



May 22, 2020

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Re: Rezoning with BIZ overlay for proposed medical office and self-storage facility and Site Plan Approval Application for property located at 860 W Southern Avenue AZ, 85210, Case No. PRS19-00658

**Project Narrative:**

Proposed application is a request for rezoning of parcel number 134-19-010 with existing zoning Limited commercial (LC) and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) to proposed zoning Limited Commercial (LC) with BIZ overlay.

The proposed site is located at 860 W Southern Avenue Mesa, AZ, 85210, near the northwest corner of Southern Avenue and Extension Road. This is a partially developed site with existing office building along Southern Avenue. The site area of this parcel is approximately 79,845 S.F. or 1.83 Acres. The existing zoning of this parcel Limited Commercial (LC) and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) and proposed zoning is Limited Commercial (LC) with BIZ overlay. The east side of this property is RS-6 and LC zoning with commercial use, north is PS zoning, west of this parcel is property with LC and NC zoning and south of this property is Southern Avenue.

For your reference, below is a street view of the site as it currently sits and an aerial view of the Fiesta District boundary with our project location (860 W. Southern Avenue) represented by a green rectangle in the upper-right corner.



Figure 1 - 860 W. Southern (Street View)

**Licensed in:**

- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

**Principals:**

- Robert W. Kubicek, AIA
- Kathleen D. Rieger, VP
- Steve A. Nosal, VP
- Neil A. Feaser, AIA, VP



Figure 2- Fiesta District Map (Note Green Square in upper right which indicates the site)

**General Plan:**

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation on the property is Mixed-Use Activity District (MUAD) with primary focus of the Mixed-Use Activity.

The goal for this character area is to help these districts be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences. We believe that the proposed medical office building and self-storage facility will support and encourage the surrounding shopping and entertainment uses also due to the constraints related on this site like width of parcel, depth of the parcel and street frontage we believe that this use is the most viable use for this site as per code the parking required for this use is also very minimal compared to other commercial uses.

The site falls within the Transit District character area of the General Plan. The focus is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops and storage use and office use will support that.

**Project goal and how it complies with Fiesta district.**

We have reviewed the design guidelines and overarching vision for the Fiesta District and believe we could build a vibrant project that would further enhance the area and be a significant improvement from what is currently in place at the property. From the conforming signage and color palette to the environmentally conscious design and smart operations technology, this project would set the standard for modern-day storage while at the same time revitalizing an existing office building that is seen by many on a day to day basis.

In order to develop the project, we would be retaining 2,075 SF of existing medical office building with 365 SF of covered walkway and demolishing the existing residential structure to allow room for the self-storage project, which would entail a 25,575 SF building. From our internal market studies, we believe that not only the Fiesta District, but Mesa as a whole, is substantially underserved in this type of storage and the services our project could provide



would be greatly appreciated by the residents and businesses within the Fiesta District and surrounding developments. As one of the goals of the Fiesta District is to be a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, many residents live in apartments, townhomes, and condos without garages. There is a high demand for self-storage where they can keep things that do not easily fit in their small residences, like motorized vehicles, excess furniture, camping and outdoor supplies, kids' things not currently in use, etc. Sometimes not commonly known is that businesses and corporations are major users of self-storage to store corporate records and documents and office furniture. Plain and simple, any area that is experiencing increases in populations, business, and traffic needs this type of storage.

The Fiesta District is a hub for advanced business and financial services, health care, and retail industry. The Fiesta District encourages an urban atmosphere with buildings facing and interacting with the street creating an interesting and engaging pedestrian environment. This area is expected to see growth in the healthcare and retail industry because of proximity to freeway US 60 and SR 87. We believe that this area is rapidly growing area and will have a significant demand for a self-storage facility. As part of the proposed project the existing medical building façade will also be renovated and will be designed to be more pedestrian friendly and attractive to fit in with the Fiesta District.

At the street level, the complementary use of colors found on surrounding developments repurposed as accents on the building will promote visual interest. While strategic placement of windows, color, and pop outs on the proposed storage building in the back along the proposed major pedestrian walk ways and entries connect to the public to welcome further interaction. In a larger scale, color accents on the upper portion of the façade and use of form and texture will create a sense of movement and draw attention from the major road ways and passer byes.

As a response to climatic and contextual conditions the development will provide sufficient shade areas throughout the frontage of site complemented with appropriate landscaping to maximize human comfort and encourage activation of space. The site will provide landscape buffers along Southern Avenue frontage. Landscaping areas will also be located throughout the site frontage and surrounding the medical building in the front.

The revitalized office building will be refreshed from the outside to attract and retain a business owner. It would be perfect for a medical office, professional services firm, financial advisor, or salon. As this part of the Project is on the street, we would ensure that building, signage, and landscape create an interesting and engaging experience for all traffic, both pedestrians and vehicles.



**11-6-3 Development standards: Required, requested deviation and provided.**

(All other standards to remain as is per current required development standard)

<b>No.</b>		<b>Current Std.</b>	<b>Proposed Std.</b>	<b>Provided on site</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Office Building</b>			
a	Interior setback side & rear	15'-0"	3'-0"	3'-2" (West)
b	Landscape setback	15'-0"	3'-0"	3'-2" (West)
<b>2</b>	<b>Storage Building</b>			
a	Landscape setback	15'-0"	3'-0"	5'-0" (West)
b	Adj. to RS Dist. (East)	20'-0"	5'-0"	5'-0" (East)
c	Entry Plaza Min depth	20'-0"	5'-0"	5'-0"
d	Entry Plaza Min Area	900 S.F.	250 S.F.	290 S.F. (58'x5')
e	Foundation base for exterior wall with public entrance	15'-0"	8'-0"	8'-0" (near SWC of Storage building)
<b>3</b>	<b>Parking Canopy for Office</b>			
a	1 canopy per suite/office if parking spaces required for office use is minimum	10	12	11

**Justification for Deviation:**

Proposed project has 2 buildings, an office building and a self-storage building. The office building is existing and all the setbacks are existing on site. We are proposing to keep the existing office building footprint as is with only change to façade and elevation. The proposed use will be general office and medical office. Therefore, we are requesting a deviation from current development standard for this building. The 2<sup>nd</sup> building, we are proposing is a new 25,575 SF self-storage building. We are requesting a deviation for side landscape setback from 15; to 5' for this building. The site is approximately only 135' in width and the self-storage building will need 25' driveway and 5' foundation base all around for the trucks and vehicles with trailer turning. With 15' landscaping and 30' driveway/foundation base on both sides the widths of the building can only be 45' max. Due to other constrains on site this width is not enough to get the area of building to make this project viable and therefore we are requesting a change in required 15' landscape setback on west side and 20' from RS zoning on east side to 5'. Landscape setback provided in the rear is 15' which is as per the requirement of current code. Per the zoning Code for buildings more than 10,000 S.F. with parking that abuts the foundation base, an entry plaza with minimum width and depth of 20' and minimum area of 900 S.F. shall be required. Due to the site constrains and existing building on the site it is very difficult to have a layout with 20' deep plaza excluding the 15' foundation base total 35'. We are providing a 5' deep x 58' wide space with total area of 290 S.F. between parking and 15' foundation base at the pedestrian traffic for this use is going to be much less and restrictive than any office or retail use. Providing such a huge plaza space is not possible due to the size and limitation of site. We are also requesting a deviation for the requirement of parking canopy for office use with more than 10 parking spaces required. The requirement for this office building is 11. The office building is existing medical office building and we are not changing the existing building area or foot print. The existing parking does not have a parking canopy and we are proposing a deviation from current standard of minimum 10 spaces to minimum 12 spaces required for parking canopies to be provided.



### **11-21-3: - DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- A. Unless specifically modified by the City Council, the specified development standards are based upon the requirements of the underlying base zoning district; including but not limited to minimum lot area, maximum density, maximum building height, minimum setbacks, and maximum lot coverage for each underlying zoning district.
- B. The City Council may approve modifications to the underlying district standards proportionate to number of items and degree of compliance provided by projects that comply either with a combination of Items 1 and 2, below; or with a combination of 1 and 3, below. Projects with few modifications need comply with a lower percentage of criteria. Projects with a higher number and greater deviation from adopted standards shall comply with a higher percentage of criteria.
  - 1. Provide distinctive, superior quality designs. (See Section 11-31-32, Superior Design)
  - 2. Address environmental performance standards outlined below:
    - a. Site selection criteria. Sites shall meet one or more of the following criteria.
      - i. Redevelop and rehabilitate economically distressed properties (particularly greyfield sites), damaged sites or environmentally contaminated 'brownfield' sites.
        - Since owning the property, the owners have been fighting with trespassers, squatters and vandalism. In one instance, the police were called, and six officers showed up to confront individuals who were impaired, on drugs, and aggressive towards the police and myself. The owners have tried boarding up the windows and locking gates, but nothing seems to work. Each month, they are painting over graffiti, cleaning up dumped trash, replacing broken windows, etc.

The property in its current state reflects negatively on the Fiesta District as a whole, as these issues detract from the goal and character of the district to be a place of safe and desirable commercial activity that pedestrians can walk around in. People do not want to, nor should they have to, walk through areas of the Fiesta District that present unsafe and unhealthy experiences.

We have reviewed the design guidelines and overarching vision for the Fiesta District and believe we could build a vibrant Project that would further enhance the area and be a significant improvement from what is currently in place at the property. From the conforming signage and color palette to the environmentally conscious design and smart operations technology, this Project would set the standard for modern-day storage while at the same time adding a type of facility that does not exist in the area.

- ii. Utilize areas with existing utility and transportation infrastructure and existing community services. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.
  - This project is very close to existing bus stop on southern avenue. The west bound bus stop is only about 230 feet away from entry driveway to this site. The building entrances are very well connected by a sidewalk to this bus stop.



- iii. Utilize locations within ½ mile of a planned light rail line or ¼ mile from an existing or planned bus stop. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible
  - Entrance driveway for the proposed project is within ¼ mile of existing bus stop on Southern Avenue. It is approximately 230' west of west bound bus stop on Southern Avenue.
- b. Site design criteria. Designing the site to facilitate alternative modes of transportation and to reduce onsite environmental impacts.
  - i. Provide safe and secure storage for bicycles. For commercial, employment or institutional projects, bicycle storage areas shall be within 200 yards of the building entrance, and shall have a designated and convenient pedestrian access route connecting the storage area to the building. For residential projects, safe and secure bicycle storage areas shall be provided on-site for a minimum 15% of the residents.
    - Safe and secure bicycle parking provided in front of office building and in front of self-storage building.
  - ii. Include priority location parking for low-emission vehicles in parking areas.
    - The total parking required for office building is 11 spaces and for self-storage building is only 4 spaces. Due to the low number of required parking stalls, it is not reasonable to dedicate spots for low-emission vehicles.
  - iii. Provide priority location parking spaces for carpool or vanpool vehicles.
    - The total parking required for office building is 11 spaces and for self-storage building is only 4 spaces. Due to the low number of required parking stalls, it is not reasonable to dedicate spots for vanpool or carpool type vehicles.
  - iv. Provide the number of parking spaces designed to serve a development site consistent with the number of spaces required to meet the minimum parking ratio. Parking spaces over the minimum number is discouraged.
    - The number of parking spaces provided for proposed project is only the number of minimum parking required per code. No additional spaces proposed.
  - v. For greenfield sites, protect or restore natural areas on site with native vegetation to encourage biodiversity and for enjoyment by people. For previously developed sites, restore areas with native or adapted vegetation to encourage biodiversity and for enjoyment by people. The size of the space should be appropriate for the size of the site and the activity level or use of the site.
    - Our goal is to revitalize and enhance the structures appearance, but we have also intentionally maintained many of the mature trees and vegetation that adds to the character of the property and the fiesta district. Many of the mature trees that will be saved have been there for many years and we feel it is important to incorporate these elements into our design as much as possible.



- iv. Design the project to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, designed to reduce summer heat gain, reduce winter heat loss, utilize day lighting strategies and provide the opportunity for occupants to take advantage of renewable energy. The design also mitigates the effects of solar exposure for users and pedestrians. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that have efficient HVAC systems, incorporate passive solar heating, cooling and day lighting strategies within an efficient building envelope, as recommended by the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) section, including buildings designed to earn the EPA ENERGY STAR or designed to meet LEED™ Silver or equivalent third-party criteria are considered to be energy efficient and no higher standard shall be used.
  - Canopies will be provided at the entrance and at the store fronts to provide shade and reduce heat, shade will be provided for the walkway by providing trees and the building will be well insulated for the conditioned spaces to be energy efficient.
  
- c. Provide documented evidence that the building(s) will meet or exceed nationally recognized environmental performance standards. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that are designed to earn LEED™ Silver, Green Globes, and/or equivalent third-party criteria, and no higher standard shall be required. Avoid sites considered inappropriate, such as prime farmland, land identified as habitat for endangered species, and wetlands or riparian areas associated with wildlife.
  - The proposed site is not part of any farmland, wetlands, habitat for endangered species or riparian area associated with wildlife. This was a partially developed site and we are proposing to renovate and reuse the existing office building to minimize the demolition. The new proposed building and the equipment's will be energy efficient. Shades will be provided by providing canopies over the entrances and for the storefronts and conditioned space in building will be well insulated to increase the energy efficiency.
  
- d. Utilize areas with existing utility and transportation infrastructure and existing community services. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.
  - This project is very close to existing bus stop on Southern Avenue. The west bound bus stop is only about 230 feet away from entry driveway to this site. The building entrances are very well connected by a sidewalk to this bus stop.
  
- e. Redevelop and rehabilitate economically distressed properties (particularly greyfield sites), damaged sites or environmentally contaminated 'brownfield' sites.
  - The property in its current state reflects negatively on the Fiesta District as a whole and deviate from the goal and character of the district to be a place of safe and desirable commercial activity that pedestrians can walk around in. People do not want to, nor should they have to, walk through areas of the Fiesta District that present unsafe and unhealthy experiences.

We have reviewed the design guidelines and overarching vision for the Fiesta District and believe we could build a vibrant Project that would further enhance the area and



be a significant improvement from what is currently in place at the property. From the conforming signage and color palette to the environmentally conscious design and smart operations technology, this project will revive the existing office building and would set the standard for modern-day self-storage while at the same time adding a type of facility that does not exist in the area.

- f. Utilize locations within ½ mile of a planned light rail line or ¼ mile from an existing or planned bus stop. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.
  - Entrance drive way for the proposed project is within ¼ mile of existing bus stop on Southern Avenue. It is approximately 230' west of west bound bus stop on Southern Avenue.
  
- 3. Provide documented evidence that the building(s) will meet or exceed nationally recognized environmental performance standards. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that are designed to earn Green Globes, LEED™ Silver, or to be in compliance with the International Green Construction Code and/or equivalent third-party criteria, are considered to be energy efficient and no higher standard shall be required. – not applicable

We believe the proposed zoning and use is consistent with the plans and goals of the city and we look forward to working with the City of Mesa.

Regards,

Neil Feaser, AIA

**RKAA Architects, Inc.**