



Planning & Zoning Report

Date: June 24, 2026

To: Planning and Zoning Board

Through: Marc Heirshberg, Assistant City Manager

From: Nana Appiah, Development Services Director
Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director
Rachel Phillips, Assistant Planning Director

Subject: Mesa Zoning Ordinance text amendment (**Fleet Services & Service Station**)-
Proposed amendments to Title 11 Chapters 6, 7, 8, 31, and 86 of the Mesa City Code. (**Citywide**)

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning and Zoning Board recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) Fleet Services & Service Station text amendment.

Purpose

Staff is recommending certain amendments to the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) to address evolving land use patterns, emerging technologies, and changes in transportation and service-related operations. Specifically, the amendment establishes and refines regulations related to electric vehicle charging, Fleet-Based Services, and service stations in order to better distinguish between public-serving commercial uses and private fleet-oriented operations.

Details of the proposed text amendments are attached in Exhibit 1 – Fleet Services & Service Station Ordinance. Specifically, the proposed text amendments:

1. Add definitions for Fleet-Based Services, Heavy Fleet-Based Services, Accessory Fleet-Based Services, and revise the definition of Light Fleet-Based Services;
2. Specify Permitted Zoning Districts for Light-, Heavy-, and Accessory Fleet-Based Services;
3. Establish development standards for Fleet-Based Services;
4. Add a definition for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging and modify the definition of Service Stations;
5. Specify where accessory Electric Vehicle Charging may be located; and
6. Modify development standards for Service Stations.

Discussion

1. Add definitions for Fleet-Based Services, Heavy Fleet-Based Services, Accessory Fleet-Based Services, and revise the definition of Light Fleet-Based Services.

Section 11-86-4 (Commercial Use Classifications) currently defines Light Fleet-Based Services as passenger transportation services, local delivery services, medical transport, and similar businesses that rely on a fleet of three or more vehicles with a gross vehicle weight capacity of less than 10,000 pounds.

Staff recommends establishing a broader definition for Fleet-Based Services and creating separate classifications for Light Fleet-Based Services and Heavy Fleet-Based Services based on fleet size and vehicle weight capacity. The proposed amendments are intended to provide clearer distinctions between varying fleet operations and ensure appropriate zoning treatment based on operational intensity and potential impacts.

The revised definitions also clarify that Fleet-Based Services may include both ground-based and aerial-based vehicle operations, thereby addressing emerging technologies and evolving delivery models, including drone-based delivery services.

Fleet-Based Services. A site or portion of a site used primarily for the parking, storage, staging, fueling, charging, and/or dispatch of vehicles (ground- or aerial-based), operated in connection with passenger transportation services, local delivery services, medical transport, or other businesses that operate more than five (5) vehicles (ground- or aerial-based) as part of their day-to-day operations. This use may include electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), charging infrastructure, transformers and utility equipment, canopies, accessory office space, and related support functions. This use does not include towing and impound operations, vehicle sales, dismantling, major repair, airport or heliport activities.

Accessory Fleet-Based Services. A fleet-based service that is clearly incidental and subordinate to a principal use located on the same lot or parcel and that serves only the operational needs of the principal use.

An accessory fleet-based service shall not constitute the principal use of the property; function as an independent fleet parking, storage, staging, charging, fueling, maintenance or dispatch facility; or provide fleet services to an off-site business. The area devoted to the Accessory Fleet-Based Service shall remain subordinate in scale and shall not occupy an area greater than the principal use.

Light Fleet-Based Services. A Fleet-Based Service consisting of ground-based or aerial-based vehicles with rated capacities of less than 10,000 pounds, involving no more than 50 vehicles, and occupying less than 10,000 square feet of fleet parking, storage, staging, charging, or dispatching area.

Heavy Fleet-Based Services. A Fleet-Based Service consisting of ground-based or aerial-based vehicles that: (A) have a rated capacity exceeding 10,000 pounds; (B) involve more than 50 vehicles; or (C) occupy more than 10,000 square feet of fleet parking, storage, staging, charging or, dispatching area.

2. Specify Permitted Zoning Districts for Light-, Heavy-, and Accessory Fleet-Based Services.

Modifications to Tables 11-6-2 (Commercial Districts), 11-7-2 (Employment Districts), and 11-8-2 (Downtown Districts) are proposed to specify where Fleet-Based Services may be located.

The permitted zoning districts for Light Fleet-Based Services generally remain consistent with the current ordinance; however, staff recommends adding the use to the Limited Commercial (LC) District to accommodate operational and service-oriented commercial activities.

In addition, Light Fleet-Based Services frequently operate as an accessory component to a principal business or use. To address this operational characteristic, staff recommends allowing Accessory Fleet-Based Services within the LC, General Commercial (GC), Planned Employment Park (PEP), Light Industrial (LI), General Industrial (GI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Downtown Business-2 (DB-2), and Downtown Core (DC) Districts.

Because Heavy Fleet-Based Services involve larger vehicles, greater operational intensity, and the potential for increased noise, traffic, and compatibility impacts, staff recommends limiting the use to the GI and HI Districts and the GC and LI Districts with approval of a Council Use Permit.

3. Establish development standards for Fleet-Based Services.

Staff is recommending the addition of Section 11-31-40 (Fleet-Based Services) to Chapter 31 (Standards for Specific Uses and Activities). The purpose of these standards is to ensure Fleet-Based Services are appropriately integrated into commercial and employment while minimizing visual, operational, and compatibility impacts on adjacent properties, particularly residential uses.

The proposed standards address fleet vehicle parking, charging, storage, screening, and associated infrastructure for both ground-based and aerial-based fleet operations.

Parking Charging, and Storage:

The amendment requires all fleet vehicle parking, charging, and storage areas to be provided in addition to the minimum required parking spaces established by Table 11-32-3.A. This provision is intended to ensure that fleet operations do not displace required customer, employee, or visitor parking.

Fleet vehicle parking, charging, and storage must occur only within designated on-site areas that are clearly identified through striping, pavement markings, or signage. These areas must remain distinct from required parking spaces and may not be located within required setbacks, landscape yards, drive aisles, or loading zones.

When Fleet-Based Services operate as an accessory use to a primary business, fleet vehicles must be located to the side or rear of buildings and may not be parked between the front building façade and the street. This standard is intended to maintain an attractive streetscape and reduce the visual prominence of fleet operations.

Screening:

The amendment establishes screening standards for ground-based fleet vehicle parking, charging, and storage areas, as well as accessory equipment and support infrastructure associated with Fleet-Based Services.

All accessory equipment and ground-mounted support infrastructure, including battery storage systems, power generation systems, and similar equipment, must comply with the ground-mounted equipment screening requirements in Section 11-30-9(A)(4) of the MZO. In addition, any fences or walls used for screening, security, access control, or enclosure must comply with Section 11-30-4 (Fences and Freestanding Walls).

Ground-based fleet vehicle areas located adjacent to streets must be screened by a 40-inch masonry wall located behind the required landscape yard. Along internal side and rear property lines, a six-foot masonry wall is required.

The amendment also allows the Zoning Administrator or designee to approve alternative screening methods when the applicant demonstrates, through a line-of-sight analysis, that the proposed design provides equal or greater visual screening and superior design quality.

Residential Compatibility:

The proposed amendment establishes additional compatibility standards intended to minimize potential noise and operational impacts associated with fleet-based operations located near residential uses or residential zoning districts.

A minimum setback distance of 100 feet is required between accessory equipment or ground-mounted support infrastructure associated with fleet service uses — including electric charging stations, mechanical equipment, and power generation equipment — and any residential use or residential zoning district, except those residential zoning districts that solely contain a commercial use.

The Planning Director or designee may approve a reduced setback if a sound study prepared and the applicant demonstrates that noise levels generated will not exceed 60 decibels at the property line. Where ambient noise levels already exceed 60 decibels, the study must demonstrate that the use will not increase existing noise levels.

4. Add a definition for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging and modify the definition of Service Stations.

Staff recommends adding a definition for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging and revising the definition of Service Stations in Section 11-86-4 (Commercial Use Classifications) to address the evolving nature of vehicle fueling and charging infrastructure.

As electric vehicles become more prevalent, the provision of energy for motor vehicles is no longer limited to traditional fuel sources and now includes electricity. Accordingly, staff recommends refining the definition of Service Stations to clarify that such uses may include the dispensing of gasoline, diesel fuel, and electricity.

Additionally, electric vehicle charging infrastructure may function either as a primary use or as an accessory component to an established business or development. To address this distinction, staff recommends adding a definition for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging to

clarify when electric vehicle charging facilities are considered incidental and subordinate to a principal use.

Service Station. *An establishment that provides fueling and/or charging services for motor vehicles, including the dispensing of gasoline, diesel, or electricity via electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). The use may include accessory retail sales, convenience stores, and minor vehicle servicing, maintenance, or repair activities (e.g., tire inflation, fluid replacement) but shall not include any major vehicle servicing, maintenance, or repair activities, as defined in Chapter 86. A Service Station may include fuel pumps, electric vehicle charging stations, canopies, and related equipment, and may be operated with or without an enclosed building. This use is intended to serve the general public and shall not include facilities dedicated to fleet fueling or charging operations.*

Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging. *The provision of electric vehicle charging equipment within an on-site parking lot or parking structure. Such facilities shall be incidental and subordinate to a permitted principal use on the same site.*

5. Specify Permitted Zoning Districts for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging.

Modifications to Tables 11-6-2 (Commercial Districts), 11-7-2 (Employment Districts), and 11-8-2 (Downtown Districts) are proposed to specify where Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging may be located.

Staff recommends allowing Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging as a permitted use within the Neighborhood Commercial (NC), LC, GC, Mixed-Use (MX), Planned Employment Park (PEP), LI, GI, HI, DB-1, DB-2, and DC Districts.

In addition, staff recommends adding two footnotes to establish operational standards for Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging. These standards clarify the amount of parking that may be dedicated to Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging and procedures for replacing required landscaping.

To ensure that Accessory Electric Vehicle Charging remains subordinate to the primary use of the site, charging spaces may occupy no more than 20% of the required parking supply. However, parking spaces in excess of the minimum parking requirement may also be converted to electric vehicle charging spaces.

Finally, if the installation of Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) results in the removal of required landscaping, the displaced landscaping must be replaced elsewhere on the site in compliance with applicable landscape requirements.

6. Modify Development Standards for Service Stations.

Staff recommends modifications to Section 11-31-25 (Service Stations) to modernize development standards and address the evolving nature of vehicle fueling infrastructure.

Fuel Pump Canopies:

The proposed amendments revise canopy standards to establish a maximum canopy height of 16 feet and limit canopy fascia widths to 30 inches. Canopy materials, colors, and finishes are required to complement the primary building, when a building is present.

Additional lighting standards are also proposed to reduce glare and minimize impacts on adjacent properties. These standards require canopy lighting fixtures to be recessed and flush-mounted within the canopy ceiling and illumination limitations for service stations located near residential uses or zoning districts.

Electric Vehicle Service Stations:

Rather than requiring a traditional fuel station canopy, electric vehicle charging facilities may utilize alternative shade and lighting solutions, including solar canopies, shade structures, architectural trellises, integrated building elements, or similar features that provide weather protection, shade, and illumination while complementing the overall site design.

Queuing and Stacking:

The amendments also introduce new queuing and stacking standards intended to ensure safe and efficient on-site circulation. Minimum stacking distances are established for fuel pump islands and one-way circulation to prevent vehicle queues from blocking access points, drive aisles, or extending into the public right-of-way.

The proposed standards also allow modifications through the Development Plan Review process when supported by a circulation and stacking study demonstrating that alternative designs adequately address operational demand and site-specific conditions.

Residential Compatibility:

To address compatibility with nearby residential areas, the amendment establishes a minimum separation distance of 100 feet between fuel pumps or electric vehicle charging stations and any residential use or residential zoning district.

The Planning Director or designee may approve a reduced separation distance if a sound study demonstrates that noise levels at the property line will not exceed 60 decibels or will not increase existing ambient noise levels where ambient conditions already exceed 60 decibels.

Citizen Participation

Website Posting:

A draft of the proposed text amendments was posted on the Long Range Planning website on May 7, 2026, and an email send to stakeholders letting them know if was ready for review and comments.

Based on stakeholder feedback revisions to the proposed text amendments were posted on the Long Range Planning website on June 4, 2026, and a follow up email sent to stakeholders alerting them that revisions based on their comments was available for review.

Open House:

Stakeholders from the Long Range Planning subscription list, Development Advisory Forum, and electric vehicle and drone industries were invited to a virtual open house on May 27, 2026, to discuss the proposed text amendments.

- Nine people attended the open house
- Attendees had the following questions and/or comments:
 - Consider removing the vehicle count threshold for both Light Fleet-Based Services and Heavy Fleet-Based Services.

- Consider allowing Heavy Fleet-Based Services in the LI District with a Special Use Permit (SUP) or Council Use Permit (CUP).
 - Remove the requirement that fleet vehicle parking be provided in addition to the minimum on-site parking requirement.
 - Increase the threshold for Accessory Electric Vehicle Parking from 16 spaces.
 - Does the separation requirement apply if there is a commercial use on a residentially zoned property?
 - Will a sound study be required of a commercial use (within a residential zone) is located within 100 feet?
- Staff provided the following response or made the following revisions in response to the questions/comments:
 - Staff revised the definitions of Light- and Heavy Fleet-Based Services to use a square foot threshold in addition to a vehicle count.
 - Staff revised the land use table to recommend Heavy Fleet-Based Services be permitted in the LI District with a CUP.
 - Required on-site parking is needed for employees and is functionally different that parking provided for fleet vehicles. The minimum required parking for Fleet Services is only four parking spaces.
 - Staff revised the threshold based on comments.
 - Staff added an exemption for the separation requirement for residentially zoned properties only containing a commercial use.
 - The sound study is only required when the separation distance is reduced. Due to staff's revisions on exempting commercial uses this will not be applicable.

Individual Meetings:

Zipline

Staff also met with Zipline, an operator of an autonomous drone delivery service to discuss the proposed amendments on May 27, 2026.

Zipline provided the following comments:

- Ensure that Mesa's proposed ordinance complies with applicable Federal and State laws.
- Zipline's operations are unique. Is the proposed ordinance meant to address drone delivery specifically?
- We believe our business operations (Zipline) are appropriate in all non-residential zones and should not be limited to industrial.
- Reconsider the height limitation for fleet-based services. We believe that height should be regulated by the underlying zone - not a separate height requirement

Staff provided the following responses:

- Staff and the City Attorney's Office have reviewed the proposed amendments for compliance with applicable federal and state laws.
- No. The proposed ordinance is not intended to address Zipline specifically. The Fleet-Based Services use was drafted broadly to capture a variety of existing and emerging fleet operations and to provide a regulatory framework that remains relevant as technology evolves.
- Zipline's current proposal in for review with the City is considered Light Fleet-Based Services which is proposed to be permitted by-right in LC, GC, DB-2, and DC with approval of a CUP. Staff believes more intense operations could have greater impacts on surrounding uses and should be located in employment districts.

- The proposed height limitation applies only to fleet parking, charging, and storage areas and does not affect the maximum building height permitted by the underlying zoning district. The standard is intended to establish clear operational parameters for fleet-related uses and mitigate potential visual and compatibility impacts associated with vehicle storage and support infrastructure. Permitted building heights within the affected zoning districts range from 30 feet to 50 feet, depending on the zoning designation.

Evergreen

Staff met with Laura Ortiz of Evergreen to discuss the proposed amendments on June 15, 2026.

Ms. Ortiz provided the following comments:

- Consider removing the footnote restricting the signage of electric vehicle parking only.
- Section 11-31-40 states that Fleet Service parking, charging, and/or storage shall be provided in addition to the required onsite parking. This will be challenging for Accessory Fleet Services that are located on a group industrial site. As written, they would have to provide additional parking.
- Section 11-31-40 states that Accessory Fleet-Based Services must be located to the side or rear of buildings. This will be challenging.
- Consider increasing the threshold for Light Fleet-Based Services. Evergreen has spoken to a couple companies about Accessory Fleet-Based Services and it appears they would exceed this threshold.

Staff provided the following response or made the following revisions in response to the questions/comments:

- Staff removed the footnote restricting electric vehicle parking signage.
- Staff revised Section 11-31-40(A) to add specific standards for Accessory Fleet-Based Service parking, charging, and storage stating that Accessory Fleet-Based Services may occupy no more than 50% of the required parking for the principle use.
- In Employment Districts, no more than two rows of parking may be located between a building and an adjacent street. These spaces are intended to serve customers and visitors, and contribute to an active and accessible streetscape. The proposed text amendments further support this objective by requiring fleet vehicle parking, charging, and storage areas to be located to the side or rear of buildings.
- Staff added a specific definition for Accessory Fleet-Based Services which states that it may not exceed the area occupied by the principle use.

Walmart and Wing

Staff met with representatives from Walmart and Wing, a drone delivery service, to discuss the proposed amendments on June 16, 2026.

Walmart and Wing representatives had several questions on the applicability of certain requirements which staff answered.

Public Comment:

Staff received additional public comment from Jazzmine Clifton with Evergreen and Kevin Xue with Tesla. Those comments and staff responses are included in your agenda packet.

Implementation

Staff recommends the ordinance approving the proposed text amendments become effective 30 days from the date of City Council approval.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – Fleet Services & Service Station Ordinance

Exhibit 2 – Section 11-31-40: Fleet-Based Services

Exhibit 3 – Public Comments