



PLANNING DIVISION  
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

October 9, 2024

CASE No.: <b>ZON24-00157</b>	PROJECT NAME: <b>The View at 55<sup>th</sup> Pl</b>
Owner's Name:	Larry Potthoff
Applicant's Name:	Larry Potthoff
Location of Request:	Within the 5500 block of East Redmont Circle (north side) and within the 3600 block of North 55th Place (east side). Located north of Thomas Road and east of Higley Road.
Parcel No(s):	141-38-024, 141-38-025, 141-38-026
Nature of Request:	Site Plan Review and a Special Use Permit (SUP). This request will allow for a Banquet and Conference Center.
Zoning District:	Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD)
Council District:	5
Site Size:	2.4± acres
Existing Use:	Office/Warehouse
Hearing Date(s):	October 9, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Josh Grandlienard, AICP, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

**HISTORY**

On **January 23, 1983**, the City Council annexed 2,335± acres, including the project site, into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 1682).

On **January 23, 1983**, the City Council established R1-90 zoning (equivalent to current Single Residence-90 [RS-90]) for 185± acres, including the project site (Case No. Z82-033; Ordinance No. 1618).

On **March 3, 2003**, the City Council rezoned the subject property from R1-90 to M-1-PAD (equivalent to current Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay [LI-PAD]) to allow for the development of an industrial park (Case No. Z03-003, Ordinance No. 4050).

On **August 16, 2017**, the Planning and Zoning Board approved a site plan to allow for the development of an office/warehouse on the project site, which exists on site today (Case No. Z17-042).

On **August 28, 2017**, City Council approved a modification to the existing PAD overlay to reduce the side and rear yard setbacks within the existing subdivision (Case No. Z17-028; Ordinance No. 5402).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background:**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow for a Banquet and Conference Center in the Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay (LI-PAD) District. The existing structure and site plan for Lots 5 and 6 was approved with case Z17-042 to allow for the office/warehouse use which exists today. The office and warehouse use will remain, but the building will be utilized in their off hours as a Banquet and Conference center. The applicant is also requesting Site Plan Review specifically for Lot 4, which is the outdoor gathering space located north of the existing building to be utilized during events (Proposed Project).

Per Table 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), a Banquet and Conference Center is permitted in the LI district with the approval of a SUP (per Ordinance No. 5861, which was approved by City Council on July 8, 2024, and became effective on August 9, 2024). Per the narrative, the proposed project includes an event venue for weddings, anniversaries, and other celebrations that will be in an existing structure that will also be used for office/warehouse uses when there are no events.

### **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.

The proposed use of a Banquet and Conference Center within an existing office warehouse use is consistent with the Employment District. Overall, the request conforms to the goals of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and meets the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1).

### **Falcon Field Sub Area Plan:**

The project site is also within the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan. The vision statement is that the Falcon Field Sub-Area is 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 the 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 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 subject property is currently zoned LI-PAD, and the proposed use of a Banquet and Conference Center is allowed with the approval of a Special Use Permit.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the site is located within the Airfield Overlay District, specifically within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3). The location of the property within the Airfield Overlay is due to its proximity to the Falcon Field Airport. Per Sections 11-19-4(C) and 11-7-2 of the MZO, Banquet and Conference Center uses are permitted in the LI zoning district in locations within the AOA 3.

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

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

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

Properties to the north are zoned RS-90, consistent with their original zoning when annexed into the City of Mesa and are currently vacant. An existing single residence neighborhood is located east of the project site on parcels zoned RS-6-PAD. Properties to the south and west are also located within the Red Mountain Commerce Center and are currently vacant.

Overall, the proposed development is compatible with existing development in the surrounding area.

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

The site currently consists of an existing 29,000± square foot office/warehouse building that operates during standard business hours. The applicant is proposing to utilize the office/warehouse structure for a Banquet and Conference Center outside of standard business hours. Additionally, the proposed site plan shows the development of an outdoor amenity space

to be utilized for the proposed Banquet and Conference Center located on Lot 4 north of the project site. The proposed amenity space is approximately 6,600 square feet in area and includes a grass lawn area for seating, as well as a portion that is covered by concrete pavers to allow for wedding ceremonies to occur in this area as a part of the Banquet and Conference Center use.

Per Table 11-32-3.A of the MZO, the minimum parking for the proposed use is one space per 75 square feet used for public assembly. Per the submitted site plan (see Exhibit 4), the proposed banquet and conference center requires a total of 152 parking spaces, and 32 additional parking spaces are required for the existing office/warehouse use for a total of 184 parking spaces required if both uses were operational at the same time. The applicant has provided a narrative outlining the plan of operations for the proposed banquets center use, which states that both uses will never occur at the same time. The existing approved site plan for Lots 5 and 6 shows 59 parking spaces on site for the existing office/warehouse building. The applicant has provided a shared parking agreement with the property located at 5515 North 55<sup>th</sup> Place, which is located approximately 300 feet west of the subject property, to accommodate parking demand during the peak parking use of the proposed banquet center. Access to the site is provided via two existing driveways into the subject property from 55<sup>th</sup> Place.

The landscape plan shows additional plantings along the north, south and west property lines of the north parcel, as well as on site around the amenity area.

Overall, the proposed site plan complies with the review criteria for Site Plan Review in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

**Mesa Zoning Ordinance Requirements and Regulations: Special Use Permit – Banquet and Conference Center Use**

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.

1. 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 is consistent with the policies of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. Per Chapter 5 of the General Plan, to grow and maintain a diverse job base, Mesa must continue to develop and maintain Economic Activity Areas that provide busy, vibrant places which draw people and businesses together. The Falcon Field Sub-Area has been identified as one of the major employment activity areas. Per the narrative, not only will the proposed banquet and conference center provide stable and diverse jobs, but it will also bring tourism which will help to revitalize the area. Chapter 5 of the General Plan recognizes tourism as an industry of opportunity in Mesa.**

***The proposal meets this criterion.***

2. 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 any other applicable City plan or policies;

**The purpose of the LI district is to provide areas for limited manufacturing and processing, wholesaling, research, warehousing, and distribution activities take place within enclosed buildings, with restricted accessory outdoor storage as needed to support the primary uses. This district also provides for a full range of commercial activities, generally on a limited scale, including high-impact commercial uses, outdoor display and outdoor sale. The operating characteristics of a banquet and conference center will contribute to the full range of commercial activities at the Red Mountain Commerce Center. Per Chapter 5 of the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan, a proper balance of aviation and non-aviation businesses is key to the long-term prosperity of the Falcon Field Sub-Area, therefore, the location of the proposed use conforms with the policies of the sub-area plan.**

***The proposal meets this criterion.***

3. 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; and

**Planning staff reviewed the request and found that the Proposed Project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor any neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City. The applicant has included a plan of operation, which includes the contact information for the operator of the wedding venue. Should any concerns arise from neighboring property owners, the operator will be able to quickly address any concerns.**

***The proposal meets this criterion.***

4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

**This proposed project will use the existing structure on the project site as well as the existing public services, public facilities, and public infrastructure.**

***The proposal meets this criterion.***

### **Zoning Ordinance, Section 11-70-5 – Special Use Permit – Parking Reduction**

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. The applicant seeks an SUP to allow for a parking reduction and to approve alternative compliance with parking requirements through a shared parking agreement.

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, 182 parking spaces are required for the proposed development. The applicant is requesting to reduce the number of parking spaces from 182 to 114, a 68-space reduction. Currently, there are 59 existing spaces with the remaining 55 spaces provided through a shared parking agreement within 300 feet of the front door of the venue. As a part of the overall operations of the shared parking, when the venue has a larger capacity event, with a max of 200 attendees, the applicant provides a valet service with a golf cart to transport visitors to and from the shared parking area. If necessary, venue staff does double park the vehicles to maximize parking and allows for the valet staff to maximize the space. Based on the information provided, events rarely reach this 200 attendee limit, but the applicant has planned accordingly if a maximum event occurs.

The provided signed shared parking agreement is with the property owner of Lots 10 and 11 of the Red Mountain Commerce Park, whose office hours are outside the operations of the intended Banquet and Conference Center. The parking lot for Lots 10 and 11 are able to provide enough parking for 55 spaces with the proposed valet service. According to the provided shared parking agreement and overall operations plan, staff has no concerns with the request for reduced parking.

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 parking demand at this site.	Per the MZO, the required parking for an Banquet and Conference Center use, requires a total of 182 parking spaces, where the applicant is proposing 114 due to the prevalence of carpooling and ride share opportunities for the proposed use in addition to the shared parking agreement.
2. The use will adequately be served by the proposed parking.	The applicant provided an operations plan that demonstrates the utilization of the shared parking to reduce the need to provide for parking directly on site and has provided a shared parking agreement to facilitate this parking reduction.
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.	According to the applicant, the parking demand is not anticipated to exceed the capacity provided or impact the supply of on-street parking in the area.

The applicant is requesting to reduce the required parking from 182 spaces to 144 parking spaces required. Per Table 11-32-3A of the MZO, for warehousing and storage uses a minimum ratio of 1 parking space per 900 square feet of building area, which would require 32 parking spaces for

the existing use and 152 parking spaces for the proposed banquet and conference center. Per Section 11-32-6 of the MZO, a Special Use Permit is required for any parking reduction.

Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, the Planning and Zoning Board, when making a decision on a SUP, shall find that the project conforms to the following criteria:

1. 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 proposal complies with the Employment Character Area designation of the Mesa 2040 General Plan by developing the site with an office/warehouse, and banquet and conference center use.**

*The proposal complies with this criteria.*

2. 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 any other applicable City plan or policies;

**The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed banquet and conference center use aligns with the purpose of the Light Industrial zone outlined within the Mesa Zoning Ordinance and comply with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, and the Employment Character Area.**

*The proposal complies with this criteria.*

3. 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; and

**The Proposed Project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, which include properties zoned LI-PAD, RS-6-PAD and RS-90, nor will the Proposed Project be injurious or detrimental to the surrounding neighborhoods or the general welfare of the City.**

*The proposal complies with this criteria.*

4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

**The addition of the site does not add any additional burden to the existing public services, public facilities, nor public infrastructure. The public infrastructure is located near the site and will adequately serve the site and proposed use with the proposed off-site improvements.**

*The request complies with this criterion.*

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

As part of the completed Citizen Participation Process, the applicant mailed notification letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, Homeowner Associations (HOAs) within ½ mile of the site, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site.

The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on February 21, 2024, where eight members of the public attended to ask general questions about the operations of the proposed Banquet and Conference Center. At time of the meeting, no neighbors voiced any concerns about the proposed use.

As of the writing of this report, staff and the applicant has not received any comments or concerns from surrounding property owners outside of the neighborhood meeting. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on October 9, 2024.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff finds the subject request 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 approval of a SUP outlined in Sections 11-70-5 and 11-32-6(A) of the MZO.

Staff recommends approval with the following **Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the final site plan and landscape plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all City Development Codes and regulations.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Case No. Z17-042.
4. Record the shared parking agreement at the Maricopa County Recorder's Office and comply with the terms of the shared parking agreement.
5. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the banquet and conference center use, recordation of a lot combination for Lots 4, 5 and 6 of the Red Mountain Commerce Center subdivision.

**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 2 – Staff Report
- Exhibit 3 – Narrative
- Exhibit 4 – Site Plan
- Exhibit 5 – Landscape Plan
- Exhibit 6 – Shared Parking Agreement
- Exhibit 7 – Citizen Participation Plan
- Exhibit 8 – Citizen Participation Report
- Exhibit 9 – PowerPoint Presentation