



STAFF REPORT
9/1/2021

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners
FROM: Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director
SUBJECT: Avenue 53 Re-zone Project

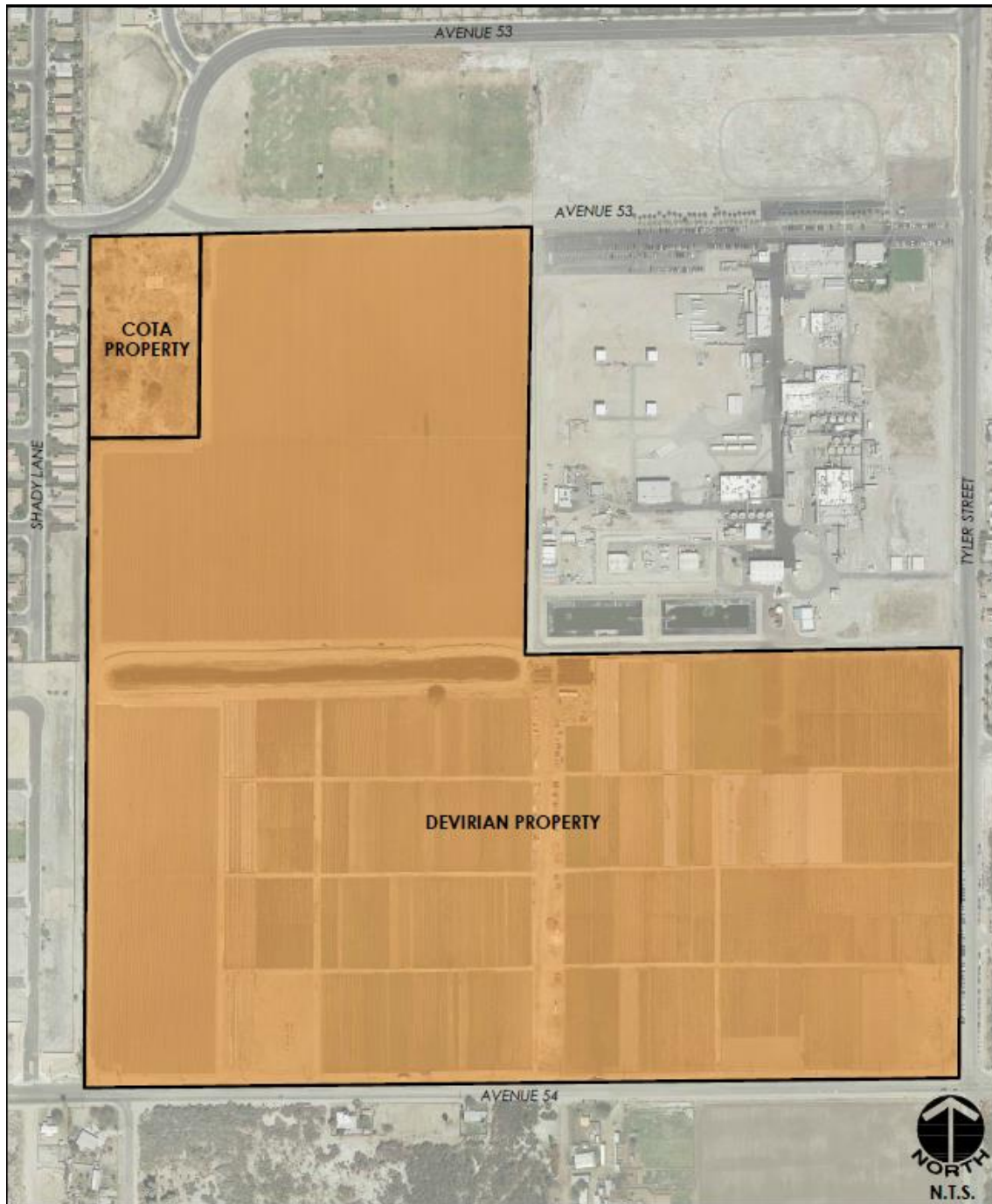
- a) Environmental Assessment (EA 21-02) recommending the adoption of a Negative Declaration pursuant to the environmental review guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.
- b) Change of Zone (CZ 21-02) to change the zone of approximately 45 acres of a 118-acre site from Manufacturing Service (M-S) to R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac). The site is located south of Ave 53, north of Ave 54, and west of Tyler St. (APN: 778-390-003, 778-390-004, 778-390-005, and 778-390-007)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolution No. PC 2021-20 recommending the City Council adopt a Negative Declaration, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, and approve Change of Zone No. 21-02 for the Avenue 53 Re-zone Project.

BACKGROUND:

The Avenue 53 Rezoning project (“Project”) is located on approximately 118 acres located south of Ave 53, north of Ave 54, and west of Tyler St. (APN: 778-390-003, 778-390-004, 778-390-005, and 778-390-007). The City initiated effort is proposing a Change of Zone from the existing Manufacturing Service (M-S) to R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac). The Change of Zone will help create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City’s 5th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), consistent with the adopted Housing Element and General Plan. It will also allow a mixture of housing types available to all residents including market rate housing and affordable housing. The Project proposes a Change of Zone only, no development plans are proposed at this time for the property.



DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The City of Coachella initiated Change of Zone No. 21-02 at the request of the State of California – Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) pursuant to a mandatory re-zoning effort called out in the City’s Housing Element. The Change of Zone’s main purpose is to create additional “development ready” multifamily residential zoning to accommodate the City’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) from the 5th Cycle carryover which is required to be completed as part of the City’s 2013-2021 Housing Element. Communities use the RHNA in land

use planning, prioritizing local resource allocation, and in deciding how to address identified existing and future housing needs resulting from population, employment, and household growth. The rezoning is anticipated to allow for the development of a maximum of approximately 1,922 dwelling units as shown below in Table 4, Potential Project Units. The project would help create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City’s 5th Cycle RHNA Allocation consistent with the adopted Housing Element and General Plan.

The Change of Zone will re-designate the property as shown below in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 1 and 2 Proposed Change of Zone:

Table 1: Current and Proposed Zoning

Property	Existing Zones	Acres	Proposed Zones	Acres
Devirian	M-S	112.9	R-M Urban (20-38 un/ac)	45.9
			MS	21.7
			MS (Buffer Area)	45.3
Cota	M-S	4.7	R-M Urban (20-38 un/ac)	4.7
Total		117.6		117.6

The proposed Change of Zone will allow for Multi-Family uses. The R-M zone is intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities, including market rate housing, and related community services. The proposed zone is consistent with the project’s land use designations of Urban Employment Center, established by the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) and therefore a General Plan Amendment is not needed for this project.

Land Use and Proposed Zoning Breakdown:

The project site is approximately 118 acres. The project proposes R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac) on approximately 50.6 acres of the site as illustrated in Figure 1 and 2 below. The R-M Urban land use permits 20 to 38 du/ac; therefore, this portion of the site could accommodate an average of 1,467 dwelling units. This is shown in Table 4, Potential Project Units.

The current General Plan Land Use category acreage, the Zoning District acreages, and the total dwelling unit yield for the project site are as shown below:

Table 2 Existing GP Land Use Designations

Land Use	Acres
Urban Employment Center	118

*Approximate value

Table 3 Proposed Zoning

Proposed Zoning	Acres
R-M Urban (20-25 du/ac)	50.6
M-S	21.7
M-S (Buffer Area)	45.3
Total*	117.6

*Approximate value

Table 4 Potential Project Units

Proposed Zone	Acres	Allowed DU	Mid Density	Total DU/AC
R-M Urban	50.6	20-38 du/ac	29 du/ac	1,467

Currently, the site has Manufacturing Service (M-S) zoning consisting. The properties immediately adjacent to the site are zoned Residential Single Family (R-S) and Residential Planned Unit Development (R-PUD) and are fully constructed residential neighborhoods. The properties immediately north are Manufacturing Service (M-S) and Heavy Industrial (M-H) zones. The Heavy Industrial zoning is the location of the Armtec Defense Products complex. To the South is Avenue 54 and vacant properties in unincorporated Riverside County.

The proposed Change of Zone Exhibit will change the zoning to have R-M Urban (25-38 du/ac) zoning for the 50.6 acres of the 118-acre site. The change of zone would not apply to a 750-foot buffer area around the Armtec property and would maintain the existing Manufacturing Service (M-S) zone. The R-M district with “minimum density” requirements, will allow further development of the sites without the need for additional discretionary actions, and are consistent with State Laws regarding the low and moderate-income categories of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The City of Coachella as the lead agency for this project prepared an Initial Study pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c) to provide a preliminary analysis of the proposed project’s actions and to determine if the project, as proposed, may have a significant effect upon the environment. Staff undertook review of the proposed rezoning and determined the project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and subsequently a Negative Declaration has been prepared. Staff recommend that the Negative Declaration be adopted with a minor modification to the change of zone map and the land use section, which identifies 21.7 acres zoned M-S at the Northwest corner of Tyler Street and Avenue 54 to be changed to Manufacturing Service with the Industrial Park Overlay Zone (MS-IP). Staff recommends that the M-S zoning remain with no change.

Attached to this staff report is a copy of the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration and the Initial Study/Negative Declaration document. The Planning Commission must find adequacy

with the environmental documents, in making a recommendation to the City Council for approval of the Change of Zone.

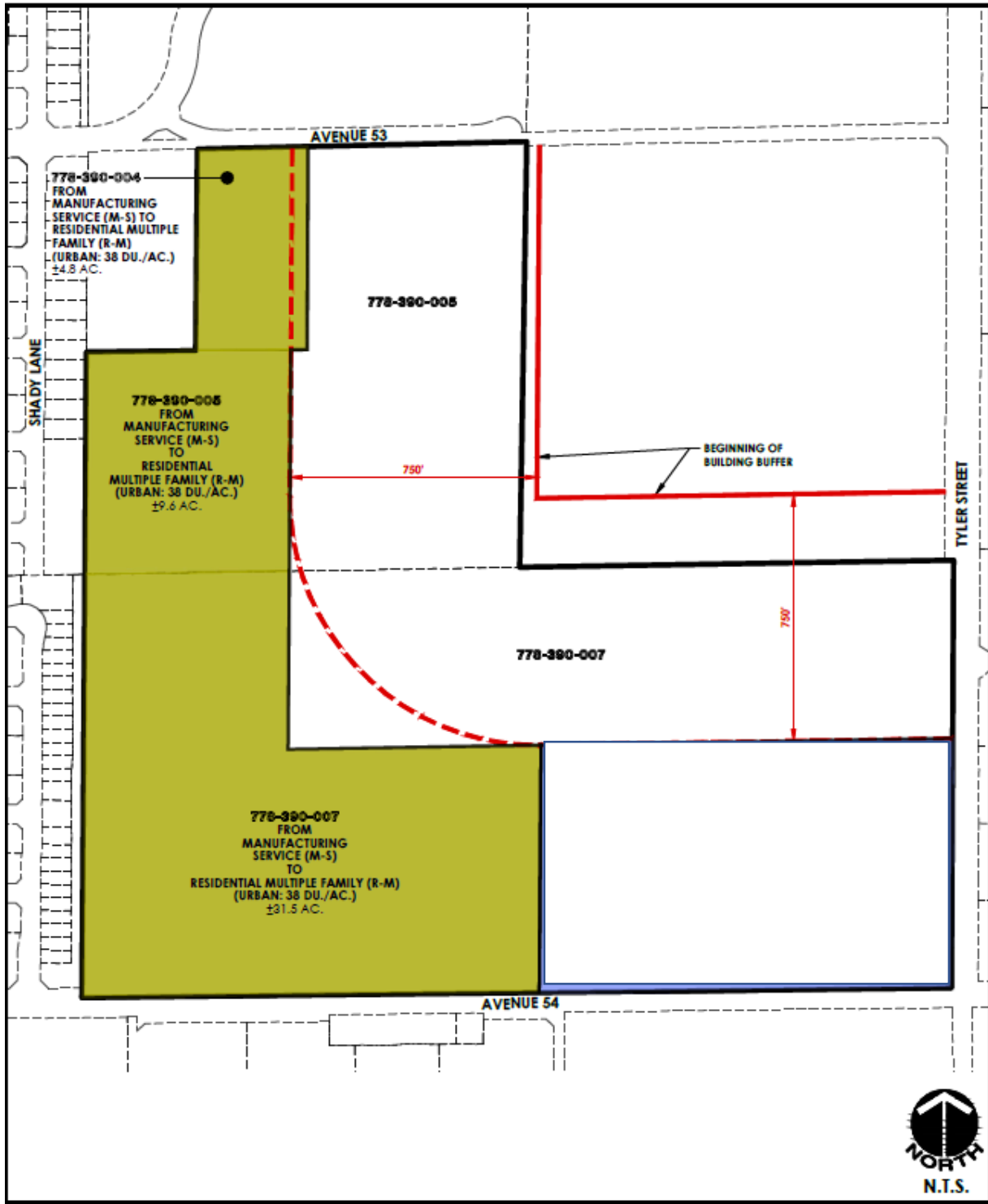


Figure 1: Proposed Change of Zone

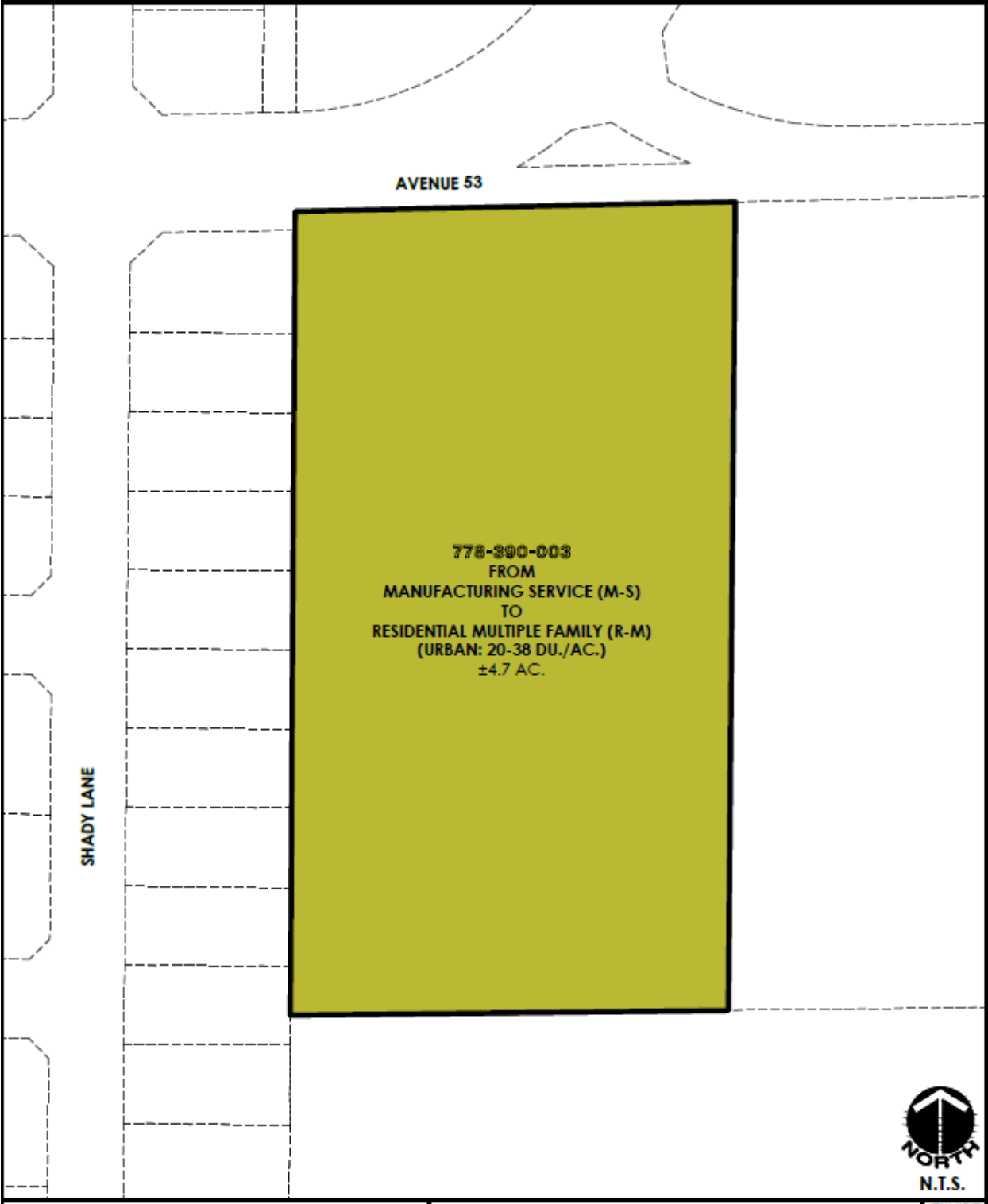


Figure 2: Proposed Change of Zone

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend to City Council adoption of a Negative Declaration (EA 21-02) and approval of Change of Zone (CZ 20-02).
2. Recommend to City Council adoption of a Negative Declaration (EA 21-02) and approval of Change of Zone (CZ 21-02) with minor modifications to the zoning district boundaries.
3. Take no action.
4. Continue this item and provide staff with direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff recommends Alternative #1 as noted above.

Attachment:

1. Resolution No. PC2021-20
2. Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration
3. CEQA Initial Study/ Negative Declaration (EA 21-02)