



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

P&Z CASE NUMBER: **Z16-022** (PLN2016-00113)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 2325 East University Drive
GENERAL VICINITY: Located east of Gilbert Road on the south side of University Drive
REQUEST: Rezoning from RS-6 to RSL-2.5-BIZ. This request will allow for the development a single residence development. Also consider the preliminary Plat for “Montero”
PURPOSE: The development of a single residence development
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 2
OWNER(S): Elaine Farms Partnership
APPLICANT: Mark Funk, Funk Family Enterprises
STAFF PLANNER: Lesley Davis

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBERS: 140-24-008L
PARCEL SIZE: 2.45± acres
EXISTING ZONING: RS-6
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Neighborhood – Suburban
CURRENT LAND USE: vacant land
PROPOSED DENSITY: 4.15 DU/AC

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: (across University Dr.) Existing multi-residence development – zoned RM-2
EAST: Existing single-residence subdivision – zoned RS-6
SOUTH: Existing townhome development – zoned RM-3 PAD
WEST: Existing office building – zoned OC PAD and Existing townhome development – zoned RM-3 PAD

ZONING HISTORY

December 18, 1971: Annexed to City (Ord. #742) and subsequently zoned RS-6.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions
P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: ☐ Approval with conditions ☐ Denial
PROP 207 WAIVER: ☒ Signed ☐ Not Signed

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

The applicant's request is to rezone and subdivide a 2.45± acre parcel from RS-6 to RSL-2.5-BIZ with a Preliminary Plat titled "Montero". The site is located east of the southeast corner of Gilbert Road and University Drive on the south side of University Drive.

The proposed subdivision consists of 15 lots that are a minimum of 40-feet wide and 81-feet deep. Open space has been provided at the entrance along University to provide a buffer to the homes from University Avenue and an enhanced entry experience. An additional active small open space area is located within the subdivision and feature turf and a swing. The applicant has stated that because the lots are somewhat deeper than in other recent RSL-2.5 subdivisions, they will accommodate some usable open space for homeowners within their yard that will supplement the small amenity area for the neighborhood. The proposed street system is private with parking available on one side of the street.

STAFF ANALYSIS

RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION DESIGN:

	Min. Lot Size Min. Dimensions	Min. Front Setback	Min. Side Setbacks	Min. Rear Setback	Rear Yard Patio setback
RSL-2.5 Standards	2,000 SF 2,500 SF (avg.) 25' x 75' (corner lot width 30')	12' - Building Wall 7' - Porch 20' - Garage	10' - Street Side 3' - Minimum 8' - Total 5' - minimum for lots 9, 10 & 11	15'	15'
Proposed	3,274 SF 4,240 SF (avg) 40' x 81' (corner lot width 45')	12' - Building Wall 7' - Porch 20' - Garage	10' - Street Side 4' - Minimum 8' - Total	15'	15'

SUBDIVISION DETAILS:

Street System	Fences/Walls	Open Space	Other
Private streets with decorative surface at entrance and at bend in street – not gated	6' CMU perimeter wall with enhanced wall along University Drive (elevations attached)	3 common open space areas providing - 2 retention areas on either side of entrance 1 small open space with swing and grass area Each lot is providing a minimum of 850 SF of private open space (code minimum is 400 SF)	-HOA -CC&Rs

RSL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Per Table 11-5-4 of the Zoning Ordinance, there are four design elements which must be implemented in this subdivision to achieve the RSL-2.5 designation. The developer has chosen to provide five, which are listed below:

Streetscape Elements:

Parkland and Open Space: The minimum open space required for a 15-lot, RSL 2.5 subdivision is 6,000 square-feet. The common open space proposed in this subdivision is 11.8% of the net acreage at 11,357 square-feet. Of this area, 8,216 square-feet is retention with turf and 3,141 square-feet is the amenity open space area. The amenity open space area is centrally located within the site. This area is a bit smaller but contains shaded seating adjacent to a play area. The open space area provided is over 30 percent greater in area than the minimum open space required.

Paving Material: Decorative paving materials that will include either pavers, stamped, colored or textured concrete are provided at the entry to the development as well as within the development at the bend in the road as it leads to the cul-de-sac.

Site Design Elements:

Shared or Clustered Driveways: Driveways will be clustered so that there is at least 36 feet of uninterrupted curb between the clustered driveways. Driveways may be paired so that there is a single curb-cut providing access to 2 houses, and the total width for the paired driveway is not more than 18 feet.

Building Design Elements:

Architectural Diversity: Projects with 20 or few lots require a minimum of 3 unique elevations. Two plans have been provided with six (6) unique elevations. Each elevation proposes a different combination of materials and colors (12 schemes). Enhanced architectural elements are provided with sand finish stucco on the front elevations and real wood and stone material (per plan and elevation).

Entries and Porches: This requirement states that at least 50 percent of the homes include entries and covered porches extending along a minimum of 50 percent of the width of the home's front facade (excluding the width of garages) and be a minimum of 8-feet wide by 4-feet deep. The proposed homes comply.

Other RSL Standards:

Where a lot in the RSL District is adjacent to a lot in the RS District, the minimum interior side yard (for a single side) that is required on the RS-zoned lot shall also be provided on the lot in the RSL District. This is a requirement for lots 9, 10 and 11, which are adjacent to the RS-6 district to the east. These lots are 45' wide, which will accommodate the required increased setback.

The applicant has provided a minimum of 850 square-feet of private open space on each lot, which exceeds the minimum requirement of 400 square-feet. The Zoning Ordinance also specifies that all lots must be located within 330-feet of an active open space area. All lots within this development comply with this requirement.

MODIFICATIONS

The proposed residential subdivision portion of this request, meets or exceeds the development standards for the RSL-2.5 zoning district, as indicated by the preceding table. The applicant is seeking the BIZ overlay for two purposes. The first is to accommodate the proposed private drive for "Montero". The additional need for the BIZ relates to the design of the product.

The Building Form standards in the Zoning Ordinance establish that the aggregate width of garage doors attached to a primary residence and facing the front of the lot shall not exceed 50 percent of the aggregate width of those elevations on the building that face the front of the lot. The applicant is

proposing a minor deviation from this standard by providing minor extensions at the front face of the home to give the appearance that the home is wider, but still providing a larger setback between the homes. The width of the homes proposed is 30-feet with 4-foot minimum side setbacks. A standard garage door is 16-feet in width, leaving only 14-feet of livable area facing the street. The applicant has provided a 2-foot extension from the garage that is 4-feet deep on one of the plans to establish an appearance from the street that the livable area is wider. On the second floor plan the applicant has extended the front porch to the side, to help create that extension at the front of the home. The applicant has proposed to justify this as an alternative to the Building Form Standards for this subdivision due to the small number of lots proposed and the increased quality of their homes with enhanced building materials, such as real wood timbers and real stone with sand stucco finishes.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process which included a mailed letter to property owners within 500-feet of the site, as well as HOAs and registered neighborhoods within a mile. The applicant offered to meet with neighbors and provided contact information for them to set up those private meetings if they had any questions or concerns. The applicant has not reported any concerns raised by neighbors. An update on the Citizen Participation will be provided to the Planning and Zoning Board before the Public Hearing.

Staff has not been contacted by any neighbors regarding this proposal.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

Summary: The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation for this site is Neighborhood with the sub-type suburban. This project provides a smaller, single-residence lot type between existing conventional RS-6 neighborhoods, existing office developments and an existing multi-residential townhome development. The proposed development creates a neighborhood character that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan.

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation is Neighborhoods with the sub-type suburban. The primary focus of the neighborhoods character type is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community.

Criteria for review of proposal: The following criteria (Ch. 15 of the General Plan) have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether the proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in the General Plan and thus meeting the statute requirements.

1. Is the proposed development consistent with furthering the intent and direction contained in the General Plan?

The General Plan focuses on creating land development patterns that emphasize the character of place and focusing on those principles that build neighborhoods, stabilize the job base, and improve the sense of place.

The proposed development is establishing a sense of place through their intent to create a small pocket subdivision adjacent to existing residential communities. It is also providing an appropriate transition between residential and office uses with a smaller lot type.

2. Is the proposed development consistent with adopted sub-area or neighborhood plans?

Mesa has not established a neighborhood or sub-area plan for this area.

3. Is the proposed development consistent with the standards and guidelines established for the applicable character type(s)?

The Character Area map of the Mesa 2040 General Plan defines this location as Neighborhood with a sub-type of Suburban, which are defined as follows:

Character Area: Neighborhood

Focus: "The primary focus of the neighborhoods character type is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community.

Neighborhoods can contain a wide range of housing options and often have associated nonresidential uses such as schools, parks, places of worship, and local serving businesses. The total area devoted to local serving businesses (commercial and office activities) in one location is generally less than 15 acres and these businesses would typically serve people within a mile radius of the area."

The proposed subdivision supports the General Plan policy with the above references to "a wide range of housing options", by providing a different housing type adjacent to conventional single residences and townhomes.

Sub-type: Suburban

The suburban Sub-type is the predominant neighborhood pattern in Mesa. These neighborhoods are primarily single-residence in nature with most lots ranging in size from 6,000 sq. ft. to 18,000 sq. ft. As part of a total neighborhood area, this character type may also contain areas of duplexes and other multi-residence properties and commercial uses along arterial frontages and at major street intersections. Schools, parks, and religious institutions are frequently found in these neighborhoods. Streets are generally wide and contain sidewalks on both sides.

The proposed project provides a slightly smaller lot size than the residential to the east, but a larger lot option than the existing townhomes to the south. The Suburban sub-type accommodates higher density projects and smaller lot subdivisions at appropriate locations. This type of a subdivision is a logical transition between densities within the development pattern and is appropriate adjacent to the conventional RS-6 neighborhood, the two existing office developments and the townhomes. This site is also within walking distance to an elementary school, junior high and churches, as described for this character area in the General Plan.

4. Will the proposed development serve to strengthen the character of the area by:

• **Providing appropriate infill development;**

This proposal infills a 2.45 acre property that has been leftover as a result of developments around it that were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s.

• **Removing development that is deteriorated and/or does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area;**

N/A

• **Adding to the mix of uses to further enhance the intended character of the area;**

The intent is to provide for new housing options in an established neighborhood with close access to schools.

• **Improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area;**

The proposal improves the streetscape along University Drive. Although this neighborhood is not

able to directly connect with the subdivision to the east or south due to existing constraints of the built environment, the applicant has proposed a subdivision street that is not gated with parking available on one side of their private drive.

- **Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area;**

The existing neighborhoods to the east is a traditional neighborhood with a variety of architectural styles and single-story homes on public streets. The townhome development to the south consists of two-story attached housing with private access throughout. The applicant is proposing an upgraded residential housing product for smaller detached homes on small lots featuring a variety of elevations and building materials to enhance the architectural character of the home to provide an enhanced streetscape and a home type that will be more sustainable long term. The quality of the proposed homes meets or exceeds that of the surrounding area and other recent RSL-2.5 projects.

5. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses? In more urban areas these transitions should generally be accomplished by design elements that allow adjacent buildings to be close to one another. In more suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or screening;

A transition from a commercial zone, through a multi-residential zone into a single-residential zone is a common approach to land planning. The current proposal adds a smaller lot residential subdivision into an area with a mix of residential building types and office uses. The plan proposes all two story homes adjacent to a conventional RS-6 subdivision with single-story homes, however, the existing townhome development to the south is comprised of two-story buildings. The applicant has provided lots that are deeper adjacent to the RS-6 neighborhood to the east to reduce the impact of the new two-story homes. The applicant is also required in the RSL-2.5 standards to provide a minimum side setback that is equal to the minimum side setback in the adjacent single residence neighborhood. The three lots that are adjacent to that neighborhood also have additional width to comply with that requirement.

Chapter 3 of The Plan also identifies 5 fundamentals to be considered to help move the City toward the goal of becoming a more complete, recognizable City. The five elements include:

1. High Quality Development
 - *As previously stated, the applicant is proposing elevations that include upgraded building materials for the 15 homes proposed. They have proposed two different home plans with a total of 6 elevations and 12 color schemes. The quality level for the stucco and building materials that staff has been presented with thus far is higher than what has been submitted by other builders previously within our community.*
2. Changing Demographics
 - *By providing more choices in the housing types on the market we can meet the needs of a wider demographic. This is an established neighborhood where new housing is not often introduced. This project creates an opportunity for new people to move into an area that may not want a larger lot to maintain.*
3. Public Health
 - *Increased opportunities for walking: Making it possible to walk from home to a park, school, or shopping can improve health.*
4. Urban Design and Place-Making
 - *This area is a fairly traditional suburban part of our city. There are more opportunities*

for projects that have more urban designs to the south and west as you approach the new location for the light rail extension along Main Street at Gilbert Road. This is approximately a half mile from this location.

5. Desert Environment

- *This plan proposes large front porches on the homes and patio covers, which provide shade and cover from the elements. Trees have also been provided*

SUMMARY:

This request is to rezone and subdivide a 2.45± acre parcel from RS-6 to RSL-2.5-BIZ to facilitate the development of a 15-lot, single-residence, small-lot subdivision on a non-gated private drive that terminates in a cul-de-sac and parking allowed on one side of the private drive. The request also includes the review and consideration of the Preliminary Plat for a subdivision titled “Montero”. The applicant is proposing a density of 6.12 du/acre.

The applicant has proposed a fairly standard subdivision design with detached house plans. The only difference is the size of the lots, which fall within the Residential Small Lot (RSL) category in the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant has met the requirement for five required design elements established in the code for the RSL-2.5 category.

The site plan indicates three common open space areas. Tracts A and B are 8,216 square-feet and serve as landscaped retention areas. These two tracts are located at either side of the entrance into the subdivision to provide a buffer from University Drive as well as creating an enhanced entrance into the subdivision. Tract C is the additional smaller active open space area, which is centrally located and includes a small play area. The active open space area is 3,141 square-feet. The amenities for this neighborhood are minimal, but with a 15-lot subdivision, there should be a balance between what is provided for amenities and what can be sustained by the HOA over the long term. Staff has had a general concern about HOAs for a small subdivisions and their ability to take on the responsibility of the maintenance of a private drive and the open space areas long term. This particular applicant has experience with small subdivision development with private drives and believes that this is not an issue. Staff believes that the more minimal amenities and small open space areas within the development will be lower cost and therefore, perhaps the maintenance of that private drive, will not cause the high HOA fees and it may be able to remain as a sustainable HOA long term.

As discussed in the “Modifications” section of this report, the applicant has requested to modify the requirement established in the Building Form Standards that limits garage door widths to no more than 50% of the width of the home. The applicant would like to accomplish this by providing an extension of the front façade of the home to give the appearance that the livable space is wider than the garage, rather than revising their house plans so that the entire home is wider. Their justification for this relates to the design of the exterior of their homes, which they have identified in their narrative as including enhanced detailing with real building materials such as wood and stone that upgrade the quality of the home. They also believe that the extensions they propose at the front elevation give the perception from the street that the home is wider.

Staff’s concern regarding this solution is primarily relates to precedence. The applicant has expressed a concern that this is a fairly new standard that is difficult to apply to the RSL lots, which are also a fairly new option. They stated that having to overhaul their residential building product for a 15-lot subdivision is not feasible, but would be warranted in a larger subdivision. Staff does agree that the approval of these homes with this solution may be justifiable solely based on the size of the subdivision,

but coupled with the use of the enhanced building materials and upgraded elevations it is more acceptable. The enhanced building materials and finishes will give the project a higher quality, help to create a community that will age well over time and continue to be an asset to the overall neighborhood.

All approved preliminary plats are subject to potential modification through the Subdivision Technical Review process to meet all City codes and requirements, including but not limited to, all ADA requirements. This sometimes results in changing lot sizes and configuration, and could result in a reduction of lots.

CONCLUSIONS:

The subdivision design generally exceeds the development standards for the RSL-2.5 zoning district. The request is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods and will provide new housing options in an area where that has not been available for some time.

Staff recommends approval of Z16-022 subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative and as shown on the site plan and preliminary plat submitted (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage).
2. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Technical Review Committee.
3. Dedicate the right-of-way required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, at the time of recordation of the subdivision plat, or at the time of the City's request for dedication, whichever comes first.
4. Compliance with all City of Mesa Code requirements and regulations.
5. **Building product must include real building materials and finishes on the exterior of the homes (i.e., wood, stone, metal, etc.). Side and rear elevations must be enhanced with appropriate transitions of wainscots, window detailing and enhanced covered patios as shown in the elevations submitted.**