

## MEMO

**To:** George Flores, Development Services Director

**From:** Ed Boik, AICP, Senior Planner

**Date:** March 27, 2014

**Re:** Administrative Determination – Natural Gas Conversion Facility  
(Industrial/Manufacturing Use)

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### **Executive Summary**

The City of Buckeye was approached with a proposal to allow a natural gas conversion facility on a property zoned General Commercial (GC). Staff has determined that the use is a compatible use in the GC district and fits within the characteristics of “Manufacturing, General” as listed as a permitted use and defined by the 2005 City of Buckeye Development Code. If an application is submitted to allow this use within the GC district, it shall be processed and reviewed as a “Major Site Plan” which requires City Council action.

### **Development Code Background**

The 2005 Development Code is the governing development code for the vast majority of properties within the City of Buckeye. The 2005 Development Code is used to determine the uses, density and intensity of uses allowed in the applicable zoning districts. The code broadly defines uses and recognizes that uses shall be “interpreted liberally to include other uses that have similar impacts to the listed uses” (Section 7-4-3). Furthermore, the code presumes that all legitimate uses of land are permissible in at least one zoning district defined by the code.

The General Commerce Zoning District is a broad zoning district which accommodates general commercial and employment uses and compatible industrial uses. A variety of uses ranging from restaurants, retail, offices, to warehouses, and manufacturing are allowed within the zoning district. Additionally, uses such as airports, zoos, and meat processing (slaughterhouses) are conditionally allowed. All uses are required to comply with a variety of site development standards such as parking, landscaping, screening and architectural standards before they can be permitted and the more intense or large-scale uses require public hearings and City Council review.

### **Manufacturing Use**

Manufacturing is defined by the development code as “The process of creating a finished product by fabrication or from raw materials, especially by means of a larger scale industrial operation.”

### **Natural Gas Conversion Facility**

A natural gas conversion facility converts natural gas into liquids such as low-sulfur diesel, water, and various waxes and base oils. The process is scalable and can initiate as a small unit and quickly be grown into multiple parallel operations. The facility will result in increased truck traffic and employ up to 100 people at maximum build out. A conversion facility will include on-site offices, holding tanks, numerous gas conversion units and an approximately 70-ft tall burn-off tower. The use can be determined to be General Manufacturing in that raw material (natural gas) is manufactured into other finished products.

### **Review Process**

General Manufacturing is defined as a permitted use by the 2005 Development Code. The 2010 Development, however, is used to define the appropriate review and public notification processes for new development. Section 8.9 of the 2010 Development Code outlines the review and approval procedures for permitted uses and site plans. Due to the potential impacts, scale and intensity of the use, this item shall require review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and final action by the City Council.

### **Conclusion & Recommendation**

After careful consideration, staff has determined that the use is a compatible use in the GC district and fits within the characteristics of "Manufacturing, General" as listed as a permitted use and defined by the 2005 City of Buckeye Development Code. Although the use is a unique manufacturing process, its functions are compatible with other permissible uses in the GC district and consistent with the definition of "Manufacturing, General". If an application is submitted to allow this use within the GC district, it shall be processed and reviewed as a "Major Site Plan" which requires City Council action.

### **References**

2005 Development Code, Section 2: Definition of Manufacturing  
2005 Development Code, Section 7-4-3: Permissible Uses  
2010 Development Code, Section 8.9: Site Plan Review

My concurrence and approval of this determination,

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George Flores  
Director of Development Services  
City of Buckeye