

SUP-25-06 Phoenix Country Day School

Statement of Direction

February 26, 2026

Phoenix Country Day School (located at 3901 E Stanford Drive) submitted an Intermediate Special Use Permit (SUP) amendment application to construct a new Wellness Center building, update/renovate the existing Baseball Field, and add two digital signs in the parking lot adjacent to existing buildings.

The site is approximately 38.8 acres. It adjoins the City of Phoenix to the east (along 40th Street with single-family residential on 24,000 minimum square foot lots) and commercial uses to the south. Within the Town limits, the site adjoins Stanford Drive to the north (with the Camelback Bible Church located across the street) and R-43 single-family residential zoned properties to the west (which were annexed into the Town at nonconforming sizes that range from one quarter of an acre to one third of an acre). The Cudia City Wash (also referred to as the Echo Canyon Wash) bisects the property/campus with the lower and middle school grade activities generally north of the wash and the upper grade school activities south of the wash.

Section 1102.3 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance states the Town Council must issue a Statement of Direction (SOD) for the Special Use Permit application within 45 days of the first staff presentation. In this case, the SOD must be issued on or before March 19, 2026.

The SOD is not a final decision of the Town Council and does not create any vested rights to the approval of a SUP. Any application for a SUP does not rely solely upon the matters addressed in the SOD. The following is the SOD for the Phoenix Country Day School new Wellness Center Building, updated baseball field, new digital signs and their associated improvements:

- The General Plan encourages the renovation of SUP sites while protecting the Town's low-density residential character and quality of life. The Town shall require development or redevelopment within Special Use Permit properties to provide any necessary mitigation achieved through context and scale, architectural design, setbacks, sound moderation, resort property programming, and landscape buffering (General Plan Land Use Policy LU.3.2).
- The Town shall recognize and support the continued vitality of the places of worship and schools and the added value they bring to the community (General Plan Community Character & Housing Policy CC&H 4.3)
- Other General Plan policies related to SUP properties encourage the use of enhanced aesthetics, buffers between uses of significantly differing function and intensity, the integration of pedestrian amenities, attractive streetscapes, use of shade trees, and the integration of art.

The Planning Commission shall focus their review on the visible, audible, and operational effects the intermediate amendment may have on the neighbors. In particular, the Planning Commission shall focus their review on:

1. **Use.** *The use of the private school is not altered by this request. The proposed Wellness Center building, the updated/renovated baseball field, and new digital signs will complement existing school uses, which are compliant with Section 1102.2, Uses Permitted, of the Town's Zoning Ordinance (for private schools).*

The primary areas for the Planning Commission to study include, and are not limited to, the design/layout of the building, the impact of the Wellness Center to the surrounding area outside the site (specifically traffic impact, noise, and light), as well as the specific operational factors (hours of operation, etc.).

2. **Noise Mitigation/Impact.** *The existing baseball field is located next to the western residential properties at a setback of approximately 28 feet from the western property line and the new Wellness Center building is setback approximately 344 feet from the western property line. The frequency of use of the baseball field will remain consistent with its current times of use. The Wellness Center will be used during school hours and in conjunction with school events. The information digital signs will not have speakers and are not designed to make noise and therefore should have no noise impacts on the neighboring properties.*

The primary areas for Planning Commission study include, and are not limited to, the noise impacts the baseball field may have on the neighboring properties, the increase in spectator seating capacity, and any applicable mitigation factors.

3. **Setbacks & Height.** *Setbacks. SUP Guidelines as applied to this site suggest that the building setback adjoining a public street (Stanford Drive) is 40 feet and 60 feet adjoining residential.*

Heights. The SUP Guidelines suggest a maximum height of 35 feet for principal structures at private schools. 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 (which limits the building height to 35 feet at a setback of 115 feet).

Renovated Baseball Field. The SUP Guidelines do not identify recommended setbacks and heights for sports fields and athletic equipment. The baseball field improvements are replacing many of the existing structures and facilities with new ones at similar heights and locations. The setback of the field fencing is approximately 28 feet from the west (residential) property line. The ballfield structures (such as the batting cage at approximately 12-foot tall) are the nearest to the west (residential) property line at a setback of 60 feet, with the items like the scoreboard (at 20 feet tall) and bleachers (at 12 feet tall) setback 200 feet or more from the west (residential) property line.

Wellness Center. The proposed Wellness Center building meets recommended height and setback requirements. The building has different heights ranging from approximately 19 feet to 22 feet tall, does not encroach into the Open Space Criteria, and is setback 344 feet from the closest property line.

Digital Signs. Informational signs are customary to schools; however, the SUP Guidelines do not address these types of signs and these would be the first digital signs on a SUP property. However, the two public schools within the Town limits have digital signs (but are not subject to Town regulations). The top of the signs are 10 feet

2 inches and 12 feet to the top of the monument structure, and setback approximately 200 feet from the property of the street.

The primary areas for the Planning Commission to study include, and are not limited to, the lighting impact of the signs to the surrounding neighbors/area outside the site (which may be mitigated via location, height, additional landscape or other screening, and lighting output).

4. **Landscaping/Buffers**. *SUP Guidelines suggest a 30-foot-wide landscape buffer along a collector street (Stanford Drive) and a 40-foot-wide landscape buffer adjoining residential (west property line).*

If permissible, the Planning Commission shall focus their review on placing landscaping in the western/SRP utility easement to help create a landscape buffer next to the baseball field. The Planning Commission shall also focus their review on the landscaping around the new Wellness Center building and identify if additional landscaping should be placed along the west side/area of the building.

5. **Exterior Lighting**. *SUP Guidelines suggest that exterior lighting be hooded and shielded so as not to be visible from an adjacent property, the brightness for any up-lighting not exceed 300 lumens, pole lights be a maximum height of 16 feet tall (although encouragement is for pole fixtures at lower heights), fixtures be minimally setback equal to the height of the fixture, and the maximum illumination output be 0.5 foot candles adjacent to residential and 0.75 foot candles along other property lines (Section 1023, Zoning Ordinance). The Town typically suggests a color temperature of not more than 3,000 Kelvins to maintain a warm and soft color scale. The Wellness Center Building lighting is compliant with Town guidelines based on the material submitted to date. There is no proposed lighting for the renovated baseball field. However, the applicant needs to provide illumination information on the digital information signs.*

The focus areas for Planning Commission review shall include the mounted height of lighting on the Wellness Center building and how illumination might wash the building. The hours of operation of the new lighting shall also be examined.

The applicant must provide lighting information (e.g. cut sheets, photometric, watts, lumens, etc.) on the digital information signs. The Planning Commission review shall focus on, and are not limited to, the lighting impact of the digital information signs to the surrounding neighbors/area outside the site (which may be mitigated via location, height, size, additional landscape or other screening, and lighting output).

6. **Signage.** *The SUP Guidelines suggest up to one identification/monument sign at each entrance not more than 8 feet tall and a sign area not more than 32 square feet at each entrance. Directional signs typically shall not exceed 12 square feet in area and 5 feet tall. The Wellness Center signage will complement and mimic the existing signage on campus and will not be illuminated. Also, the applicant needs to provide lighting information on the digital information signs to fully evaluate this request.*

The applicant must provide lighting information (e.g. cut sheets, photometric, watts, lumens, etc.) on the digital information signs. The Planning Commission review shall focus on, and are not limited to, the lighting impact of the digital information signs to the surrounding neighbors/area outside the site (which may be mitigated via location, height, size, and lighting output).

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 Intermediate SUP Amendment.

As per Section 1102.3.C.3.c of the Zoning Ordinance, at any time during the review process, the Planning Commission may request clarification and/or expansion of this Statement of Direction based on additional information. The Planning Commission shall complete their review and make a recommendation to the Town Council on or before March 19th, 2026. The expectation is the applicant will provide all necessary information for the Planning Commission to complete their review and render a recommendation prior to April 21st.