



PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

December 11, 2019

PROJECT NAME: **Leisure and Recreation Zone District**

Applicant's Name:	The City of Mesa Planning Division
Request:	Amendments to Title 11, the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, Article 2: Base Zone by adding Chapter 15: Leisure and Recreation Zone District to Title 11; and amending Article 1: Introductory Provisions, Chapter 3: Designation of Zoning Districts, Zoning Map, and Boundaries by adding the Leisure and Recreation base zone to the Zoning Ordinance of the Mesa City Code.
Hearing Date(s):	December 11, 2019 / 4:00 p.m.
Report Date:	November 22, 2019
Staff Planner:	Rachel Prelog
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

City Staff is proposing amendments to the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) to create a new zoning district category, "Leisure and Recreation" (LR). The purpose of this district is to allow public and private parks as a specific entitled land use and zoned district. Currently, the MZO allows for public parks and recreation uses within other zoning districts; however, there are no provisions to entitle property specifically for either public or private recreational uses as a standalone unique zoning district geared towards parks and open space recreational uses. As a result of the absence of this district, general development proposals with areas that are intended to be specifically reserved for development of open spaces and other associated recreational uses receive an underlying zoning that also allows for other non-parks and open space recreational uses. Over time, these spaces become challenging and prone to conversion to other uses generally allowed in the designated zoning district; thereby potentially losing the reserved open space and recreation use of the property.

Allowing the creation of a Leisure and Recreation Zoning District will enable various development to zone land specifically for leisure and recreation uses, which will minimize the

occasional challenges of allowing conversion to non-open space and recreation uses, especially whenever there is a transfer of ownerships.

General Plan Goals 2040

Providing rich, high-quality public spaces is one of the overarching goals of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. As described in the General Plan, public spaces can be both public property and private land where people have the opportunity to come together, meet, and interact. These places are an essential part of having a healthy, productive, vibrant city.

Creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods
Growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs
Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural resources.

The goals and policies within Chapter 6 of the General Plan: Providing Rich, High Quality Public Spaces and Cultural Resources, also aligns with the City's Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities (PRCF) Gold Medal 2025 Plan. Within the PRCF 2025 Plan, the City aims to preserve open space and places a strong emphasis on connecting people to the land and to each other. The PRCF Gold Medal 2025 Plan establishes a set of guiding principles to assist in decision making that may have a system-wide impact. One of the guiding principles of the PRCF is to provide services at a sustainable rate. "Increasing operational costs, environmental regulations, expanding requests for services, land use pressures, environmental degradation, and social disparity can create a sense of scarcity and compromise the long-term vitality of an organization" (PRCF 2025 Plan pg. 35). The creation of the LR District with specific entitlements for open space and recreational uses supports the sustainability of the park system by providing greater protection of parkland for future generations and supporting a land use pattern that balances services across the city.

Staff Recommendation

Based upon the preceding analysis and compliance with the goals and vision of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, staff recommends approval of the proposed text amendments.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1-Staff Report
Exhibit 2-Ordinance