



**PLANNING DIVISION  
STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Meeting**

**December 9, 2024**

CASE No.: <b>ZON24-00711</b>	PROJECT NAME: <b>Lot 7 at Thomas Road</b>
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Owner's Name:	Resident Plumber, LLC
Applicant's Name:	Marian McKersie, RKAAs Architects
Location of Request:	Located at the northeast corner of East Thomas Road and North 55 <sup>th</sup> Place, approximately 2,600 feet west of the intersection of North Recker Road and East Thomas Road.
Parcel No(s):	141-38-027
Request:	Rezone from Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development and Bonus Intensity Zone Overlays (LI-PAD-BIZ) and Site Plan Review.
Existing Zoning District:	Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD)
Council District:	5
Site Size:	1± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Offices
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
Hearing Date(s):	<b>November 13, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Tulili Tuiteleapaga-Howard, Planner I
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions (7-0)
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

**HISTORY**

On **December 21, 1981**, the City Council annexed approximately 177± acres, including the project site, into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 1551).

On **January 23, 1983**, the City Council established R1-90 zoning (equivalent to current Single Residence-90 [RS-90]) on approximately 186± acres, including the project site (Case No. Z82-33; Ordinance 1618).

On **February 19, 1985**, the City Council approved a rezoning on approximately 149± acres, including the project site, from R1-90 to conceptual M-1 (equivalent to current Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay [LI-PAD]) to allow for a future industrial development (Case No. Z85-014; Ordinance 1985).

On **March 3, 2003**, the City Council approved a rezoning on approximately 11± acres, including the project site, from R1-90 to M-1 PAD (equivalent to current Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay [LI-PAD]) for the development of an industrial business park (Case No. Z03-003; Ordinance 4050).

On **February 4, 2008**, the City Council approved a modification of Ordinance No. 4050 to delete certain conditions within the ordinance to facilitate development of the Red Mountain Commerce Center (Case No. Z08-002; Ordinance 4810).

On **August 28, 2017**, the City Council approved a rezone on approximately ±11 acres, including the project site, to modify the existing Planned Area Development overlay to reduce the side and rear yard setbacks within the existing subdivision (Case No. Z17-028; Ordinance 5402).

On **October 8, 2024**, the Design Review Board reviewed the proposed building elevations and landscape plan. The applicant has worked with staff to incorporate the suggested changes.

On **November 13, 2024**, the Planning and Zoning Board recommended that City Council approve the proposed project (Case No. ZON24-00711).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background**

The applicant has requested to rezone the project site from Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay (LI-PAD) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development and Bonus Intensity Zone Overlays (LI-PAD-BIZ) and Site Plan Review to allow the development of an industrial shell building (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project would allow for additional deviations from the LI development standards, which would only be applicable to the project site and not the overall Red Mountain Commerce Center.

In 2003, City Council approved a Planned Area Development overlay for the Red Mountain Commerce Center, which modified specific development standards. The applicant is proposing to develop an approximate 7,800 square foot industrial shell building with three suites.

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

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character Area designation on the property is Employment with an Industrial Sub-type. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Employment Districts are a character type that is primarily used for employment-type land uses of at least 20 acres. Employment Districts typically have minimal connection to the surrounding area. Examples of Employment Districts include areas for large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. The goal of Employment Districts is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in

high-quality settings. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Light Industrial is a primary use within the Industrial Sub-Type of Employment Districts.

The Proposed Project is consistent with the Employment District and the goals of the Mesa 2040 General plan and meets the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

**Falcon Field Sub Area Plan:**

The proposed project site is within the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan. The vision statement describes the Falcon Field Sub-Area as a vibrant and progressive urban center that serves as an oasis of aviation related business and recreation; an oasis of abundant, high quality employment for professionals, technical experts, and highly skilled labor; an oasis of regional entertainment that attracts that presence of distant visitors, local employees, and area residents; and an oasis of aesthetic beauty, possessing scenic vistas, quality architecture, and natural desert landscape.

The proposed project site is within the General Industrial area of the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan. Development in this area must comply with FAA requirements per AOA 3, address any related flight safety requirements, and provide a compatible mix of land uses.

**Zoning District Designations**

The applicant has requested to rezone the project site from LI-PAD to LI-PAD-BIZ. Per Section 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the LI zoning district allows for limited and general manufacturing, processing, research, warehousing and distribution activities.

The Proposed Project is permitted within the LI zoning district.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the site is located within the Airfield Overlay District, specifically within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3) because of its proximity to the Falcon Field Airport. Per 11-7-2 and 11-19-4 of the MZO, Indoor Warehousing uses are permitted in the LI zoning district in locations within the AOA 3.

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

<p><b>Northwest</b> (Across 55<sup>th</sup> Place) LI-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>North</b> LI-PAD Office/Warehouse</p>	<p><b>Northeast</b> RS-6 (Across 56<sup>th</sup> Street) Single Family Residential</p>
<p><b>West</b> (Across 55<sup>th</sup> Place) LI-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>Project Site</b> LI-PAD Vacant</p>	<p><b>East</b> PS Electrical Transformer Yard</p>
<p><b>Southwest</b> (Across Thomas Road) PEP Vacant</p>	<p><b>South</b> (Across Thomas Road) PEP-BIZ Vacant</p>	<p><b>Southeast</b> (Across Thomas Road) RS-90 Vacant</p>

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The project site is part of an existing industrial subdivision. The property to the north is an existing office and warehouse building with an associated banquet and conference center. Properties to the west are zoned LI-PAD as part of the industrial subdivision and are currently vacant. To the south across East Thomas Road is vacant land zoned Planned Employment Park with a BIZ overly (PEP-BIZ) for a future office development. To the east is an existing electrical transformer yard on Public and Semi-Public zoned land.

The Proposed Project is compatible with the existing surrounding land uses.

**Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ) Overlay – MZO Article 3, Chapter 21:**

The Proposed Project includes a request for a Bonus Intensity Zone overlay (BIZ) to allow for modifications from certain required development standards of the MZO. Per Chapter 11-21-1 of the MZO, the purpose of the Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ) Overlay District is to provide for variation from the application of residential densities and other development standards to allow greater intensity of development and encourage unique, innovative developments of superior quality.

Table 1 below shows the MZO required standard and the applicant’s proposed BIZ standard.

Table 1: Development Standards

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>MZO Required</b>	<b>BIZ Proposed</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-33-3 (B)(2)(a)(ii)</i> - Landscaping for Non-Single Residence Uses Adjacent to Other Non-Single Residence uses or districts – Width, Non-Group C-O-I Development	15 feet	<b>North: 4 feet</b> <b>East: 3 feet</b> <b>South: 0 feet</b>	As Proposed
<u>Setback of Cross Drive Aisles –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-32-4(A)</i>	50 feet	<b>30 feet</b>	As Proposed

**Required Landscape Yards:**

Per Section 11-33-3(B)(2)(a)(ii) of the MZO, properties that are not part of a group C-O-I development must provide a 15-foot landscape yard except where a cross-access drive aisle occurs within the required landscape yard.

The applicant is requesting a reduction to the landscape yards along the north, east, and southern property lines to accommodate the proposed building footprint and ensure compliance with other development standards.

**Setback of Cross Drive Aisles:**

Per Section 11-32-4(A) of the MZO, parking spaces along main drive aisles connecting directly to a street and drive aisles that cross such main drive aisles shall be set back at least 50 feet from the property line abutting the street.

Because of the size of the property, the applicant is requesting a reduction to the required setback from 50' to 30'. Per the applicant, a 50-foot setback may be achieved if measured from the existing curb rather than the property line. Measured from the property line, the proposed reduction will allow a 30-foot setback.

**BIZ Justification:**

Per Section 11-21-3(B) of the MZO, the City Council may approve modifications to the underlying district standards if the project includes distinctive, superior quality designs and incorporates environmental performance elements as outlined in Section 11-21-3(B)(2).

The Proposed Project will utilize a holistic approach to the building design by using high quality materials that respond to the desert environment via varying colors and textures used. There will also be a visible hierarchy in masses through heights and depths to create a visual impact on the building's size and mass

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

The existing site is currently vacant. The Proposed Project includes development of a single industrial shell building oriented west facing North 55<sup>th</sup> Place. There are three individual suites that feature 400 to 500 square feet of office space and 1,441 to 2,493 square feet of industrial warehousing space. The site plan shows an amenity open space area for employees to the east of the proposed building.

Access to the site is provided along the west side of the property from North 55<sup>th</sup> Place. Per Table 11-32-3.A of the MZO, 17 parking spaces are required for this industrial shell building. The site plan submitted shows 17 parking spaces are provided onsite.

The Proposed Project complies with the review criteria for Site Plan Review in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments**

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

Staff has not received any comments or concerns from surrounding property owners.

**Staff Recommendations:**

Staff finds the Proposed Project is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO and the review criteria for a Bonus Intensity Zone Overlay outlined in Section 11-21-3(B) 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 Ordinance 5402.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review Case No. DRB24-00522.
4. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modifications to the development standards as approved with this BIZ.

Development Standard	Approved
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3 (B)(2)(a)(ii)</i> - Landscaping for Non-Single Residence Uses Adjacent to Other Non-Single Residence uses or districts – Width, Non-Group C-O-I Development	North: 4 feet East: 3 feet South: 0 feet
<u>Setback of Cross Drive Aisles</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-32-4(A)</i>	30 feet

**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit 1 - Presentation
- Exhibit 2 - Ordinance
- Exhibit 3 - Ordinance Map
- Exhibit 4 - Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 5 - Site Plan
- Exhibit 6 - Minutes
- Exhibit 7 - Submittal Documents