

TOWN *Of* PARADISE VALLEY



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Stanton and Town Council Members

FROM: Andrew Ching, Town Manager
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DATE: May 14, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Community Development Department – Planning Division
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AGENDA TITLE: Discussion and Possible Action on Statement of Direction (SUP-26-02) Franciscan Renewal Center Major Special Use Permit Amendment 5802 E Lincoln Drive (APN 169-31-020)

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the Statement of Direction for Franciscan Renewal Center for the addition of solar panel systems on four (4) new parking lot shade structures, adding approximately 19,200 square-feet of floor area, in the western/southwestern portion of the parking lot.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Request

The applicant requests a Statement of Direction for a Major Special Use Permit amendment (SUP-26-02) regarding the proposed addition of solar panel system on four (4) new parking lot shade structures on the Franciscan Renewal Center property (approximately 4.7 acres) located at 5802 E Lincoln Drive (Maricopa County Assessor Number 169-31-020) submitted by Mike Slivers, on behalf of Franciscan Renewal Center.

Location

Franciscan Renewal Center is a place of worship located east of the northeast corner of Lincoln Drive and Smoke Tree Lane. It fronts Lincoln Drive, a major arterial within the Town. To the immediate north and west of the church are the R-43-zoned lots (rear yards) of the Lincoln Drive Vista subdivision. To the east is the majority of the Franciscan Renewal Center church site, which is within the Maricopa County jurisdiction (Maricopa County Assessor Number 169-34-001).

History

Franciscan renewal Center gained Special Use Permit (SUP) approval in December 2013. In June 2018, the Town granted permit approval to begin construction of the Community Life Center (BD18-41667). Two formal amendments have been approved throughout the history of the church. Please reference the SUP History Summary (Exhibit C) for a brief history of the amendments to the church's SUP.

Town Council Discussion

The Town Council reviewed the draft Statement of Direction (SOD) at the April 28th study session. Based on the direction given, there are no changes to the Statement of Direction reviewed on April 28th.

The Town Council had several questions. These included the following:

- Possible impact of the proposed solar panels for the residences to the north and west, both regarding the arrays themselves and the proposed additional tree plantings. These will be areas the Planning Commission will focus on during their review.
- The renovation of the Franciscan Renewal Center monument sign along Lincoln Drive located on the Maricopa County parcel (particularly the brightness). The review and approval of this sign fall under Maricopa County jurisdiction. The renovations kept the existing sign shape and height. However, Town staff will coordinate separately from SUP-26-02 with the Franciscan Renewal Center leadership to understand their monument sign lighting as the prior sign was illuminated.
- Clarification on the renderings and site plan, including adding north arrows, clearly indicating locations and where maximum height of tilt of the structure will reside. The presentation and certain plans were updated with this SOD packet, and any other necessary updates will be made for the Planning Commission review step.
- Provide the existing wall height that is along the west portion of the site. This wall is both 6-foot-tall and 8-foot-tall in some sections, which are compliant with Article XXIV, Walls and Fences, of the Town Zoning Ordinance requirements.
- Questions on the notice, with a focus on the homeowners to the west of the proposed parking lot shade structures with solar panels. The noticing for a Major Special Use Permit amendment includes several formats and occurs at different stages of the application process. The applicant is required to hold a Citizen Review Session (neighborhood meeting) prior to Planning Commission recommendation. All properties within a 1,500-foot radius of the subject site will be noticed of this neighborhood meeting. The Town also requires noticing for the public hearings by the Planning Commission and the Town Council. This noticing includes the 1,500-foot mailing, property posting on the subject site, and newspaper notice. In response to the Town Council input from the last study session regarding the proposed trees (which the applicant has included a hedge option), the applicant also has sent out a voluntary notice regarding the project solely to the residences to the direct west and north on April 28th (Attachment F).

Scope of the Request

The scope of the request is a Major SUP amendment of the church's zoning for the addition of solar panel systems on four (4) new parking lot shade structures in the western/southwestern portion of the parking lot. Parking structure/array one is approximately 3,745.6 square-feet, structure/array two is approximately 4,370.44 square-feet, structure/array is approximately 4,214.23 square-feet, and structure/array four is approximately 6,869.77 square-feet – totaling 19,200.04 square-feet of addition. The existing floor area on the lot is 12,281 square-feet (Community Life Center). The new total lot square-footage is 31,581.04 square-feet, totaling 15.41% floor area ratio (31,581.04 square-feet/204,994 square-feet of the lot). A total floor area ratio increase of 9.42% (5.99% existing and 15.41% proposed).

This request requires a Major SUP application since the shade structures constitute an increase of more than 40% (156% of increased floor area) upon the existing total floor area on this site (Section 1102.7 of the Zoning Ordinance), with a Major SUP application requiring a Statement of Direction (Section 1102.8.C of the Zoning Ordinance). No new lighting or removal of lighting is being proposed with the new solar structures. Two (2) light poles will be lowered under Array One. Existing output is compliant at 0.75-foot candles at the property line (refer to Attachment D for previously approved lighting plan). Removal of 16 trees will be necessary in order to install the four new shade structures. The applicant is proposing to install an additional 20 pollinators and milkweed be planted in place of the trees. Seven (7) new Willow Accacia trees will also be planted adjacent to the west property line to assist in providing additional screening of the shade structures from the residential lots to the west. Per Town Council direction, the applicant is also proposing a Red-tip Photinia hedge as an alternate to the Willow Acacia, which does not grow

to the maximum height of the Accacia. Vegetation selection will be determined by adjacent residents, Planning Commission and Town Council discretion.

Statement of Direction (SOD)

The draft SOD (Attachment E) provides the Planning Commission with a deadline on or before September 1, 2026 to complete their review and make a recommendation to the Town Council. The expectation is the applicant will provide all necessary information for the Planning Commission to render a recommendation sooner.

The SOD is not a final decision of the Town Council and creates no vested right to the final action of this Special Use Permit. Rather, a SOD provides the Planning Commission with general guidance on a variety of development aspects of the project (such as height, setbacks, lighting, noise, etc.), guidance on procedural aspects (such as application timing/completion of review), and guidance on policy aspects (such as identifying appropriate and acceptable standards, uses, and compatibility for the SUP) to respond to the unique aspects of each SUP amendment. The full merits of the request are reviewed in detail during the Planning Commission review and recommendation process, with a full review and decision by the Town Council after the Planning Commission makes a formal recommendation.

Below is a summary of the draft SOD as it relates to how the proposed request compares to the SUP Guidelines. The Planning Commission will focus their review on the visible, audible, and operational effects the amendment may have on the neighbors.

1. Use. The primary church use of the site will not be altered. The solar shade structure additions are compliant with the use and are found on other religious campuses within the Town of Paradise Valley (i.e. First Southern Baptist Church in 2023 and Temple Solel Intermediate Amendment in 2013). The primary areas of study for the Planning Commission include, and are not limited to, the design, location, impact of the shade structure to the surrounding area outside the site (specifically noise, light, and visibility/design of the solar panels), and use of landscaping to help screen the structure.
2. Height. SUP Guidelines suggest a maximum height of 24 feet for accessory structures. The guidelines further apply the Open Space Criteria whereby no structure would penetrate an imaginary plane starting at a setback of 20-feet from all property lines at 16-feet above natural grade which slopes upward at a ratio of one foot vertically for each five-feet horizontally. The proposed accessory structures all have a minimum clearance height of 11 feet from grade and each measure 16 feet to the top of structure from grade. This maximum height also aligns with the maximum accessory structure height for residentially zoned lots (R-43 specifically). The arrays do differ in both length and width. Array One spans 41-feet 6-inches across the western elevation and 91-feet 11-inches along the southern elevation. Array Two and Three each span 41-feet 8-inches across the southern elevation and 211-feet and 11-inches along the eastern elevation. Finally, Array Four spans 41-feet 8-inches across the southern elevation and 166-feet 10-inches along the western elevation. Per Open Space Criteria requirements, the provided setback of 42-feet 8-inches for Array Four (closest to a particular property line) allows for a height of ± 20 -feet 5-inches – well above the proposed maximum height of 16 feet. Thus, the structures easily comply.

The Planning Commission shall evaluate the proposed height and viewsheds based on its visibility of the proposed shade structures as seen from off-site, as well as the structure's appropriate scale, with special consideration given to the views from the west and north side bordering R-43 residential homes and from Lincoln Drive to the south.

3. Setbacks. SUP Guidelines as applied to this site suggest that the setbacks to the exterior property lines are 60-feet adjoining a residential property and 40-feet
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adjoining a public street. The proposed setbacks for Array One are 125-feet and 8-inches from the western property line (adjacent to R-43 zoned residential lots), 356-feet and 7-inches from the northern property line (adjacent to R-43 zoned residential lots), 114-feet and 11-inches from the eastern property line (Franciscan Renewal Center County parcel), and 214-feet and 3-inches from the southern property line (Lincoln Drive). Arrays Two and Three are setback 99-feet and 1-inch from the western property line, 109-feet and 10-inches from the northern property line, 192-feet and 5-inches from the east property line, and 318-feet and 4-inches from the southern property line. Array Four setbacks are 42-feet 8-inches from the western property line, 131-feet and 2-inches from the northern property line, and 339-feet and 1-inch from the southern property line. Array Four is setback less than the 60-foot SUP Guideline, though the height is well below what the Open Space Criteria allows (42-foot 8-inch setback allows for a maximum 20-foot 5-inch height). The Planning Commission shall explore appropriate setbacks for each shade structure.

The Town Council recognizes that too many and/or overly detailed plans and documents may create a substantial financial burden on the applicant. Therefore, the Planning Commission shall consider requesting and/or requiring only the necessary plans and documents needed to evaluate and complete the Major SUP Amendment.

Process

Section 1102.3.C of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Town Council issue a SOD to the Planning Commission for a Major SUP Amendment before their review of the request. The process for the SUP request is a pre-application review by the Town staff (completed), Town staff generated draft SOD for the Town Council for their review and issuance (in review), Planning Commission review of the SUP, a Citizen Review Session (neighborhood meeting) held by the applicant, a Planning Commission public hearing on the SUP for their recommendation to Town Council, and Town Council study session and Town Council public hearing for action on the SUP.

Public Comment

There is no required noticing with the SOD. All public comment and outreach efforts detailed after SOD and as required by code in the Citizen Review Session (scheduled for May 28th) will be provided during the Planning Commission and Town Council process. Voluntary notice to the affected residences to the west and north was sent on April 28th (Attachment F).

Next Steps

Upon approval of the SOD, the application will move to the Planning Commission for their review and recommendation before going back to the Town Council.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Staff Report
 - B. Vicinity & Related Maps
 - C. SUP History Summary
 - D. Narrative & Plans
 - E. Statement of Direction
 - F. Notification Material
 - G. Presentation
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