



PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

April 8, 2020

CASE No.: **ZON20-00024**

PROJECT NAME: **Cimarron Apartments Rezoning**

Owner's Name:	Rich Van Anda
Applicant's Name:	Marlene Imirzian & Associates Architects
Location of Request:	Within the 100 to 200 block of East 1 st Street (south side) and within the 0 to 100 block of North Hibbert (west side). Located west of Mesa Drive and north of Main Street.
Parcel No(s):	138-38-015A, 138-38-026
Request:	Rezone from T4 Neighborhood Flex (T4NF) to T5 Main Street Flex (T5MSF) within the Form Based Code Regulating Plan. (1.3± acres).
Existing Zoning District:	Downtown Core (DC) / T4NF Transect
Council District:	4
Site Size:	1.3± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Multiple Residential development
Existing Use(s):	Parking for existing apartments; commercial building
Hearing Date(s):	April 8, 2020 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Jennifer Gniffke
Staff Recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

HISTORY

On **February 21, 1984**, the City Council approved rezoning of the site to Multiple Residence-4 (R-4) with Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ) and High-Rise (HRZ) overlays for the development of a 210-unit apartment complex at a density of 44.2 units per acre (Z84-012, Ordinance #1798).

On **August 3, 1987**, the City Council approved an amendment to the zoning code to create new zoning districts with development regulations, a zoning map, and design guidelines for all

properties within Mesa's Town Center (Z87-40, Ordinance #2254), the subject site was designated with Downtown Core (DC) zoning.

On **June 14, 2012**, the City Council approved an amendment to the zoning ordinance adopting the Form Based Code (Ordinance #5099). The subject site was designated with a transect of T4NF as part of the Regulating Plan of the Form Based Code (FBC). Per the approved Regulating Plan, properties within the FBC areas are required to Opt In to the Regulating Plan prior to developing under standards of the FBC.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting to rezone 1.3± acres of property from the Form-Based Code (FBC) Regulating Plan designation of T4NF to T5MSF. The subject site is currently zoned Downtown Core (DC), and its FBC designation is T4NF. Per Chapter 56 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (i.e the Form-Based Code), the FBC designation is optional on a property within the boundaries of the Regulating Plan until a property owner "opts- in" to the transect designation assigned on the property. In such instances, then the standards of the transect designation become the regulating document to guide land uses and development standards on the property. The site currently contains an office use and a parking structure, and the proposed request will provide the property owner the option to redevelop the site consistent with the standards of the T5MSF transect building form and standards.

As discussed above, the property is designated as T4NF. However, the FBC Regulating Plan shows the adjacent properties to the west and south as T5MSF transect. This designation is specifically along the south side of 1st street frontage, from MacDonald Road east to the edge of the subject site (see Figure 1). This request will extend the transect further east to Hibbert. This designation will facilitate applying development standards on the property similar to those of the surrounding properties and help create a uniform urban form.

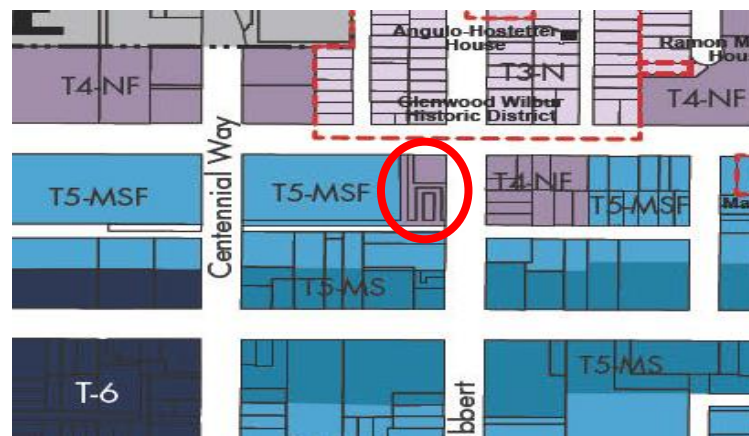


Figure 1

From the provided site plan and staff site visit, the subject property (circled in red in figure 1) currently contains an office building, specifically located on the southwest corner of 1st Street and Hibbert. The remainder of the site is developed with covered parking structures for a multi

residence development (i.e. Cimarron Apartments) located immediately west of the site. According to the application documents, the owner of the existing multi residence development has acquired the subject property and desires to redevelop it as an extension to the existing multi residence development.

The purpose for the request to rezone the property to the T5MSF transect is to harness the well structured form and standards of the FBC, as well as its streamlined review processes and surety. The anticipated expansion includes a new 4-story apartment building with rooftop amenities, structured parking, and a pedestrian-oriented design along Hibbert. The design of the expansion will be reviewed through the Zoning Clearance approval process with the Development Services Department and is not part of this request. Per Section 11-56-4(E) of the MZO, the specific design of the development will be reviewed through the Zoning Clearance process. Per this section of the MZO, the zoning clearance is reviewed administratively.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan character designation on the property is Downtown with a Transit Corridor overlay. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the primary focus of the Downtown character type is for the creation of a pedestrian-oriented, transit rich environment with a lot of activity. The area is also to be continued to be recognized as the governmental, cultural, financial, and entertainment center of the community.

Per the Plan, the goal of the designated Character area is to make it a people-friendly area that is alive with options for housing, employment, shopping, entertainment, and events. The goal of the Transit overlay designation is to encourage development of a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan (pg 7-46), the Downtown and Main Street Transit District which encompasses the subject area is expected to grow by approximately 20,000 residents and 15,000 jobs by 2040. Light rail and other transit services, as well as the increase in arts and cultural resources in the area, will spur the redevelopment activity and provide the opportunity to improve creating a sense of place (p. 7-46 of the General Plan).

In accordance with recommendation of the General Plan, development within the Transit Corridor should follow a more urban pattern with buildings constructed close to front property lines to engage the street and parking spaces located behind or beside buildings. The building design should also include breaks in elevations, and avoid blank building walls. In addition, main entrances of buildings should face the street or public spaces and not parking lots. Further, surrounding street networks should also maintain a pedestrian orientation to foster a walkable environment.

Central Main Street Plan

Per the City's adopted Central Main Street Sub-Area Plan, the subject site is located within the Modern Downtown Core development character area. Per this Plan, the intent of the area is to provide mid- to high-rise developments as an integral component of an office, commercial, cultural, and entertainment core. The area is also envisioned to transform into a highly urban environment.

The proposed request to rezone the site to T5MSF aligns with the goals of the General Plan character designation and the Central Main Street Plan designation. Development standards, particularly required building form and standards allowed under the T5MSF conforms to the goals of Downtown character area designation and the Central Main plan to create a pedestrian focus development with building places closer to the street and orientation directed toward streets instead of parking areas. Redevelopment of the site under the T5MSF will be required to conform to the outlined standards in the FBC.

Zoning District Designations:

The proposed request to rezone the designated transect on the property from T4NF to T5MSF will allow redevelopment of the site to be in greater conformance with the goals of the General Plan and the Central Main Plan.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest (Across 1 st Street) DR-2/T3N Residential	North (Across 1 st Street) T3N Offices & Residential	Northeast (Across Hibbert / 1 st Street) DR-2/T3N Church
West DC/T5MSF Cimarron Apartments	Subject Property DC/T4NF Cimarron Apartments	East (Across Hibbert) DC/T4NF Residential, Office and Church uses
Southwest DC/T5MSF Parking garage; mortuary	South DC/T5MSF Parking garage	Southeast (Across Hibbert) DC/T5MSF Vacant and Office uses

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject site is surrounded by residential, commercial and civic uses. The surrounding neighborhood is rapidly growing; to the west, across Centennial, is the proposed Arizona State University building currently under construction. This development is planned to bring a large student population to the area. There are also several other planned developments in the surrounding area including The Grid, located a block away to the southeast, and the Mesa & Main redevelopment project, located a quarter of a mile to the southeast. The request to rezone the subject property from T4NF to T5MSF will be compatible with the surrounding uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, 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 1 mile of the site. The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on February 27, 2020 in the Cimarron Apartments Community Room. According to the applicant and staff in attendance, no neighbors attended the meeting.

As of the writing this report, staff has not received any correspondence or phone calls regarding the proposed rezoning or site expansion.

Staff Recommendations:

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan and the Central Main Street Area Plan; Therefore, staff recommends approval.

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
2. Completion of a Zoning Clearance process per section 11-56-4(E) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.