



**PLANNING DIVISION  
STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Meeting**

**August 21, 2023**

CASE No.: <b>ZON23-00611</b>	PROJECT NAME: <b>Lehi Heritage Neighborhood</b>
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Owner’s Name:	Various Owners
Applicant's Name:	The Lehi Community Improvement Association
Location of Request:	Generally, bound by Center Street to the west, Thomas Road to the north, Gilbert Road to the east and McKellips Road to the south.
Parcel No(s):	Various Parcels
Request:	Heritage Neighborhood Designation
Existing Zoning District:	Agricultural (AG) and Residential (RS-43)
Council District:	1
Site Size:	1,110± acres
HPB Hearing Date(s):	<b>July 11, 2023 / 6:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Maura Jackson, Historic Preservation Advisor/Planner Michelle Dahlke, Principal Planner
Staff Recommendation:	Approval
Historic Preservation Board Recommendation: Approval (4-0)	

**HISTORY**

The City established the Heritage Neighborhood Program (also referred to as the Heritage Neighborhood Recognition Program) to recognize neighborhoods with unique historic, social and/or cultural events that have contributed to a unique character and sense of history, and those that have played a role in shaping Mesa. The recognition helps to develop a sense of neighborhood pride and identity while maintaining and improving neighborhood stability.

The Heritage Neighborhood Recognition Program fosters neighborhood upkeep and redevelopment by identifying the distinctive characteristics of a neighborhood’s setting, buildings, structures, landscape features, and public spaces. This recognition discourages the demolition of significant buildings and structures, or the removal of character-defining landscape features. The Program also encourages the continued use of design, building forms,

and development patterns that are traditional for the neighborhood and provide a means for the property owners and residents within the neighborhood to document and celebrate its unique social and cultural heritage.

Heritage Neighborhoods may, or may not, have the integrity of physical structures needed to become a local or national historic district; however, they do have a sense of the physical form from the historic period of development and a significant story to tell. Heritage Neighborhoods are different than a Historic District or Historic Landmark overlay in that these neighborhoods will not be rezoned with a Historic or Landmark Overlay District. The underlying zoning designation will remain in place with the Heritage Neighborhood Program recognition.

To be considered a Heritage Neighborhood, an application must be filed with the City Historic Preservation Office for review. Staff works with the applicant to document the character-defining elements and history of the neighborhood, ensure the neighborhood meets the criteria for recognition, assist in the coordination of a community meeting, and present a recommendation to the Historic Preservation Board. The Historic Preservation Board's recommendation is forwarded to City Council for approval of the Heritage Neighborhood Program designation by resolution.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

In November 2022, the Mesa Historic Preservation Office received an application to recognize the Lehi neighborhood described in Exhibit 2 as a Heritage Neighborhood through the Historic Preservation Office Heritage Neighborhood Program (Proposed Project). The Lehi Community Improvement Association (Applicant) is seeking Heritage Neighborhood recognition to showcase the neighborhood's unique history and setting. The Applicant recognizes the heritage characteristics of Lehi and wants to document this for future City leaders as development or redevelopment within the Lehi area is proposed.

The Lehi neighborhood included in the Proposed Project includes the current Lehi Sub Area, adopted by the Mesa City Council by Resolution 8655 on January 23, 2006, and several parcels that surround the Lehi Sub Area (Exhibit 3, Proposed Lehi Heritage Neighborhood Boundaries). The Applicant identified the areas that contribute to the heritage of Lehi, including its ties to Lehi legacy families, the layout of lots in a traditional Lehi manner, the relevant architecture of early Mormon settlements, agricultural contributions to the region, proximity to the original Mesa town center, spaces that show the communal elements of Lehi, and the exhibition of early Mormon settlement characteristics.

The Heritage Neighborhood Program designation for the Proposed Project will not change the underlying zoning, General Plan designation, or Lehi Sub Area designations. Although the designation of an area as a Heritage Neighborhood does not require the authorization of property owners within the Proposed Project boundaries, the Applicant has provided a list of property owners that have agreed to the Heritage Neighborhood Program designation for the Proposed Project.

## ANALYSIS

To receive Heritage Neighborhood Program recognition, there are five criteria that must be met. The following table identifies how the applicant’s request meets this criterion.

Criteria for Heritage Recognition	Meets	Does not Meet
<p><b>The majority of the neighborhood was originally developed at least 50 years ago.</b></p> <p><b>Staff comment: Lehi was Settled in 1877 by Mormon pioneers who were a part of the ‘Lehi’ Company, under the direction of Daniel Webster Jones. Throughout the mid to late 1900s many homes were constructed. The area saw modest growth in the 50s and 60s and it was not until the late 1970s that Lehi saw considerably more residential additions to the neighborhood.</b></p>	X	
<p><b>The overall character of the neighborhood, in terms of types and scale of building, remains the same as in the historic period.</b></p> <p><b>Staff comment: The 1980s, 1990s and 2000s saw more modern homes being built, coexisting with the historic-era homes. These homes generally keep with an ‘urban ranch’ style that echoes the original Mormon settlement, leaving room for foliage or livestock.</b></p>	X	
<p><b>Documentation is submitted indicating that, during the historic period, the residents and/or business owners in the area worked together to create a unique and identifiable neighborhood character distinguishable from their surroundings or neighboring areas that brought people together and continues to influence the nature of the neighborhood.</b></p> <p><b>Staff comment: The Lehi neighborhood included in the Proposed Project boundaries is largely based in agricultural roots. Agricultural influence continues today through a variety of characteristics: lot sizes, rural nature, orchards, livestock features, and canals/irrigation. Another strong characteristic of the Lehi neighborhood is the sense of community seen through historic inclusivity as well as longstanding traditions and events. This sense of community contributed to the agricultural success and nature of the neighborhood. Lehi residents also worked together to preserve their unique neighborhood feeling during annexation into the City of Mesa in 1970.</b></p>	X	

Criteria for Heritage Recognition	Meets	Does not Meet
<p><b>There are unique and identifiable physical characteristics that create the fabric of the neighborhood (i.e., building scale, material, color, proportions, or other historical associative or contextual values).</b></p> <p><b>Staff comment: The Lehi neighborhood physical characteristics include open spaces, large lots, rural atmosphere, high density of farming/livestock structures, amenities for horseback riding, open canals/flood irrigation, mature vegetation, variety of homes using brick/stone, visible historic elements, and buildings of historic significance.</b></p>	X	
<p><b>Residents are able to document the people, events, and/or cultural heritage that influenced the neighborhood’s historic integrity.</b></p> <p><b>Staff comment: There is documentation of the original Lehi Settlers and early families of Lehi, many of which have descendants still living in Lehi today. Lehi has many longstanding traditions and events. Lehi brick is widely known as part of this neighborhood’s cultural heritage that influenced not only the built environment found here, but the success of the neighborhood as well.</b></p>	X	

The Lehi neighborhood substantially meets the requirements for Heritage Neighborhood Recognition. The neighborhood has a vibrant sense of community tied to tangible resources. This is one of the oldest parts of what is now the City of Mesa and has survived with minimal changes to the rural atmosphere.

**Benefits of Being a Mesa Heritage Neighborhood:**

Areas recognized as a Heritage Neighborhood include the benefits of working with the Mesa Historic Preservation Office to identify and promote these neighborhoods through four methods:

- 1) Neighborhood identification sign on major streets bordering the neighborhood;
- 2) Modification of selected street signs to include the Heritage Neighborhood designation;
- 3) Assistance with developing signage or markers for individual properties identified by the neighborhood as locally historic places, which tell the story of the neighborhood;
- 4) Documentation of the important elements of historic development form (relationship of streets to buildings, scale of buildings, etc.) that the neighborhood desires to be preserved and maintained to the extent possible; and
- 5) Adding the neighborhood and a description of its history to the Mesa Heritage Neighborhood Register.

For the Proposed Project, the following apply:

1. *Proposed Identification Signs and Modification of Existing Street Signs within The Lehi Neighborhood.*

Staff completed an initial neighborhood survey using an aerial map and site visits to identify major entrance points to the neighborhood. The visibility of the proposed sign and availability of existing signage and signposts were evaluated. Staff recommended locations for proposed signage near portions of the neighborhood that best showcased heritage character-defining features.

Staff identified six points of entry for double-sided Heritage Neighborhood entry signs and 31 existing street signs to be replaced. The Historic Preservation Office has coordinated with the City Transportation Department to develop this signage program for the Proposed Project. The estimated cost of signage will be \$2,915 with a contingency of \$1,000. The cost of Lehi's Heritage Neighborhood signage will be allocated from the Historic Preservation \$50,000 annual budget.

2. *Documenting important Elements of Historic Development Form.*

If approved, information on the Lehi Heritage Neighborhood will be shared on the Mesa Historic Preservation Office website. The Proposed Project boundaries will be included on the city's Geographic Information Systems.

**Mesa Heritage Neighborhood Register:**

If approved by City Council, the Lehi Heritage Neighborhood will be added to the Mesa Heritage Neighborhood Register as the second Heritage Neighborhood. This recognition will recognize identified distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood's setting, buildings, structures, landscape features, and public spaces. Inclusion on the Mesa Heritage Neighborhood Register will provide a means for property owners and residents to document and celebrate the unique social and cultural heritage of the Lehi Heritage Neighborhood. The City will have the information available to the general public to increase awareness and share the story of the neighborhood's heritage.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

A community meeting to discuss the Heritage Neighborhood application for the Proposed Project was held at 6:30 PM on January 24, 2023, in conjunction with the annual Lehi Neighborhood meeting. The Applicant presented to the neighborhood the request for Heritage Neighborhood recognition, what the application consisted of, the benefits of the Heritage Neighborhood Recognition Program, and encouraged the community to contribute information.

Historic Preservation staff attended the meeting and presented the benefits of the Heritage Neighborhood Program.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff finds that the requested Lehi Heritage Neighborhood designation meets the Heritage Neighborhood Program criteria and recommends **approval**.

**Exhibits:**

Exhibit 1 – Staff Report

- Exhibit 2 – Application
- Exhibit 3 – Lehi Heritage Neighborhood Boundaries
- Exhibit 4 – Lehi Heritage Neighborhood Proposed Signage