



September 27, 2021

Evan Balmer,
Senior Planner, Development Services
City of Mesa
55 North Center Street
Mesa, AZ 85201
480-644-3654
Evan.Balmer@mesaaz.gov

Dear Evan,

Subject: Project Cork Narrative
(Case#: ANX21-0072, ZON21-00730 and DRB21-00877)

Introduction

On behalf of Ryan Companies US, Inc., we are pleased to submit this narrative and supporting documentation requesting Annexation, Rezoning, Site Plan Review, Design Review approval, two Special Use Permits and alternative compliance request for two design standards to allow an industrial development (“Project Cork” or the “Project”) on the north side of Pecos Road between Merrill Road and 222nd St. This Project will bring employment to this rapidly developing area.

Background

The Project is comprised of an approximately 74.37-acre parcel that is currently zoned R-43 in unincorporated Maricopa County. The Project is a rectangular parcel that extends from Pecos Road to the under construction SR 24. The project is bordered by Pecos Road to the South, SR 24 to the north, vacant industrial land to the east and west. City of Mesa corporate limits are contiguous on two sides of the Project.

General Plan Designation

The General Plan designation for the Project is Employment. This designation is for large scale employment type land uses. The Project fits squarely into this General Plan

Ryan Companies US, Inc.
3900 East Camelback Road, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85018

p: 602-322-6100
ryancompanies.com

AZ LICENSE ROC212330 RES
AZ LICENSE ROC195813 COMM
Equal Opportunity Employer



designation. It is the intent of the developer to create an employment center for the surrounding community.

Strategic Development Plan

Additionally, the Project is within the Logistics and Commerce District (“LCD”) of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan (the “MGSDP”). The LCD lists warehousing as a desired use and goes on further to say that “greater intensity and higher density uses will be encouraged” in the area where the Project is located. This Project fits exactly with the LCD’s goals and objectives.

Requests

Multiple requests are being filed concurrently. The first request is for annexation into the City of Mesa. We would request that the annexation be approved with a City of Mesa comparable zoning of Agriculture (“AG”). Subsequent to the annexation, the second request is for rezoning to light industrial (“LI”) zoning. The third request is for site plan review. The site plan will include a large industrial building with approximately 517,220 square feet of main floor and approximately 184,352 square feet of mezzanine. The fourth request seeks design review of the Project’s site plan, landscaping and elevations. The fifth request is for a Special Use Permit for height up to 56 feet where 40 feet is currently allowed. The sixth request is for a Special Use Permit for reduced parking where 808 spaces are required and 502 spaces are being provided. The seventh request is for alternative compliance for two design standards which will be discussed in greater detail below.

Narrative

Project Cork proposes annexation and rezoning of parcels 304-34-015E and 304-34-015D. The rezoning would be from AG to LI in the City of Mesa. The Project will consist of a large industrial building covering approximately 517,220 square feet on the main floor with a 184,352 square foot mezzanine for a total square footage of 701,572 for warehousing and office uses. As seen on the attached elevations, the building vernacular is set as a contemporary design intended to meet the needs of the end user. With that in mind, the main office portion of the building is the initial visual that is seen with the warehouse portion behind it. With the articulated corners and entrances combined with the warehouse building, the building shows multiple changes in height. The primary structural element of the project is development with tilt-up concrete construction, but the buildings have been enhanced with textured form liner, varying colors of textured paint, accent metals, canopies and trellises. The massing of the structure is designed to break up long expanses of concrete with vertical and horizontal breaks on the exterior wall that help to define scale and hierarchy of elements. The use of canopies and trellises are integrated into the front façade to help reinforce a pedestrian scale to the project. The parapets are not contiguous to allow massing forms



to take shape and to allow proper screening of future utilities on the roof. All parapets include a metal scint band and vary in height from 3'6" to 5'6".

In accordance with MZO Sec. 11-7-3(B)(2)(a), the façade facing Pecos Road has a variety of heights, materials and change in plane to enhance the human scale of the project. The office portion of the project is pushed forward, set at a lower height than the warehouse, stepping the building to create a visual interest as you approach the project. In addition, we utilize a variety of textures and materials to break up the plane of the façade through the use of ACM panels, concrete form liner, glazing and seat walls. The hierarchy of the building massing and accent materials creates a natural way finding for employees and visitors. To strengthen the pedestrian scale of the project, we have incorporated human scale low steel trellises to break up the long facade and placed metal canopies to accent the main entry and utilize for amenity areas. At the East, North and West facades, we have incorporated form liner concrete panels, varying heights, multiple paint colors and clerestory windows on all elevations. These changes to the buildings facade further meet MZO Section 11-7-3(B)(3). In accordance with MZO Sec. 11-7-3(B)(2)(c), the building changes height across the building façade.

Annexation

This is a request for two parcels to be included in the City of Mesa's corporate limits. These parcels have one owner who has authorized Ryan Companies US Inc to make this application. The letter of Explanation for Annexation is included with this submittal as a separate document.

Circulation

The site will be accessed from two entrances on Merrill Road, one entrance on Pecos Road and one entrance from 222nd St. Both Merrill Road entrances and the 222nd Street will allow for full access and the Pecos Road will be right in right out with a decel lane. All offsite improvements along Pecos Road and Merrill Road associated with the Project will be built to City of Mesa standards at the time of development. 222nd Street will be built to Maricopa County roadway standards. Internal roadways will be between 24' and 80' wide providing efficient internal circulation and will meet the City's fire truck turning radius requirements.

Truck Courts

The truck court was designed to ensure the safety and security of the employees while maintaining the operational aspect of the Project. The layout was designed to segregate the office areas and street traffic from the truck and loading function. The truck court will be screened with 8-foot-high screening walls and the truck courts entrances will have manned guard shacks. There will be 127 dock doors in the truck court.

Parking

MZO 11-32-3 requires 1 space for 375 sf for office and 1 space for 900 sf of warehousing. The Project is proposing a 701,572 sf building which would require a total of 808 parking spaces. The Project is proposing 502 employee spaces for the development. While this is below the standards set forth in the MZO, the parking reduction, which will be discussed in further detail below, was done to allow for the project to still meet the needs of the user while addressing the design standards of the City. Based upon the end user's past experience with these types of buildings, the amount of parking proposed on this site plan is the minimum needed to still operate the facility. At the parking peak, the amount of employee parking will be between 400-450 leaving 52 spaces available for vendors/visitors to the site. The end user is appropriately concerned about safety of its employees and its visitors and needs to separate the car parking from the truck parking. The amount of trailer spaces provided is 359. Any trailer parking spaces will be contained within the truck courts areas and will be screened by walls or buildings from the streets and the to be constructed freeway. The current parking design allows the end user to operate the building in a safe manner while addressing the intent of the design standards for industrial. The Project will be in compliance with all applicable Mesa ordinances regarding parking screening throughout the development including a combination of walls and dense landscaping. Parking areas are separated from onsite buildings by at least 10 feet. Screening walls for parking areas have also been provided in accordance with City requirements. Outdoor bicycle parking will be provided in accordance with City code.

Signage

A Comprehensive sign plan is included in this submittal.

Open Space

Open space requirements have also been met for both required sidewalk plazas and outdoor amenities with outdoor gathering areas with onsite furniture. Located at the front of the office portion of the building will incorporate an employee/visitor amenity that resembles a restaurant's outdoor patio space. This amenity is depicted on the included elevation.

Pursuant to Section 11-7-3(B)(1)(d), the areas will be equal to or larger than 1% of the building gross floor area and are labeled on the site plan. Enhanced landscape areas, that include seating, along the edges of the property have been included to help with screening from the adjacent roads and properties. There will be contiguous pedestrian access to the building to meet all accessibility requirements.

Landscape Design and Stormwater Retention

The Project will be landscaped in accordance with all applicable Mesa ordinances. The landscape materials will be consistent with native plant materials found in the region,

are drought tolerant and contribute to the reduction of heat island effects. The landscaping design will also promote the theme carried throughout the development. The landscaping will include site walls and mature landscaping to create a significant streetscape on Pecos. The parking lots included oversized landscape areas and wide sidewalks to promoted a pedestrian scale to the project. The landscape design also integrates site amenity areas for employees and visitors.

This area of the county is known to have significant amount of storm water flows. The project will be designed to accept historic offsite flows and 100 year two (2) hour storm events. The onsite retention areas will be isolated from the offsite flows. Offsite flows will be collected at the historic points they enter the site, channelized and allowed to exist the site at the historic outfall locations. Included in this submittal are conceptual engineering plans that go into greater detail. The storm water retention will utilize surface basins dispersed throughout the site to accommodate the two-hour 100-year event. The retention basins will bleed off into the offsite channels. Retention basins will be integrated into the design of the landscape and maintained by the owner.

Special Use Permit for Height

In accordance with MZO 11-70-5 a Special Use Permit (“SUP”) may only be granted if all of the following criteria are met:

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;
2. The location, size, design and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;
3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and
4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

As mentioned above, the request for the SUP is to allow building heights up to 56 feet where 40 feet is allowed. The request meets the four part test as set out in Mesa Ordinance. As it relates to sections 1 and 2 of the test, the Project is designated as Employment in the General Plan and the Logistics and Commerce District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan. The height request is consistent with the General Plan designation. The Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan calls out that buildings should be as tall as allowed by the flight plan of the airport. It also calls out for the most intense development patterns at the location of the project. Granting this SUP will



advance the goals of the General Plan and specifically addressing an objective of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

As to section 3, this project will not be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City. We will continue to work with Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport and the FAA to seek any required approvals for this project. FAA has reviewed the project and determined there is no hazard to air navigation based on the proposed building heights. The additional height will help the City fill a need of these types of buildings and promote additional employment in the area. As to section 4, there is no concern about having the adequate public facilities, services or infrastructure to serve the buildings at the height requested. With all four parts of the test satisfied, we respectfully request approval of the SUP.

Special Use Permit for Parking Reduction

In accordance with MZO 11-32-6 a Special Use Permit ("SUP") may only be granted if all of the following criteria are met:

1. Special conditions – including but not limited to the nature of the proposed operation; proximity to frequent transit service; transportation characteristics of persons residing, working or visiting the site – exist that will reduce parking demand at the site;
2. The use will adequately be served by the proposed parking; and
3. Parking demand generated by the project will not exceed the capacity of or have a detrimental impact on the supply of on-street parking in the surrounding area.

As mentioned above, the request for a parking reduction is necessary in order to comply with the design standards of the City regarding the streetscape in LI zoning. The request meets the three part test detailed above. As it relates to the first prong, this project clearly has special conditions. The size and use of the building requires an employee/visitor parking field that, for safety reasons, is separated from the truck court. Based upon the building layout, design and the lot shape, separating the truck court from the employee/visitor parking lot causes a parking field to be close to Pecos Rd. The design standards of the City require the buildings to be as close as possible to the street. The end user has extensive experience in operating this type of building and has made the determination that the parking proposed in this submittal is the minimum necessary to safely operate this facility. By reducing the parking spaces below the code minimum, the building is moved closer to Pecos Rd, thereby meeting the intent of the design standards.

Additionally, the extensive experience the end user has in operating this type of facility allows them to fully understand the transportation needs of its employees and visitors. Based upon that knowledge, the end user has always included two transit/drop off

locations on the site plan. While it may be some time before mass transit is available in this area, the end user is aware of the amount of drop off traffic that occurs on its other sites which contribute to the special conditions of this site.

As for the second prong, based on the end user's knowledge of other sites, combining the transit/drop off locations with the amount of parking proposed in this submittal, the use will be adequately served by the proposed parking.

The third prong is addressed in part by the answer to the second prong. As it relates to the supply of on street parking, there are no plans known to the applicant of having on street parking in this area.

With all three parts of the test satisfied, we respectfully request approval of the SUP.

Alternative Compliance for Design Standards

MZO Sec. 11-7-3(B)(6)(b)(iv) allows for alternative compliance with this ordinance so long as the approving authority finds the "proposed alternative is aesthetically more complementary to the site, better fits into the context of the area, improves the overall architectural appeal of the and/or meets or exceeds the design objectives as described in the City's General Plan."

MZO Sec. 11-7-3(B)(2) requires "architectural elements and techniques shall be utilized to reduce the apparent massing and scale of building... and may not have blank uninterrupted wall lengths exceeding 50 feet without including at least two (2) of the following: change in plane, change in texture or masonry pattern, windows, trellis with vines or an equivalent element that subdivides the wall into human scale proportions." Additionally, MZO Sec. 11-7-3(B)(5)(b) requires that "no more than fifty percent (50%) of the total façade may be covered with one (1) single material."

Our understanding of the intent of the design standards is to prevent long, monolithic expanses of the same material on the building. As discussed above, the primary structural element of the project is development with tilt-up concrete construction. The massing of the structure is designed to break up long expanses of concrete with vertical and horizontal breaks on the exterior wall that help to define scale and hierarchy of elements. The use of canopies and trellises are integrated into the front façade to help reinforce a pedestrian scale to the project. The façade facing Pecos Road has a variety of heights, materials and change in plane to enhance the human scale of the project. The office portion of the project is pushed forward, set at a lower height than the warehouse, stepping the building to create a visual interest. In addition, we utilize a variety of textures and materials to break up the plane of the façade through the use of ACM panels, concrete form liner, glazing, accent metals, varying colors of paint and seat walls. To strengthen the pedestrian scale of the project, we have incorporated human scale low steel trellises to break up the long facade and placed metal canopies to accent the main entry and utilize for amenity areas. At the East, North and West facades, we



have incorporated form liner concrete panels, varying heights, multiple paint colors and clerestory windows on all elevations.

As described above, the buildings are designed in a way that improves the overall architectural appeal while fitting into the context of the area and improving the overall architectural appeal of the buildings. We respectfully request approval of alternative compliance with the two design standards listed above.

Conclusion

On behalf of Ryan Companies US, Inc., we respectfully request approval of the seven items detailed in this submittal. Ryan Companies US, Inc. is excited to bring forward a project that will provide employment for Mesa citizens and the surrounding communities.

Sincerely,

Josh Tracy

Director of Real Estate Development

(p) 602-322-6236

(c) 480-620-9945

Ryan Companies US, Inc.
3900 E Camelback Rd. Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85018

Josh.Tracy@ryancompanies.com

ryancompanies.com