



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Planning and Zoning Board

August 14, 2024

CASE No.: **ZON24-00571**

PROJECT NAME: **Fire and Medical Station 223**

Owner's Name:	City of Mesa
Applicant's Name:	Bill Johns, City of Mesa
Location of Request:	Within the 3200 to 3400 blocks of East McDowell Road (north side). Located north of McDowell Road and west of Val Vista Drive.
Parcel No(s):	141-17-002G
Request:	Rezone from Single Residence 35 (RS-35) to Public and Semi-Public District (PS) and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for the development of a Public Safety Facility.
Existing Zoning District:	RS-35
Council District:	1
Site Size:	14± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Fire and Medical Public Safety Facility
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
Hearing Date(s):	August 14, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Josh Grandlienard, AICP, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **October 20, 1984**, City Council annexed 280± acres, including the project site, into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 1890).

On **February 19, 1985**, City Council approved a rezoning of 105± acres, including the project site, from Maricopa County Rural 43 and Rural 35 to R1-35 (equivalent to current RS-35) (Case No. Z85-004, Ord. No. 1918).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting to rezone 14± acres of property from Single Residence 35 (RS-35) to Public and Semi-Public (PS) and approval of an Initial Site Plan to allow for a Public Safety Facility (Proposed Project). The project site is located on the north side of East McDowell Road and west of North Val Vista Drive.

The Proposed Project is to develop a new fire and medical station to serve the area, known as Fire and Medical Station 223, and is considered a Public Safety Facility which is allowed by right in the PS District.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character Area designation on the property is Neighborhood with a Large Lot/Rural Subtype and Specialty District with an Airport Sub-type.

Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the goal of the Neighborhood Character Area is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community. The Public and Semi-Public zoning district is a secondary zoning district in the Neighborhood-Large Lot/Rural Character Area. A majority (more than 55%) of the character area has been developed with primary zoning districts and primary uses, therefore the use of a secondary zoning district is appropriate.

Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the goal of the Specialty Airport district is to support and assist the operations of the Falcon Field and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airports. The Public and Semi-Public zoning district is a primary zoning district in the Specialty-Airport Character Area.

Overall, the request conforms to the goals of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and meets the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1).

Zoning District Designations:

The request is to rezone the subject property from RS-43 to PS. The purpose of the PS District is to accommodate large scale governmental, public utility, recreational, and educational facilities. The proposed public safety facility is allowed by right within the PS district.

Airfield Overlay – MZO Article 3, Section 11-19:

Per Section 11-19 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the site is located within the Airfield Overlay District, specifically within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3). The location of the property within the Airfield Overlay is due to its proximity to the Falcon Field Airport. Per Sections 11-19-4(B) and 11-7-2 of the MZO, Public Safety Facility uses are permitted in the PS zoning district in locations within the AOA 3.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest PS Water Treatment Plant	North PS Water Treatment Plant	Northeast PS Water Treatment Plant
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West PS Water Treatment Plant	Project Site RS-35 Vacant	East RS-35 Church
Southwest (Across McDowell Road) RS-15 Single Residence	South (Across McDowell Road) RS-35 Single Residence/Church	Southeast (Across McDowell Road) RS-35 Single Residence

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject site is consistent with the surrounding single residence uses to the south, existing Public Utility Facility to the west and north, as well as the Church to the east. The proposed City Public Safety Facility on the property will not be out of character with the surrounding development.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The Proposed Project will occupy 3.18 acres of the larger 14± acre project site. The proposed Public Safety Facility will be located on the east side of the project site and consists of a 13,100 square foot, 27-foot-tall building with four truck bays for fire and emergency medical vehicles.

The applicant has provided 26 parking spaces which complies with the required 20 parking spaces on site. Per Table 11-32-3 of the MZO, fire stations are required to be parked at 1 space per bed, plus 1 space per 75 feet of community room, where this project does not include a community room. The proposed fire station is designed so that there are 10 staff members proposed per shift, which meets this parking requirement. Access to the site is provided off of McDowell Drive with a provided public parking located separately from the emergency access to reduce any conflicts between traffic movements.

Alternative Landscape Plan:

As part of their site plan application the applicant is requesting an alternative landscape plan in order to reduce the size and quantity of required landscape islands. Per Section 11-33-4(B)(1) of the MZO, a landscape island measuring eight feet wide by 15 feet in length is required for every eight parking stalls. Per Section 11-33-7(B)(3) of the MZO, an alternative landscape plan may be requested to modify interior parking lot landscaping requirements. The applicant is proposing to reduce the minimum size of the landscape islands for the row of twenty parking spots located within the secured yard on the north side of the property to a minimum width of 0 feet. Instead, the applicant is proposing to provide the required plantings within the publicly visible portions of the site. The alternative landscape plan complies with the design principles required per Section 11-33-7(A) of the MZO including providing plant variety, an innovative and naturalistic design, utilizes native vegetation, plant viability and longevity, and the use of water efficient plants, consistent with the City's Climate Action Plan. Based on comments received from the Design Review Board, the applicant modified the location of the proposed Mesquite trees to better increase the plant's viability and longevity as well as incorporating site-specific attributes.

Design Review:

Per Section 11-66-6(C)((7) of the MZO, review and approval from the Design Review Board is required for municipal projects including fire stations. The Proposed Project was discussed with

the Design Review Board at their July 9, 2024 study session and will return to the Board on August 13, 2024, for their final action.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

As part of the completed Citizen Participation Process, the applicant mailed notification letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, Homeowner Associations (HOAs) within ½ mile of the site, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site.

As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any comments or concerns from surrounding property owners. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on August 14, 2024.

Staff Recommendations:

Staff finds the Proposed Project is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan and the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

Staff recommends approval with the following **Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review Case No. DRB24-00483.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:
 - a. Owner must execute the City's standard Avigation Easement and Release for Falcon Field Airport prior to the issuance of a building permit.
 - b. Due to the proximity to Falcon Field Airport, any proposed permanent or temporary structure, as required by the FAA, is subject to an FAA filing for review in conformance with CFR Title 14 Part 77 (Form 7460) to determine any effect to navigable airspace and air navigation facilities. A completed form with a response by the FAA must accompany any building permit application for structure(s) on the property.
 - c. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, provide documentation by a registered professional engineer or registered professional architect demonstrating compliance with the noise level reductions required in Section 11-19-5 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.
 - d. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within one mile of Falcon Field Airport.
4. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1 – Staff Report
Exhibit 2 – Vicinity Map
Exhibit 3 – Project Narrative
Exhibit 4 – Site Plan
Exhibit 5 – Landscape Plan
Exhibit 6 – Preliminary Grading and Drainage Plans
Exhibit 7 - Elevations
Exhibit 8 – Citizen Participation Plan
Exhibit 9 – Citizen Participation Report