

The Den on Rio Salado
2630 W. Rio Salado Parkway, Mesa, AZ
85201

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Den on Rio Salado is a proposed two-building lodging campus located on a 3.14-acre property at 2630 W. Rio Salado Parkway (APNs 135-38-001N and 135-38-001M). The development consists of:

1.1 Multiple Residence (Building 1)

- 5 stories, 36 units, approx. 67,000 SF
- Approx. 13,400 SF of first-floor common, administrative, and support spaces
- Designed as a private residential facility for seasonal baseball players affiliated with the adjacent Chicago Cubs Minor League / Spring Training complex
- Maximum building height: 65 feet

1.2 Candlewood Suites Hotel (Building 2)

- 4 stories, 103 guestrooms, approx. 54,725 SF
- Select-service hotel intended for general public use and occasional team-related lodging
- Maximum building height: 57 feet

Both buildings form a unified lodging campus with shared circulation and parking, while maintaining independent operations and dedicated amenity areas tailored to their respective programs.

2. SITE CONTEXT & SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT

The site is currently **vacant land**.

North: City-owned surface parking

East: Chicago Cubs Minor League & Spring Training complex

South & West: Commercial uses typical of the Rio Salado corridor

The site's proximity to the Cubs facilities makes it ideally suited for specialized player housing and hotel functions that support sports tourism.

3. SITE DESIGN & ACCESS

3.1 Vehicular Access & Circulation

- Maintains the existing access on Rio Salado Parkway
- Adds a new access driveway on Cubs Way to improve circulation and reduce turning conflicts
- Provides a shared parking area, with 40 gated stalls dedicated to Multiple Residence residents and staff

3.2 Parking

- Parking required: Based on combined hotel + Multiple Residence use
 - Parking provided: meets 89% of the minimum requirements. PAD deviation is requested.
 - ADA stalls, loading zones, fire lanes, and 2-way drive aisles are designed per City standards
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4. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN INTENT

The design intent is to create a cohesive, contemporary, and high-quality lodging campus that complements ongoing investment along the Rio Salado Parkway corridor.

4.1 Massing & Form

Both buildings incorporate recesses, projections, and vertical modulation to break up long façades and reduce the perceived height of the 4- and 5-story structures. Material and color changes reinforce massing breaks and highlight key building elements such as primary entries and corner articulations.

4.2 Material Palette

A unified palette of EIFS, thin brick veneer, and metal panel accents provides visual continuity across the campus and ensures long-term durability in Mesa's climate.

The Multiple Residence incorporates thin brick veneer, selected in colors and horizontal banding patterns inspired by traditional Chicago brick architecture. This design choice subtly references the heritage of the Chicago Cubs and the players who will reside in the facility, giving the building a contextual and place-specific identity.

4.3 Entry & Ground-Level Experience

Primary entries for both buildings are clearly defined through:

- Shade structures and canopies
- Enhanced paving treatments
- Ample glazing for visibility
- Clear pedestrian walkways and site lighting

The Multiple Residence maintains secure access for residents while presenting an articulated and welcoming arrival sequence.

4.4 Relationship to the Site

Buildings are positioned toward the site perimeter to frame the development, create a stronger street edge, and organize the internal circulation. A centrally shared parking field supports efficient vehicle movement.

Amenity areas are positioned away from public streets:

- Hotel: Pool and patio
- Multiple Residence: Sports court, putting green, BBQ area, outdoor lounge

This arrangement supports usability, privacy, and noise mitigation.

5. LANDSCAPE & AMENITY AREAS

The landscape design incorporates:

- Street trees and pedestrian-scaled landscaping
- Shaded walkways connecting both buildings
- Outdoor recreation zones appropriate to each use (pool for hotel, sports court / putting green for Multiple Residence)
- Plant selections appropriate for climate, shade creation, and heat-island reduction

6. GENERAL PLAN ANALYSIS

1. **The Proposed Project will not result in a shortage of land for other planned uses:** The proposed amendment will not result in a shortage of land for other planned uses. A large amount of commercially zoned land exists to the north and east and remains designated as Urban Center Placetype. The amendment supports the City's objective by enabling residential development in an area that already has similar uses.
2. **Whether events after the adoption of the General Plan have changed the character or condition of the area:** The adoption of this requested Minor General Plan Amendment will enhance the existing character by providing an expansion of the spring training experience. It will create a gateway to the spring training facility. The county has demolished their Animal Shelter that had been previously located on this site.
3. **The degree to which the proposed amendment will impact the whole community or a portion of the community by:**
 - a. **Altering existing land use patterns in a significant way that is contrary to the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Strategies identified in the General Plan:** The Proposed Project will not significantly alter existing land use patterns; the request is to change the Placetype to match that of the surrounding properties to the east and north.
 - b. **Requiring larger or more extensive improvements to roads, sewer or water systems that may negatively impact development of other lands:** The Proposed Project, concurrent rezone, site plan review and Council Use Permit will not require more extensive improvements to roads, water systems or sewer. Cubs Way and Rio Salado Parkway are fully improved, and the existing utility infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate this request.

- c. Adversely impacting existing uses due to increased traffic congestion that is not accommodated by planned roadway improvements or other planned transportation improvements such as nonmotorized transportation alternatives or transit:** The Proposed Project will not adversely affect surrounding development due to increased traffic congestion. Cubs Way and Rio Salado Parkway in their current condition are sufficient in capacity to accommodate the new uses.
4. **Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Strategies of the General Plan:** The proposed amendment is consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the Mesa 2050 General Plan. Specifically Strategies:
- N2. Promote adaptive reuse and infill as tools to rejuvenate and revitalize established neighborhoods.
- LU2. Create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place.
- LU3. Encourage infill and redevelopment to meet the community's strategic needs.
- HAC4. Expand Mesa's reputation as an arts and culture tourism leader in Arizona.
- ED5. Promote Mesa as a regional commercial, entertainment, and tourist destination.
5. **Whether the proposed amendment constitutes an overall improvement to the General Plan and the City of Mesa:** The proposed amendment constitutes an overall improvement to both the General Plan and the City of Mesa by developing the property more consistent with the surrounding uses and better uses for the site.
6. **The extent to which the benefits of the proposed amendment outweigh any of the impacts identified by these criteria:** The Proposed Project represents a significant reinvestment in the area. The addition of a high-quality hotel and multiple residence development in this area helps to fulfill a number of strategies identified in the General Plan by creating additional housing opportunities and bringing renewed vibrancy to a transitioning corridor.

Development Standards	MZO Required	BIZ Proposed
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – MZO Section 11-7-3	30 feet	65 feet
<u>Minimum Setbacks to Building and Parking Areas</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A Front and Street Facing Side (adjacent to Rio Salado Parkway) Side and Rear adjacent to non-residential district, per story	15 feet 60 feet (15 feet per story)	11 feet 7 feet (north side) 2.5 feet (east side) 2.5 feet (west side)
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – MZO Section 11-33-3(B)(1)(a) and (B)(2)(a)(ii) Adjacent to other Non-Single Residence Districts	15 Feet	0 Feet
<u>Perimeter Landscaping</u> – MZO Table 11-33-3.A.4 Arterial Streets Local Streets	1 Tree and 6 Shrubs per 25 Linear Feet of Street Frontage 1 Tree and 4 Shrubs per 25 feet of Street Frontage	0 Trees and Shrubs required within the proposed landscape yards
<u>Required Parking Spaces by Use</u> – MZO Table 11-32-3.A - Multiple Residence - Covered Parking	2.1 spaces per unit (76 spaces) 1 covered parking space per unit	1.29 spaces per unit (56 spaces) 11 covered parking spaces on site
<u>Minimum Private Open Space</u> – MZO Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(a) – Sizing - Two and Three Bedroom Units	100 square feet per two bedroom unit and 120 square feet for three bedroom units	60 square feet per unit

Development Standards	MZO Required	BIZ Proposed
<u>Minimum Private Open Space Above Ground Level</u> = MZO Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(a) – Minimum Width	8 feet wide	5 feet wide

Per MZO Section 11-31-32, for a project to reflect Superior Design it will incorporate all of the following elements:

- A. **Holistic Approach to Project Design.** Varied, high-quality, regionally-appropriate building materials, used in distinctive building forms, building massing and detailing that result in a note-worthy example of holistic site design, architecture, landscaping and signage; and

The Proposed Project includes the required proportions of regionally appropriate building materials, used in distinctive building forms and detailing including a mix of rectangular and cantilevered forms with consistent elements and detailing between the two proposed uses on site.

- B. **Responsive Approach to Site and Sub-Area Context.** Architectural and landscape architecture details and features that reflect the character defined in Sub-Area Plans or the General Plan's Placetype urban design characteristics, that are harmonious with adjacent development patterns, integrate with the physical conditions of the immediate site, and create a unique sense of place; and

The Proposed Project design includes varied architectural forms that are harmonious with the area within the district near the Cubs Spring Training Facility and the proposed brick for the Cubs Players Facility is consistent in color with the existing brick for Sloan Park.

- C. **Sustainable Design.** Site design, architecture and landscaping features that address the local climate to reduce summer sun penetration and provide summer sunshade protection for pedestrians, promote energy and water conservation, promote the preservation or creation of open space, provide for and encourage the use of multiple modes of transportation, utilize existing infrastructure, and create the opportunity for social interaction; and

The Proposed Project provides increased open space on the northern side of the property, which will be screened from direct summer sun from the South and will be able to provide additional shading for the onsite amenities. Paved areas are broken up with landscaping and shaded foundation areas, and high-efficiency windows also reduce the heat impact on the site.

- D. **Exceeds Standards.** Provision of details and features that exceed the criteria and standards specified in Sections 11-5-3, 11-5-5, 11-6-43, 11-6-4

(as applicable), 11-7-3, 11-8-5, 11-8-6 and Chapters 30 through 34, where applicable; and

The Proposed Project exceeds standard requirements through enhanced architectural, landscape, and site design. Foundation base calculations exceed base requirements through use of averaging on all sides of the buildings. 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.** Details and features that create attractive, comfortable environments for pedestrians; ensure safe, useful and well-integrated open or public spaces; and include high quality amenities.

The Proposed Project includes well-designed public spaces that enhance the pedestrian experience. The proposed hotel site will directly connect into the existing pedestrian network, placing additional emphasis along the eastern side of the site for the amenities adjacent to the multiple residence building. The amenities provided for the multiple residence includes a sports court, putting green, soccer field, in addition to a covered patio area which includes BBQ grills. Based on the above discussion, staff finds that the Proposed Project complies with Criteria 1 required for approval of a BIZ overlay.

- 1. Address environmental performance standards outlined below:
 - a. Site selection criteria. Sites shall meet one or more of the following criteria.
 - i. Redevelop and rehabilitate economically distressed properties (particularly greyfield sites), damaged sites or environmentally contaminated 'brownfield' sites.

The project site is an infill parcel that is currently vacant. The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- ii. Utilize areas with existing utility and transportation infrastructure and existing community services. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.

The site has access to City of Mesa utilities and direct access to Rio Salado Parkway and Cubs Way. Both of these roadways include detached sidewalks that connect the proposed development to adjacent neighborhoods. The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- iii. Utilize locations within ½ mile of a planned light rail line or ¼ mile from an existing or planned bus stop. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.

There is an existing westbound bus stop located on the east side of the intersection of Rio Salado Parkway and Cubs Way, approximately 200 feet from the

Proposed Project. There is an existing eastbound bus stop on the south side of Rio Salado Parkway, approximately 450 feet from the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- b. Site design criteria. Designing the site to facilitate alternative modes of transportation and to reduce onsite environmental impacts.
 - i. Provide safe and secure storage for bicycles. For residential projects, safe and secure bicycle storage areas shall be provided on-site for a minimum 15% of the residents.

The proposed development includes bicycle racks for the hotel use, with bike storage for the multiple residence use located interior to the structure.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- ii. Include priority location parking for low-emission vehicles in parking areas.

The Proposed Project does not include priority parking for low emission vehicles.

The Proposed Project does not meet this Criteria.

- iii. Provide priority location parking spaces for carpool or vanpool vehicles.

The Proposed Project does not include priority parking for carpool or vanpool vehicles.

The Proposed Project does not meet this Criteria.

- iv. Provide the number of parking spaces designed to serve a development site consistent with the number of spaces required to meet the minimum parking ratio. Parking spaces over the minimum number is discouraged.

Per Table 11-32-3A of the MZO, 179 parking spaces are required for the proposed development. The site plan submitted shows 159 parking spaces being provided on site.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- v. For greenfield sites, protect or restore natural areas on site with native vegetation to encourage biodiversity and for enjoyment by people. For previously developed sites, restore areas with native or adapted vegetation to encourage biodiversity and for enjoyment by people. The size of the space should be appropriate for the size of the site and the activity level or use of the site.

Although the site is currently undeveloped, native vegetation was removed many years ago with prior development done for a County Animal Shelter. The

landscape plan for the Proposed Project includes drought tolerant and regionally appropriate plant species.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- vi. Design the project to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, designed to reduce summer heat gain, reduce winter heat loss, utilize day lighting strategies and provide the opportunity for occupants to take advantage of renewable energy. The design also mitigates the effects of solar exposure for users and pedestrians. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that have efficient HVAC systems, incorporate passive solar heating, cooling and day lighting strategies within an efficient building envelope, as recommended by the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) section, including buildings designed to earn the EPA ENERGY STAR or designed to meet LEED™ Silver or equivalent third-party criteria are considered to be energy efficient and no higher standard shall be used.

The architectural design proposed includes shaded entries at all pedestrian entries, which help to mitigate the effects of solar exposure for employees and visitors to the site. This increased shading of the windows also reduces heat gain within the building.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- c. Provide documented evidence that the building(s) will meet or exceed nationally recognized environmental performance standards. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that are designed to earn LEED™ Silver, Green Globes, and/or equivalent third-party criteria, and no higher standard shall be required. Avoid sites considered inappropriate, such as prime farmland, land identified as habitat for endangered species, and wetlands or riparian areas associated with wildlife.

The building proposed for the site is not designed to LEED standards.

The Proposed Project does not this Criteria.

- d. Utilize areas with existing utility and transportation infrastructure and existing community services. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.

The site is in close proximity to existing utility infrastructure and is located to support the surrounding area of schools, commercial spaces and residential areas with additional commercial uses.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- e. Redevelop and rehabilitate economically distressed properties (particularly greyfield sites), damaged sites or environmentally contaminated 'brown-field' sites.

While the site is not considered a greyfield or brownfield site, it is not operating at its highest and best economic use. The development of this site will be a positive economic benefit both within the immediate area as well as the larger City of Mesa.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- f. Utilize locations within ½ mile of a planned light rail line or ¼ mile from an existing or planned bus stop. This criterion is preferred for higher density and higher intensity development, when feasible.

The Proposed Project is near to a westbound bus station on Rio Salado Parkway, located on the east side of the intersection of Rio Salado Parkway and Cubs Way, with an eastbound route located across the street on Rio Salado Parkway.

The Proposed Project meets this Criteria.

- 2. Provide documented evidence that the building(s) will meet or exceed nationally recognized environmental performance standards. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that are designed to earn Green Globes, LEED™ Silver, or to be in compliance with the International Green Construction Code and/or equivalent third-party criteria, are considered to be energy efficient and no higher standard shall be required.

The building proposed for the site is not designed to LEED standards.