



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

City Council Hearing

December 15, 2021

CASE No.: ZON21-00730	PROJECT NAME: Project Cork
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Owner's Name:	Tucker Properties, LTD.
Applicant's Name:	Josh Tracy, Ryan Companies
Location of Request:	Within the 10300 to 10600 blocks of East Pecos Road (north side) and within the 6400 to 6800 blocks of South 222nd Street (west side). Located west of Signal Butte Road on the north side of Pecos Road.
Parcel No(s):	304-34-015E
Request:	Rezone from Agriculture (AG) to Light Industrial (LI); Site Plan Review and Special Use Permits. This request will allow for industrial development.
Existing Zoning District:	Maricopa County Single Residence 43 (RU-43)
Council District:	6
Site Size:	71.3± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Industrial
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
Hearing Date(s):	October 27, 2021 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Evan Balmer
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

HISTORY

The subject site is currently under the land use jurisdiction of Maricopa County. However, the applicant has applied to annex the property into the City of Mesa (Case# ANX21-00728). The planned annexation, if approved, will assign a zoning designation of Agriculture (AG) to the property, which is comparable to the existing Maricopa County zoning designation of Single Residence 43 (RU-43). The application for the annexation is planned to be considered on the same City Council agenda as the subject request.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The subject property is currently vacant and located on the northwest corner of Pecos Road and 222nd Street. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from Agricultural (AG) to Light Industrial (LI), Site Plan Review for an initial site plan and two Special Use Permits to allow for the development of an industrial building in the LI zoning district. The proposed site plan shows the development of a 701,572 square foot building on the subject site. According to the applicant, the building will be used for warehousing and office uses. Per Section 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), warehousing and office uses are allowed in the LI zoning district.

Approval of the requested Special Use Permits (SUP) would allow: (1) A reduction in the number of required parking spaces from 808 to 502 spaces; and (2) A maximum building height of 56 feet, where 40 feet is allowed in the LI district. Section 11-32-6 of the MZO allows for a reduction in the required number of parking spaces with the review and approval of a Special Use Permit. In addition, Section 11-30-3 of the MZO also allows the Planning and Zoning Board to approve increases in height for proposed developments through a Special Use Permit when located in an Airfield Overlay District.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character Area designation on the property is Employment. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Employment districts typically have minimal connection to the surrounding area and are used for employment-type uses such as manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. Per the Plan, one of the goals for Employment districts is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high-quality settings. The subject proposal for an industrial building is a typical land use in the employment character area and will help further the goal of the General Plan Character Area.

Gateway Strategic Development Plan:

The subject property is also located within the Logistics and Commerce District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan (GSDP). Per the GSDP, heavy industrial, light industrial, business park, and commercial uses will be predominant within this district. Desired uses include manufacturing facilities, large warehouses, distribution facilities, planned employment parks, and similar uses. This district should provide a high-quality employment environment that is compatible with increasing over-flight activities associated with Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The proposed development meets the goals and intent of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The proposed development of an industrial building is consistent with the goals of the Employment Character Area designation, as well as the intentions of the Logistics and Commerce District of the Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

Zoning District Designations:

The subject property is currently zoned Agricultural (AG). The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to Light Industrial (LI). Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, the proposed development of the property for warehousing and office uses are permitted in 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 City of Mesa 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 11-7-2 of the MZO, the AOA 3 allows industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse uses.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The proposed site plan shows development of a 701,572 square foot industrial building on the property. Based on the site plan submitted, there will be four access points to the site, two on Merrill Road, one on Pecos Road and one on 222nd Street. Employee and visitor parking will be located along Pecos Road. Truck docks and trailer parking will be located along the west, north and east elevations of the building. Per the submitted plans, all the proposed truck docks and loading areas within the development will be screened from public view by an 8-foot opaque screen wall. The site plan also shows pedestrian walkway connectivity between the building and Pecos Road, as well as within the parking areas of the development. The design of the pedestrian walkway connectivity conforms to the requirements for such design outlined in Section 11-7-3(B)(1)(d) of the MZO.

Overall, the proposed site plan, with the accompanying Special Use Permits described below, conforms to the requirements of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance including the review criteria for Site Plan Review in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

Special Use Permit:

Section 11-66-2(C)(2) of the MZO allows the Planning and Zoning Board to hear and take action on a SUP when requested in conjunction with another request requiring action or recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board.

Building Height:

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to exceed the maximum building height permitted in the LI and Airfield Overlay Districts. Per Section 11-30-3(B), a Special Use Permit is required to exceed the maximum height of the base zoning district when within an Airfield Overlay District.

Per Table 11-7-3 of the MZO, the maximum height allowed in the LI zoning district is 40 feet. The applicant is requesting a 56-foot maximum building height to the top of the parapet. According to the applicant, the increased building height is needed to accommodate the type of operations planned for the building.

Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, requirements for granting an SUP include: (1) Demonstrating that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and other applicable City plans and/or policies; (2) Demonstrating that the location, size, design, and

operating characteristics of the project are consistent with the purpose of the zoning district designation on the property; (3) Ensuring the project will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas; and (4) Demonstrate there is adequate public services and infrastructure to support the development.

The proposed development size, shape, and characteristics conform to the goals and purposes of the LI zoning district designation on the property and the General Plan Employment character area designation. Allowing the increase in height of the proposed building to 56-feet will not be detrimental to the surrounding properties. In addition, the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the subject request and expressed no concerns with the proposed building height.

Parking Reduction:

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, 808 parking spaces are required for the proposed use. The applicant is requesting to reduce the number of parking spaces from 808 to 502, a 306-space reduction. Section 11-32-6 of the MZO establishes criteria for approval of a SUP to allow the reduction in the number of parking spaces. Below is a summary of the criteria for the SUP and findings:

Parking Reduction Required Findings (MZO Section 11-32-6)	Findings
1. Special conditions – including but not limited to the nature of the proposed operation; proximity to frequent transit service; transportation characteristics of persons residing, working or visiting the site exist that will reduce the parking demand at the site.	The proposed use on the property is warehousing and office. Based on the submittal documents, the end user has extensive experience in operating this type of building and has made the determination that the parking proposed in this submittal is the minimum necessary to safely operate this facility. Based on the information provided, 502 parking spaces will provide enough parking for the proposed operations.
2. The use will adequately be served by the proposed parking.	The proposed reduction in the number of parking spaces is consistent with the number of parking spaces provided by similar industrial buildings. Based on the end user’s knowledge of other sites, combining the transit/drop off locations with the amount of parking proposed in this submittal, the use will be adequately served by the proposed parking.
3. Parking demand generated by the project will not exceed the capacity of or have a detrimental impact on the supply of on street parking in the surrounding area.	The parking demand is not anticipated to exceed the capacity provided or impact the supply of on-street parking in the area based on previous phases of the development.

Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, the granting of an SUP must also advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and not be detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the city. As previously stated, the proposed development of a warehousing and office

building is consistent with the goals of the General Plan by providing high-intensity employment uses compatible with Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. According to the applicant, the parking provided is sufficient to meet the needs of the end user.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board is scheduled to review the subject request on October 12th, 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>Northwest (Across State Route 24 Freeway) PC Vacant</p>	<p>North (Across State Route 24 Freeway) PC Vacant</p>	<p>Northeast (Across State Route 24 Freeway) Maricopa County RU-43 Vacant</p>
<p>West Maricopa County RU-43 Vacant</p>	<p>Subject Property AG Vacant</p>	<p>East Maricopa County RU-43 Vacant</p>
<p>Southwest (Across Pecos Road) GI Vacant</p>	<p>South (Across Pecos Road) GI Vacant</p>	<p>Southeast (Across Pecos Road) GI Vacant</p>

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject site is currently vacant. To the north of the site is the State Route 24 Freeway. To the east of the site is vacant property zoned RU-43 in Maricopa County. South of the site is vacant property zoned General Industrial (GI) and to the west of the site is an industrial office building zoned LI and vacant property zoned RU-43 in Maricopa County. The proposed industrial development is compatible with the surrounding development and land uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process which included mailing letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site as well as HOAs within ½ mile or registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. As of the writing of this report, neither the applicant nor staff has received one email from an adjacent property owner in support of the proposal. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on October 27, 2021.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the application received and the proceeding analysis, staff finds the subject request is consistent with the General Plan, the Gateway Strategic Development Plan, the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO, and meets the review criteria for a Special Use Permit outlined in Section 11-32-6 and Section 11-70-5 of the MZO; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
4. Dedicate the right-of-way and easements required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, or at the time of the City's request for dedication whichever comes first.
5. 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 Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prior to the issuance of a building permit.
 - b. Due to the proximity to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway 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.
 - c. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within one mile of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1-Staff Report

Exhibit 2-Vicinity Map

Exhibit 3-Application Information

3.1 Project Narrative

3.2 Site Plan

3.3 Landscape Plan

3.4 Elevations

Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 5-Citizen Participation Report