

McDonald's
**Narrative for
Design Review, Site Plan Review & SCIP Applications**
Gilbert & McKellips Roads, Mesa, AZ
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Developer:

McDonald's USA, LLC
17550 N. Perimeter Drive, Suite 400
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
Contact: Scott Audsley

Engineer:

Kimley-Horn and Associates
1001 W Southern Ave Suite 131
Mesa, AZ 85210
Contact: Sterling Margetts

Architect:

KDF Architectural Group
300 W. Clarendon Avenue, Suite 320
Phoenix, AZ 85013
Contact: Dan Filuk, RA, AIA

Applicant:

Earl & Curley, P.C.
3101 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1000
Phoenix, AZ 85012
Contact: Rod Jarvis/Gary King

Introduction

In 2014, McDonald's obtained the necessary approvals to construct a new McDonald's restaurant building of 4,250 sq. ft. with a side by side 2-1 drive-thru lane on the pad previously occupied by a Chuy's restaurant in the Basha's Shopping Center at the northwest corner of McKellips and Gilbert Roads, in the City of Mesa. The site is approximately 0.93 acres in size and includes Maricopa County Tax Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 136-06-256A. The dilapidated and vacant 8,853 sq. ft building (previously occupied by the Chuy's restaurant shown in the aerial below) was demolished and the pad dustproofed until the approved plans could be implemented. The restaurant was not built within the allotted timeframes for the various entitlements that were obtained. McDonald's does now plan to move ahead with construction of the restaurant but since the 2014 approvals have expired, McDonald's is beginning that re-entitlement process.



As noted above, this McDonald's restaurant PAD is part of a larger shopping center development that contains over 72,350 sq. ft. of commercial space anchored by EoS Fitness with Serrano's and other restaurants, retail and small businesses filling out the center. The Serrano's Mexican Restaurant is in a stand-alone building located along the Gilbert Road frontage. The 450 sq. ft. Dutch Brothers Coffee drive-thru located directly on the corner of McKellips and Gilbert Road is not technically part of the center.

The enclosed/attached plans are very similar to the approved plan in 2014 by the City. The shopping center did however move forward with renovation plans and design themes/materials which this new McDonald's restaurant will incorporate in a complementary fashion.

Site Conditions and Accessibility

A Context Aerial Photo and Existing Site Photos are enclosed with this application. The shopping center was originally developed in the 1980's but its appearance has been substantially renovated and is very attractive. Access into the center is available from both Gilbert and McKellips Roads. Primary access into the McDonald's pad site will be from two existing driveways along McKellips Road. McKellips Road currently does not have a raised median and left turns are permitted in both directions. Secondary access to McDonald's is available from Gilbert Road via the internal circulation drives in the shopping center.

Compliance with Zoning & General Plan Designations

The proposed McDonald's restaurant is in compliance with the Mixed-Use Activity District with a sub-type of Community-Scale Districts as defined in Chapter 7 of the General Plan. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the primary focus of the Mixed-Use Activity character type is to provide community activity areas that include a significant commercial and retail component. The goal is to help the district to be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences. These character types are typically at the intersection of two arterial streets and are typically auto dominant.

The site is zoned Limited Commercial (LC). The Limited Commercial zoning district provides areas for indoor retail, entertainment and service-oriented businesses that serve the surrounding area. The proposed McDonald's restaurant with a drive-thru is permitted in the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district.

DESIGN & SITE PLAN REVIEW

Conceptual Site Plan

The enclosed site plan illustrates the building size and location; vehicular circulation and parking; the limited depth of the pad site due to the shopping center parking lot circulation drive aisle and landscape areas for the site. The site plan has been designed to fit within these existing site conditions and constraints in order to minimize impacts and disturbances to the centers' circulation aisles/parking and uses within the shopping center. The east-west building orientation also minimizes solar gain. As a result of this building orientation, the parking that might otherwise front onto McKellips is located behind, or north of, the proposed restaurant building and is therefore not visible from McKellips Road. Given the site's shallow & wide rectangular shape that is constricted on all four sides by existing center circulation aisles or McKellips Road, the only option to fully utilize this site is to position the drive-thru lane parallel to McKellips Road. However, in accordance with City objectives, the view of the drive-thru lane from McKellips Road has been screened from view by using several architectural design elements which have also been incorporated into the building elevation – all to create an inviting and attractive streetscape appearance.

The enclosed site plan illustrates the building size and location; vehicular circulation and parking; the limited depth and width of the pad site is due to the shopping center parking lot circulation drive aisles on three sides and landscape areas for the site. The site plan has been designed to fit

within these existing site conditions and constraints in order to minimize impacts and disturbances to the centers' circulation aisles/parking and uses.

Proposed Site Layout

In selecting the restaurant layout on this pad, various alternatives were considered for this 4,250 sq. ft. building. A north/south orientation was initially considered but due to the significant intrusion into the shopping center's main parking field in front of EoS Fitness and the required realignment of the principal east/west shopping center drive-aisle, any north/south site orientation was ruled out. It simply wouldn't work for the other existing major and minor tenants in the center. The benefits of the proposed site design are as follows:

- Both internal and external vehicular circulation conflicts are eliminated with this layout and delivery trucks can safely maneuver on the north side of the site out of view of the traveling public and away from primary customer entrance.

Traffic into and out of the shopping center is indirectly metered by the signalization of the McKellips and Gilbert intersection. The two center driveways off McKellips are thought to be the primary access points for the McDonald's Pad, but the site also has convenient and safe access to main center driveway. The intersection signal allows vehicles from the center to both enter and exit safely at both driveways. This layout allows safe and convenient parking for in-restaurant dining as well as eliminating most conflicts with drive-thru customers. The drive-thru lanes are designed with sufficient capacity (length) to accommodate virtually every situation. And in times of unusual drive-thru demand, the queue takes place at the northwest corner of the restaurant – in the shopping center out of view of traveling public on McKellips, away from the heavily-traveled egress from Dutch Bros, and away from the eastern McKellips access drive.

With this orientation, customers seeking the drive-thru lanes can enter either at the eastern driveway, proceed north and once well into the center will turn west towards the drive-thru entry or from the west driveway. Once well into the center, these drivers will then turn right into the drive-thru lanes. In this way, traffic movements will be smooth and orderly from either shopping center driveway.

Vehicles exiting the McDonald's drive-thru will generally use the eastern driveway and turn right to prepare to enter McKellips. This movement allows for safe merging with customers exiting Dutch Bros. And when that movement onto McKellips is open, customers can safely exit onto McKellips. If that eastern driveway has any wait, the customer has numerous existing options by simply turning left and moving up into the Center for other exiting options. It's important to highlight the fact that vehicles that do plan to go west on McKellips Road have a unique feature not found in most shopping centers; a small acceleration lane via the bus bay.

- With the drive-thru, there is more opportunity to minimize the presence of vehicles and emphasize architectural elements. The design of the canopy draws its influence from the architectural features used in the shopping center renovation and the McDonald's Restaurant to create an inviting and attractive streetscape appearance.

First, the existing landscape setback area between the drive-thru lane and McKellips Road has not only been retained, but generally deepened and increased in overall area and quality over the existing condition in the southwest corner of the pad site. In the former condition with the Chuy's Restaurant, there was a landscaped setback on McKellips ranging from 4-ft. (due to the earlier dedication of right-of-way for a bus pull-out) up to a maximum 34-ft. (an average landscape setback of 18-ft.) and consisting of approximately 4,860 sq. ft.

In the proposed site plan, the narrowest part of the existing setback is proposed to be increased from 4-ft. to 8-ft. and the deepest part of the setback is proposed to still be at least 34 ft. deep, but an increased average landscape setback of 23 ft. is now being provided. Thus, the overall total

amount of landscaped area will also increase by 30% (now 10,605 sq. ft.) from the existing site conditions, and 50% more than required under current Code.

Two screen walls that are terraced and articulated with plane offsets and variations in height are proposed to provide the required 40" high screen wall and significantly enhance the streetscape image.

Alternate Site Layout - Flipped Designs

Prior to submitting this application, McDonald’s carefully examined several site layouts that placed the drive-thru on the north side of the building. We did this analysis in light of the City’s preference that drive-thru’s not parallel a street. However, we discovered that each such layout has major weaknesses.

Design with the drive-thru on the north side of the PAD must rely on a two-way entry into the PAD close to McKellips Road from the shopping center drive-aisle near the shopping center’s eastern driveway. This places vehicular and pedestrian circulation in conflict and all of these movements would be fronting onto McKellips Road. This is a significant safety concern that this approach would adversely impact the smooth flow of traffic into and out of the center. In each such layout, there also wasn’t sufficient room to allow for overflow queuing out of the drive-thru lanes without back-up into the main parking and drive aisles, thus creating a choke or congestion point. A flipped layout also places the majority of customer parking on the south side of the building where it is fully visible to the street. These flipped designs will necessitate awkward turning movements for customers and delivery trucks servicing the restaurant. Customers parking in the east parking field would be forced to walk between vehicles queuing into the drive-thru area. Pushing the McDonald’s drive-thru further to the east of the site may remove some of this conflict, but would still place the congestion point at the front of the building and could back traffic up onto the center driveway.

If the drive-thru lane exit is in the northwest corner of the PAD, a vehicle exiting the drive-thru lane adds an unnecessary layer of complexity to on-site circulation. Parking spaces for an adjacent business that shares access rights with the center back-up to the western shopping center drive-aisle. Not only must customers watch out for vehicles that could be backing out of those spaces but must also ensure no conflicts with traffic entering the center. And needless to say, waiting for a car to back out of one of those spaces can delay service to customers waiting in the drive-thru. It is an unnecessary layer of complexity.

If vehicles must enter the drive-thru from a drive-aisle, that is a problem because vehicles tend to arrive in groups of 2-4 and if the drive-thru entry is already full, the overflow queuing would occur in the drive aisle thus disrupting site circulation (as earlier noted). Depending on which direction they came from, the queuing could block a vehicle wanting to leave the shopping center. And finally, aesthetically, the image of a McDonald’s parking lot is less desirable than an attractive architecturally treated drive-thru lane.

Site Plan and Building Data is summarized in the table below.

Site Plan and Building Data	
APN	136-06-256A
General Plan	Mixed-Use Activity District
Zoning	Limited Commercial (LC)
Parcel Site Area	+/-40,548 sq. ft. (0.93 acres)
Gross Building Area	4,250 Sq. Ft. (Gross)
Base Building Area	4,250 Sq. Ft. (Net)
Lot Coverage	10.4%
Maximum Building Height Allowed	30’
Maximum Building Height Proposed	23’-6”

	(MAIN BLDG. & PARAPET)
Minimum Building & Parking Setback McKellips Rd	
Required	15' Min.
Proposed	8' Min. / 23' Avg.
Open Space Area and Coverage %	+/-13,330 Sq. Ft. and 32.8% of Parcel Area
Landscape Area and Coverage %	+/-10,605 Sq. Ft. and 26.1% of Parcel Area
Parking Required	43 Total Spaces (1 space per 100 Sq. Ft. of indoor area)
Parking Provided	2 Accessible Spaces 38 Standard Spaces 40 Total Spaces
Bicycle Parking Required	At least 3 Bicycle Spaces or 1 Bicycle Space per 10 on-site vehicle spaces provided, whichever is greater
Bicycle Parking Provided	5 Bicycle Spaces

Architecture

This application requests Design Review Board approval for a 4,250 square foot, single-story, wood-frame restaurant with a drive-thru. It is designed to be aesthetically appealing, functional, pedestrian friendly, and provide for safe and expeditious flow to and from the site. The building has a full kitchen, with cold storage, and an indoor dining facility that seats approximately 67 patrons. The floor plan contains all of the elements of recently completed McDonald's restaurants as well as a newly implemented feature, that of a third window along the drive-thru side. This presents an enhanced drive-thru experience in that the patron, who must occasionally wait for an order to be completed, can pull forward to this third window and wait while the order is completed. This allows the staff to stay in the building and patrons behind this vehicle to pull out and around the waiting car to maintain a smooth flow of service.

Planning has requested we follow their "Quality -Development-Design Guidelines." The building architecture, materials and colors are primarily based on the existing center's renovated facades. The look of the center is far from McDonald's corporate standards and so McDonald's design team put significant effort into revising the McDonald's design to complement the center. Because best traffic flow and queuing practices require the restaurant to orient to McKellips Road, special attention was given to this street elevation. Building materials and colors were varied, pop-outs were added, the parapet height was varied appropriately and a canopy was added over the drive-thru. The design of the canopy draws its influence from the metal trellis structures used elsewhere in the center.

The other three building elevations reflect the same overall design approach, colors and textures utilized that were utilized on the McKellips elevation as well, incorporating architectural features and patterns that give a pedestrian scale to the building. All roof-mounted mechanical equipment is architecturally screened and roof drain elements are internalized within the building. The architectural building elements include color, texture and material change that are distinct and recognizable, but also harmonious. Architectural building materials are of high quality and durability and consist of fiber cement board, stucco, aluminum, steel & tempered glass. The following are a few things we have done since our initial pre-application submittal to comply with current design standards: Pop outs have been increased in depth, offsets in wall planes at material changes are introduced (varies 4" to 8") and we Increased vertical parapet offset from 16" to 24".

Landscape Architecture

The planting design palette has been developed to integrate with the existing site. Along McKellips Road, planting will exceed the City's minimum requirements in order to provide additional screening of the drive-thru lane. Colorful blooming evergreen trees, along with strategically placed shrubs and groundcover, will soften and enhance the architectural features of the terraced retaining and screen walls and the building. Site visibility is maintained for the existing and future freestanding sign monument along McKellips. The parking lot landscape palette complements the existing parking islands for consistency. Foundation planting around the building will provide color and texture year-round.

Signage

All signage proposed for this new restaurant will comply with the amended Comprehensive Sign Plan approved for the shopping center which included signage for McDonald's.

SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PERMIT (SCIP)

The purpose of the SCIP is "to establish a review process by which improvement standards required by this Ordinance can be incrementally installed on non-conforming sites when such sites are enlarged; buildings are replaced, extended or have additions constructed; or other site modification developed. The intent is to recognize existing site constraints, and work proportionately with the degree of improvement being sought by the applicant to also improve the property based upon the development standards adopted by the Ordinance, and therefore bring non-conforming developments into substantial compliance with this Ordinance through approval of a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP)."

As was noted earlier, the dimensions of this PAD are fixed by the entry driveways, the main shopping center drive aisle to the north of the PAD and McKellips Road. And the original landscaped setback on McKellips was reduced by the dedication of right-of-way for a bus pull-out. In the proposed site plan, the narrowest part of the existing setback is proposed to be increased slightly and the largest depth of the setback is proposed to be substantially increased.

Given the dimensions and physical constraints of this pad site, complying with the City's landscape setback requirement off McKellips Road works a hardship on the use and the site. This wide/shallow condition noted above is fixed. In the area of the bus bay pull-out, the exit from the drive-thru has a wider throat so that any patron who has to wait a bit longer for his order to be filled can pull up to a third window and wait while the cars behind him can pull around and exit the drive-thru, helping to maintain a smooth flow.

While the landscaped setback dimensions and total area are going to increase over the previous condition, the minimum setback will still not comply with the City's current standard. The installation of the bus pull-out pocket after the creation of this pad just makes it unreasonably difficult to redevelop the pad and still increase the setback in this small area up to the current City Standard of 15-ft. which justifies City support for the approval of a SCIP.

This Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) is necessary in this location to facilitate the redevelopment of the pad site, while maintaining and working within the existing site conditions and constraints. At the time of initial development for this commercial shopping center, the landscape and parking setbacks and the foundation base requirements of the Zoning Code varied or were non-existent, when compared to the development standards now in place under the current Code. This SCIP request proposes deviations from current Code requirements relating to a small portion of the Landscape & Parking Setback along McKellips Road and the Foundation Base. These reductions as proposed on average actually exceed the current setbacks and (although not up to the current Code for a short portion of the frontage) will allow redevelopment of the site while

maintaining the centers' existing circulation drive aisles, improvements and uses. A summary of the proposed SCIP elements is outlined in the table below:

SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PERMIT (SCIP) SUMMARY			
Standard	Existing Site Condition	Code Requirement	Applicant Proposed
Drive-Thru Land Parallel to McKellips Road (11-31-18D)	N/A	Drive-thru lanes shall not be located parallel to arterial roadways	Allow parallel drive-thru lane; provide 40-inch high screen walls and provide approximately 2200 sq. ft. of landscaping in excess of Code requirements.
McKellips Road Landscape & Parking Setback	Minimum: 4 feet Maximum: 34 feet Average: 18 feet Landscape Area: 4,860 S.F.	Minimum: 15' Maximum: n/a Average: n/a Landscape Area with Min. 15' Setback: 4,050 S.F.	Minimum: 8' Maximum: 34' Average: 23' Landscape Area Provided: 10,605 S.F.
Foundation Base	Exterior Walls w/ Public Entrance: 5 feet Exterior Walls adj. to Parking Stalls: 5 feet	Exterior Walls w/ Public Entrance: 15 feet Exterior Walls adj. to Parking Stalls: 10 feet	Exterior Walls w/ Public Entrance: 10 feet Exterior Walls adj. to Parking Stalls: No Change Proposed As an offset to not providing enough trees around the building, four (4) trees were added to the landscaped island on the north side of the PAD.
Foundation Base Drive-Thru(D/T)	Not Applicable	Minimum 2-foot foundation base along exterior of building adj. to d/t; 40-inch high screen wall adjacent to public right-of-way	Along the drive-thru aisle against the building, we are proposing a total 2' deep decorative concrete base with 6-inch vertical curb along exterior of building; 40-inch high screen wall adjacent to public right-of-way and metal trellis canopy.

The latest technologies are being utilized in the design and construction of this new restaurant. The benefits of faster service accrue not only to the customer and McDonald's, but also the center by helping to keep the shopping center aisles clear of cars in the queue for the drive-thru, which improves on-site safety. Given the improvements in the function, design and aesthetics over the

existing non-conforming condition, we believe there is sufficient merit for the City to approve this SCIP request.

Conclusion

This new McDonald's restaurant will be another upgrade to this decades-old center, which has been undergoing a needed renovation. The new restaurant will be a complementary use in the center as well as the area and as every McDonald's does, it will add to the economic development base in the City.

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