

Justification and Compatibility Statement

August 9, 2016

Goodware LLC (dba 1st Academy Preschool and Childcare) has been working with City, County and State agencies in our desire to open a quality early childhood education facility. We will serve children 0-12 years of age. This will help to meet the growing demand from the Banner Medical staff, the faculty, staff and students of Mesa Community College, as well as that of the families in the area.

Part of the Department of Health Services Childcare Licensing Division for the State of Arizona requirements for childcare centers is to have an outdoor playground area of at least 37.5 square feet per licensed child. Children are required to spend time outside to develop large motor skills, and encourage a healthy lifestyle that integrates physical exercise. With the blessing of the property owners and the fire department, we plan to repurpose part of the seldom-used back parking lot for a playground. This will take away some of the parking spots on the northeast end of the property. However, the property will still be in compliance with city regulations for required parking spaces.

However, Chapter 33-3-B-1-a. of the Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum of 20 to 25 feet of landscaping between a Non-Single Residence Uses Adjacent to Single Residence. There is an apartment complex to the north of our proposed playground. There is only 25 feet between the playground fence and the fence running along the common property line. This pathway is used for vehicles to drive around the property and access parking, as well as the fire department in the case of an emergency there are water hooks up. It would not be possible to physically landscape 20 feet and have enough space for vehicles to be able to drive in both directions.

In order to adhere to the intent of the landscaping ordinances, improve the aesthetic appeal of the community and at the request of the city planning office, we intend to add 5 feet of landscaping with a curb along the north side of our playground's wrought iron fence. In addition, we would like to be exempt from part of chapter 33-3-B-1-c.iii number of plants required. We feel that adding 4 trees per 100 linear feet would cause additional risk that the debris this will create on the playground is not safe for small children to potentially ingest during times that trees loose their leaves. We would still add 20 shrubs per 100 lineal feet of landscaping.

If approved, the new plans will not hinder the ability of traffic flow around the facility given that 20 feet will be between our landscaped area and the perimeter fence. The current fire hose hook ups for the fire department will be relocated north of their current location to enable the fire department access in case of an emergency.

The playground will include several different surfaces. A climber with a slide, a swing set, and a second climbing structure for toddlers will have 9 inches of woodchips under them and 36 inches around them to meet the state and national playground safety requirements. 3 Blue shade sails (two 18'x18', and one 12'x12') will be included through over the climbing structures and picnic areas to help protect against UV rays. Asphalt will remain as the surface for a basketball court, mud tables, and a foursquare court. Artificial grass will be placed to create a picnic and play area for our preschool/school age and a separate area for younger toddlers.

We have also included planters at the main entrance and on the playground. These will be educational for children learning gardening skills and will create a more ascetic appeal to the overall playground design. They will not fulfill the entire city landscaping requirements but will give a pleasant and purposeful use of the back area of the property that is not seen by road or foot traffic on a regular basis.