



April 2, 2025

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Recommendation

Staff finds that the request for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Wireless Communication Facility (WCF) to exceed the maximum height in the Single Residence-43 (RS-43) zoning district meets the requirements of Chapter 35 and the approval criteria outlined in Section 11-70-5(E) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO).

Staff recommends approval with conditions.

Project Overview

Request:

The applicant is requesting a SUP to exceed the height limit in the RS-43 District to allow for the placement of a new mono-eucalyptus Wireless Communication Facility (WCF).

- Maximum Height: 30 feet
- Proposed: 60 feet

Site Context

General Plan:

- The Place Type for the project site is Mixed Residential and the Growth Strategy is Sustain.
- Single-family residential is a principal land use within the Mixed Residential Place Type.
- The Project Site is within the Desert Uplands Planning Sub Area.

Zoning:

- The project site is zoned Single Residence-43 (RS-43).
- A WCF is permitted within the RS-43 District in compliance with MZO Section 11-35-5.

Surrounding Zoning & Use Activity:

The proposed WCF is compatible with surrounding land uses, which include single-family residential and vacant land.

Northwest RS-15 (Across Brown Rd.) Residential	North RS-9 (Across Brown Rd.) Vacant	Northeast RS-9 (Across Brown Rd.) Vacant
West RSL-2.5 Residential	Project Site RS-43 Place of Worship	East RS-6 Residential
Southwest RS-43 Vacant (Flood Control District)	South RS-43 Vacant (Flood Control District)	Southeast RS-43 Vacant (Flood Control District)

Site History:

- **May 5, 1998:** City Council approved the annexation of 837± acres, including the Project Site, into the City of Mesa (Case No. A97-007; Ordinance No. 3464).
- **January 19, 1999:** City Council established zoning districts on recently annexed land in the City of Mesa, including Single-Family Residence-43 (R1-43) (equivalent to Single Residence-43 [RS-43]) zoning on the Project Site (Case No. Z98-117; Ordinance No. 3589).
- **August 8, 2006:** The Board of Adjustment approved a SUP to allow a 55-foot Commercial Communication Tower (CCT) [equivalent to Wireless Communication Facility (WCF)] with a monocross design (Case No. BA06-035).

Project/Request Details

Site Plan:

- **Access:** The proposed mono-eucalyptus, as well as the existing WCF equipment facility, which will be reused for the new mono-eucalyptus tower, are situated south of the existing Grace Church and are accessed by a new 20-foot-wide access and utility easement that runs along the western edge of the existing drive aisle.
- **Screening:** Per MZO Section 11-35-5(H), sites with antennas, antenna support structures, and related equipment shall be landscaped with a buffer of plant materials that effectively screens views of the base of support structures and equipment facilities from adjacent residential property or from any public right-of-way. The existing WCF equipment facility and the proposed mono-eucalyptus tower will be screened by the church building and by mature landscaping that exists on the site, shielding them from view of adjacent residential properties and from the public right-of-way.
- **WCF Design:** Per MZO Section 11-35-5(F), antennas, antenna support structures, and related equipment must be located, and designed to blend with the existing natural or built surroundings. The Desert Uplands Sub-area contains a list of permissible plant material that are native to the Sonoran Desert. The applicant worked with Planning Staff to select a design that would best blend in with the surroundings. The applicant is proposing a mono-eucalyptus stealth design – see the attached Exhibit 6. The design will use broadleaf foliage

and a multiple-toned, textured bark color. These colors were chosen to match existing vegetation in the area and to help camouflage the site more. Overall, the proposed WCF will be designed to blend with the surroundings.

- **WCF Preferred Locations:** Per Section 11-35-5(A), camouflaged stealth designs are a preferred method for WCF's in Residential Districts. The proposed location of the new mono-eucalyptus tower is approximately 75-feet east of the existing 55-foot mono-cross tower. The existing mono-cross tower equipment will be removed and decommissioned. Additionally, the existing equipment compound will be reused to serve the new mono-eucalyptus tower.

Approval Criteria - Section 11-70-5:

- **Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies:**

The proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the Mesa 2050 General Plan as it helps support strong connected neighborhoods. Enhancing the communication services in the area allows residents in the vicinity to stay connected with the best available services for daily life.

- **The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies:**

The proposed project meets the MZO separation requirement from adjacent residential uses and incorporates a stealth design that matches the color palette of the existing mature landscaping located in the rear of the lot and plantings in the nearby vicinity and Desert Uplands Planning Sub-Area. The proposed project is consistent with the Mesa 2050 General Plan.

- **The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City:**

The proposed WCF will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City. The proposed project meets the separation requirement from adjacent residential land uses and incorporates design elements that match the color palette of the existing mature landscaping located in the rear of the lot and planted in the nearby vicinity.

- **Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project:**

Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure exist and are available at the existing site and will serve the new facility.

Citizen Participation

The applicant conducted a Citizen Participation process, notifying surrounding property owners, HOAs, and registered neighbors.

Required Notification:

- Property owners within 500-feet, HOAs within ½ mile, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the project site were notified of the public hearing.
- Staff received no feedback.

Conditions of Approval

Staff recommends **approval** of the Special Use Permit (SUP), subject to the following conditions:

1. Compliance with all final documents submitted with this application.
2. All antennas, mounting hardware, and equipment on the existing mono-cross sculpture shall be removed and decommissioned.
3. All antennas, mounting hardware, and equipment near the antennas shall be painted to match the mono-eucalyptus design.
4. A permanent, weather-proof identification sign, approximately 16-inches by 32-inches in size on the building identifying the facility operator(s), operator's address, and 24-hour telephone number for reaching the operator or an agent authorized to provide 24/7 response to emergency situations.
5. Maintenance of the facility shall conform to the requirements of Mesa Zoning Ordinance Section 11-35-5(l).
6. The operator of the WCF shall respond to and complete all identified maintenance and repair of the facility within 30-days of receiving written notice of the problem.
7. No later than 90 days from the date the use is discontinued or from the cessation of operations, the owner of the abandoned tower or the owner of the property on which the facilities are sited shall remove all equipment and improvements associated with the use and shall restore the site to its original condition as shown on the plans submitted with the original approved application. The owner or the owner's agent shall provide written verification of the removal of the wireless communications facility within 30 days of the date the removal is completed.
8. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Department regarding the issuance of building permits.
9. Future modifications must be approved by the Planning Director to ensure the modifications remain in compliance with the concealment elements of the mono-eucalyptus or facility and the standards of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance as amended.
10. Compliance with all applicable City development codes and regulations.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2 – Project Narrative

Exhibit 3 – Site Plan

Exhibit 4 – Elevations

Exhibit 5 - Renderings

Exhibit 6 – Stealth Package

Exhibit 7 – Coverage Map

Exhibit 8 – Power Point Presentation