

Planning and Zoning Board



Study Session Minutes

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 57 East 1st Street

Date: August 23, 2023 Time: 3:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Benjamin Ayers
Jeff Pitcher
Jeffery Crockett
Troy Peterson
Jamie Blakeman
Jayson Carpenter

MEMBERS ABSENT

Genessee Montes

(*Boardmembers and staff participated in the meeting through the use of telephonic and video conference equipment)

STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Kopaskie-Brown
Evan Balmer
Kellie Rorex
Kwasi Abebrese
Sarah Steadman
Alexis Jacobs

OTHERS PRESENT:

1 Call meeting to order.

Chair Ayers excused Boardmember Montes from the entire meeting and declared a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

2 Review items on the agenda for the August 23, 2023, regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staff Planner Kwasi Abebrese presented case ZON23-00355. See attached presentation.

Boardmember Crockett addressed the public's concern by asking if the applicant has done anything to mitigate any of the traffic issues that would be associated with drop off and pick up?

Staff Planner Kwasi Abebrese explained that these concerns were also brought up in the neighborhood meeting and the applicant explained that drop off and pick up times vary as this is a daycare and not a school. In addition, the transportation team has also reviewed the plans with no concern.

Boardmember Crockett asked for more clarification from the transportation team.

Transportation Engineer Peter Vargas explained that we use a national standard, which is the Institute of Transportation Engineers, to determine the number of peak hour trips based on the use of a daycare center. It's a national standard that sets out typical peak hour trips for any number of commercial uses. And so that's the standard that we use. And based upon that calculation, it's based upon per 1,000 square feet of the building floor area used for a daycare center, not the number of students because the drop off times and the pickup times are spread out. And so that calculation equates to 131 peak hour trips, to put that in context. Here in the City of Mesa our radar goes up at about 300 peak hour trips. Given the right turn deceleration lane for westbound traffic, given where the front door is set back from Guadalupe Road, we really don't feel that this will impact the number of trips on either of these roadways.

Boardmember Pitcher asked for clarification of the location of the front entrance.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown reiterated that the Board received eight comment cards for their review.

3 Hear a presentation and discuss proposed amendments to the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (Title 11 of Mesa City Code) regarding drive-thru facilities, pick-up window facilities, drive-up ATM/teller windows, site plan review, and miscellaneous Mesa Zoning Ordinance clean ups.

Staff Planner Kellie Rorex presented the proposed text amendments. See attached presentation.

Boardmember Peterson asked for clarification on the proposed setback requirements from residential properties and how it compares with the other cities requirements, as shown in the staff presentation.

Staff Planner Kellie Rorex answered that the cities listed in the presentation were not the only ones that were looked at. We looked at a couple others that did have between 100 feet and 150 feet setback requirements.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown added if you look at the map where drive-thrus are allowed in the City of Mesa, you'll notice it's mostly on our main corridors and what's inside of our main corridors is essentially residential uses. And so, what we're trying to do is protect those residential uses because it is allowed in over 20% of the city. So that 100 foot setback is protecting those residential neighborhoods from listening to the call box where orders are being made.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the proposed setback requirements.

Boardmember Peterson expressed concern and suggested staff prepare a diagram to help explain the proposed text amendment.

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Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown responded that there is always a process to vary from the code and the requirements in the code through the variance process. In addition, staff will look into providing some type of diagram to explain the text amendment better.

Boardmember Crockett mentioned that the presentation shows Mesa has 22% coverage and Scottsdale is 4%. So, does it follow that Mesa has five times as many drive-thrus than Scottsdale, or can you not draw that correlation?

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown responded that I don't think we can really draw that conclusion. First of all, this size of Mesa is substantially greater than Scottsdale, I don't think we have a number in terms of the actual number in each jurisdiction. I think what we're trying to show here is the ample opportunities for drive-thrus, and why we're seeing a lot of them being clustered together. Hearing from the development community, they asked us to do this through design. We've really tried to move away from things like concentration number on a corner, that type of thing to really look at this from a design and a public safety perspective.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the data to compare drive-thrus per capita of the surrounding jurisdictions.

Boardmember Crockett asked about the developer comments stating that the proposed amendments are not in line with other jurisdictions relaxing regulations. Have you observed that other jurisdictions are relaxing regulations for drive-thrus, and is that a fair comment?

Staff Planner Kellie Rorex responded that not in the four jurisdictions presented tonight. Some other jurisdictions that we did look at aren't necessarily more relaxed on drive-thrus but they have made changes around the hours of operations and what processes they would require.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown added that this is the feedback we've received from the development community. It is one of the reasons we went back and looked at the surrounding jurisdictions to see what their best practices are so that we could better align with them. So, we heard over and over again, other jurisdictions are relaxing their standards, and you're making ours more difficult. We wanted to kind of verify that, which is why we did the best practices that we did.

Vice Chair Pitcher asked if you've got an existing drive thru, and they're making some renovations or something at what point do they have to go back through the Council Use Permit process? At what point does that get triggered?

Principal Planner Evan Balmer responded; we have three basic categories. There's administrative modifications, which are intended to be really minor, maybe a solid waste enclosure needs to relocate or it's something pretty small. We have minor modifications to approved plans, which can still be approved administratively by the Planning Director but those are things that are maybe a little bit bigger in scope, but they're still capped at 10% or 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater. So maybe your

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patio is expanding or we're shifting the location of the patio, things like that. Beyond that, it's a major modification, a major modification has to go back to the original approving body. So, let's say the Planning and Zoning Board approved a site plan and we're past the threshold of a minor modification and we end up at a major modification. It's essentially like starting over. At that point we would look at it under the lens of our current code requirements, but we do have a lot of options for minor modifications to approved plans, which is generally where these things land. It's a little uncommon, I would say, that we have major modifications for things like this.

Boardmember Blakeman stated we've looked at a lot of standards here. What standards really do is look at what's happened and what's in place. And a lot of these standards have been in place for many, many years. With COVID people have moved towards a more drive-thru mentality, and there's certainly more demand. And that's more characteristic of what we are today and what's moving into the future. I'm just wondering, this is kind of a look back backwards, rather than look forward. What is the look forward?

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown replied this really is a look forward, because really what we're doing is we're trying to regulate the design of drive-thrus as we anticipate more drive-thrus coming to the city. But I think the look forward is how do we make the city more attractive? How do we make the city more pedestrian friendly? How do we reduce potential traffic issues? How do we protect employees? How do we protect our established residential neighborhoods? Those are really some of the key things we're trying to look at by using the design standards rather than other approaches to this. So how we mitigate the impacts is really what we're trying to do.

Boardmember Blakeman expressed concern with queuing distance standards.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown added that the traffic impact study will help us identify what unique characteristics apply to the drive-thru coming in and can help justify deviations as needed.

Chair Ayers expressed concern on how these proposed standards would impact a situation where you have several pad sites on the property, we don't always know who the user is going to be. I think we see the problem, as an example, is the temporary parking lot layout that we see in a lot of places where they come in and temporarily, for six years, put a bunch of cones out. Could we potentially have the traffic impact studies show how temporary queuing setups would impact the overall site.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown responded that we can look at that.

The traffic impact study is basically going to tell us, if they do know the use, what their requirements would be. And the way we would write the code is that if the source material shows stacking is sufficient and meets the demands of the development.

Staff Planner Kellie Rorex added that there is a section for the traffic impact studies that does require a mitigation plan be provided.

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Additional discussion ensued around the traffic impact studies.

- 4 Planning Director Update:** Public Meeting on September 6, 2023, to get feedback from the Public on the General Plan updates. Public Meeting on August 24, 2023, for Historic Preservation text amendments and Design Guideline updates.

5 Adjournment.

Boardmember Crockett motioned to adjourn the study session. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Pitcher.

The study sessions was adjourned at 4:24 pm.

Vote: 6-0 (Boardmember Montes; absent)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Ayers, Pitcher, Crockett, Peterson, Blakeman, Carpenter

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,

Evan Balmer
Principal Planner

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ZON23-00355



Request

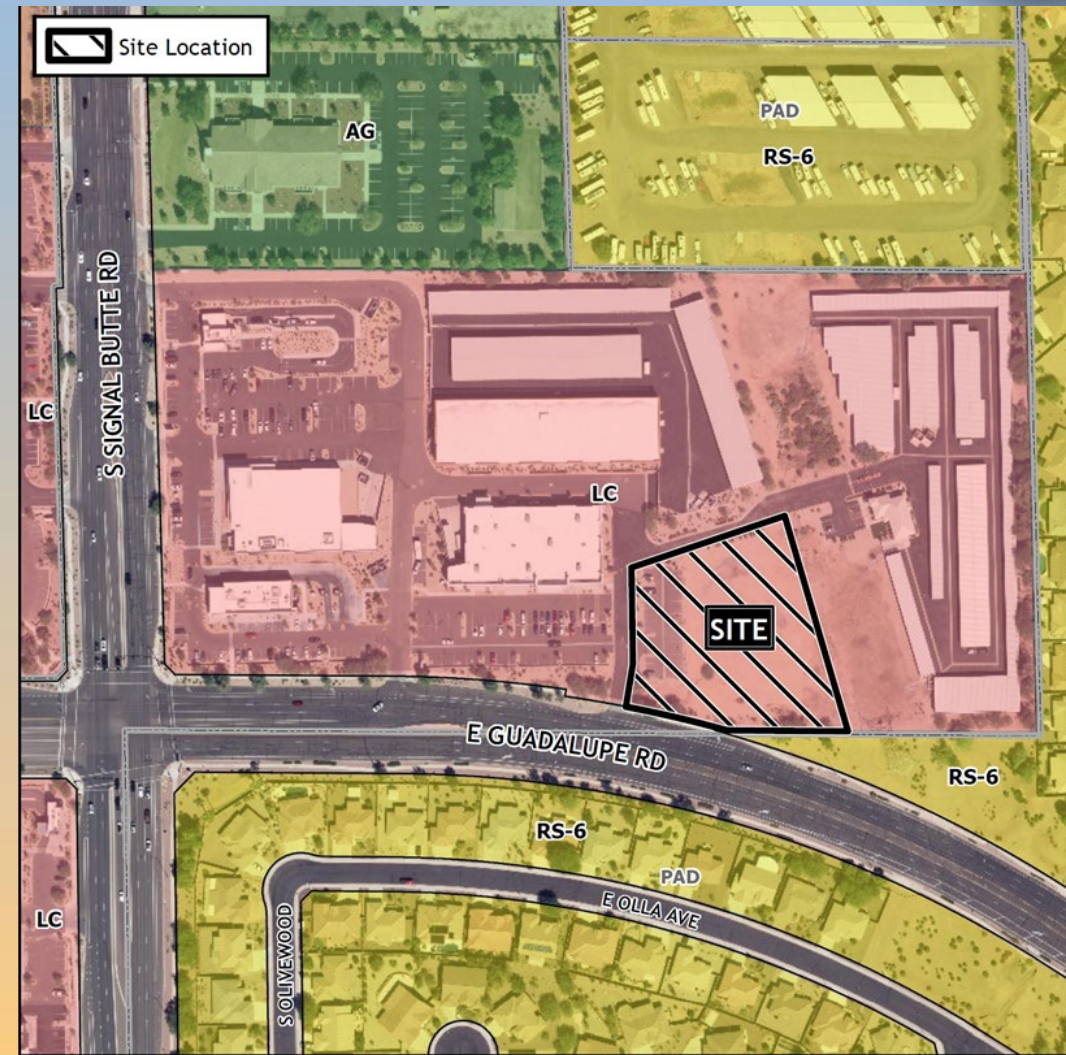
- Site Plan Modification
- To allow for the development of a Day Care Facility





Location

- North of Guadalupe Road
- East of Signal Butte Road
- Within Mesa Center
Pointe group commercial
center





General Plan

Neighborhood

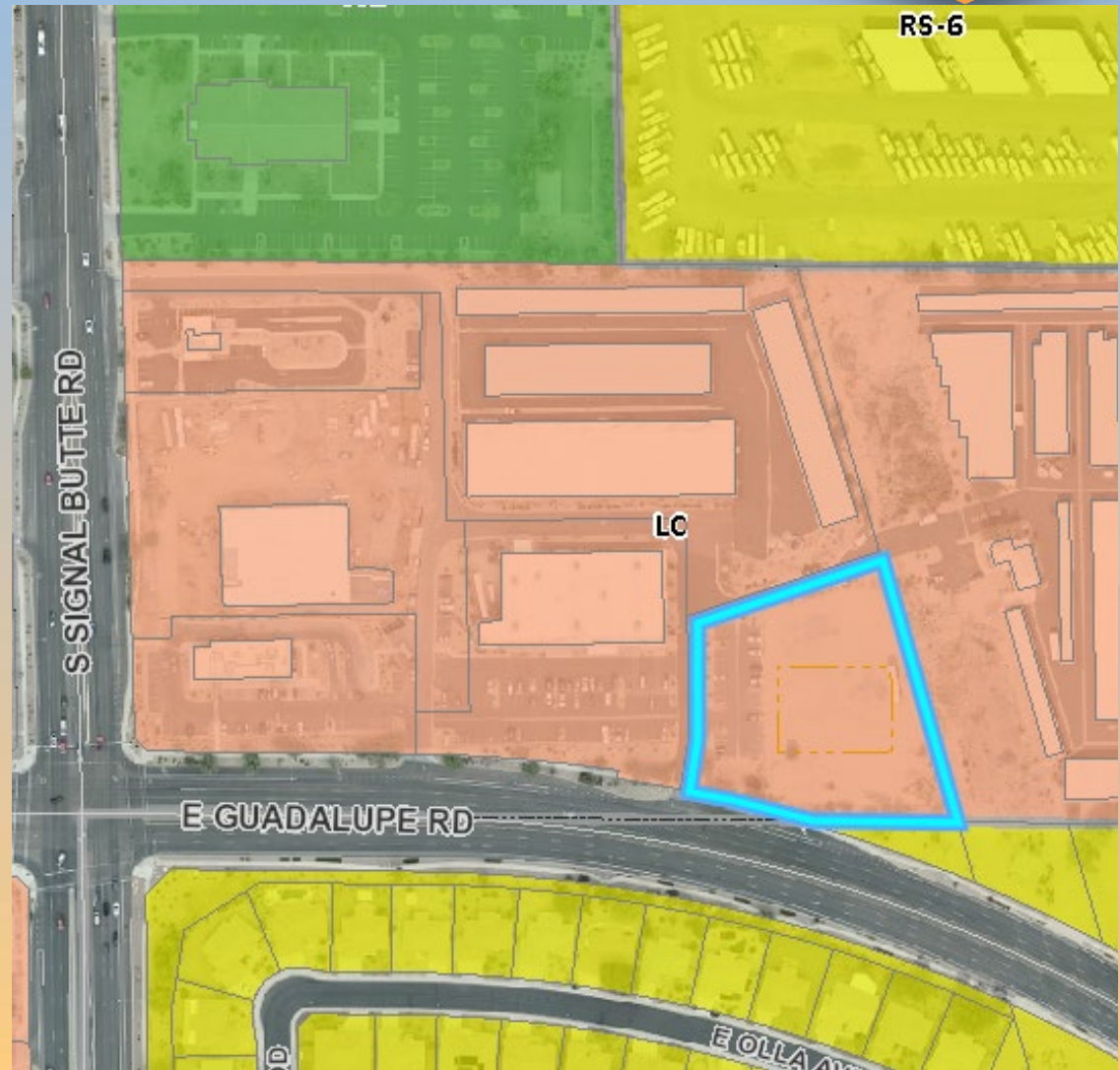
- Safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community
- Primarily residential in nature but may contain commercial uses along arterial frontages and intersections
- Proposed use complies with the goal of this character area





Zoning

- Limited Commercial (LC)
- A day care center is permitted in the LC district





Site Photo



Looking north from Guadalupe Road



Site Photo

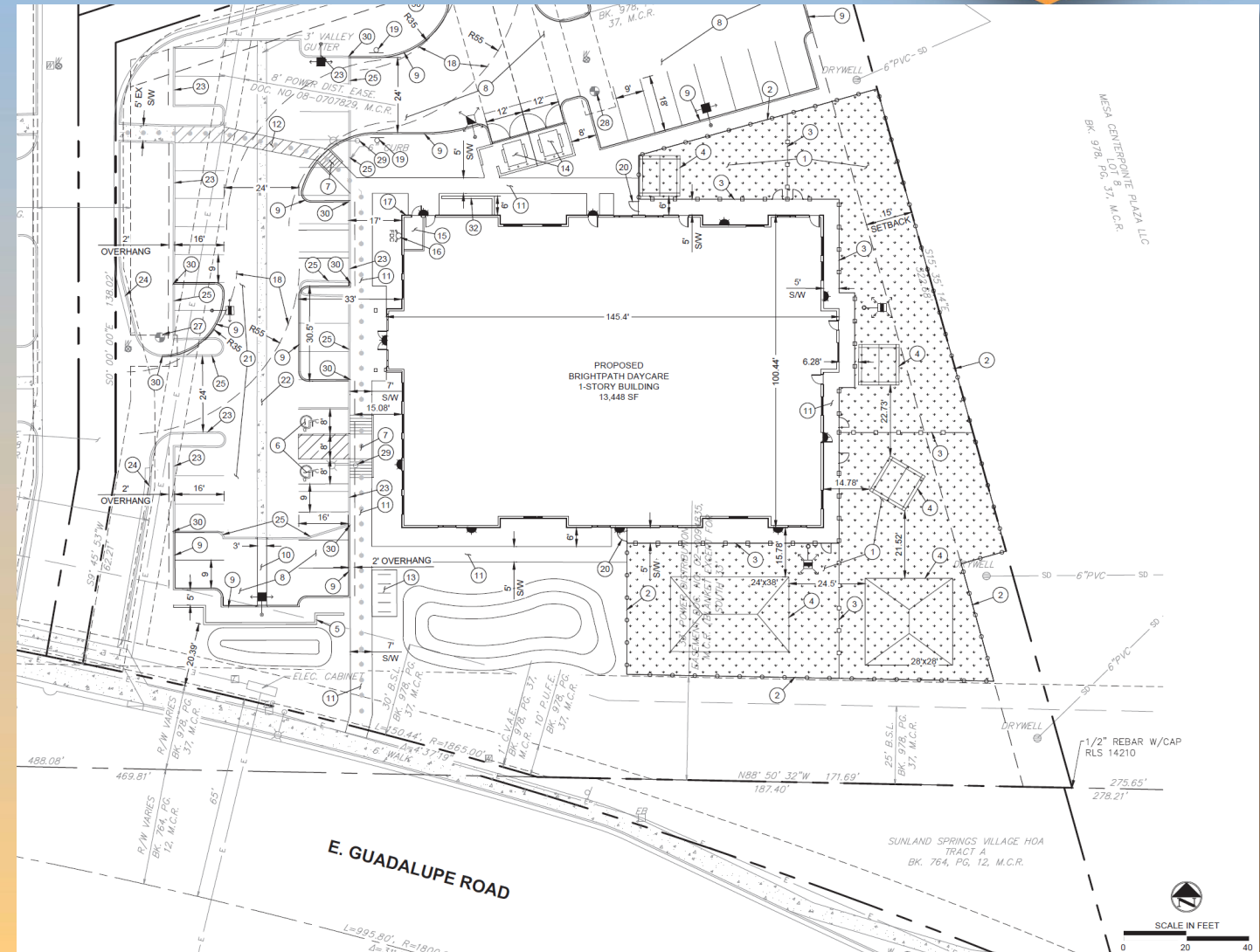


Looking northwest from Guadalupe Road



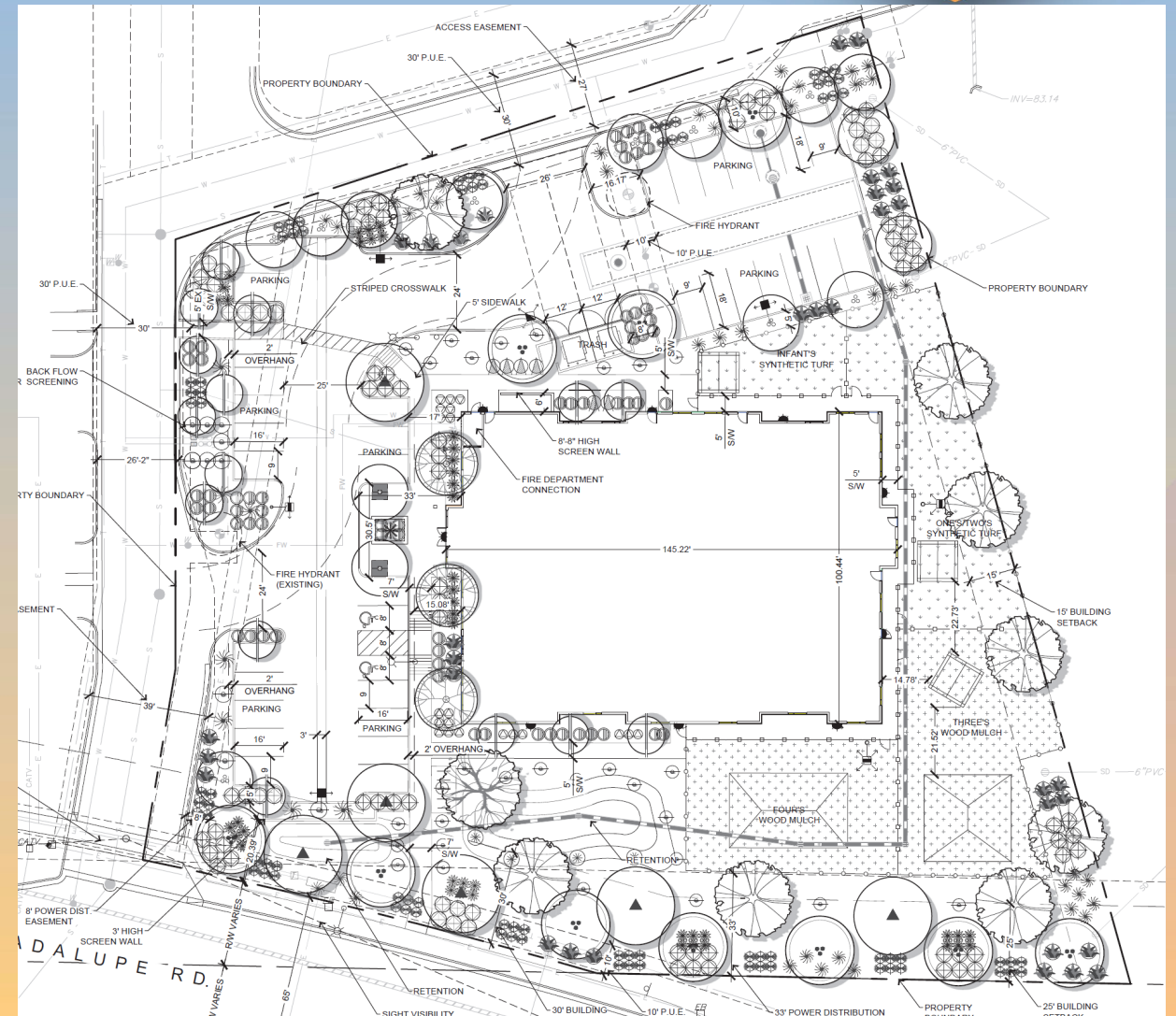
Site Plan

- 13,448 sq ft day care center
- Fenced playground area with shade structures
- Vehicular access from East Guadalupe Road and internally from an existing shared driveway
- 36 parking spaces required; 37 spaces provided





Landscape Plan





Renderings





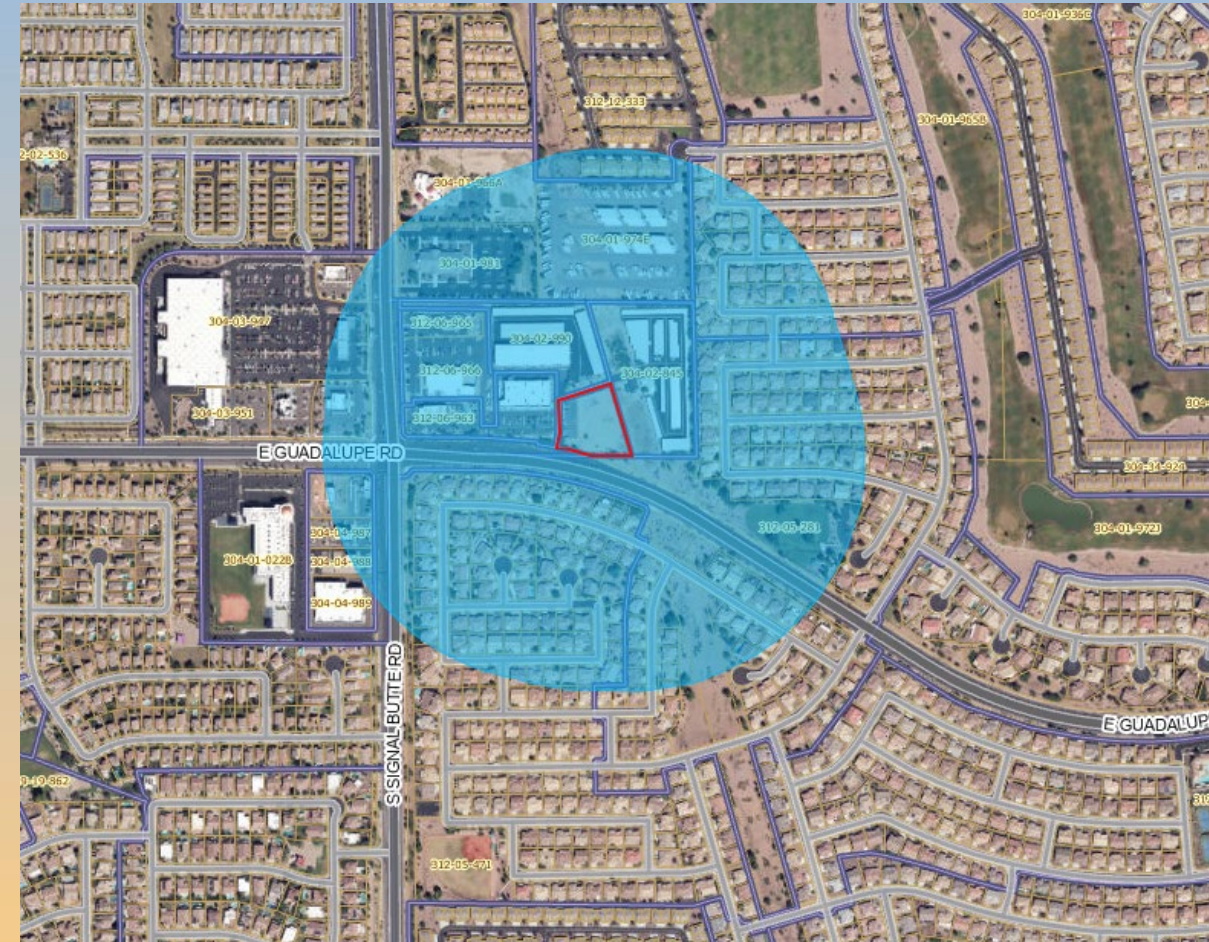
Renderings





Citizen Participation

- Notified property owners within 1000 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods
- Virtual neighborhood meeting held on August 3, 2023
 - Three attendees
- Staff received twelve comments
 - Two in support and ten in opposition to the request





Findings

- ✓ Complies with the 2040 Mesa General Plan
- ✓ Complies with the review criteria in Chapter 69 of the MZO for Site Plan Review

Staff recommends Approval with Conditions



City of Mesa Study Session - Drive Thrus

Kellie Rorex, Senior Planner
Rachel Nettles, Assistant Planning Director

August 23, 2023



Process Recap

- Project initiated - early 2022 at the direction of City Council
- Staff explored and presented alternative concepts based on Council and stakeholder feedback
- Continued to receive feedback from developers that:
 - Council approval would be costly, time consuming, and arbitrary
 - City's goals could be accomplished through design standards
 - Proposed amendments not in-line with other jurisdictions relaxing regulations



5 Public
Meetings



8 Focus/Small Group
Discussions



4 City Council Study
Sessions

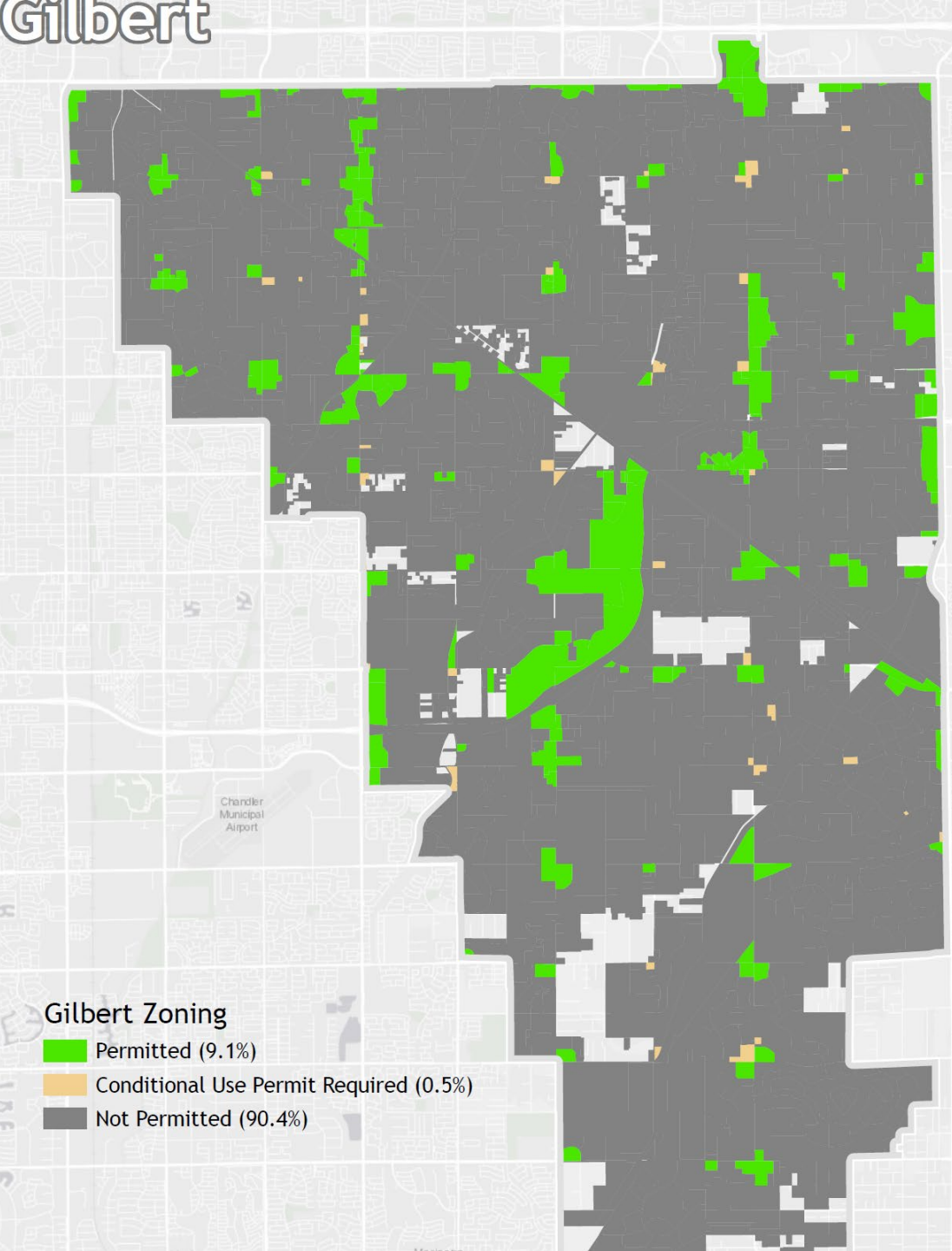


3 P&Z Study
Sessions



Process Recap

- Researched surrounding jurisdictions to compare:
 - Where drive-thrus are allowed
 - Required processes
 - Development standards
- Based on research conducted, staff is:
 - Presenting findings
 - Providing recommendations to align with surrounding jurisdictions



Land Use Requirements

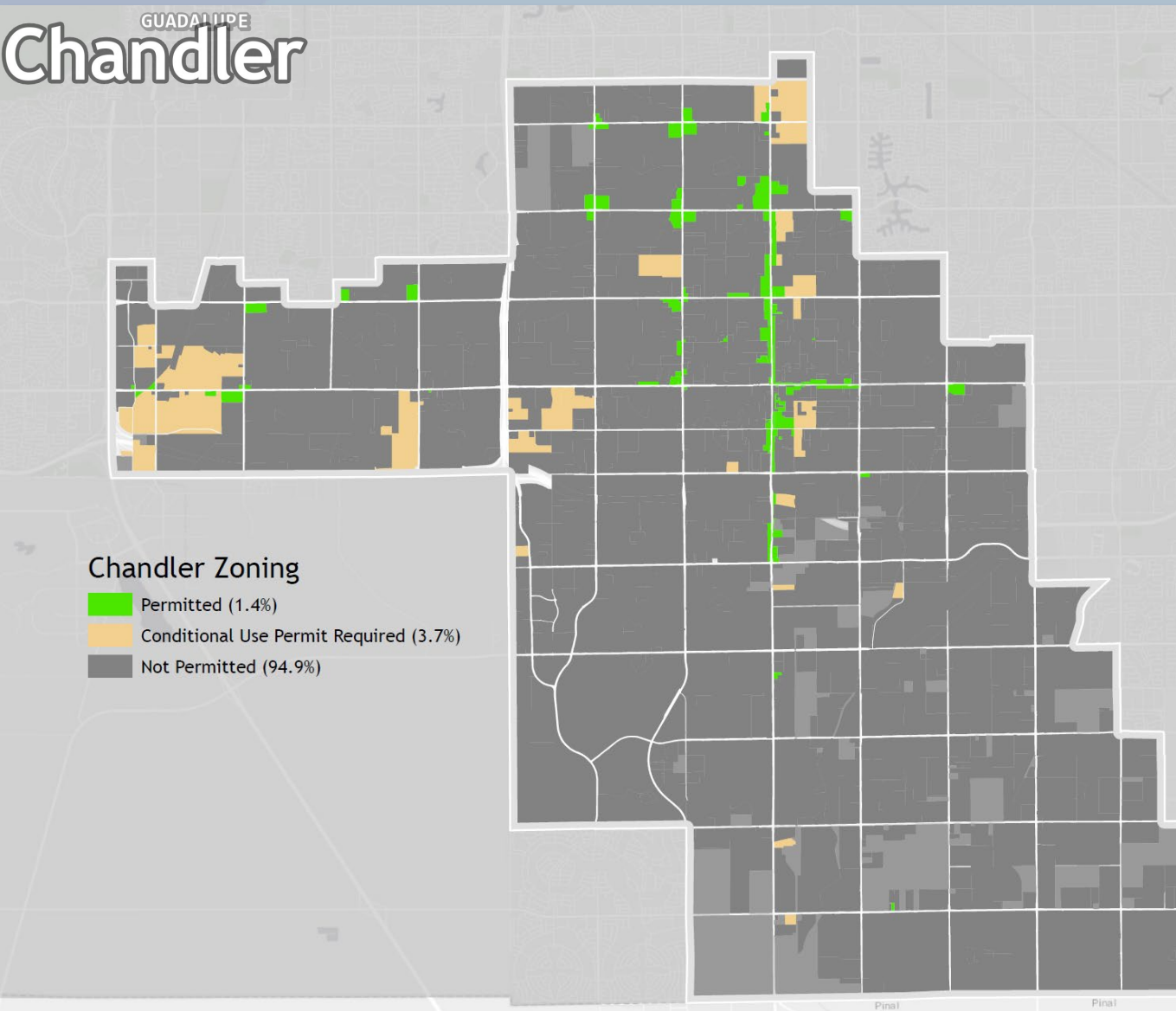
Permitted (9.1%):

- Community Commercial
- Shopping Center
- General Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Heritage Village Center (if existing)

Conditional Use Permit Required (0.5%):

- Neighborhood Commercial District
 - If hours of operation are between 11pm and 6am

Land Use Requirements

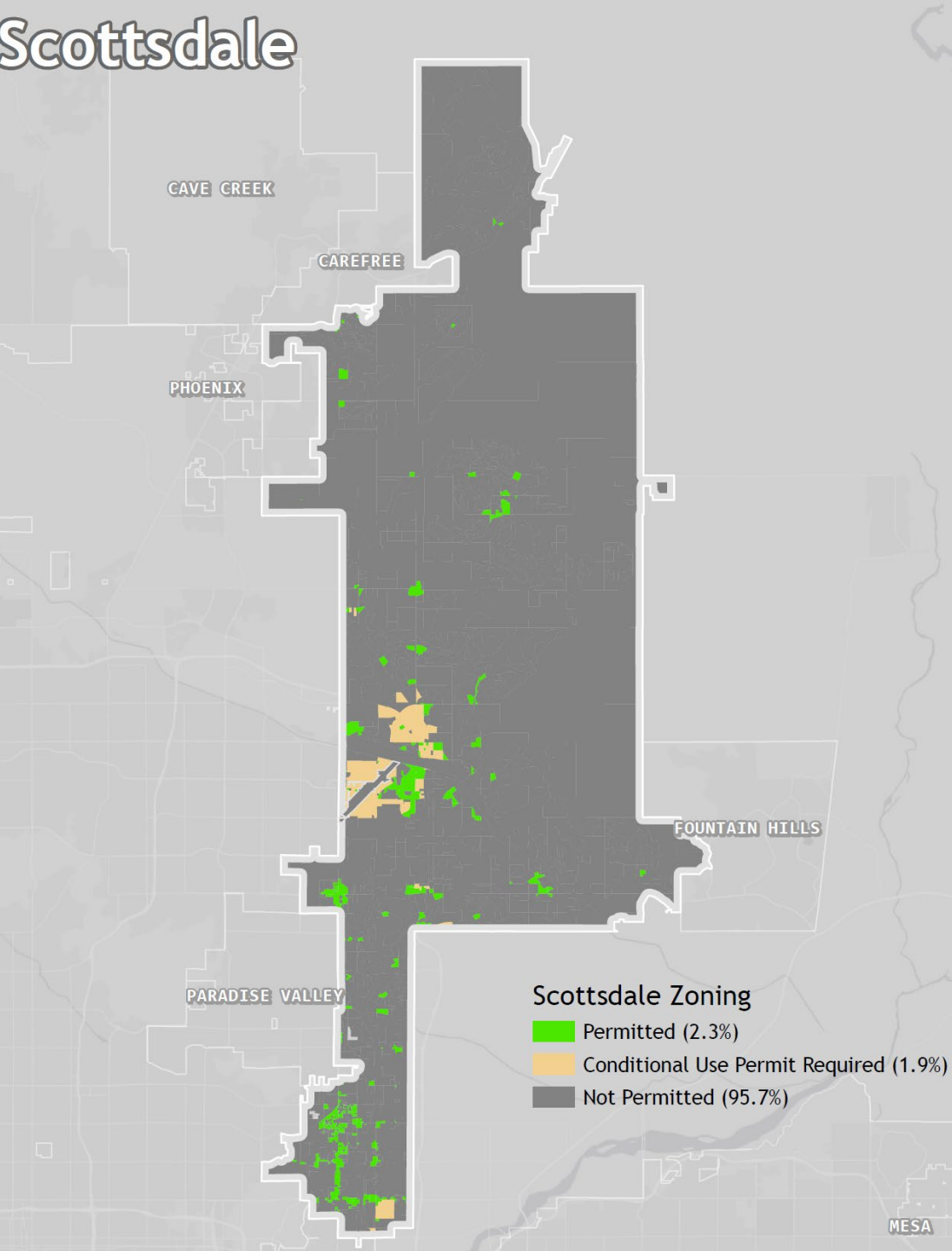


Permitted (1.4%):

- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial

Conditional Use Permit
Required (3.7%):

- Planned Industrial
- General Industrial



Land Use Requirements

Permitted (2.3%):

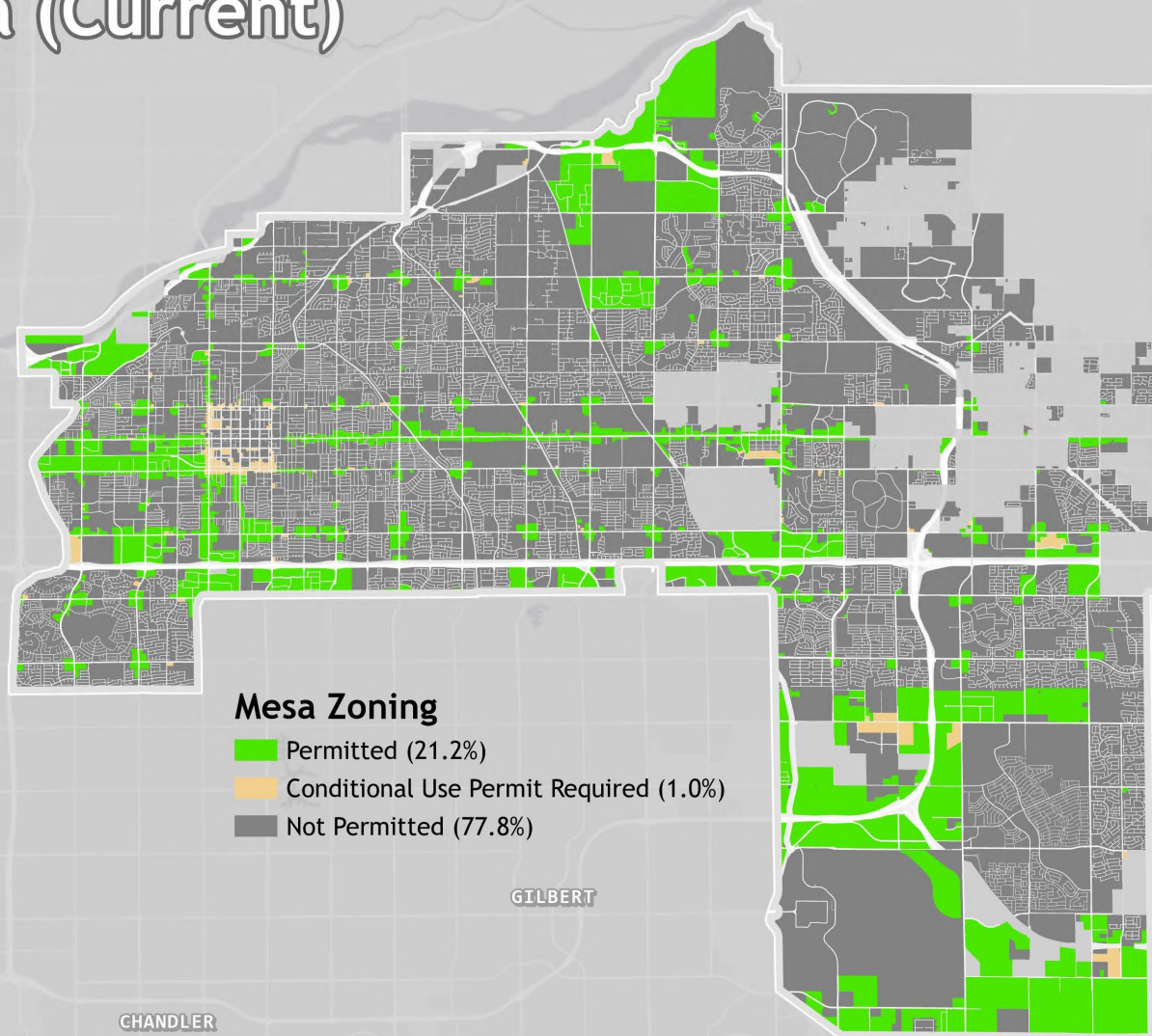
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Central Business
- Regional Shopping Center
- Highway Commercial
- Planned Neighborhood Center
- Planned Community Center
- Planned Regional Center

Conditional Use Permit Required (1.9%):

- Planned Airpark Core
- Industrial Park

Land Use Requirements

Mesa (Current)



Permitted (21.2%):

- Limited Commercial
- General Commercial
- Planned Employment Park
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial

Conditional Use Permit Required (1%):

- CUP
 - Downtown Business 1
- SUP
 - Neighborhood Commercial
 - Heavy Industrial
 - Downtown Business 2
 - Mixed Use



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Land Use Districts and Processes

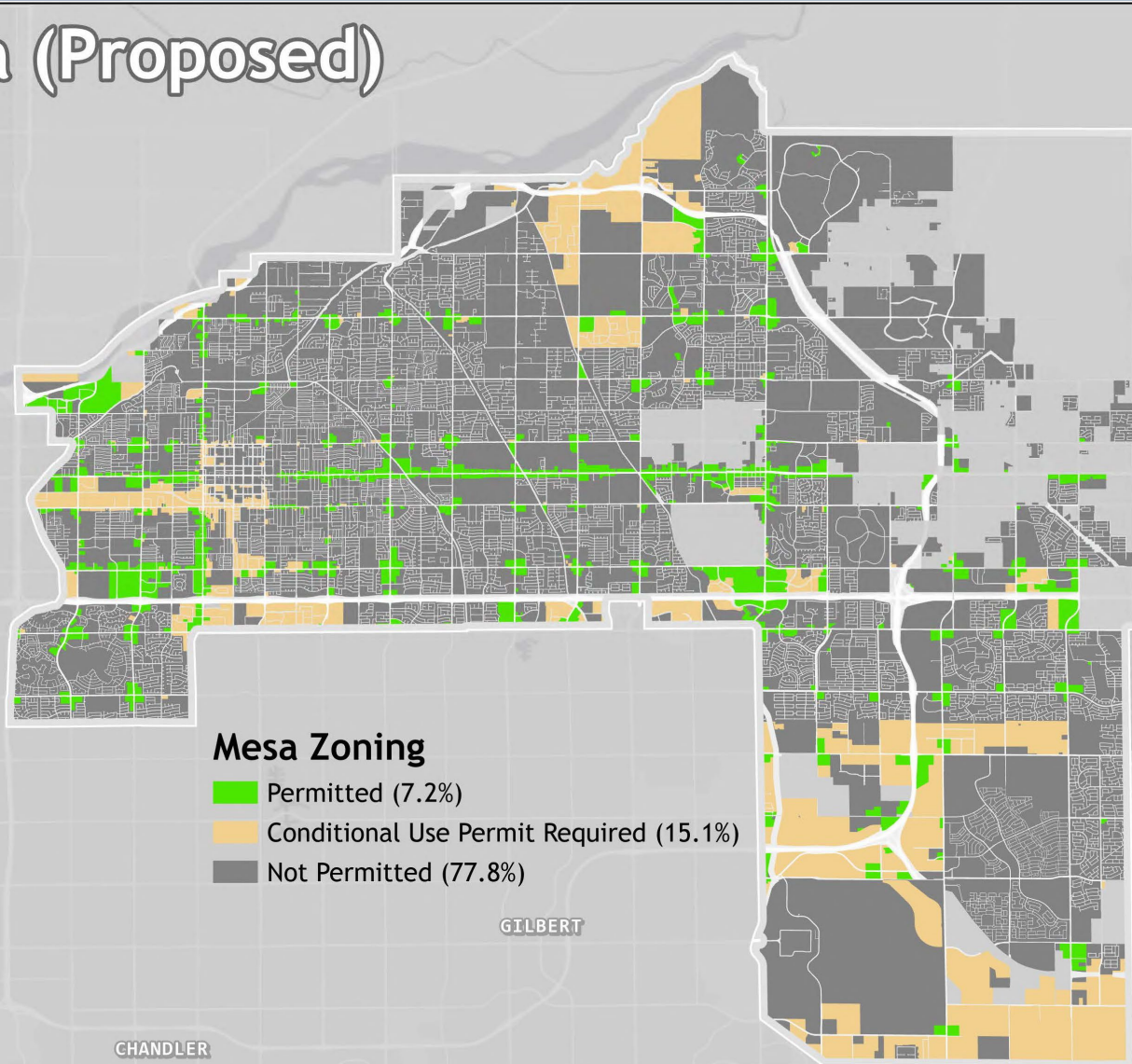
No Ban on Drive-thrus is Proposed

Proposed Modification:

- Drive-Thru – Require CUP (Vesting options being considered)
 - Neighborhood Commercial (formerly SUP)
 - Planned Employment Park
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Heavy Industrial (formerly SUP)

Land Use Requirements

Mesa (Proposed)



Permitted (7.2%):

- Limited Commercial
- General Commercial

Conditional Use Permit Required (15.1%):

- CUP
 - Downtown Business 1
 - Neighborhood Commercial
 - Planned Employment Park
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Heavy Industrial
- SUP
 - Downtown Business 2
 - Mixed Use



Existing Screening Requirements

Mesa

- Drive-thru may not be located parallel to arterial street; or
- Screen with a 40-inch wall

Chandler

- By building orientation; or
- A landscaped berm and retaining wall measuring 4-feet

Gilbert

- 3-feet of landscaping on each side of a drive-thru screen wall

Scottsdale

PCP District

- 4-foot wall; or combination of wall and dense landscaping

Signature Corridors

- 25-foot landscape buffer between the drive-thru lane and the street

Planned Airpark Core

- 50-foot landscape buffer adjacent to a SF district



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Screening Requirements

Retain Current Standard:

- If the drive-thru lane is adjacent to an arterial street:
 - Screen with a 40-inch-high screen wall

Proposed Modification:

- Add options
 - 1) In addition to a to 40" screen wall; and
Provide 2 additional trees and 2 additional shrubs per 100 feet of street frontage; or
 - 2) Provide an architecturally integrated awning, canopy, or trellis system that covers the entire drive-thru; and
Provide 1 additional tree and 2 additional shrubs per 100 feet of street frontage



Existing Stacking Requirements

Mesa

- 100-feet between the drive-thru window and order-placing box
- 40-feet between the order-placing box and the entry to a drive-thru lane
- May be deviated through Site Plan Review

Chandler

- 150-feet between drive-up window to start of lane
- 6-vehicle queuing from the start of lane to the menu board

Gilbert

- 75-feet - beverage/eating and drinking establishments
- Limited-service restaurants
 - 100-feet; or
 - 50-feet per lane for double drive-thru
- 75 feet - banks and financial institutions

Scottsdale

- N/A



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Stacking Requirements

Retain Current Standards:

- 100 ft. between the drive-thru window and order-placing box
- 40 ft. between the order-placing box and the entry to a drive-thru lane

Proposed Modifications:

- Add a 50 ft. stacking distance between the drive-thru lane entry and the street access or cross access drive
- Add 100 ft. stacking distance between a pick-up window and entry to the pick-up lane
- Add a 40 ft. stacking distance behind a drive-up ATM/teller window
- Requirements can be modified if evidence is provided in the required TIS that the proposed stacking is sufficient to meet the demands of the development



Existing Employee Screening Requirements

Mesa

- N/A

Chandler

- N/A

Gilbert

- Shade structures adjacent to drive-thru lanes
- Walkways adjacent to drive-thru lanes

Scottsdale

- N/A



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Employee Screening Requirements

Proposed Modification:

- When employees take orders outside:
 - Provide an architecturally compatible shade structure near where employees take orders
 - Provide a 2-foot-wide raised pedestrian path



Existing Setback from Residential Requirements

Mesa

- N/A

Chandler

- N/A

Gilbert

- N/A

Scottsdale

Planned Airport Core

- 150 feet from the drive-thru lane to a SF district or zoning comparable to SF



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Setback from Residential Requirements

Proposed Modification:

- Require a 100-ft. setback from a residential use or zoning district to the drive-thru or pick-up lane



Existing Traffic Impact Study Requirements

Mesa

- N/A

Chandler

- Traffic Impact Study
 - Shopping Center 24,000 sq. ft or larger
 - Pharmacy with drive-thru

Gilbert

- Traffic Impact Analysis

Scottsdale

- Transportation Impact Mitigation Analysis (TIMA) for rezonings, general plan amendments, and use permits
- Requirement for Traffic Impact Study determined based off TIMA



Proposed Mesa Amendments

Traffic Impact Study Requirements

Proposed Modification:

- Require a traffic impact study with the following information:
 - Business hours of operation.
 - The method by which a customer order is placed and processed.
 - The time required to serve a typical customer.
 - Arrival rates of customers.
 - Peak demand hours.
 - Anticipated vehicular stacking required:
 - a. A mitigation plan that shows: how backup queuing will not block internal drives or back up into traffic; and
 - b. How sound from external operations will be attenuated from neighboring properties.



Summary of Proposed Amendments

Use Development Standards to:

- Improve aesthetics
- Improve circulation
 - Prevent overflow onto streets
 - Reduce congestion within internal drives
 - Ensure appropriate traffic measures and design are employed
 - Improve pedestrian access, safety, and connectivity
- Lessen impacts on residential areas
- Improve the urban form
 - Use landscaping and architectural features to screen drive-thru lanes
 - Use landscape buffers to use and lessen the appeared density
- Increase safety and provide employees protection from the elements



Summary of Proposed Amendments

Modify the required approval for some zoning districts to:

- Align requirements and allowed locations with other jurisdictions
- Improve the compatibility of land uses with the intent of the zoning districts and General Plan
- Increase public engagement opportunities



Next Steps

- Provide draft online for additional public review
 - Public Meeting September 6th
- Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation
 - City Council Action

