and 2,000 feet west of the Wilmot Road alignment (see Case Location Map). The preliminary development plan (PDP) proposes a wireless communication tower disguised as a pine tree (monopine), 50 feet in height, with six antennas. The WCF will be placed within a 640 square foot (30 feet by 21 feet-4 inches) lease area in the northwestern corner of a 22-½-acre parcel. The existing use of the property is an apartment complex. The WCF will be located behind and immediately to the east of an accessory storage shed near the parking lot area.

A communications use of this type in the R-3 zone is subject to Sections 4.9.13.O and 4.9.4.I.2, .3, and .7 of the *Unified Development Code (UDC)* and requires approval through a Mayor & Council Special Exception Procedure, Sec. 3.4.4, because the tower does not meet a 2-to-1 setback from CR-2 (Pima County residential) zoned property located immediately to the northwest of the proposed WCF. Documentation provided by the applicant indicates that no practical alternative exists, and measures are being taken to conceal or disguise the tower and antenna from view by using a stealth monopine design.

The Mayor & Council Special Exception Procedure requires a public hearing before the Zoning Examiner after which the Zoning Examiner forwards a recommendation to the Mayor and Council for a decision to grant the request with, or without, conditions or to deny the request. The Mayor and Council may also forward the request to the Design Review Board (DRB) for design review and recommendation.

**Planning & Development Services Department Recommendation** – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of the special exception request, subject to the attached preliminary conditions.

**Background Information**

Existing Land Use: Apartment complex (vacant area near parking lot next to accessory structure).

Zoning Description:

R-3 (Residential Zone) – This zone provides for high density, residential development and compatible uses. Civic, educational, recreation, religious uses, and select other uses, such as day care and urban agriculture, are also permitted that provide reasonable compatibility with adjoining residential uses.

Surrounding Zones and Land Uses:

North: Zoned Pima County CR-2; FEMA floodplain area for Pantano Wash  
South: Zoned R-3 and O-2; Residential apartments and Office condominiums  
East: Zoned Pima County CR-2; FEMA floodplain area for Pantano Wash  
West: Zoned R-1; Residential townhomes

Previous Cases on the Property: No previous Special Exception cases on property

Related Cases:

SE-18-15 T-Mobile – Valencia Road, C-1 Zone – This was a request for approval of a wireless communication facility disguised as a broadleaf tree (monoelm), 70 feet in height in the C-1 zone. The special exception site is located approximately 400 feet south of Valencia Road and 1,400 feet east of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. On July 10, 2018, the Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance No. 11570, allowing the special exception.

SE-15-14 Verizon - Grant Road, C-1 Zone – This was a request for approval of a wireless communication facility concealed within an artificial palm tree (monopalm), 60 feet in height and associated equipment as a special exception land use in the C-1 zone. The special exception site is located 95 feet north of Grant Road and 67 feet west of Columbus Boulevard. On July 7, 2015, the Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance No. 11288, allowing the special exception.

SE-15-11 Verizon – Swan Road, C-1 Zone – This was a request for approval of a wireless communication facility concealed within an artificial pine tree (monopine), 60 feet in height and associated equipment as a special exception land use. The site is located approximately 300 feet south of Camp Lowell Road and 150 feet west of Swan Road. On September 9, 2015, the Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance No. 11301, allowing the special exception.

**Applicant's Request** – The applicant requests special exception approval for the placement of a 50-foot high wireless communications facility disguised as a pine tree (monopine) with associated ground equipment on a parcel zoned R-3 and developed with a residential apartment complex and parking.

**Planning Considerations** – Land use policy direction for this area is provided by the *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan (AAAP)* and *Plan Tucson*. The *AAAP* does not have any specific policies that provide land use direction for wireless communication. However, it supports development that protects and enhances the integrity of the neighborhood. The *AAAP* states under General goals to identify appropriate locations for new development. Also, Non-Residential Policy 1.d; requires appropriate design elements and buffering techniques during the rezoning and associated development plan review processes to ensure sensitive design of nonresidential development adjacent to established neighborhoods.

The rezoning site is located within an “Existing Neighborhood” as identified on the Future Growth Scenario Map of *Plan Tucson*. Policy LT28.1.2 requires that, if possible, wireless communication facilities be located, installed and maintained to minimize visual impacts and preserve views. The applicant states that the proposed wireless communication facility will help improve telecommunication services in the surrounding neighborhoods. *Plan Tucson* policies protect established residential neighborhoods by supporting compatible development, including non-residential uses, where the scale and intensity of use is compatible with adjacent uses. Policy LT28.1.3 calls for improving the appearance of above-ground utilities and structures and extending access to high-tech wireless communication facilities throughout the city.

The proposal is in general compliance with *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan* and *Plan Tucson*, and does not require a plan amendment. The plan policies generally support new cell tower proposals when designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and when buffering is provided.

The Pima Association of Governments - Transportation Planning Division (PAG-TPD) estimates that the proposed development will not generate additional measurable vehicle trips per day. Field inspection by staff indicates there are currently no billboards on the rezoning site.

### **Design Considerations**

**Land Use Compatibility** – The proposed monopine will include two antennas per sector with three sectors for a total of six antennas. The applicant has submitted photo-simulations of the monopine, showing the antennas concealed by artificial needles and branches. The applicant has also provided radio frequency maps showing a gap in wireless communication coverage in the area and how this gap will be resolved by the proposed WCF.

The WCF will be set back from Grant Road by approximately 1,500 feet, and will be placed within a 640-square foot (30' by 21'-4") lease area in an open area adjacent to an accessory structure near the northern part of the parking area for the apartment complex. While the monopine will be partially screened from adjacent development by existing buildings, it will be visible from surrounding residential neighborhoods, commercial development, and the adjacent Pantano River Park. Staff acknowledges that the proposed WCF will help improve telecom services to the established neighborhoods and businesses in the area.

Ground equipment will be housed inside equipment cabinets, located on a concrete slab, and will be screened from view by a 10-foot high masonry wall. Staff recommends that any graffiti be removed within 72 hours of observation. The proposal does not include a permanent backup generator.

In terms of wireless communication facilities, a stealth application is one that disguises the appearance of the pole and antennas to look like an element of the built or natural landscape, which could typically occur at the chosen location. A stealth application should be as close as possible in scale and appearance to the object it is disguised as, with no obvious unnatural elements. The success of a stealth application is dependent on the ability of the design and construction of the cellular site to fit into its surroundings to such a degree that it is not noticeable. Scale and proportion, site design, color, and materials, are particularly important in stealth applications insofar as they contribute, or do not contribute, to the ability of the facility to be as unobtrusive as possible. To ensure a successful stealth monopine at this location, the following standards should be incorporated into the conditions:

- The monopine shall not exceed 50 feet in height at top of the highest point;
- The pole shall be covered with cladding (bark) where visible, and painted/colored to resemble a live pine tree;
- Replacement of lost/damaged branches to be completed within ten working days of observation;
- All cables shall be run inside the pole, with no foot pegs or other visible appurtenances;
- All wires, wire ports and equipment shall be concealed behind the artificial branches and leaves;
- Antenna panels shall be colored or provided with socks in a light/shade pattern to better camouflage them;
- Ground equipment to be screened by a masonry wall.
- Any future collocated antennas shall be camouflaged and concealed by artificial branches and needles.

Road Improvements/Vehicular Access/Circulation – No road improvements are proposed with the project. Primary vehicular access to the WCF will be through the existing curb cuts and on-site parking area access lanes, and is identified by a 12-foot wide access and utility easement from Grant Road. According to the *Major Streets and Routes Plan*, Grant Road is designated as an arterial street with a future right-of-way of 120 feet.

Federal Regulations – Because this Special Exception application involves a wireless communication request, the Zoning Examiner’s consideration of the application is impacted by the application of federal laws specific to wireless communications. While federal law does not entirely preempt local decision-making authority based on legitimate zoning requirements, such as community aesthetics and compliance with stealthing requirements, it does impose the following limitations:

- 1) The decision on the application must occur within the “shot clock” period as provided under federal law, which for this type of application is 150 days. In this case, the application was accepted on May 24, 2019 and the “shot clock” period will expire on October 21, 2019. If a decision is not rendered within the “shot clock” period, the review and consideration process is presumed to be unreasonable and affords the applicant the opportunity to file a lawsuit. If sued, the City would need to prove that it acted “reasonably” when it failed to act within the established “shot clock” period. This means that the Zoning Examiner should come to a decision on this application within two weeks of the public hearing.
- 2) The evaluation of the request cannot include consideration of potential environmental or health effects of radio-frequency (RF) emissions where, as here, the facility will comply with FCC regulations and standard on such emissions.
- 3) The decision on the application cannot unreasonably discriminate among providers of functionally equivalent services. A denial may be deemed to be “unreasonable discrimination” if the applicant is similarly situated to other prior applicants and the proposed facility is no more intrusive than other prior applications that have been approved.
- 4) The decision may not have the effect of prohibiting the provision of wireless services, or of causing a significant gap in the applying provider’s coverage. In this context, the relevant issues are: (1) whether the applicant has shown a significant gap in service coverage; and (2) whether the proposal to fill this gap is the least intrusive means of doing so, or whether there are alternative sites that would fill the gap.
- 5) In the event of a denial, that decision and its reasons must be delivered to the applicant in writing, and must be supported by substantial evidence. Given these constraints, the Zoning Examiner’s consideration and decision on this application should focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated a significant coverage gap; whether that gap could be addressed through an installation at an alternative site; and whether the proposed concealment/stealthing measures are sufficient to meet the City’s requirements. The Zoning Examiner should also consider how this application compares to other prior applications for similar facilities. In the event of a denial, the reasons for the denial must be stated so they can be incorporated into a written decision and captured in the meeting minutes.

**Use-Specific Standards** – The applicant’s proposal requires approval as a Mayor and Council Special Exception and must meet the Use-Specific Standards of UDC Sections 4.9.13.O and 4.9.4.I.2, .3, and .7. The Mayor and Council may forward the request to the Design Review Board for design review and recommendation. Below is an analysis of the performance criteria.

4.9.4.I.7

The following requires approval as a special exception in accordance with Section 3.4.4, *Mayor and Council Special Exception Procedure*.

a. Wireless communication antennas, provided:

- (1) The tower or antennas are not permitted by other provisions of this section.

*The 50-foot tall monopine in the R-3 zone does not conform to other sections of the code because it does not meet a 2:1 setback from adjacent CR-2 residentially zoned property.*

- (2) New towers require a minimum separation of one mile from any existing tower, regardless of ownership, unless documentation establishes that no practical alternative exists.

*The nearest existing wireless communications facility is approximately 3,200 feet to the southeast of the proposed site. This facility is not suitable to fit within the existing sites on Verizon’s network. The search ring to resolve the coverage gap has a radius of approximately 0.25 miles.*

- (3) All appropriate measures shall be taken to conceal or disguise the tower and antenna from external view.

*The tower will be disguised as a pine tree (monopine).*

- (4) All appropriate measures shall be taken to reduce the negative proliferation of visible towers and antennae by the collocation of new antennae on existing towers or with the facilities of other providers which are located or planned for development within the proposed service area.

*The nearest existing WCF is approximately 3,200 feet to the southeast and is not suited for collocation to provide coverage. The search ring to resolve the coverage gap has a radius of approximately 0.25 miles.*

- (5) Notice shall be provided to all agents designated at least 15 days prior to the date of the public hearing before the Zoning Examiner.

*All policies of the Mayor and Council Special Exception Process shall be followed accordingly.*

Staff finds the proposal to be in compliance with the *UDC* Use-Specific Standards.

**Conclusion** – The proposal is in compliance with the performance criteria for a wireless communication facility. The special exception request is consistent with policy direction in the *Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan* and *Plan Tucson*, which support development designed to be compatible with and sensitive to surrounding land uses. The proposed WCF has been designed to blend in with the surroundings and does not conflict with plan policies. Subject to compliance with the attached preliminary conditions, approval of the requested special exception is appropriate.

### PROCEDURAL

1. A site plan in substantial compliance with the preliminary development plan dated May 14, 2019, is to be submitted and approved in accordance with *Administrative Manual*, Section 2-06.
2. The property owner shall execute a waiver of potential claims under A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 for this zoning amendment as permitted by A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 (I) in the form approved by the City Attorney and titled "Agreement to Waive Any Claims Against the City for Special Exception Land Use".
3. Historic or prehistoric features or artifacts discovered during future ground disturbing activities should be reported to the City of Tucson Archaeologist. Pursuant to A.R.S. 41-865 the discovery of human remains and associated objects found on private lands in Arizona must be reported to the Director of Arizona State Museum.
4. Any relocation, modification, etc., of existing utilities and/or public improvements necessitated by the proposed development shall be at no expense to the public.
5. Five years are allowed from the date of initial authorization to implement and effectuate all Code requirements and conditions of the special exception land use.
6. A copy of the Special Exception decision letter shall be included with the site plan at the time of permit application submittal.
7. Plans for future carriers must be approved through a separate special exception process.
8. According to the FAA Notice Criteria Tool, this project is located in proximity to a navigation facility and could impact navigation signal reception. The applicant shall file Form 7460 with the FAA at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp> at least 45 days before construction activities begin in order to allow sufficient time to respond to any concerns which are identified by the FAA. Any cranes used which are used must also be identified with Form 7460.

### LAND USE COMPATABILITY / CONCEALMENT MEASURES

9. The wireless communication monopine, including attachments such as antenna panels and artificial branches and leaves, shall not exceed fifty (50) feet in height from grade elevation.
10. The antennas shall be covered in camouflaged socks to blend with the colors of the artificial branches and needles of the monopine.

11. The pole shall be covered with cladding (faux bark) wherever the pole is visible, and be painted to resemble a live pine tree.
12. Replacement of lost/damaged artificial branches/needles is to be completed within ten (10) working days of observation and artificial branches/needles shall be colored to match live branches/needles as closely as possible.
13. Verizon shall routinely monitor the facility and repair/replace any artificial branches that may become worn or damaged through time.
14. All wire ports shall be concealed behind the antennas and all equipment shall be mounted behind the antenna panels.
15. Ground equipment and monopine to be located within lease area as depicted on the preliminary development plan dated May 14, 2019.
16. All walls visible from a public right-of-way and/or adjacent to existing residential development are to be painted with graffiti-resistant paint.
17. Six-(6) inch wide fence block or greater shall be used for perimeter walls. Graffiti shall be removed from walls within seventy-two (72) hours of discovery or notification.
18. There shall be no exterior wiring, visible footpegs, portals, cabling or cable shrouds, or other unnatural appearing features on the monopine.

AGREEMENT TO WAIVE ANY CLAIMS  
AGAINST THE CITY FOR ZONING AMENDMENT

This agreement ( "**Agreement**") is entered into between \_\_\_\_\_, as the owner of the property described herein ("**Owner**") and the City of Tucson ("**City**") to waive any and all claims for diminution of value that may be based upon action by the City in response to a request from the Owner. This Agreement is entered into in conformance with A.R.S. §12-1134(I).

The Owner is the holder of fee title to the property located at \_\_\_\_\_, Tucson, Arizona, (the "Property") which is more fully described in the Owner's application to the City in Case SE-19-14 and incorporated herein. The Owner, or the authorized agent of the Owner, has submitted an application to the City requesting that the City grant a Special Exception Land Use for the Property. The Owner has requested this action because the Owner has plans for the development of the Property that require the Special Exception Land Use. The Owner believes that the Special Exception Land Use for the Property will increase the value and development potential of the Property, and that this outweighs any rights or remedies that may be obtained under A.R.S. §12-1134 et. seq.

By signing this Agreement, the Owner waives any right or claim that may arise under A.R.S. §12-1134, including any claim for the reduction in the value of the Property, as a result of the enactment of the Special Exception Land Use in Case SE-19-14.

The Owner understands that City staff may propose, the Zoning Examiner may recommend and the Mayor and Council may adopt conditions to the requested Special Exception Land Use that limit the potential development of the Property. The Owner acknowledges that the Special Exception Land Use and conditions are a single, integrated legislative approval. The Owner agrees and consents to all conditions that may be imposed. The Owner retains the right to withdraw the Special Exception Land Use application prior to a vote by the Mayor and Council or to decline to implement the necessary requirements to effectuate the Special Exception Land Use if the Owner disagrees with any conditions that are proposed or approved. If the Owner does not withdraw the application, the Owner shall be deemed to have accepted all adopted conditions to the requested Special Exception Land Use. If the Owner withdraws the application or does not effectuate the Special Exception Land Use, this Agreement is null and void.

This Agreement is entered into in Arizona and will be construed and interpreted under the laws of the State of Arizona. The Owner has agreed to the form of this Agreement provided and approved by the City Attorney. The Owner has had the opportunity to consult with an attorney of the Owner's choice prior to entering this Agreement and enters it fully understanding that the Owner is waiving the rights and remedies as set forth herein.

Upon execution, this Agreement shall be recorded in the Office of the Pima County Recorder.

The Owner warrants and represents that the person or persons listed herein as the Owner is/are the owner in fee title of the Property. The Owner further agrees to indemnify and hold the City of Tucson, its officers, employees and agents harmless from any and all claims, causes of action, demands, losses, costs and expenses based upon an alleged reduction of value of the Property as a result of the City's action in Case SE-19-14.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Individual, Corporation, Partnership, or LLC, as applicable)

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Individual, Corporation, Partnership, or LLC, as applicable)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Representative, if applicable)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Representative, if applicable)

Its: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of Individual Signing in Representative Capacity)

Its: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of Individual Signing in Representative Capacity)

State of Arizona )  
 )  
County of \_\_\_\_\_)

On this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_, before me personally appeared \_\_\_\_\_ on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person who he or she claims to be, and acknowledged that he or she signed the above/attached document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

My Commission expires:  
\_\_\_\_\_

City of Tucson, an Arizona municipal Corporation:

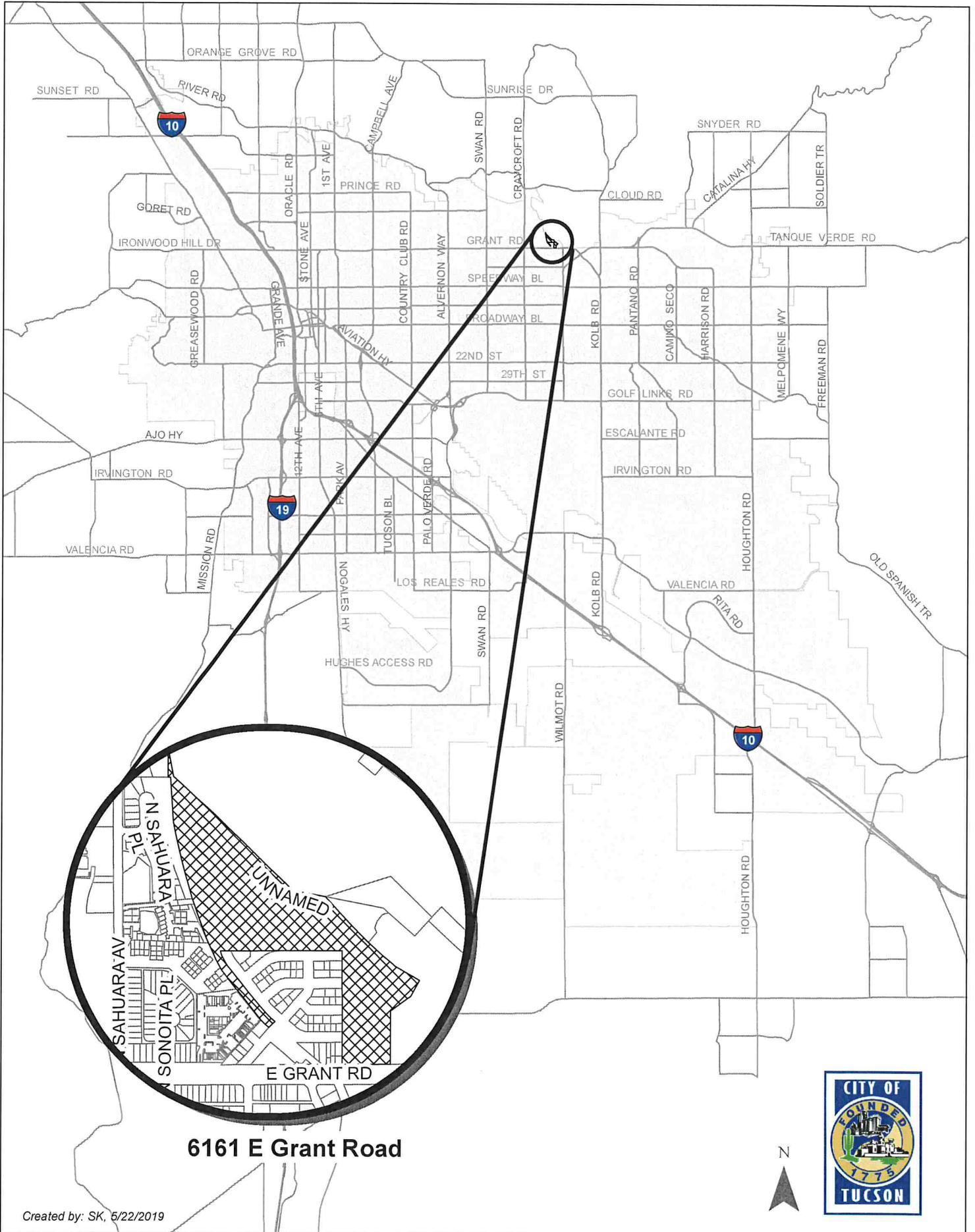
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Planning & Development Services Department

This form has been approved by the City Attorney.





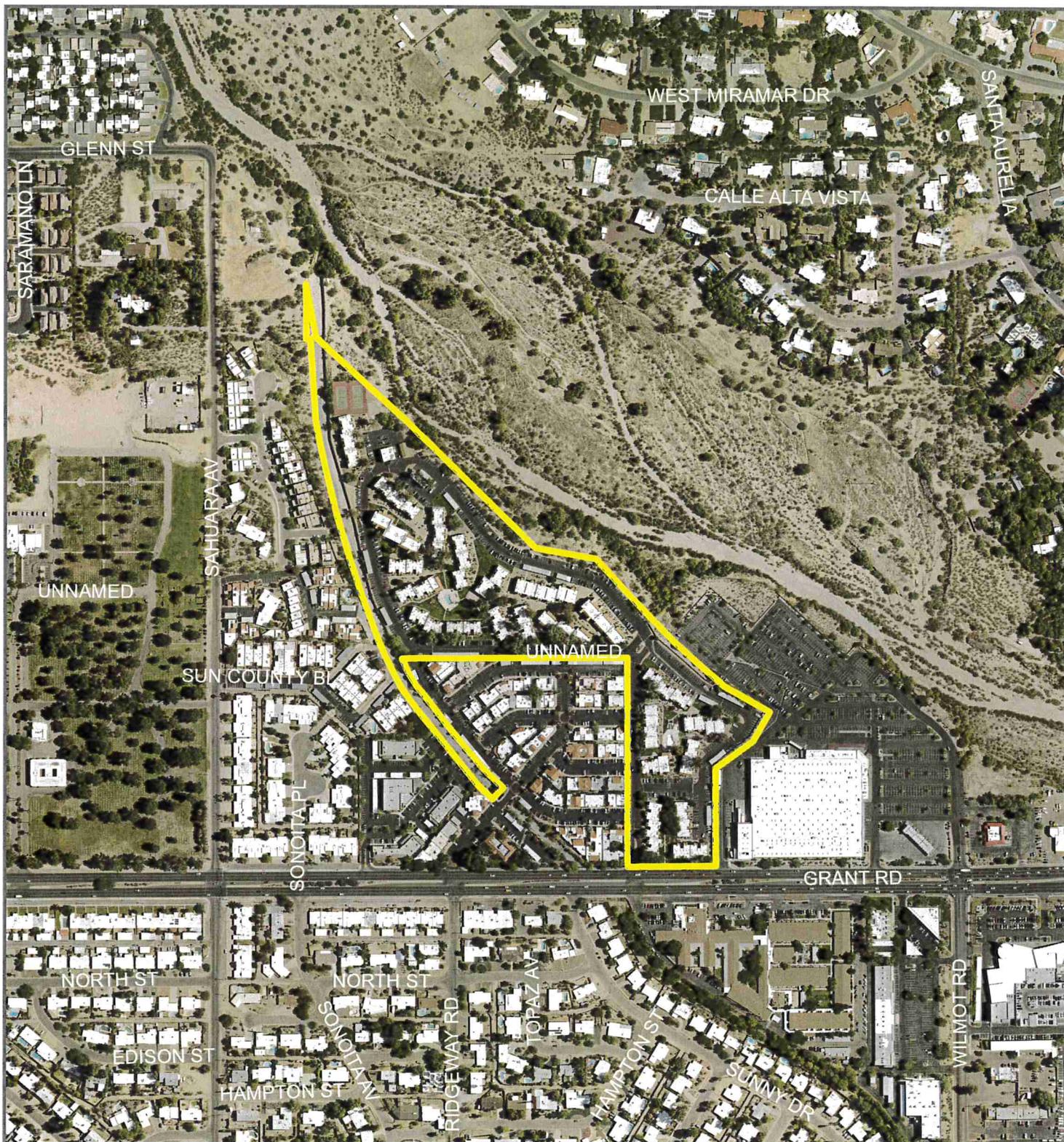
# SE-19-14 Verizon - 6161 E. Grant Road



**6161 E Grant Road**

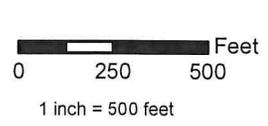


SE-19-14  
Verizon - 6161 E. Grant Road

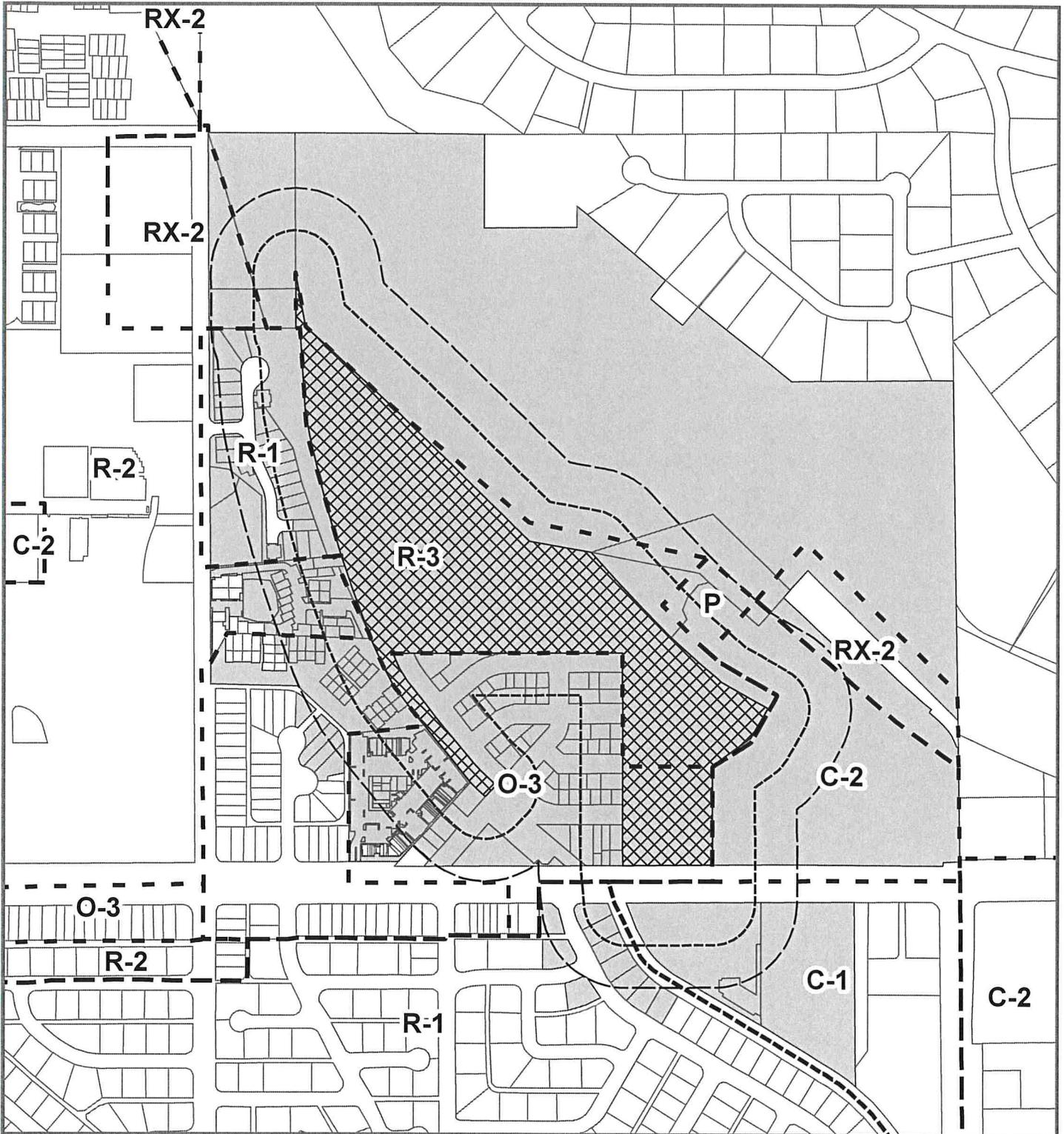


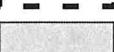
 Subject Property

Address: 6161 E Grant Rd  
Base Maps: Twp.13S Range 14E Sec.36  
Ward: 2

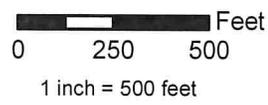


SE-19-14  
Verizon - 6161 E. Grant Road



-  Subject Property
-  Protest Area (150 ft. Radius)
-  Notification Area (300 ft. Radius)
-  Zone Boundaries
-  Properties Notified

Address: 6161 E Grant Rd  
Base Maps: Twp.13S Range 14E Sec.36  
Ward: 2





## Special Exception Approval – Protest Form

If you wish to submit a written protest or approval, this form is provided for your convenience. Please print your comments below, sign your name, and mail to the Rezoning Section of the Planning and Development Services Department at the address on the reverse side (you will need to attach postage). The number of approvals and protests along with protest calculations will be reported at the Zoning Examiner’s public hearing.

**Approvals and protests must have an owner’s signature to be recorded.**

If protests are filed from property owners representing 20% or more by area in any quadrant of the area located within a 150 foot radius of the parcel(s) on which the rezoning is proposed, an affirmative vote of ¾ of the Mayor and Council will be required to approve the rezoning ordinance.

**Case: SE-19-14 Verizon – 6161 E. Grant Road, R-3 Zone Ward #2**

\_\_\_\_\_  
I/We the undersigned property owners, wish to

- APPROVE the proposed special exception.  
 PROTEST the proposed special exception.

**Reason:**

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PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME	PLEASE PRINT MAILING ADDRESS	PLEASE PRINT LEGAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION		
		Subdivision	Block	Lot

Owner’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Place  
Stamp  
Here

City of Tucson  
**Planning and Development Services Department**  
Rezoning Section  
201 N. Stone  
P.O. Box 27210  
Tucson, Arizona 85726-7210

SE-19-14

Expose this flap - Affix stamp and return

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City of Tucson PMc  
Planning and Development Services  
Department -Rezoning Section  
201 N. Stone Avenue  
P.O. BOX 27210  
Tucson, Arizona 85726-7210

SE-19-14  
IMPORTANT REZONING NOTICE ENCLOSED