



**PLANNING DIVISION  
STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Hearing**

**April 4, 2022**

CASE No.: <b>ZON21-00731, ZON21-00878</b>	PROJECT NAME: <b>Ascend at Longbow Highpoint</b>
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Owner's Name:	Dover Associates, LLC
Applicant's Name:	Reese Anderson, Pew & Lake, PLC
Location of Request:	Within the 2800 to 3100 blocks of North Recker Road (west side) and within the 5900 block of East Longbow Parkway (south side). Located north of McDowell Road on the west side of Recker Road.
Parcel No(s):	141-41-010
Request:	<b>ZON21-00878: Minor General Plan Amendment.</b> This request will change the General Plan Character Area from Employment to Mixed-Use Activity District.
	<b>ZON21-00731:</b> Modification of the Longbow Park Planned Area Development Overlay (Longbow Park PAD); Rezone from Light Industrial (LI) to Limited Commercial (LC), Council Use Permit (CUP) and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for a mixed-use development.
Existing Zoning District:	Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD)
Council District:	5
Site Size:	20± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Commercial & Multiple Residence
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	<b>January 12, 2022 / 4:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Cassidy Welch, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	ZON21-00878: Adoption
	ZON21-00731: APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	Adoption (Vote: 5-0)
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

## HISTORY

On **May 14, 1979**, the City Council approved annexation of 263± acres of property from Maricopa County into the City of Mesa, including the subject site (Ordinance No. 1234) and subsequently assigned a Single Residence 43 (RS-43) zoning district designation on the property (Z79-109; Ordinance No. 1272).

On **March 4, 2002**, the City Council approved a Development Master Plan (DMP) to allow development of a business park (Longbow Business Park), golf course and club, and other commercial uses on the property (Z02-001; Ordinance No. 3972).

On **November 17, 2008**, the City Council approved a modification of the Longbow Development Master Plan to align the land uses with the City's Falcon Field Sub-Area plan and allow for future commercial and employment uses on the property (Z08-063; Ordinance No. 4897).

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Background:**

The applicant is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment and a rezone in order to develop a mixed-use development on the subject site.

### **Case No. ZON21-00878 Minor General Plan Amendment:**

The applicant is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment to change the character area designation from Employment to Mixed-Use Activity District. Chapter 16 (pg. 16-26) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan provides approval criteria that City Council may consider when considering a Minor or Major General Plan Amendment. Those criteria include if the proposed amendment will result in the loss of land for other planned uses, the degree of impact to the surrounding community, existing land use patterns, and the extent to which the benefits of the amendment outweigh any impacts.

The proposed Minor General Plan Amendment to Mixed-Use Activity District for the development of a mixed-use center will be consistent with the existing and anticipated development pattern of the area. The 20-acre property is currently vacant and surrounded by a large-scale commercial center to the north, golf course to the west, and self-storage facility to the south. The proposed Minor General Plan Amendment is consistent with the criteria for approval outlined in Chapter 16 (pg. 16-26) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

### **Case No. ZON21-00731 Rezone:**

The associated rezone request is to modify the existing Longbow Park Planned Area Development (Longbow Park PAD) and rezone the property from LI-PAD to LC-PAD with a Council Use Permit (CUP) and site plan to allow for a mixed-use development. The purpose for the CUP is to allow modifications to the required development standards for development of

residential uses in a commercial zoned district, as well as an increase in the maximum residential density allowed in the LC district for such a development.

The request is also to allow certain additional modifications to the City's development standards within the Longbow Park PAD. These additional modifications shall only apply to the area identified as Lot 4, the subject site, within the Longbow Park PAD.

**General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:**

The applicant is requesting a Minor General Plan Amendment to change the character area designation from Employment to Mixed Use Activity District. The requested Minor General Plan Amendment to the Mixed-Use Activity District character type is consistent with the surrounding character area designations. The properties located north of Longbow Parkway also have a character area designation of Mixed-Use Activity District. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the Mixed-Use Activity District character areas are large-scale community and regional activity areas designed to attract customers from a large radius with a goal to provide strong and viable centers of commercial activities that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences. The requested change of the subject property to Mixed-Use Activity District to allow development of a mixed-use development will help provide the market and population to support the existing and requested Mixed-Use Activity District character areas and create an overall place-based system of economic development where people can live, work, shop, and recreate.

Per Chapter 7 (pg. 7-22) of the General Plan, a minimum of 70% of the total Mixed-Use Activity District character area shall be reserved for primary zoning designations and uses. These primary designations shall include commercial zoning districts, such as the Office Commercial (OC), Limited Commercial (LC), General Commercial (GC), Mixed Use (MX), Planned Employment Park (PEP) and Infill Incentive District 2 (ID-2). The minimum percentages of the zoning can be met with a combination of the above listed zoning districts, or the entire area may be zoned under one primary zoning district. In addition to the zoning requirements, the General Plan also outlines the minimum and maximum percentages of primary and secondary land uses allowed in the Mixed-Use Activity District character area designation. Per this requirement, the maximum allowed secondary land uses for Multiple Residential is 30%. However, per Chapter 7 (pg. 7-2 & 7-5) the City Council has the discretion to allow modifications to the required percentages. The General Plan also allows evaluation of the existing surrounding development to be considered for conformance with the required land use percentages of the character area. The subject request, being zoned entirely LC to allow the development of Commercial and Multiple Residence uses, conforms to the intent of the Mixed-Use Activity District considering the development of the surrounding properties is largely commercial and adds to the goals of revitalizing the area and providing much needed population to support existing developments. Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the criteria for review of development outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

**Zoning District Designations:**

The subject property is currently zoned LI-PAD. The request includes a rezoning of the property from LI to LC with a CUP to allow the proposed development on the property. Per Table 11-6-3

of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), retail, restaurants, and eating establishments with drive-thru lanes are allowed uses in the LC zoning district. Further, per Table 11-6-3 of the MZO, multiple residences are allowed in the LC district subject to certain standards outlined in Section 11-31-31 of the MZO, such as maximum allowed residential density and minimum required commercial floor within a development. Per Section 11-31-31(E) of the MZO, a proposed development may be allowed through approval of a CUP to modify the required development standards for residential uses in a commercial district. The applicant is also requesting modifications to the existing Longbow Park PAD overlay to allow the proposed development.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the property is located within the Airfield (AF) Overlay District. Specifically, within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3). The location of the property within the AOA 3 is due to its proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, commercial and residential land uses are allowed within the AOA 3.

Council Use Permit:

Per Table 11-6-2 of the MZO, multiple residences are permitted in the LC zoning district subject to conformance with outlined requirements in Section 11-31-31 of the MZO. Per Section 11-31-31(A) of the MZO, a project with multiple story buildings may include residential uses if: 1) a minimum of 60 percent of the gross floor area (GFA) of all buildings within a project is reserved for commercial uses; and 2) a minimum of 65 percent of the ground floor of each multi-story building is reserved for commercial uses. Per Section 11-31-31(E) of the MZO, modifications to the commercial floor area requires approval of a Council Use Permit.

The applicant is requesting to allow development of the subject 20-acre property with approximately 33% of the site (6.6± acres) reserved for commercial uses. According to the applicant, the subject development should be considered within the context of the overall surrounding developments and zoning designations. Currently, a majority of the properties to the north across Longbow Parkway are developed as a commercial center and zoned as LI-PAD. The submitted documents identify that the proposed multiple residence on 13-acres constitutes approximately 33% percent of the overall 39.85 acres of commercial uses surrounding the property and less than 40 percent of the maximum area allowed for residential uses. Also, per Chapter Seven (page 7-5) of the General Plan, a proposed development within an existing development area may be allowed to utilize existing surrounding land uses to meet the required minimum land uses. Per the General Plan, a minimum of 70% of the total area shall be reserved for primary land uses. Further, the City Council may also approve deviations to the required minimum and maximum land uses if approval of the proposed development will still further and achieve the intended goals of the character area. According to the applicant, approval of the subject mixed-use development will help revitalize the area and provide the needed population to support the existing commercial uses.

The proposed development is required to conform to the criteria for approving a CUP outlined in Sections 11-31-31(F) and 11-70-6 of the MZO. These requirements include showing that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and other city

policies, and demonstrate that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the project are consistent with the purpose of the zoning district designation on the property. The CUP is also required to show that approval of the project will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas, and there is adequate public services and infrastructure to support the development.

The proposed development conforms to the criteria for approving a CUP outlined in Sections 11-31-31(F) and 11-70-6 (D) of the MZO. The size, shape, and characteristics of the development shown through the site plan and building elevations demonstrate conformance with the purpose of the LC zoning district, including providing a high-quality multiple residence use to support the existing and proposed commercial development. The proposed development also conforms with the goals of the General Plan including the Mixed-Use Activity District. The submitted plan, as also modified with the PAD, demonstrates compliance with all zoning, building, and fire safety regulations.

**Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay – MZO Article 3, Chapter 22:**

The subject site is currently located within the Longbow Park PAD. This PAD was established in 2002 (Case Z02-001) and modified in 2008 (Case Z08-063) to establish a master planned development and golf course. As a part of the subject request, the applicant is requesting certain modifications to the LC zoning standards for the multiple residence component for the area identified as Lot 4 within the Longbow Park PAD. Table 1 below shows the MZO required standards, the applicant’s proposed PAD standards, and staff recommendations:

Table 1: Development Standards

<b>MZO Development Standards</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i>	30 feet	<b>38 feet</b>	As proposed
<u>Minimum Building Separation</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i> - Building height up to 20 feet - Building height between 20 and 40 feet	25 feet  30 feet	<b>20 feet</b>  <b>20 feet</b>	As proposed
<u>Residential Development Standards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i> - Minimum Outdoor Living Area (sq. ft./unit)	100 square feet	<b>44 square feet (minimum)</b>	As proposed
<u>Required Parking Spaces</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-32-3(A)</i> - Multiple Residence	2.1 spaces per unit	<b>1.85 spaces per unit</b>	As proposed

As shown on the table above, the applicant is requesting modifications from the LC zoning district standards outlined in Section 11-6-3 and 11-32-3 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

**Maximum Building Height:**

Per Section 11-6-3 of the MZO, the maximum building height in the LC zoning district is 30 feet. The applicant is requesting a height increase from 30 feet to 38 feet. According to the applicant, the requested height increase is consistent with the maximum building height within the RM zoning districts and is needed to accommodate the proposed residential density. Also, the requested height will allow the unique building design proposed with the development to create a superior building designation to contribute to the overall quality of the development.

**Minimum Building Separation:**

Per Section 11-6-3 of the MZO, the minimum building separation for buildings with a height up to 20 feet is 25 feet. The applicant is requesting a reduction of the minimum building separation from 25 feet to 20 feet. Further, per Section 11-6-3 of the MZO, the minimum building separation for buildings with a height between 20 and 40 feet is 30 feet. The applicant is requesting a reduction of the minimum building separation from 30 feet to 20 feet. According to the applicant, the requested reduced building separation is required to accommodate the proposed site plan and clustering of buildings to allow increased common open space.

**Minimum Outdoor Living Area:**

Per Section 11-6-3 of the MZO, the minimum outdoor living area for residential developments in the LC zoning district is 100 square feet per unit. The applicant is requesting a reduction of the minimum outdoor living area from 100 square feet to a minimum of 44 square feet. Per the submitted plans, the minimum private outdoor living area is 44 square feet however the average private open space is closer to 67 square feet. According to the applicant, the proposed multiple residence development has provided approximately 235 square feet of common open space per unit which exceeds the minimum 100 square feet requirement. Further, residents will also have access to the required trail that wraps the entire perimeter of the Longbow golf course.

**Required Parking Spaces:**

Per Section 11-32-3(A) of the MZO, 2.1 parking spaces per unit is required for multiple residence developments. Based on this requirement, a minimum of 754 spaces is required for the proposed development of 359 units. The applicant is requesting a reduction of the parking ratio from 2.1 space per unit to 1.85 spaces per unit, which equates to providing a total 664 parking spaces. Per the submitted plans, the proposed parking ratio is consistent with other multiple residence developments approved in various areas within the Metro Area that are located in a similar mixed-use environment. In addition, according to the applicant, the location of the proposed development within an existing commercial center typically generates less demand for parking spaces.

**Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:**

The subject request is for a mixed-use development that includes commercial and multiple residences. According to the site plan, the proposed commercial development will constitute

approximately 6.63± acres of the total 20± acre site. The commercial development is located on the northern portion of the subject site, adjacent to Longbow Parkway and Recker Road. The proposed commercial site plan includes 6 commercial buildings with two associated drive-thru lanes. The proposed buildings are located along Longbow Parkway and Recker Road and developed in a layout consistent with the existing commercial center across Longbow Parkway. Vehicular parking is located internal to the commercial site and a series of pedestrian walkways connects the proposed commercial buildings to each other as well as to the multiple residence development to the south.

According to the site plan, the proposed multiple residence development will constitute the remaining 13.36± acres of the total 20± acre site. The multiple residence development is located on the southern portion of the subject site, adjacent to Recker Road. The proposed multiple residence development is for 359 units in eighteen 2 and 3 story buildings. The proposed site plan shows development of several common open space areas and amenities throughout the site that includes a swimming pool, clubhouse, pool cabana, dog park, and BBQ areas. As required by the Longbow Park PAD, a trail is required along the perimeter of the Longbow Golf Course. In addition to the required trail, a series of pedestrian paths within the multiple residences and connecting to the adjacent commercial developments is proposed.

**Design Review:**

The Design Review Board is scheduled to review the subject request on October 12, 2021. Staff will be working with the applicant to address any comments and recommendations from the Design Review Board.

**Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:**

<p><b>Northwest</b> (Across Longbow Parkway) LC-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>North</b> (Across Longbow Parkway) LC-PAD Retail</p>	<p><b>Northeast</b> (Across Longbow Parkway &amp; Recker Road) RS-7-PAD Single Residence</p>
<p><b>West</b>  LI-PAD Golf Course</p>	<p><b>Subject Property</b>  LI-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>East</b> (Across Recker Road) RS-7-PAD &amp; AG-PAD Single Residence &amp; Park</p>
<p><b>Southwest</b>  LI-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>South</b>  GC-PAD Self-Storage</p>	<p><b>Southeast</b> (Across Recker Road) AG-PAD Park</p>

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The subject property is currently vacant and located within Lot 4 of the Longbow Park PAD. The subject site is adjacent to the Longbow Park golf course to the east and a self-storage facility to the south. To the north of the subject site, across Longbow Parkway, is an existing commercial center also located within the Longbow Park PAD. The proposed commercial development will be adjacent to the exiting commercial center across Longbow Parkway and serve as an

appropriate transition from the existing commercial center to the proposed multiple residences and golf course. Overall, the proposed development of the property for a mixed-use development will help attract new residents to the area and provide additional population and services to support the existing commercial development. Also, the proposed development conforms to the goals of the Mixed-Use Activity District and the LC zoning district to provide strong viable areas that are sustainable. Overall, the proposed development will be compatible to the surrounding community.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

A Citizen Participation Process has been completed which included mailed letters to property owners within 1,000-feet of the site, as well as HOAs within ½ mile and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. The applicant held a virtual neighborhood meeting on September 15, 2021. A second neighborhood meeting was held on November 10, 2021 at the Longbow Golf Course with approximately 40 residents in attendance. As of writing this report, staff has received five (5) emails from nearby residents with concerns about the proposed multiple residence component. Staff has also received several calls from nearby residents with similar concerns. The major concerns received from residents include:

- Density – Nearby residents expressed concerns with the proposed multiple residence use and number of units proposed. There is a general concern that the proposed multiple residence use is not compatible with the existing single residence subdivision to the east of the subject site, across Recker Road.
- Traffic – Throughout the Citizen Participation Process, neighbors had concerns about the potential impacts on traffic in the area. Several residents cited existing traffic issues with the existing commercial Longbow development. The Transportation Department has reviewed the proposed request and found that Recker Road has sufficient capacity to support the anticipated increase in traffic.
- Parking – In addition to the concerns with traffic, several nearby residents identified a concern that the proposed parking reduction in the multiple residence component would lead to an overflow of parking in the neighborhood to the east of the subject site and that a lack of availability in parking would lead to an increase in traffic on Recker Road. The proposed reduction in parking is consistent with similar multiple residence developments in the area and is sufficient to meet the needs of the development.

The applicant has provided an updated Citizen Participation Report. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled February 9, 2022 Study Session.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Based upon the application received and preceding analysis, staff find that the subject request for a Minor General Plan Amendment is consistent with the goals and intent of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, including the General Plan amendment criteria of Chapter 15, and therefore, recommends adoption.



Based upon the application received and preceding analysis, staff find that the subject request for rezoning from LI-PAD to LC-PAD is consistent with the 2040 General Plan, is consistent with the Longbow Park PAD, meets the review criteria for a Planned Area Development overlay outlined in Section 11-22-5 of the MZO, meets the approval criteria for a Council Use Permit outlines in Section 11-70-6 of the MZO, and meets the approval criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-2 of the MZO. Therefore, staff recommends approval of both requests with the following conditions of approval.

**Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Regulations.
4. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:
  - a. Owner shall execute and record the City’s standard Avigation Easement and Release for Falcon Field Airport prior to the issuance of a building permit.
  - b. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, provide documentation that a registered professional engineer or registered professional architect has certified that noise attenuation measures have been incorporated into the design and construction of the buildings to achieve a noise level reduction to 45 decibels as specified in Section 11-19-5 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.
  - c. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within 1 mile(s) of Falcon Field Airport.
  - d. 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. If required, an FAA determination notice of no hazard to air navigation shall be provided prior to building permit issuance.
  - e. All final subdivision plats and leasing offices shall include a disclosure notice in accordance with Section 11-19-5(C) of the Zoning Ordinance which shall state in part: “This property, due to its proximity to Falcon Field Airport, will experience aircraft overflights, which are expected to generate noise levels that may be of concern to some individuals.”
5. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations and the existing Longbow PAD (Case No. Z08-063; Ordinance No. 4897), except the modifications to the development standards as approved with the PAD overlay and shown in the following table:

<b>MZO Development Standards</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i>	38 feet
<u>Minimum Building Separation</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i> - Building height up 20 feet - Building height between 20 and 40 feet	20 feet 20 feet

<u>Residential Development Standards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-6-3</i> - Minimum Outdoor Living Area (sq. ft./unit)	44 square feet (minimum)
<u>Required Parking Spaces</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-32-3(A)</i> - Multiple Residence	1.85 spaces per unit

**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit 1- Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 2-Staff Report
- Exhibit 3-Application Information
  - 3.1 Project Narrative
  - 3.2 Site Plan
  - 3.3 Grading and Drainage Plan
  - 3.4 Landscape Plan
  - 3.5 Elevations
- Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Plan
- Exhibit 5-Citizen Participation Report
- Exhibit 6-Letters of Opposition
- Exhibit 7-Avigation Easement
- Exhibit 8-Parking Study
- Exhibit 9-Facilitator Citizen Participation Report