



Requesting Department:
Development Services

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

THRU: Brett Burningham, Development Services Director

**FROM: Erik Swanson, Interim Planning Administrator
Kyle Barichello, Senior Planner**

RE: Public Hearing and Possible Action on P19-0032 Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone, a request from Sean Lake, Pew and Lake PLC, on behalf of Mark Schnepf, for a PAD Rezone of approximately 225 acres from R1-43 to Agritainment (AT)/PAD and C-2 (Commercial) to allow future development of the existing Schnepf Farms property, located at the northwest corner of Riggs and Rittenhouse roads.

DATE: May 13, 2020

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of P19-0032 Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone, subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in this report.

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to recommend approval of P19-0032 Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone, subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in this report.

RELEVANT COUNCIL GOAL(S)



Secure Future



Effective Government

SUMMARY

This proposal consists of a request from Sean Lake, Pew and Lake PLC, on behalf of Mark Schnepf, to rezone approximately 225 acres from R1-43 to Agritainment/PAD and

C-2 (General Commercial) to allow the continued operation and future development of Schnepf Farms, located at the northwest corner of Riggs and Rittenhouse roads.

HISTORY

December 16, 2015: The Town Council approves GPA15-033 (Resolution 1077-15) "South SAP Major General Plan Amendment."

DISCUSSION

Schnepf Farms started in Queen Creek in 1941 when Jack and Maude Schnepf purchased 640 acres of desert land and sent their oldest son and daughter-in-law to start farming the property. What started as a cotton farm quickly expanded to be over 5,000 acres by the early 1970's growing about 20 different crops from grapes to potatoes. Downsizing of the farm started in the late 70's when the farm economy turned south. Downsizing continued through the years and the farm today is "rightsized" at approximately 250 acres.

In the 1990's Mark and Carrie Schnepf, the current owners of Schnepf Farms, began to transform and reinvent the farm from the production of only traditional crops, to one of the largest Agritainment venues in the Southwest. Agritainment is a relatively new word coined in part by the Schnepfs. As the name implies, agriculture is combined with entertainment to create interesting, educational, and entertaining farm experiences for guests of all ages. The farm is currently home to wedding venues, concert stages, U-Pick orchards, a "glamping" area, bakery and farm store.

Consistent with the Agritainment theme, the proposed Conceptual Master Plan incorporates a variety of elements that will add to the entertainment value of the project and generate additional visitors and activity within the area. Vision images as well as types of future uses and expansion plans have been provided by the applicant to illustrate the overall theme and intent for Schnepf Farms, as referenced in the South Specific Area Plan (SSAP). For reference, all of the uses permitted under the Agritainment zoning district at the Schnepf Farms are shown in Table 4.6-1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning and Planned Area Development (PAD)

The Agritainment General Plan Land Use designation is intended to provide for land uses that support agriculture and agriculture-oriented activities in the Town, while offering flexibility to accommodate these uses under one designation. Such uses shall be compatible with agriculture, and may include uses that support open space, natural resource management, outdoor recreation, enjoyment of scenic beauty, educational experiences, commercial, and residential uses.

At this time, the applicant is not requesting formal site plan or building design approval. Rather, the purpose of this application is to establish an Agritainment PAD to conceptually outline its theming, design guidelines, and overall vision that will shape and inspire its

future development. Within the attached project narrative is the vision for the execution of this Agritainment use through “Character and Concept Design Guidelines.”

The PAD Overlay in the Agritainment Zoning District also allows for more flexibility and efficiency in dealing with phasing and site plan review by the Town. Accordingly, future site plan reviews for the Schnepf Farms shall consider the site, landscape, and architectural design of all structures, and related on-site or off-site improvements to promote the vision and intent of the Schnepf Farms Character and Concept Design Guidelines. Additionally, the proposed Agritainment Planned Area Development (PAD) is subject to the following “Character and Concept Design Guidelines”:

- Theme and Design
- Design Features
- Landscaping.
- Lighting
- Open Space.
- Paving.
- Pathways/Accessibility
- Signage.
- Walls and Fencing
- Structural Characteristics

Information regarding these Agritainment elements are explained in detail within the narrative.

PAD Findings of Fact

As stated in Section 4.11 of the Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the Planned Area Development Overlay District (PAD) is to provide for the orderly development of land consistent with the Town of Queen Creek General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, while permitting flexibility in the design, construction and processing of residential, commercial and/or industrial developments of a quality which could not be achieved by traditional lot by lot development under conventional zoning concepts. In order to grant the PAD Overlay Zoning District, the following findings of fact must be made:

- a. That the requested modifications to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the underlying Zoning Districts are in the best interests of the Town and are beneficial to the Town in that a higher quality or more appropriate design, or economic benefits (such as employment) can be achieved by not requiring strict adherence to the terms and regulations of the zoning ordinance;

Response: *The requested modifications to the Zoning Ordinance are consistent with the Section 4.11 Planned Overlay District and are consistent with the flexibility encouraged for the Agritainment Zoning District.*

- b. That strict adherence to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance is not required in order to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the future occupants of the proposed development;

Response: *The findings of the PAD proposal ensures adequate measures are taken to avoid impacts to the health, safety, and welfare of the future use of the property. All uses proposed on the property are consistent with the permitted uses for the AT Zoning District.*

- c. That strict adherence to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance is not required in order to ensure that property values of adjacent properties will not be reduced;

Response: *Due to the uniqueness of the Schnepf Farms property, the flexibility in the development standards allows the property to develop in a unique way true to the existing character of Schnepf Farms as well as the future Agritainment style uses proposed on the property. This flexibility is also required by the AT Zoning District.*

- d. That the proposed development is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan.

Response: *The proposed development plan is consistent with the goals and objectives within both the General Plan and the SSAP.*

The applicant has addressed all of the findings of facts in the PAD narrative which are in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

ANALYSIS

Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone Project Information	
Site Location	Northwest corner of Riggs and Rittenhouse Roads
Current Zoning	R1-43, R1-18, C-2, EMP-A
Proposed Zoning	Agritainment/PAD and C-2
General Plan Designations	Special District 1: Agritainment Neighborhood
Surrounding Zoning:	
North	R1-43 (Rural Estate District)
South	R1-5 (Harvest at QC)
East	R1-18 (Suburban Residential Type B) C-2 (General Commercial) EMP-A (Light Industrial) AT (Queen Creek Olive Mill)
West	RU-43 (Unincorporated Maricopa County)

Gross Acreage	225 acres
Open Space Acreage: (Required)	15% minimum
Landscape Buffer Setback(s)	No less than 15 feet around the perimeter
Internal Building Setback(s)	0 feet (subject to Building Code)
Lot Coverage	N/A

General Plan Review: The current 2018 General Plan designations for this property are “Special District 1: Agritainment” and “Neighborhood.” Approximately 19 acres fall under the “Neighborhood” land use category, with the remaining area designated as “Special Use District 1: Agritainment.” The Agritainment land use category was created to celebrate the agricultural character of the Town and conserve those assets that contribute to the Town’s agricultural history. The designation was also created to further codify the Town’s South Specific Area Plan, which designated Schnepf Farms, Sossaman Farms, and the Olive Mill within an Agritainment land use category. The proposed rezoning to Agritainment/PAD is in compliance with the 2018 General Plan, and aligns with the land uses envisioned for the project under both of the designations.

Additionally, the Economic Development section of the General Plan discusses the tourism and tax dollars that flow from Agritainment uses. An Economic Development goal is to make the Town of Queen Creek an Agritainment capital of Arizona by supporting and expanding agritourism assets in the Town, which includes the Schnepf Farms and the Queen Creek Olive Mill.

Zoning Review: The property is currently zoned R1-43, EMP-A, and R1-18. There is a total of 212 acres proposed as Agritainment/PAD located in the middle of the site and north of Cloud and south of the wash. Additionally, a total of 23 combined acres of C-2 (General Commercial) is proposed at the SW corner and SE corner of the site along Riggs Road. This C-2 zoning district will be required to be consistent with an Agritainment architectural style as proposed within the PAD. The proposed commercial zoning is in compliance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and the South Specific Area Plan (SSAP).

Based on the findings of fact in the PAD ordinance and the applicant providing the design amenities outlined in the PAD ordinance, staff is recommending approval of this application. Staff has reviewed this proposal and believes the overall quality of the request will support favorable consideration of the requested modifications.

Adequate Public Facilities: In accordance with Article 5.1 and its provisions in the Zoning Ordinance, the adequate public facilities will be provided by the project. Additional details will be provided with the future Site Plan review and approvals for this site. The Town of Queen Creek will be the potable water provider and wastewater service provider for the property.

Engineering Review: The project has been reviewed by the Engineering and Transportation Divisions. Additional review will continue during the future Site Plan process.

Open Space: The total open space required for the Agritainment Zoning District is 15%. This project will demonstrate detailed compliance with this minimum open space requirement during the first Site Plan submittal.

Public Participation: A Neighborhood Meeting was conducted by the applicant on June 26, 2019. No residents attended the meeting. A second neighborhood meeting was held on December 19, 2019 with approximately 18 members from the public in attendance. The majority of the attendees were from the La Sentiero subdivision north of Via De Palmas Road, on the northernmost boundary of the property.

The residents expressed concern that the additional development on Via De Palmas would increase the traffic on this street and impede their ability to exit onto Rittenhouse Road. They were interested in who would be responsible for the half-street improvements to Via de Palmas, to which Mr. Schnepf indicated that he would be responsible for the completion of the half-street improvements. Additionally, the neighbors were concerned that the Town would require them to annex into the Queen Creek boundaries, and were interested in the relocation of the sewer system. They expressed a preference that the proposed R1-7 parcel north of the wash to be developed as large lots.

There were additional questions about the proposed uses on the 37-acre parcel south of the wash. Mr. Schnepf answered that, while he doesn't have a current plan, it would likely not develop as large-lot residential, or remain agricultural. He said his hope is that it could be a synergistic use with the farm, such as a boutique hotel, restaurant, multi-family development, or other use allowed within the AT zoning district. The goal is to develop it in a manner that would provide funding for the continuation of the farm activities on the remaining property.

In the following submittal after the neighborhood meeting, the applicant removed the highly discussed eight-acres north of the wash from the proposed rezoning application. This effectively addressed the neighboring La Sentiero residents' concerns as the property will remain in unincorporated Maricopa County and zoned as RU-43

Notification for the neighborhood meetings included sending a meeting notice to all property owners within 1,200 feet of the subject property and posting signs on the property that met the requirements outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. To date, Staff has received no public comment.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. This project shall be developed in accordance with the plans attached to this case and all the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance applicable to this case.
2. The following table outlines the development standards for the AT and C-2 Districts:

District	Maximum Lot Coverage	Maximum Building Height	Minimum Front Yard Setback	Minimum Side Yard Setback	Minimum Rear Yard Setback
AT/PAD	60%	110’*	0’	0’	0’
C-2	60%	48’	0’	0’	15’

*Signage may be taller

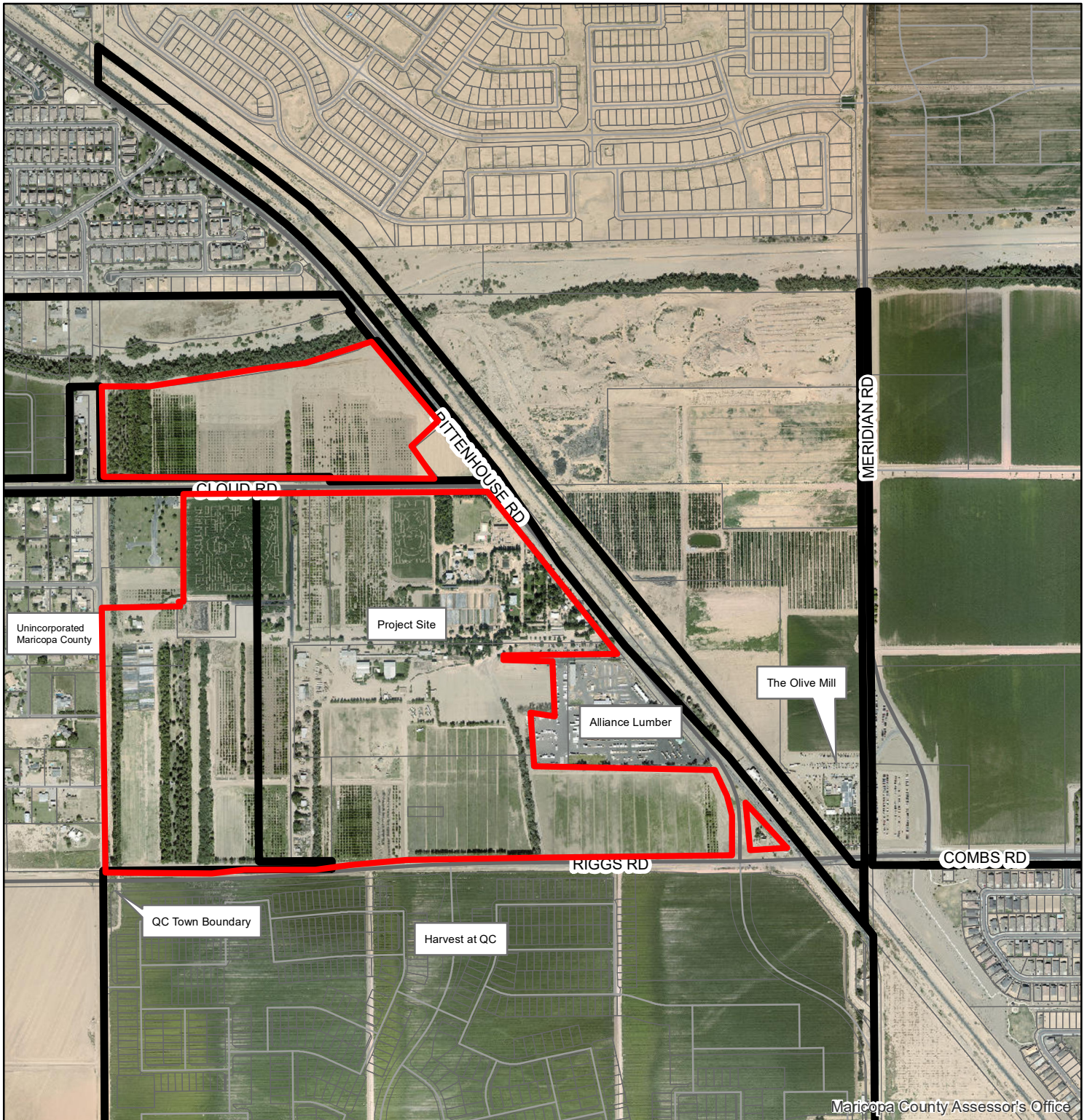
3. Site Plans for all or portions of the property that are generally consistent with the “Concept Master Plan” may be processed under Article 3.3(D)(1) *Minor Site Plan* of the Town’s Zoning Code.
 - a. Site Plans that are not generally consistent with the “Concept Master Plan” will be processed in accordance with the applicable Sections 3.3(D)(1) *Minor Site Plan* or 3.3(D)(2) *Major Site Plan* of the Town’s Zoning Code.
 - b. The Planning Administrator shall determine if a proposed Site Plan is generally consistent with the “Concept Master Plan.”
 - c. At the time of Site Plan review application, the Applicant will provide to the Town the items listed on the Town’s Site Plan submittal checklist, as may be modified by the Town Planning staff.
4. The following Design Standards will also be provided and demonstrated upon Site Plan review and submittal:
 - a. The Open Space requirements (i.e. 15%) for the Agritainment Zoning District will be met.
 - b. Perimeter landscape buffer yards will not be less than 15 feet; and building setbacks along project perimeters will conform to this landscape buffer yard requirement. Zero setback lines (subject to meeting Building Code) may be permitted for side and rear yards that are interior to site.
5. Phasing of on-site development may be proposed by the Applicant and approved by the Planning Administrator. The Planning Administrator’s review and approval of phasing shall be based upon the Applicant’s compliance with the proper coordinating and installation of off-site street, landscaping, utility, emergency vehicle and other public safety requirements. This shall include the dedication of the required 15 foot trail along Signal Butte Road from Riggs Road to the Queen Creek Wash per the Parks and Trails Master Plan.
6. Temporary banner locations and other unique signage or branding that may exceed the Town’s standards for size and location, especially if related to periodic and /or

recurring activities, shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Administrator in compliance with the overall vision and theme of the Schnepf Farms.

7. For offsite public improvements the Town requires cash, irrevocable letter of credit (IRLOC), or a bond to cover the costs for construction assurance. The IRLOC and bond are required to be approved by the Town Attorney. The assurance amount shall be determined by an engineer's estimate during the Construction Document review phase. Construction assurance shall be deposited with the Town prior any permits being issued.
8. Developer shall provide a pro rata in-lieu payment based upon the frontage of Riggs Road for future half-median landscaping for Riggs Road per an approved engineer's estimate.
9. 40' of half street of Right-of-Way for Signal Butte Road shall be dedicated by way of Final Plat or Map of Dedication at the time of the development of the property along the Signal Butte Alignment.
10. A minimum of 55' of half street of Right-of-Way, measured from the centerline of the road for Riggs Road & Rittenhouse Road, shall be dedicated by way of Final Plat or Map of Dedication prior to any permits being issued.
11. If the development of the NEC, for commercial purposes, consistent with the commercial zoning, warrants a traffic signal, the developer shall provide ¼ cost share (\$100,000.00) for the traffic signal at Signal Butte Road and Riggs Road intersection.

ATTACHMENTS

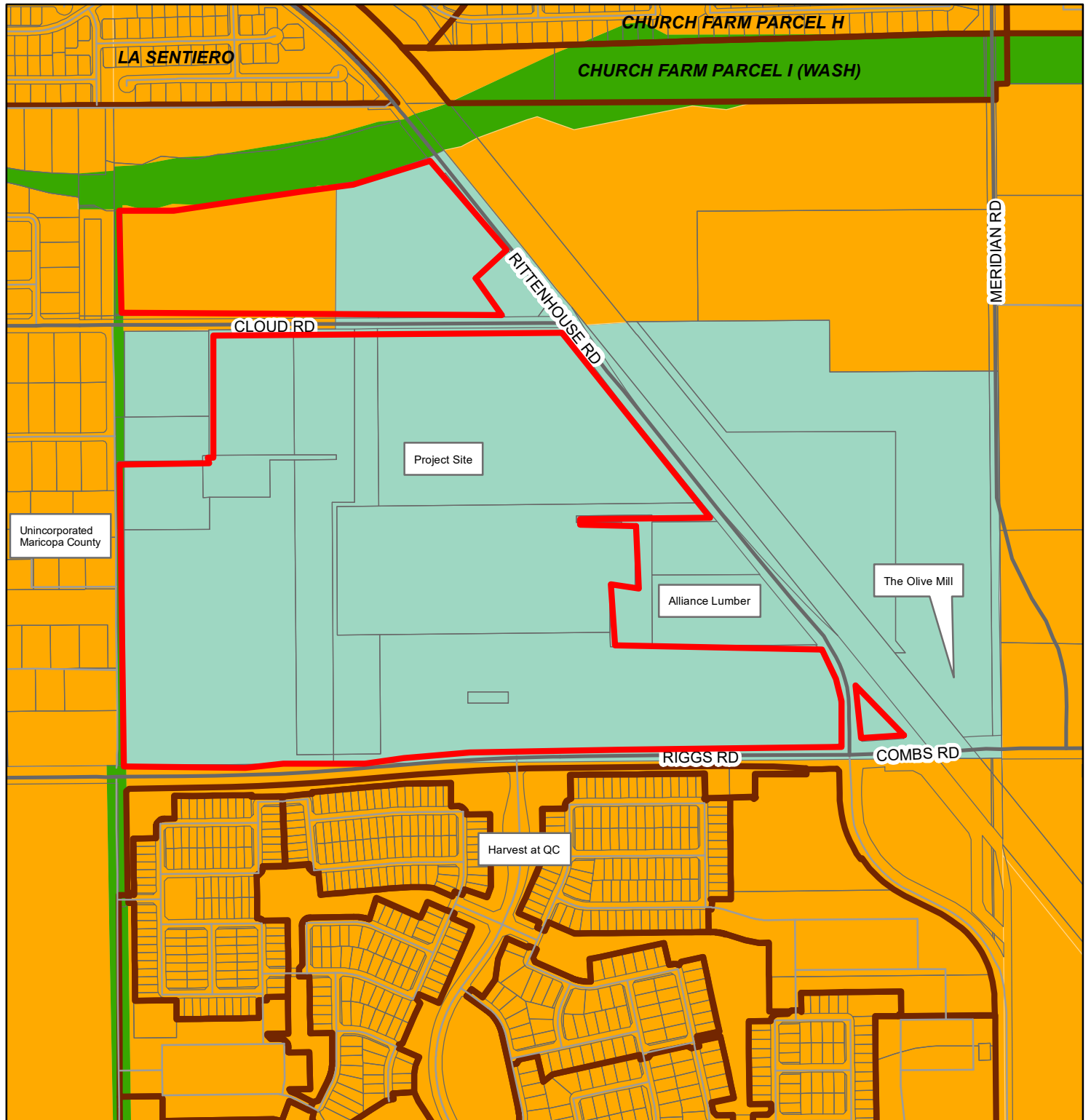
1. Aerial Exhibit
2. General Plan Exhibit
3. Current Zoning Exhibit
4. Proposed Zoning Exhibit
5. Conceptual Development Plan
6. Architectural Vision Images
7. Project Narrative



Project Name: Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone General Plan Exhibit

Case Numbers: P19-0032

Hearing Date: May 13, 2020 (Planning Commission)



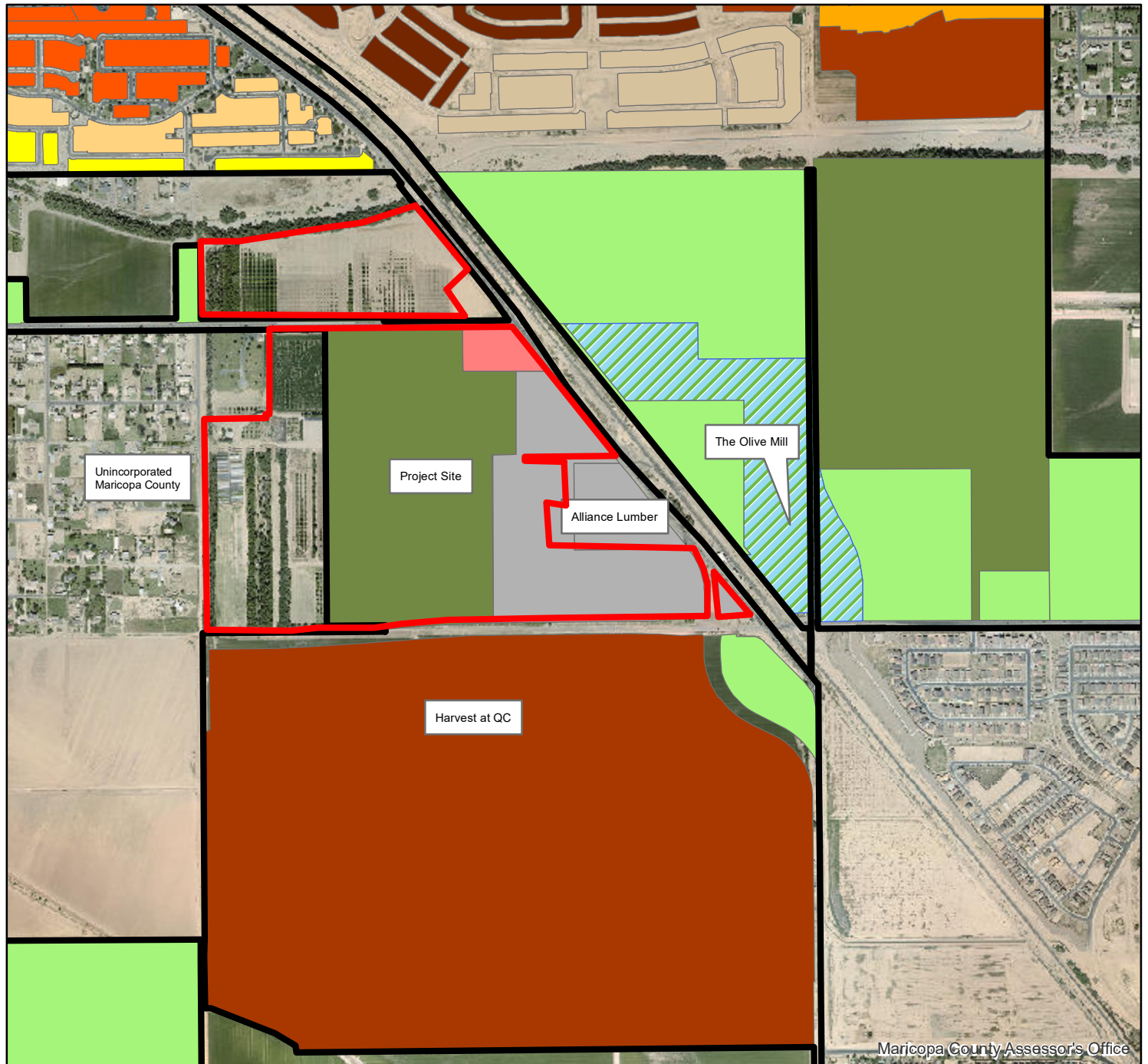
General Plan Land Use

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Special District 1: Agritainment | Urban | Open Space | Special District 4 |
| Rural | Commercial | Special District 2 | |
| Neighborhood | Industrial | Special District 3 | |

Project Name: Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone Existing Zoning

Case Numbers: P19-00032

Hearing Date: May 13, 2020 (Planning Commission)



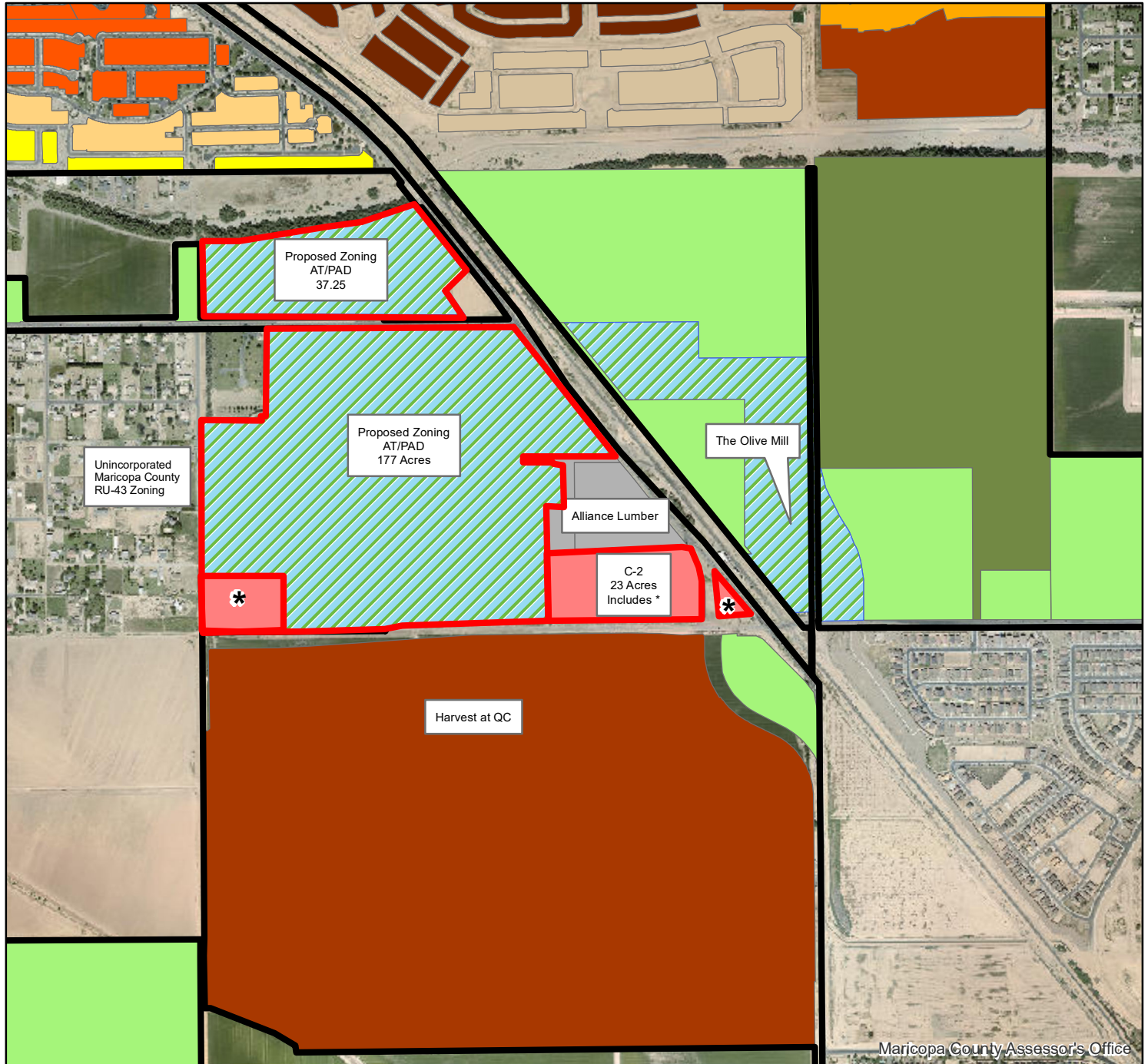
Zoning Districts

C-1 - Commercial	PQP - Public/Quasi-Public	R1-7 - Residential	R1-35 - Residential
C-2 - Commercial	RC - Recreation/Conservation	R1-8 - Residential	R1-43 - Residential
C-3 - Commercial	MDR - Residential	R1-9 - Residential	R1-54 - Residential
DC - Commercial	R1-4 - Residential	R1-12 - Residential	R1-190 - Residential
EMP A - Office/Industrial Park	R1-5 - Residential	R1-15 - Residential	PCD - Planned Community
EMP B - General Industrial	R1-6 - Residential	R1-18 - Residential	AT - Agritainment

Project Name: Schnepf Farms PAD Rezone Proposed Zoning

Case Numbers: P19-00032

Hearing Date: May 13, 2020 (Planning Commission)



Zoning Districts

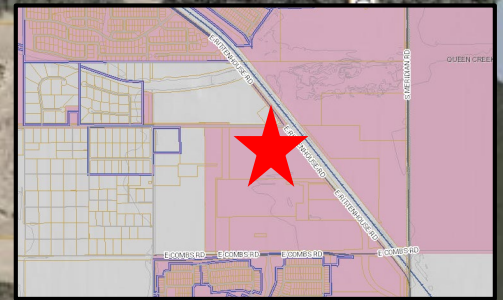
C-1 - Commercial	PQP - Public/Quasi-Public	R1-7 - Residential	R1-35 - Residential
C-2 - Commercial	RC - Recreation/Conservation	R1-8 - Residential	R1-43 - Residential
C-3 - Commercial	MDR - Residential	R1-9 - Residential	R1-54 - Residential
DC - Commercial	R1-4 - Residential	R1-12 - Residential	R1-190 - Residential
EMP A - Office/Industrial Park	R1-5 - Residential	R1-15 - Residential	PCD - Planned Community
EMP B - General Industrial	R1-6 - Residential	R1-18 - Residential	AT - Agritainment

Schnepf Farms Development Plan

Maricopa County
RU-43

R1-35

Proposed
AT/PAD
37.25
acres



Potential AT Uses Include:

- Single Family
- Multiple Dwelling
- Bed & Breakfast Inns
- Commercial Ranch, Commercial stable, Outdoor Guest Ranch
- Resort, Cabins and Lodges
- Commercial Amusement, Outdoor Amusement Center
- Animal Sales and Care
- Bakeries (large scale, including distributors or warehousing)
- Banks (excluding drive-thru facilities)
- Cemeteries, Mausoleums
- Farm Related Business
- Nurseries and Green Houses
- General Agriculture uses, agribusiness, entertainment farming
- Christmas Tree Sales
- Agribusiness

*See Queen Creek Zoning Code Table 4.6-1

Maricopa
County
RU-43

Proposed
Annexation and
AT/PAD
Area
54.17 acres

Proposed AT/PAD
Zoning
122 acres

Agritainment/PAD
(AT/PAD)

C-2
23 acres
(incl *)

*

*

North

January 8, 2020

E COMBS RD

E COMBS RD

E COMBS RD

E COMBS RD

E COMBS RD

313-25-730

304-94-982

304-93-558B

304-93-559

304-92-0067

304-92-006F

304-93-558D

304-92-006W

304-93-558E

4-92-057M

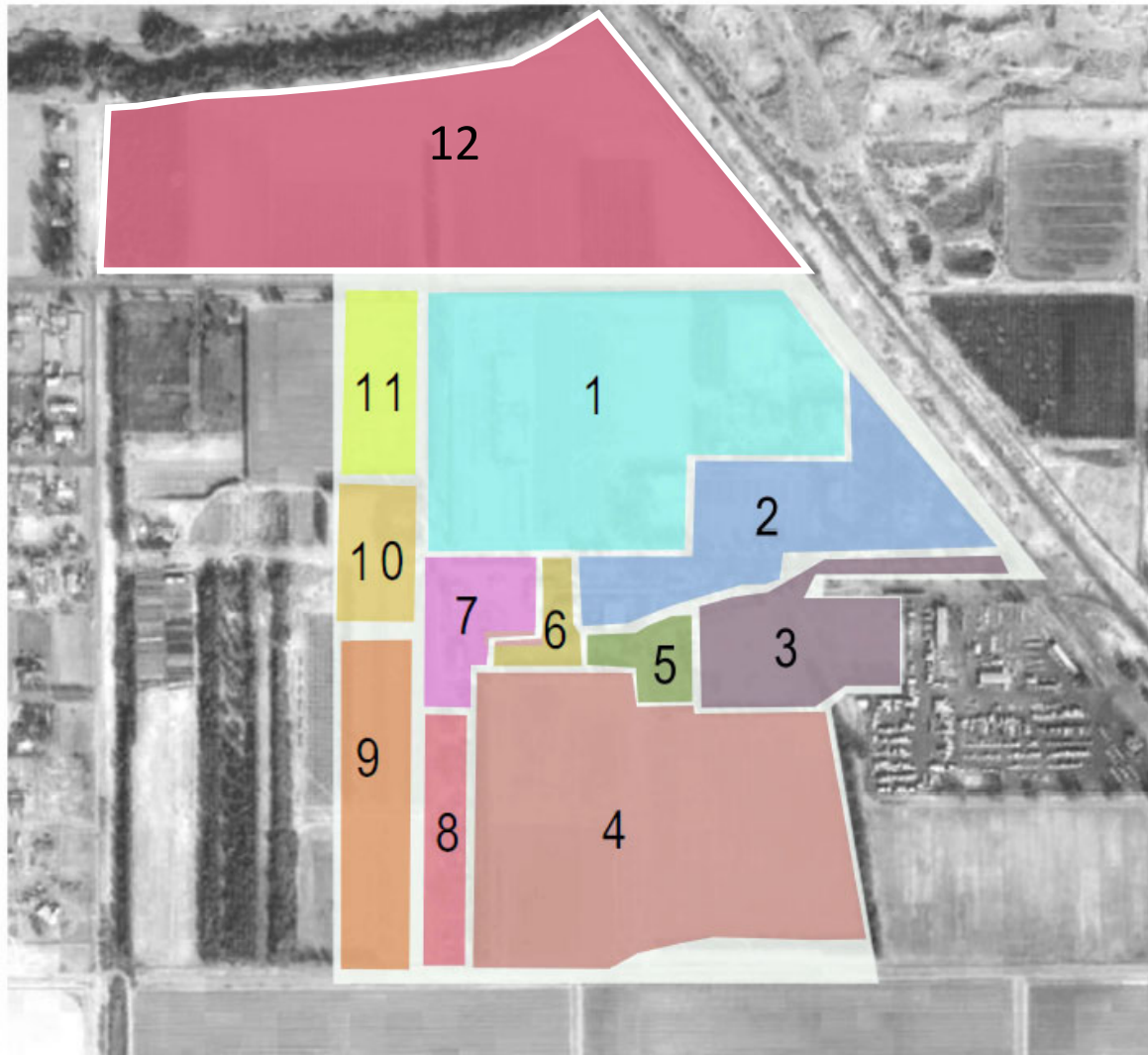
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304-93-435

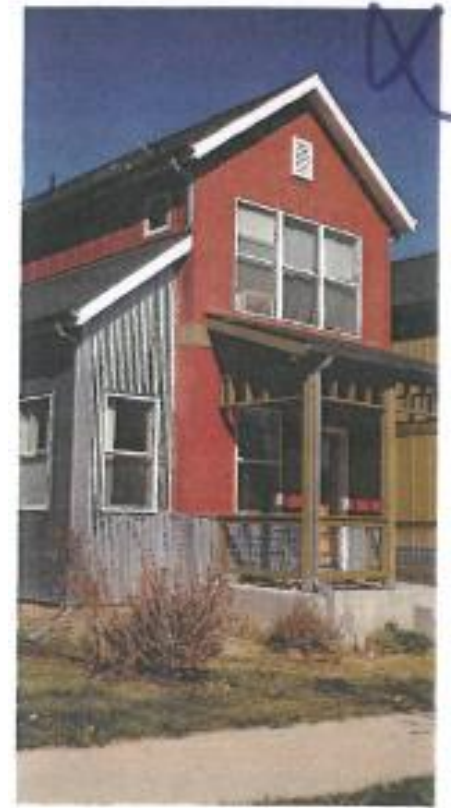
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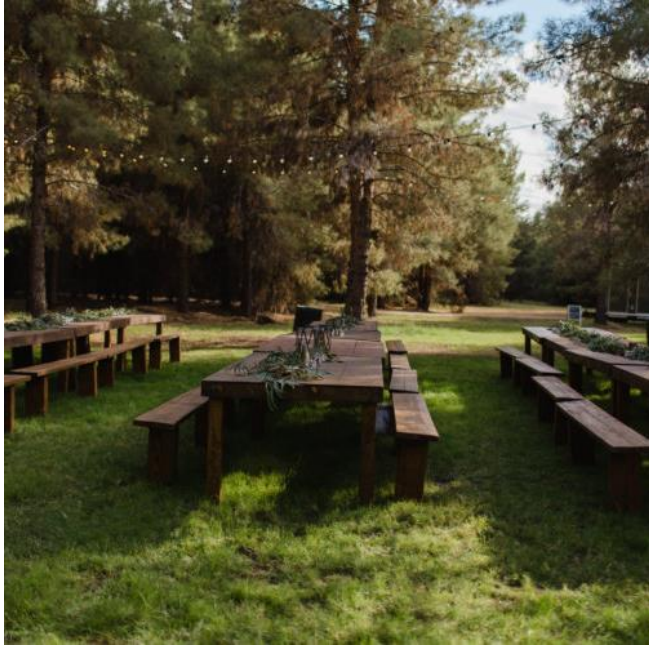


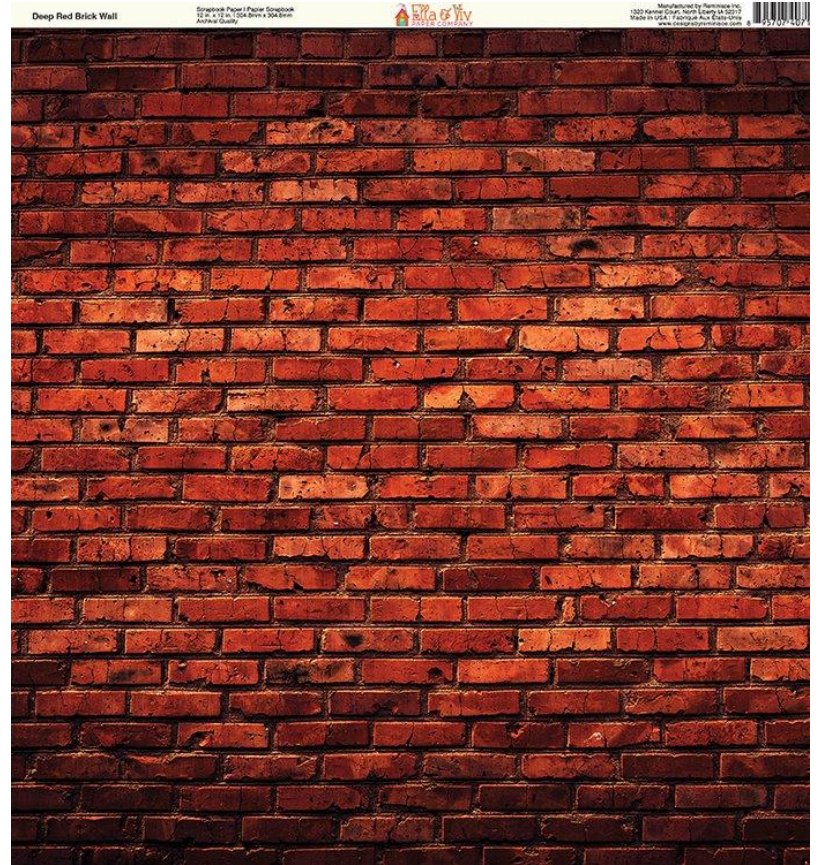
AT (PAD) Existing and Proposed Uses

1. Amusement Rides, corn maze, petting zoo, amphitheater venue, pumpkin patch, deer, train tracks, u pick orchards, wedding ceremony area, mini golf, educational tours, Dinners Down the Orchard, and Tractor pulls.
2. U pick gardens, train depot, specialty shops, museum, pavilion venue, country store, bakery, café, main stage, food service, corporate party areas, beer & wine gardens, restrooms, admission, guest services, garden center, ice skating, exit store, and educational tours.
3. Parking, Dry camping, and spillover area for vendors.
4. Multipurpose fields used for parking, camping, drive-in movies, events of all types, larger concerts, fireworks, beer & wine gardens, balloon launches.
5. RV camping, glamping, employee housing, restroom shower building.
6. Wedding Venue, corporate events, Red Barn venue hosting entertainment of many types.
7. Farm headquarters with office, shop, equipment yard, storage.
8. Employee housing, junkyard, storage area, hayride area.
9. U pick orchards, and hayride course.
10. The Farmhouse Venue used primarily for Weddings but all types of functions, Dinner Down the Orchard.
11. Corn Maze, parking, camping.
12. Single family, multiple family, bed & breakfast, resort cabins and lodges, cemeteries, and other AT uses listed in QC Zoning Ordinance Table 4.6-1.



Character Images





Retail at Schnepf Farms



Rezoning Project Narrative

Submitted by:

Sean B. Lake

Pew & Lake, PLC

1744 South Val Vista Drive, Suite 217

Mesa, AZ 85204

On Behalf of:

Mark Schnepf

Submitted to:

The Town of Queen Creek

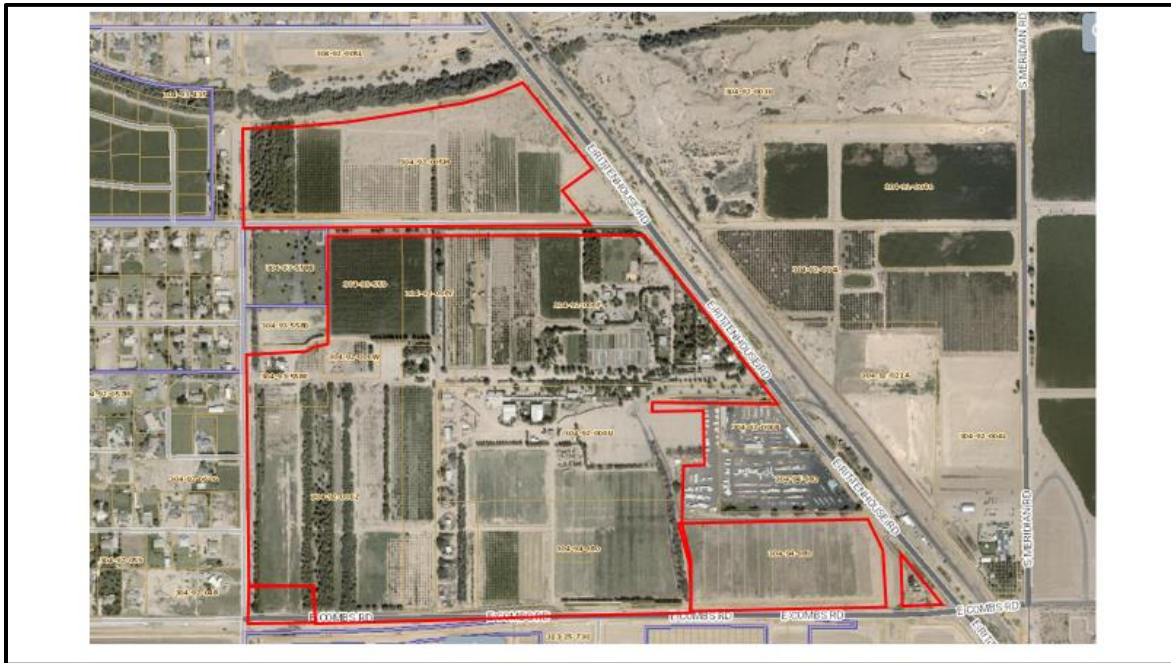
April 1, 2020

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Introduction

Pew & Lake, PLC, on behalf of Schnepf Farms, is pleased to provide this project narrative and related materials to the Town of Queen Creek in support of an Annexation and PAD rezoning request for approximately 234 acres of property located west of Rittenhouse Road, between Via de Palmas and Riggs Road. The boundaries of the subject property are shown below, followed by a chart indicating the parcel numbers involved in the annexation and rezoning requests.



Parcel Number	Acreage
Queen Creek Parcels	
304-92-006Y	+/- 16 acres
304-92-006S	+/- 8.5 acres
304-92-006F	+/- 40 acres
304-92-006U	+/- 36.5 acres
304-94-980	+/- 41 acres
304-94-981	+/- 1 acre
Total	+/- 143 acres
Property to be Annexed	
304-92-005J	+/- .11 acre
304-92-005M	+/- 37.2 acres
304-39-558E	+/- 4.7 acres
304-92-006Z	+/- 37.7 acres
304-92-006W	+/- 2.6 acres
304-93-559	+/- 8.8 acres
Total	+/- 91 acres
Development Site	+/- 234 acres

If the requests discussed in this narrative are approved, the entire Schnepf Farms property will be brought into the Town’s jurisdictional boundaries and the Agritainment (AT) PAD and C-2 zoning districts will be applied to the property. By bringing this property into the Town and rezoning to the above-referenced zoning categories, the long-term vision of the Schnepf family will be memorialized, and there will be consistency between the current uses on the property, it’s General Plan Designation and Zoning classification.

About Schnepf Farms

Schnepf Farms started in Queen Creek in 1941 when Jack and Maude Schnepf purchased 640 acres of desert land and sent their oldest son, Ray, and his new bride, Thora, out to start farming the property. It started as a cotton farm, but the family soon learned that almost anything would grow in the sandy loam soil that the Queen Creek Wash had created.

Ray and Thora expanded the farming operation to be over 5,000 acres by the early 1970’s growing about 20 different crops from grapes to potatoes. Ray started downsizing in the late 70’s when the farm economy turned south. Downsizing continued through the years and the farm today is “rightsized” at approximately 250 acres.

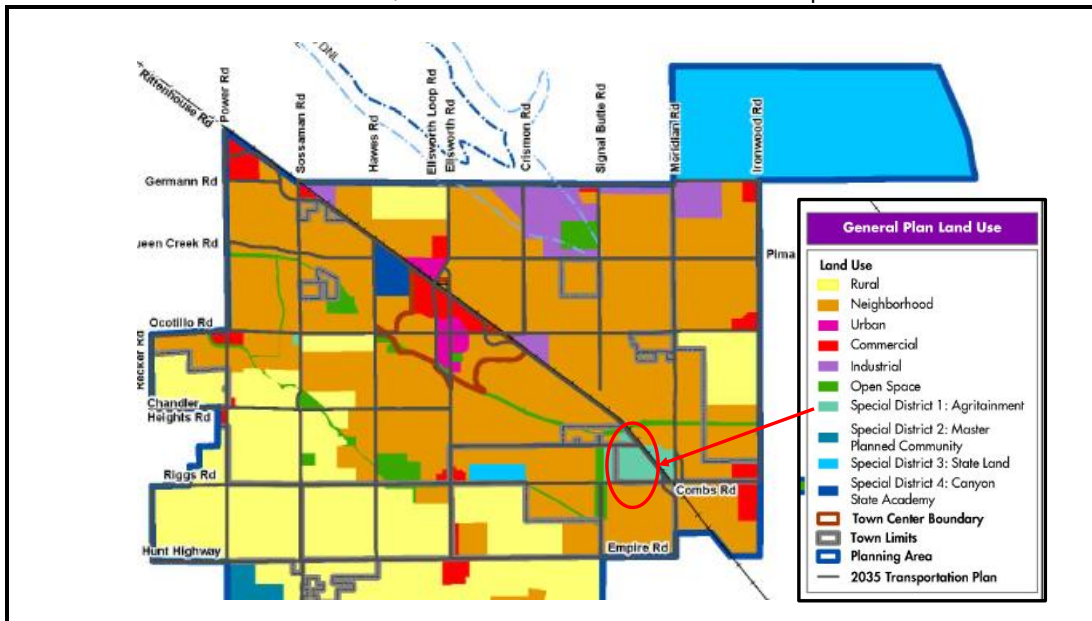
In the 1990’s Mark and Carrie Schnepf, the current owners of Schnepf Farms, began to transform and reinvent the farm from the production of only traditional crops, to one of the largest Agritainment venues in the Southwest. Agritainment is a relatively new word coined in part by the Schnepfs. As the name implies, agriculture is combined with entertainment to create interesting, educational, and entertaining farm experiences for guests of all ages. The farm is currently home to wedding venues, concert stages, U-Pick orchards, a “glamping”, bakery and farm store.



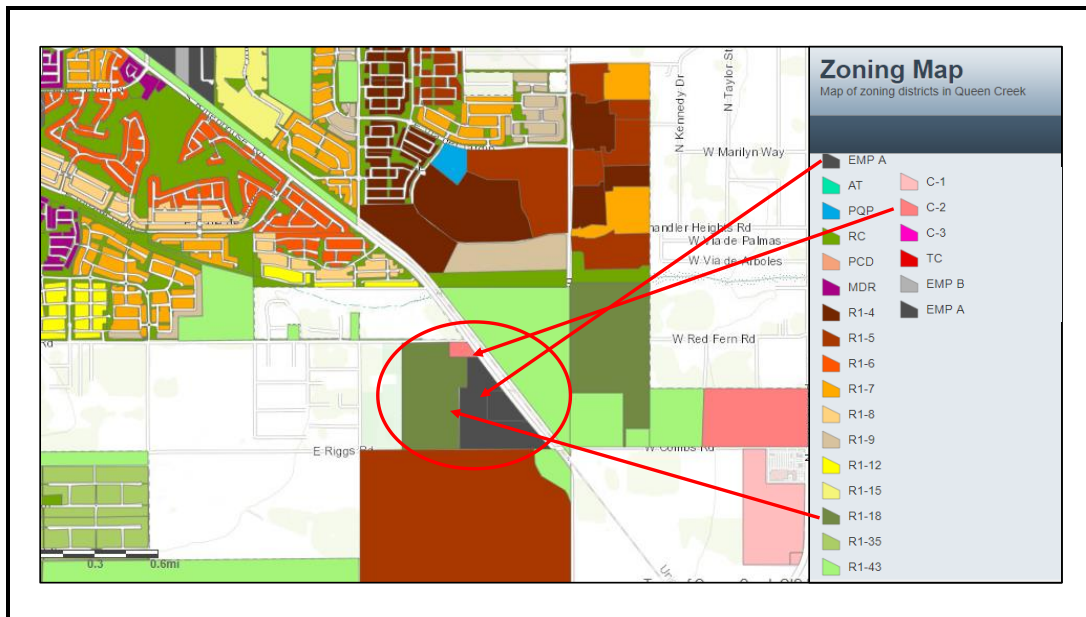
Existing General Plan Designation and Zoning Classification

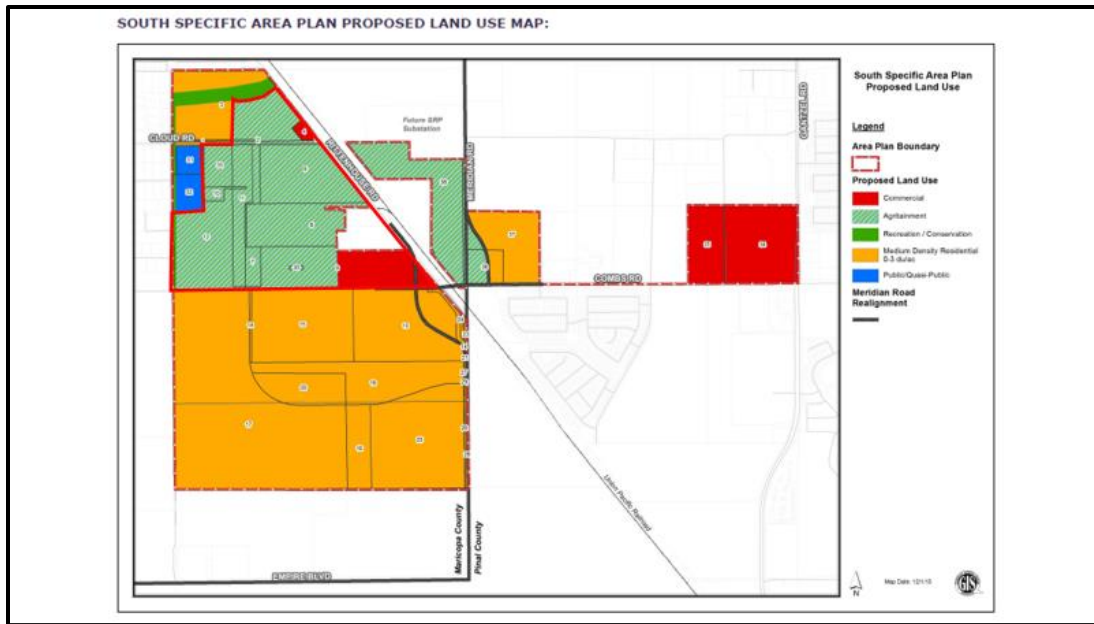
As shown below, the project site is currently designated in the Town of Queen Creek General Plan as Special District 1: Agritainment and is designated as Suburban Residential (R1-18), Light Commercial (C-1) and Employment Type A (EMP-A) on the Town's Zoning Map. It is also shown as both Agritainment and Commercial in the Town's South Specific Area Plan

Town of Queen Creek General Plan Land Use Map



Town of Queen Creek Zoning Map





Relationship to Surrounding Properties

As shown in the graphic below, the site is bound on the east by Alliance Lumber and Rittenhouse Road. Beyond Rittenhouse Road lie the Railroad tracks and the Queen Creek Olive Mill. The site is bound on the south by Combs Road, agricultural property and the Harvest Queen Creek subdivision. On the west the site is bound by Signal Butte Road, single family homes and San Tan Memorial Gardens cemetery. The northern boundary of the property is bound by the La Sentiero subdivision.

	General Plan Designation	Zoning	Existing Use
North	Neighborhood	R1-12 and R1-8	Queen Creek Wash and La Sentiero Subdivision
South	Neighborhood	R1-5	Harvest Queen Creek Subdivision
East	Agritainment	Agritainment	Queen Creek Olive Mill
West	Neighborhood	RU-43	Maricopa County Large Lots
Project Site	Special District 1: Agritainment	R1-18, C-2 and EMP-A	Vacant/Schnepf Farms

Existing Site Conditions

The majority of the property is presently in use as Schnepf Farms. The property between Cloud and Combs Road has evolved from the original farm and home built over 75 years ago. Through the years, the farm has not only expanded from the original building, but also added a Barn and Wedding venue, hayride course, country store, employee housing and storage areas. Additional properties involved in this request are north of Cloud Road and south of the Queen Creek Wash. All of these parcels are under the ownership of the Schnepf family. However, the tract of land containing the Queen Creek Wash was deeded to the Town of Queen Creek in 2018. The remaining, developable parcels are mostly flat and unremarkable in topography, yet oddly configured.

Utilities and Services

Utilities are provided to the site by the providers as shown below:

Utility	Provider
Electric	Salt River Project
Natural Gas	Southwest Gas
Water	Town of Queen Creek
Sewer	Town of Queen Creek
Trash and Recycling	Right Away Disposal
Telephone	Century Link or Other
Internet	Cox Communications
Law Enforcement	Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
Emergency Services	Town of Queen Creek

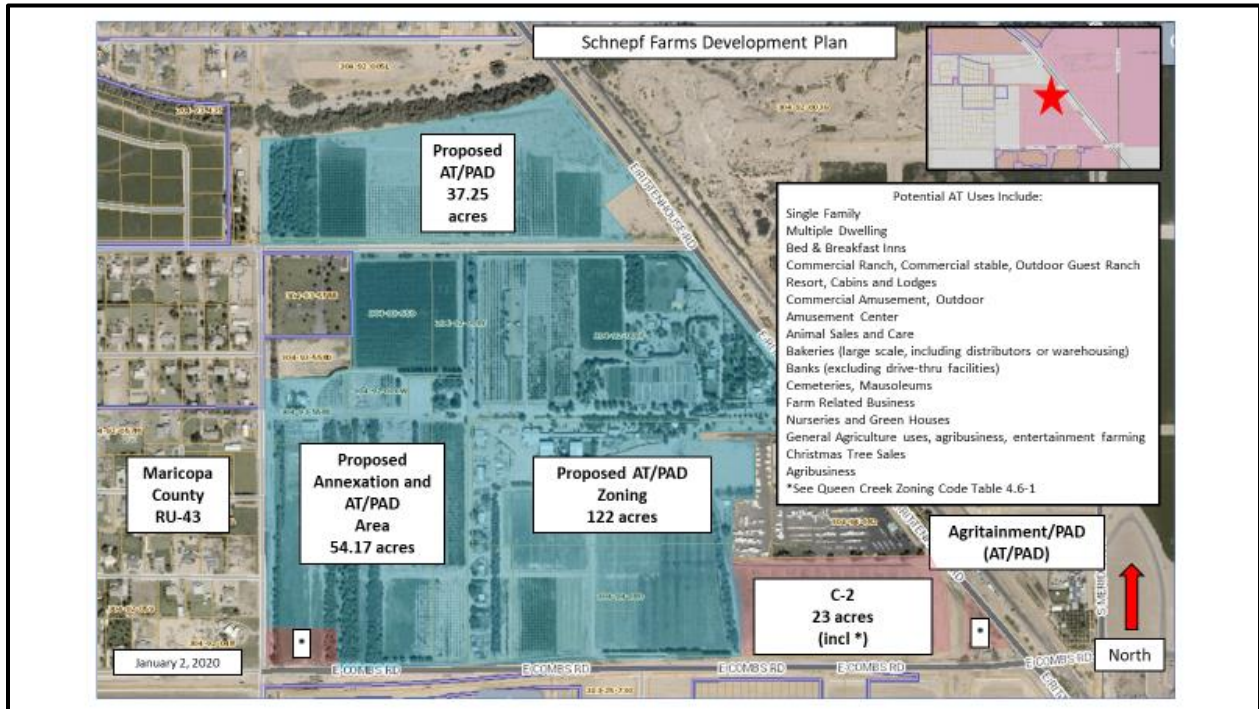
Request

Our requests to the Town of Queen Creek are:

1. Annexation of approximately 99 acres into the Town of Queen Creek.
2. Rezoning of approximately 211 acres from R1-18, C-2 and EMP-A to Agritainment (AT) with a Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay.
3. Rezoning of approximately 23 acres from EMP-A to C-2.

4. Approval of the Schnepf Farms Conceptual Master Plan.

As outlined in Town of Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance, the Agritainment zoning district provides for land uses that support and enhance agricultural uses in the Town. The uses need to be compatible with agriculture, and may include uses that contain open space, outdoor recreation, commercial and residential uses. The proposed allocation of AT, R1-5, MU and C-2 zoning is shown in the Development Plan below, and also provided as **Attachment A** of this narrative.



Compliance with General Plan and South Specific Area Plan (SSAP)

General Plan Compliance

As previously stated, the site is currently designated in the Town of Queen Creek General Plan as Special District 1: Agritainment. This Land Use category was created in the Town of Queen Creek General Plan that was adopted by voters in May of 2018. The creation of this land use designation is to celebrate the agricultural character of the Town and conserve those assets that contribute to the Town's agricultural history. The designation was also created to further codify the Town's South Area Specific Plan which designated Schnepf Farms, Sossaman Farms and the Queen Creek Olive Mill within an Agritainment land use category. The new land use designation recognized that there were certain types of development-both existing and future- that were not appropriate for any of the other land use categories, and that required greater flexibility in development standards.

Rezoning Schnepf Farms will implement some of the following Goals, Policies and Actions

outlined in the Land Use Element of the General Plan:

- Goal 1: Continue to promote Agritainment uses in appropriate locations within the Town.
- Strategy 1.A: Protect and promote the Town’s history, location, amenities, and development potential to create a unique, attractive, desirable, and economically sustainable community.
- Action 1.A.2: Continue to promote Agritainment uses in appropriate locations within the Town.

Additionally, the Economic Development section of the General Plan discusses the tourism and tax dollars that flow from Agritainment uses. An Economic Development goal is to make Queen Creek the Agritainment capital of Arizona, by supporting and expanding agritourism assets in the Town, which include Schnepf Farms.

For the foregoing reasons, the proposed rezoning is consistent with the Town of Queen Creek General Plan Special District 1: Agritainment, land use designation.

Planned Area Development (PAD) Applicability

As stated in Section 4.11 of the Town of Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the Planned area Development Overlay District (PAD) is to provide for the orderly development of land consistent with the Town of Queen Creek General Plan and Zoning Ordinance while permitting flexibility in the design, construction and processing of residential, commercial and / or industrial developments of a quality which could not be achieved by traditional lot by lot development under conventional zoning concepts. While the conventional zoning districts and the requirements of those districts set forth in the Town of Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance are reasonable, there may be circumstances in which it is in the Town’s best interests to allow unique and /or creative designs and techniques that:

1. Promote the most appropriate use of a parcel;
2. Allow diversification of use;
3. Allow economic development;
4. Facilitate the adequate and economical provision of streets, parks, open space, schools, storm drainage, sewer and water utilities;
5. Preserve and utilize open space;
6. Offer recreational opportunities close to residential uses;
7. Enhance the neighborhood’s appearance;
8. Counteract adverse effects of urbanization; and provide for the unified control of land development.

Permitted Uses

The Permitted Uses at Schnepf Farms are those shown currently in use on the property, and those shown as permitted in the Agritainment District (AT), C-2 District (for the 21 acres at the northwest corner of Combs and Rittenhouse Roads, and the 2 acres at the NEC of Signal Butte and Riggs Road) as shown in table 4.6-1 of the Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance.

Shown below is a sampling of permitted uses in each of the zoning districts. The full listing of permitted uses in each zoning district is found in Table 4.6-1 of the Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance. Uses shown in Table 4.6-1 that require a Conditional Use Permit will still be required to seek approval of a Conditional Use Permit prior to development.

Sampling of Permitted Uses in AT/PAD and C-2 Districts	
AT/PAD	C-2
Detached and attached housing	Assisted Living
Multiple Dwellings	Hotel/Motel
Park	Day Care
Church	Church
Restaurants/Coffee Shops	Medical Clinic
Guest Ranch/Resort	Restaurants
Retail Sales and Services	General Offices
Existing Uses on property	Retail Sales and Services

Special Events and Temporary Uses

Schnepf Farms is home to many seasonal events throughout the year. The event season starts in October with a Pumpkin and Chili Party and generally ends in mid-summer with a Hometown Fourth of July event. The thematic, seasonal events are listed below:

- Pumpkin and Chili Party- October
- We Make History (Historical Re-enactment of Revolutionary and Civil War)- November
- Christmas at Schnepf Farms A World of Illumination- December
- Night Lights (Lantern Festival)- January
- Estrella War (Renaissance Event)-February
- Peach Blossom Celebration- (U-Pick Peaches)-Spring

- Easter Egg-citement- April
- Good Life Festival- Spring
- Hometown 4th-July

As previously noted, there are ongoing operations at the Schnepf Farms that include the Bakery and Country Store, Glamping and U-Pick flowers and vegetables. Special events such as wedding, proms and school tours are held throughout the year and coordinated with on-site event planners.

As a working agricultural enterprise, Schnepf Farms also provides temporary farm worker housing as shown in the areas on **Exhibit B**. Temporary farm worker housing is not subject to development/impact fees.

Dimensional and Density Regulations

Shown on the next page are the dimensional and density regulations prescribed for the Agritainment and C-2 zoning districts.

District	Maximum Lot Coverage	Maximum Building Height	Minimum Front Yard Setback	Minimum Side Yard Setback	Minimum Rear Yard Setback
AT/PAD	60%	110’*	0’	0’	0’
C-2	60%	48’	0’	0’	15’

*Signage may be taller

The standards applied to the AT district are derived from the least restrictive standards in the non-residential zoning districts in Queen Creek. The C-2 standards reflect conventional zoning standards as shown in Table 4.7-3 in the Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance.

At this time, there is no request for Site Plan Review, instead, the purpose of this rezoning application is primarily to establish zoning on the property that is consistent with its General Plan Designations as well as codify the existing uses on the property through the approval of a Conceptual Master Plan. Future development of the property will be subject to the following:

- 1) Site plans for additional development of the property that are generally consistent with the Conceptual Master Plan provided with this submittal will be processed as a Minor Site Plan Review pursuant to Article 3.3(D)(1).
- 2) Site plans that are not generally consistent with the Conceptual Master Plan will be processed as either a Minor or Major Site Plan review, as determined by the Planning Administrator, in accordance with Article 3.3(D)(1)(2) of the Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance.

- 3) The Planning Administrator shall determine if a proposed site plan is generally consistent with the Conceptual Master Plan.
- 4) At the time of Site Plan Review, the Applicant will provide to the Town the items listed on the Town's site plan submittal checklist, as may be modified by the Planning Administrator.

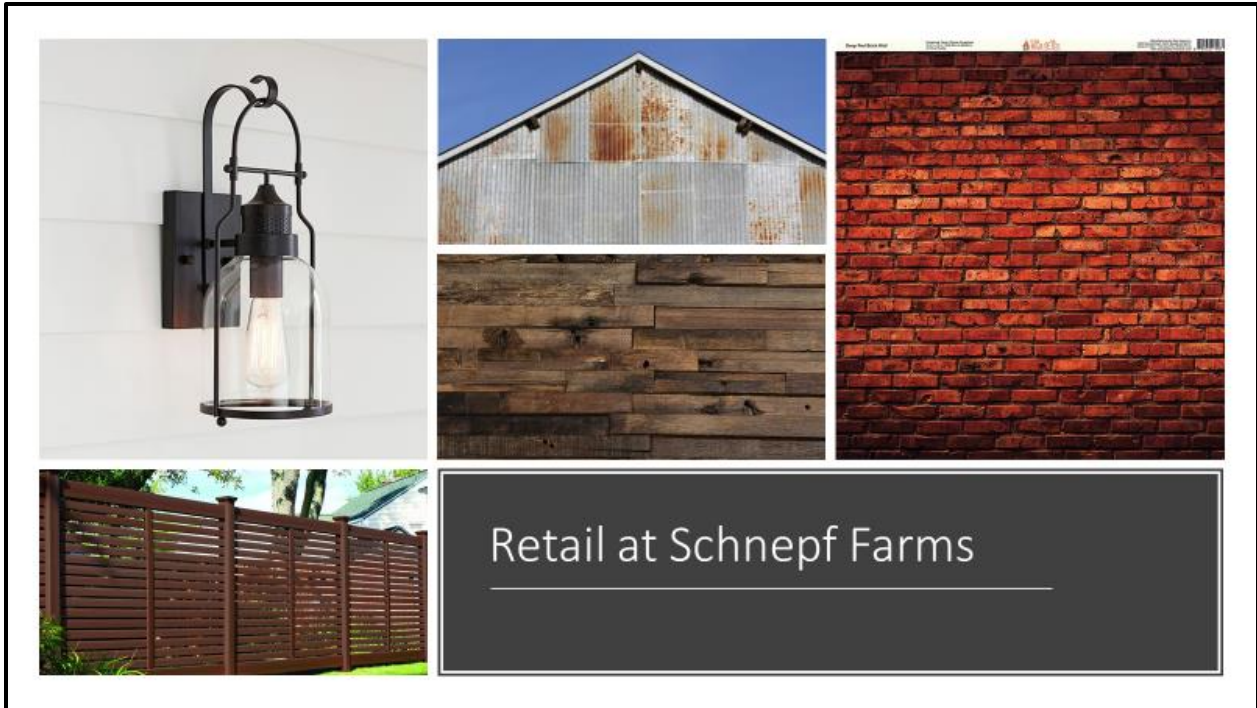
Agritainment (AT) Character and Concept Design Guidelines

Theme and Architectural Design

Following the design criteria set forth within the South Specific Area Plan, future development within Schnepf Farms will provide a quality, vibrant, attractive, lively and aesthetically appealing development to promote the distinct characteristics of the natural and built environment of the area. Schnepf Farms strives to create walkable, family friendly areas and environments that are safe and easily accessible. Schnepf Farms will reflect an overall feeling of quality and tradition, striving for a refined and modern take on the areas agrarian small-town appeal, characterized by simple, yet distinctive architecture, curb separated sidewalks, and streets lined with trees.

Design Features

Attracting customers from the Town as well as residents from the greater Phoenix metro area has been the focus of Schnepf Farms throughout the years. To provide an exceptional Agritainment experience and further this goal, design standards have been developed that are creative, unique and flexible enough to facilitate a project that is not a conventional or typical development. Future development on the AT and C-2 parcels will adhere to the following guidelines in order to maintain the existing character of Schnepf Farms. Materials will be carefully chosen to underscore the agricultural heritage of the farm and convey a time-worn, patina.



Landscaping

Development within the AT zoning district will not be required to strictly adhere to the Town's landscape and streetscape design standards with respect to the intensity and type of landscaping materials adjacent to Cloud Road, Rittenhouse Road, and Riggs Road. Visual permeability into Schnepf Farms is critical to creating the Agritainment environment. Alternative streetscape design and themes may be developed for the project to provide a streetscape appearance consistent with Agritainment goals and objectives. Per the South Specific Area Plan landscaping in Agritainment areas is encouraged to be designed to match or complement elements of the site and buildings on the site.

Providing shade and protection for pedestrians throughout Schnepf Farms while promoting interaction and connectivity for residents and visitors is one of Schnepf Farm's guiding principles. A system of trails, sidewalks, walkways, and paseos will allow for uninterrupted connectivity between the various planned uses within the development.

The landscape character within Schnepf Farms is based on sustainable principles in which there is a strong relationship between people, nature and the built environment. The incorporation of pervious surfaces through the use of more plant material and less hardscape is a goal of the overall design. Plant materials will be selected based on their sustainability in the Southern Arizona climate, ability to create shade, durability as low water use, drought tolerate plant materials, and traditional use throughout the Farm.

Lighting

Depending on the use, lighting within Schnepf Farms will vary greatly. Some areas of the Farm will require more subdued lighting than a typical commercial use, and other more intense uses may require lighting that exceeds Town requirements. Large concert venues, amphitheaters, and amusement uses shall be exempt from Town standards and shall instead propose maximum pole heights and lumens at the Site Planning stage of development with approval by the Planning Administrator.

Paving

Paving may be minimized to reduce traffic speeds, maintain drainage on the site and to encourage a walkable environment. Parking areas within Schnepf Farms may be constructed of permeable surfaces, including grass, rather than conventional asphalt and concrete to maintain the agrarian character of the Farm. When permeable materials are used in parking areas, no curbing is required. Where curbing is necessary, it may be either vertical or rolled as circumstances require.

Sidewalks

Meandering sidewalks are not required within Schnepf Farms. The widths of sidewalks shall be consistent with their intended purpose. Overly wide concrete sidewalks are to be avoided. Sidewalks may be attached or detached and will comply with ADA requirements.

Signage

According to the South Specific Area Plan and Article 6 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance, signage in Agritainment areas is to be designed to match or complement elements of the site and buildings on the site. Schnepf Farm's signage will represent the unique character of the farm. Signage should build upon the development theme and should be artistically designed and carefully crafted with particular attention given to small businesses. Interior and exterior signage should tie together a company's brand, the logo, and creative image. Recognizing the opportunity for special events, festivals, live music, and farm/Agritainment operations, signage in Schnepf Farms may take advantage of alternative designs, materials, and locations that may not otherwise be provided for, or allowed, in other parts of the Town including the use of temporary banners, scrims and screens along the perimeter fence line. A comprehensive sign plan may be separately submitted for review and approval by the Town, as permitted in Article 6 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Walls and Fencing

Solid masonry or concrete walls shall not be required. Minimizing the amount of fencing throughout the project is desirable although perimeter fencing shall be permitted for security and crowd control. The use of landscaping materials as a screening device is encouraged, as is decorative fencing where fencing is necessary.

Citizen Participation

The applicant has conducted citizen participation activities in accordance with Town of Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance Article 3, Section 3.1.C- Public Outreach Procedures. A neighborhood meeting was held on June 20, 2019. No neighbors attended that meeting. A second neighborhood meeting was held on December 19, 2019. Notification for the neighborhood meetings included sending a meeting notice to all property owners within 1200 feet of the subject property and posting signs on the property that met the requirements outlined in the Queen Creek Zoning Ordinance. Both of these actions were taken at least 15 days prior to the scheduled neighborhood meetings. The applicant has prepared a Citizen Participation Report including a summary of the neighborhood meeting and copies of the notification materials. This report will be provided to the Town of Queen Creek prior to any scheduled public hearings.

Conclusion

With the adoption of the Town's General Plan in 2018, recognition was given to the importance of the Town's agricultural character and heritage. To celebrate the agricultural character of the Town, the General Plan Land Use Map included the Rural Land Use Category and Agritainment Special District areas. These are areas designated for development that conserves the Town's agricultural history. The proposed rezoning of Schnepf Farms fulfills the Town's goals to preserve and promote the Town's agricultural roots. The mix of proposed uses will provide much needed future growth options for Schnepf Farms and will allow the farm to operate within a proper zoning district. As a primary component of economic development, Agritainment brings in tourism and the tax dollars, that flow from those uses, directly to the Town. The Town's Agritainment and agritourism assets, which include Schnepf Farms, need to be supported and expanded through the addition of complementary uses as outlined within the proposed Schnepf Farms PAD. This development will serve as an ideal example of Agritainment within the Town of Queen Creek.

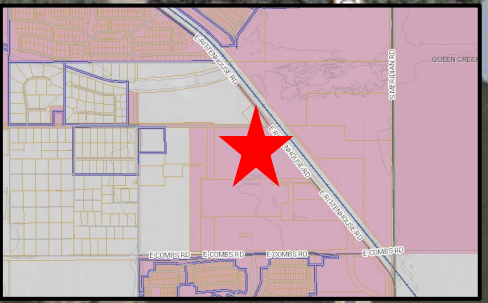
The Schnepf family is excited to continue operating in Queen Creek and bringing new and exciting activities to the farm. With the approval of this rezoning application, a clear path to future development will be established that will allow for the continued growth and success of the farm for many years to come.

Exhibit A- Schnepf Farms Development Plan

Maricopa County
RU-43

R1-35

Proposed
AT/PAD
37.25
acres



- Potential AT Uses Include:
- Single Family
 - Multiple Dwelling
 - Bed & Breakfast Inns
 - Commercial Ranch, Commercial stable, Outdoor Guest Ranch
 - Resort, Cabins and Lodges
 - Commercial Amusement, Outdoor Amusement Center
 - Animal Sales and Care
 - Bakeries (large scale, including distributors or warehousing)
 - Banks (excluding drive-thru facilities)
 - Cemeteries, Mausoleums
 - Farm Related Business
 - Nurseries and Green Houses
 - General Agriculture uses, agribusiness, entertainment farming
 - Christmas Tree Sales
 - Agribusiness
- *See Queen Creek Zoning Code Table 4.6-1

Maricopa County
RU-43

Proposed
Annexation and
AT/PAD
Area
54.17 acres

Proposed AT/PAD
Zoning
122 acres

Agritainment/PAD
(AT/PAD)

C-2
23 acres
(incl *)



April 15, 2020

E.COMBS RD

Exhibit B- Schnepf Farms Temporary
Housing Locations

Proposed
AT/PAD
37.25
acres

Temporary Farm
Worker Housing

Proposed
Annexation and
AT/PAD
Area
54.17 acres

Proposed AT/PAD
Zoning
122 acres

C-2
23 acres
(incl *)

April 15, 2020

North

