

PROJECT NARRATIVE FOR BIZ OVERLAY REQUEST

RMDC DANCE STUDIO

11245 E Warner Rd, Mesa, AZ 85212 (APN# 304-33-990D)

Application No.: ZON25-00326

Zoning District: LC - Limited Commercial

Request: BIZ Overlay per MZO §11-21-3

INTRODUCTION

Red Rock Design Build (“Applicant”) submits this narrative in support of a Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ) Overlay request for the RMDC Dance Studio project located at 11245 E Warner Road, Mesa, Arizona. The BIZ Overlay is requested to allow limited modifications to development standards within the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district. These modifications are necessary due to the parcel’s unique constraints, including a prior land dedication for a City of Mesa municipal well that resulted in an irregular parcel configuration and access obligations. The intent of the request is to enable the construction of a high-quality, two-story commercial building containing a community dance studio with four supporting tenant suites, while maintaining compatibility with adjacent residential uses and enhancing the Warner Road corridor.

SITE

The project site is located on the southeast corner of East Warner Road and S Mountain Road in east Mesa. The property lies within the LC zoning district and is directly contiguous with a dedicated City of Mesa municipal well site at its southeast corner. The parcel is accessed from Warner Road. It is surrounded by residential subdivisions to the east and north, additional LC-zoned commercial property to the west, and a school to the south.

The site is designated as Neighborhood Center under the Mesa 2050 General Plan and is located within the Evolve Growth Strategy area, both of which support neighborhood-serving commercial uses and high-quality architectural development.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The subject property was originally part of a larger parent parcel. A portion of that parcel was previously dedicated to the City of Mesa for the construction and operation of a municipal well. This dedication:

- Established a new interior property line at the well perimeter
- Reduced the developable area
- Resulted in an irregularly shaped development site
- Created ongoing access obligations to the well site

The site currently contains no structures. Existing features include a perimeter block wall along the eastern residential subdivision boundary, block wall along the southern boundary, and the municipal well facility abutting the southeast corner. Buffering from residential is provided with the east adjacent off-site retention basin. The parcel has direct frontage along Warner Road and internal vehicular circulation is constrained by required well access and setbacks. Improvements along Warner Road include curb and gutter, sidewalk, street light, and landscaping. The west side of the property has a paved shared access drive.

RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING PROPERTIES

The subject parcel is surrounded by the following uses:

- **North:** RS-7 Single-Family Residential located across Warner Road
- **East:** RS-6 Single-Family Residential, separated by a landscaped retention basin and decorative subdivision wall
- **South:** School within PAD zoning
- **West:** LC-zoned commercial property

Compatibility is achieved through:

- Multiple layers of physical separation (increased building setbacks, roadway, basin, walls)
- Enhanced landscape techniques and foundation base treatments as described in the Alternative Landscape Plan
- Shaded pedestrian routes and human-scaled architectural elements

The project's stepped massing, materials, and circulation design support a compatible transition to surrounding residential neighborhoods.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

The site's Neighborhood Center designation supports small-scale commercial, service, and community uses intended to serve the surrounding residential areas. The Evolve Growth Strategy encourages reinvestment in developing areas through context-sensitive design, improved pedestrian experiences, and high-quality architecture.

The proposed dance studio and neighborhood-serving tenant spaces align with both designations by:

- Providing active commercial use within walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods
- Reinforcing character and identity along Warner Road
- Delivering a high-quality, pedestrian-oriented site plan
- Maintaining scale and intensity compatible with adjacent residential areas

The underlying LC zoning remains appropriate for the requested use and overlays.

DESCRIPTION

The project consists of a two-story, 15,344-square-foot (gross floor area) commercial building featuring the Dance Studio on the ground and second floor and four tenant suites on the ground floor. Project features include:

- Multiple dance studios with flexible instructional and performance spaces
- Administrative and support functions
- Four leasable suites for neighborhood-serving retail or service uses
- Shaded pedestrian walkways and extended canopy elements
- Architectural materials including brick, stucco, glazing, concrete, and metal accents

- Foundation base landscaping incorporating enhanced planting, plazas, and a shaded patio
- Parking and circulation optimized and maximized while still providing improved access routes

BONUS INTENSITY ZONE OVERLAY DISTRICT CRITERIA

1. The project meets the intent of the BIZ Overlay by providing Superior Design in conformance with MZO §11-21-3(B). The project demonstrates Superior Design through these criteria:

a. Holistic Approach to Project Design

The RMDC Dance Studio is designed as a cohesive architectural composition that integrates building massing, materials, and façade rhythm across the site. The two-story dance studio and single-story tenant spaces are unified through consistent parapet lines, glazing patterns, tower elements, and shade canopies. A coordinated palette of brick, stucco, metal accents, and high-performance glazing creates a contemporary and visually consistent building.

Along Warner Road, architectural rhythm, enhanced landscape frontage, and the southeast tower and plaza feature establish a clear and inviting street presence. Architectural elements, pedestrian spaces, and landscaping are designed together as an integrated system.

b. Responsive Approach to Site and Sub-Area Context

The project responds to its surroundings by orienting primary entrances and pedestrian activity toward the west, facing adjacent LC-zoned commercial property rather than nearby residential neighborhoods. This places customer activity within the interior of the site and away from residential edges. The main dance studio entrance is located deep within the site to further reduce visibility and activity near homes.

Existing subdivision walls, increased building setbacks, an existing off site retention basin to the east, an added retention basin to the south, and expanded landscape and foundation base areas along the east and south edges provide effective buffering. Building placement, circulation, and pedestrian elements are focused inward to maintain compatibility with surrounding residential uses.

c. Sustainable Design

The project incorporates practical sustainability strategies that improve performance and user comfort. Continuous shade canopies reduce solar heat gain, improve pedestrian comfort, and lower cooling demand. Shaded walkways and landscaped areas create a more comfortable on-site microclimate.

Pavement areas are minimized and broken up through landscaping and shaded foundation zones to reduce heat-island effects. High-efficiency glazing balances daylight with thermal performance to improve interior comfort and reduce energy use.

d. Exceeds Standards

The project exceeds standard LC district requirements through enhanced architectural, landscape, and site design. While limited foundation base averaging is required along portions of the east and south elevations due to site constraints, these areas are offset by expanded foundation base depths of approximately 25 to 33 feet along the north and west sides of the building. These areas support enhanced landscaping, shade trees, pedestrian walkways, and seating.

Along Warner Road, expanded landscape depths and consistent façade articulation strengthen the corridor's visual character. The southeast tower element is supported by an enlarged pedestrian

plaza that exceeds standard dimensional requirements. Material quality and façade articulation—including varied parapet heights, brick and stucco banding, metal accents, glazing, and shade canopies—further elevate the project above baseline commercial standards.

e. Great Public Spaces

The project includes well-designed public spaces that enhance the pedestrian experience. A shaded patio along the west side of the building provides a comfortable outdoor gathering area serving both the dance studio and adjacent tenant suites. Extended canopies provide year-round shade and weather protection.

An expanded pedestrian plaza at the southeast tower feature provides a clear and welcoming entry point near Warner Road, with generous circulation space, shade, and visibility.

2. In addition to providing Superior Design, the project meets the intent of the BIZ Overlay by addressing applicable environmental performance standards in conformance with MZO §11-21-3(B). The project demonstrates compliance with these standards through the following criteria:

The project addresses environmental performance standards outlined in MZO §11-21-3(B)(2)(a)(ii) through its location on an infill site within an area served by existing public utilities, roadway infrastructure, and community services. While limited utility and site infrastructure improvements are required to support the proposed development, the project is located on a previously disturbed commercial parcel and does not impact environmentally sensitive or undeveloped land, thereby supporting efficient use and extension of existing infrastructure.

Site and building design further support environmental performance (referenced under MZO §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)). Bicycle parking is provided in excess of code requirements and is located near building entrances with direct pedestrian access (referenced under §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(i)). A dedicated carpool parking space is provided on the east side of the building to support shared vehicle use and alternative transportation options (referenced under MZO §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(iii)). Parking is provided in accordance with an approved City parking service as documented in the Requested BIZ Modifications table, allowing a modified parking ratio consistent with project needs while maintaining safe circulation and site functionality (referenced under §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(iv)). The project incorporates shade canopies, expanded landscape coverage, building orientation, and high-performance glazing to reduce solar heat gain, improve pedestrian comfort, and enhance energy efficiency (referenced under §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(v) and (vi)).

When considered together with the project’s Superior Design features, these environmental performance strategies satisfy the combined criteria of MZO §11-21-3(B)(1) and (2) and support approval of the requested BIZ Overlay modifications.

DESIGN STANDARDS EXCEEDED

CATEGORY	CODE SECTION	STANDARD REQUIREMENT	PROJECT CONDITION	STATUS
West Building Setback	§11-6-3	0' allowed (LC adjacency)	~48' provided	Exceeds
South Building Setback	§11-6-3	50' minimum	~96' provided	Exceeds
South Building Setback (adjacent to municipal well parcel)	§11-6-3	0' allowed (LC adjacency)	~31' provided	Exceeds
East Building Setback	§11-6-3	50' minimum	~68' provided	Exceeds
North Landscape Setback (Warner Rd)	§11-6-3; §11-33-3	15' minimum	~25' provided	Exceeds

CATEGORY	CODE SECTION	STANDARD REQUIREMENT	PROJECT CONDITION	STATUS
Foundation Base – West Elevation	§11-33-5	15' base required at entry façade	~2,100 SF required → ~3,347 SF provided	Exceeds
Foundation Base – North Elevation	§11-33-5	15' base on walls visible from ROW	~473 SF required → ~2,836 SF provided	Exceeds
Foundation Base – East Elevation	§11-33-5	15' base at public entrance	~2,100 SF required → ~2,440 SF provided	Exceeds
Landscape Coverage	Ch. 11-33	LC lots typically provide ~15% landscape area	~27% landscape provided	Exceeds
Warner Frontage Landscaping	§11-33	Standard arterial frontage requires typical LC landscape depth	Depths of 20'-35' provided	Exceeds
Accessible Parking	ADA/IBC	2 accessible spaces	3 provided	Exceeds
Bicycle Parking	MZO	5 spaces	8 spaces	Exceeds
Plaza / Pedestrian Area	BIZ Intent	Pedestrian amenities encouraged	Enhanced tower plaza provided	Exceeds
Shaded Patio	BIZ Intent	Outdoor shade encouraged	Shaded patio on west elevation	Exceeds
Architectural Quality	BIZ Intent	Baseline LC articulation	Elevated articulation + materials	Exceeds
Heat Mitigation / Shading	BIZ Intent	Shade encouraged	Continuous canopies + glazing	Exceeds
Neighborhood Compatibility	BIZ Intent	Mitigate impact to RS	Activity oriented westward	Exceeds

REQUESTED BIZ MODIFICATIONS

#	MZO Code Section	Standard Requirement	Requested Modification	Justification
1	§11-33-3 Landscape Yard East (Adjacent to RS-6)	20' minimum landscape yard required adjacent to RS zoning	Reduce landscape yard depth to 6' minimum along the east property line	§11-21-3(B)(1) Superior Design - Responsive: Buffering along the east property line is maintained through the combination of an existing decorative masonry wall, separation created by the adjacent off-site retention basin, and enhanced planting design that preserves compatibility with adjacent residential development. §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(v): Landscape areas elsewhere on the site are restored with native and adapted vegetation in a manner appropriate to the size and use of the site, encouraging biodiversity and environmental performance within a previously disturbed commercial parcel.
2	§11-33-3 Landscape Yard South (Adjacent to municipal well parcel)	15' minimum landscape yard required	Reduce landscape yard depth to 0' along the south property lines adjacent to the municipal well parcel	§11-21-3(B)(1) Superior Design - Responsive: Site design along the south property line responds directly to the operational, access, and infrastructure requirements of the adjacent City-owned municipal well parcel, integrating building placement, circulation, and landscape features into a cohesive and well-coordinated layout. §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(iv): Parking and circulation areas are designed to serve the development site consistent with the minimum parking ratio, and the site layout avoids excess paved area beyond what is necessary for safe and efficient site function.
3	Throat depth along Warner Road (Northwest drive entrance)	50' minimum	Reduce throat depth to approximately 25' at the northwest drive entrance	§11-21-3(B)(1) Superior Design - Sustainable: The reduced throat depth improves internal circulation efficiency and shortens pedestrian crossing distances at the driveway, allowing parking to be organized closer to the building while maintaining safe vehicular operations and supporting a more walkable site layout. §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(i): The site facilitates alternative modes of transportation through the provision of safe and secure bicycle parking located near building entrances with direct and convenient pedestrian access.

4	Throat depth along Warner Road (Northeast drive entrance)	50' minimum	Reduce throat depth to approximately 24'-4" at the northeast drive entrance	§11-21-3(B)(1) Superior Design - Responsive: The adjusted throat depth responds to site geometry and driveway spacing along Warner Road, maintaining orderly circulation and visibility while integrating with surrounding access patterns and internal site circulation. §11-21-3(B)(2)(b)(iii): The parking layout includes a dedicated carpool parking space located along the east side of the building, consistent with the provision of priority parking for carpool or vanpool vehicles.
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ALTERNATIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN [MZO §11-33-7]

An Alternative Landscape Plan is submitted pursuant to Mesa Zoning Ordinance §11-33-7 to address site-specific constraints associated with the municipal well parcel and the resulting irregular site configuration. The Alternative Landscape Plan is provided to allow flexibility in the distribution of required landscape and foundation base areas while maintaining compliance with the intent of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

The Alternative Landscape Plan demonstrates that all required landscape quantities are met or exceeded and that landscape performance objectives related to buffering, shade, and pedestrian comfort are achieved through enhanced planting design and redistribution of landscape areas. The use of an Alternative Landscape Plan reduces the number and extent of requested BIZ Overlay modifications by allowing landscape and foundation base areas to be placed where they function most effectively given the site constraints.

The Alternative Landscape Plan is intended to be reviewed in conjunction with the Requested BIZ Modifications table and supporting exhibits to demonstrate overall compliance and performance.

CONCLUSION

The requested BIZ Overlay modifications facilitate the development of a well-designed, contextually appropriate, and community-oriented project that is fully aligned with the Mesa 2050 General Plan, including the Neighborhood Center land use designation and the Evolve Growth Strategy framework. The RMDC Dance Studio demonstrates a level of architectural quality, landscape enhancement, and pedestrian-oriented site planning that exceeds standard LC district requirements and advances the City's goals for high-quality commercial development along the Warner Road corridor. The project's careful integration with surrounding residential uses and its superior design features affirm its suitability for this location.

In consideration of the project's demonstrated compliance with City policies and its provision of meaningful public and aesthetic benefits, the Applicant respectfully requests approval of the BIZ Overlay.