

Ajo Al's Mexican Restaurant

2336 E Baseline Road
Mesa, Arizona 85204

SCIP Justification



Pathangay Architects, llc

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SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PERMIT (SCIP)

The purpose of the SCIP is “to establish a review process by which improvement standards required by this Ordinance can be incrementally installed on non-conforming sites when such sites are enlarged; buildings are replaced, extended or have additions constructed; or other site modification developed. The intent is to recognize existing site constraints and work proportionately with the degree of improvement being sought by the applicant to also improve the property based upon the development standards adopted by the Ordinance, and therefore bring non-conforming developments into substantial compliance with this Ordinance through approval of a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP).”

General Plan: The General Plan character area designation on the property is Mixed Use Activity District. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the primary focus of the Mixed-Use Activity District character area designation is a large scale (typically over 25 acres) community and regional activity area that usually has a significant retail commercial component including shopping areas such as malls, power centers, or lifestyle centers that are designed and developed to attract customers from a large radius. The proposed use conforms with the general plan.

Zoning: The property is zoned Limited Commercial (LC). Per Section 11-6-2 of the MZO, the proposed development for an eating establishment with outdoor seating is permitted on the property.

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Requested Modifications:

SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PERMIT (SCIP) SUMMARY			
Standard	Existing Site Condition	Code Requirement	Applicant Proposed
Parking: 11-32-3A		1 space per 75 s.f. for indoor; 1 space per 200 s.f. for outdoor 50 spaces	Allow 37 parking spaces due to landscape islands being added to end of parking rows.
Landscaping: 11-33		Fully detailed landscape plan required with Board of Adjustment, Design Review and Planning & Zoning	A fully detailed concept landscape plan included with the BOA, P&Z and DR submittals
11-33-3(B)2.a.ii Landscape	None Provided	Must provide a 15-foot landscape yard except where a cross- access drive aisle occurs within the required landscape yard.	North Side: +/- 4'-6" Landscape Setback
11-33-5(A)1&2 Foundation Base		15-foot-wide foundation base. A minimum 10-foot-wide foundation base shall be provided, measured from face of building to face of curb along the entire length of the exterior wall adjacent to parking stalls. A minimum 5-foot-wide foundation base shall be provided, measured from face of building to face of curb along the entire length of the exterior wall adjacent to drive aisles	North: adjacent to parking stalls 6-feet. South: with public entrance – 46-feet West: Adjacent to parking stalls - 6 ½ feet East: Adjacent to drive aisle - 8 feet Including planters and planting areas

The proposed project should comply where possible with the intent of the revised Design Guidelines and Site Development Standards. The existing conditions of surrounding properties are taken into account to provide a context setting for the project but may not necessarily set a precedent for parking requirements. The Planning Division staff recommendations are based on how well the project works within the following parameters (each given equal weight):

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1) Fitting within the context of the existing development.

Applicant Justification: The building architecture, materials and colors are primarily based on the existing center. The look of the center is far from Ajo AI's corporate standards and Ajo AI's design team put significant effort into revising and updating the existing building design to complement the MZO. Special attention was given to the entrance, street elevation and the new outdoor dining area. Building materials and colors were varied, pop-outs were added, the parapet height was varied appropriately, and an outdoor patio area was added to the building footprint.

2) Fitting within the context of surrounding development.

Applicant Justification: See Justification above.

3) How well the project works to achieve the intent of the revised standards.

Applicant Justification: The layout of this site is fixed by the existing building, driveways and surrounding businesses. The original development was a restaurant for approximately 20 years. The building footprint, screen wall and parking configuration are fixed and makes it unreasonably difficult to redevelop the site and still increase parking, setbacks and meet the City's current standards. Full compliance with the current MZO would require significant alterations to the site and existing building.

This Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) is necessary in this location to facilitate the redevelopment of the vacant building, while maintaining and working within the existing site conditions and constraints. At the time of initial development in 1997, the landscape, parking requirements, setbacks and the foundation base requirements of the Zoning Code varied or were non-existent, when compared to the development standards now in place under the current Code.

This SCIP request proposes deviations from current Code requirements relating to a small portion of the Parking and Landscape requirements and the Foundation Base.

These reductions as proposed will allow redevelopment of this site while maintaining the centers' existing circulation drive aisles, improvements and uses.

Conclusion

The proposed improvements will result in a development that is compatible with, and not detrimental to, adjacent properties or neighborhoods. The modifications requested along with the proposed improvements, function, design and aesthetics over the existing non-conforming condition, we believe there is sufficient merit for the City to approve this SCIP request.