

# 4312 E University

NWC of Greenfield Rd and University Dr

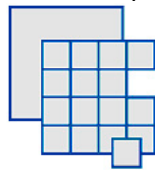
## Request for Site Plan Modification, Design Review, Special Use Permit, and Council Use Permit

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*Submitted by:*

**Pew & Lake, PLC**

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**Pew & Lake, P.L.C.**  
Real Estate and Land Use Attorneys

*Project Design:*



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Pam Vickers  
2233 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016

*On behalf of:*

**Cooper Companies**  
**Mark Hanneken**

October 30, 2023

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## I. Introduction & Project Description

Pew & Lake, PLC is pleased to submit this narrative and related exhibits for concurrent Site Plan Modification, Design Review, Special Use Permit, and Council Use Permit review. The subject site is approximately 191,833 SF (4.02 acres) in size and the Maricopa County Assessor Parcel Number for this Property is #140-14-003M. The existing zoning for this site is Commercial - LC and is currently vacant. The project site plan was originally approved for a retail/self-storage facility in 2004, and then again in 2006, with zoning application Z06-29, Ordinance 4545, on May 22, 2006, by the Mesa City Council. The applicant has been working over the last several months with the City of Mesa's Planning Department; re-designing the project to improve the currently existing self-storage/retail site plan to allow an updated and more attractive design for the self-storage and retail layout.

North of the site is Residential (RM-2), East of the site is an existing Extra Space Storage (EXR) climate-controlled facility, (which achieved zoning compliance in Commercial – LC in 2014), South of the site is University Drive and West of the site is Residential (RM-3).

The goal of this application is to receive Design Review, SUP, and CUP Approval for a multi-use project; including, a Class A climate-controlled self-storage facility and a retail/restaurant component, as follows:

1. Pad A: Fast Casual Restaurant with a street facing patio and drive-thru lane of approx. 204 ft of stacking – the drive-thru will be screened from street view with landscaping as requested by the Planning Department.
2. Pad B: Multi-tenant building with Retail and Fast Casual Restaurant with a drive-thru lane of approx. 150 ft of queuing.
3. Pad C: 2-Story + Basement, Class A climate-controlled storage facility as an expansion to the existing Extra Space Storage facility to the East (Exhibit A). The building will include both exterior and interior accessed storage units along with an internal drive aisle feature. The applicant for this new storage facility will be entering into an “annexing agreement” with Extra Space Storage. A letter from Extra Space, outlining both the “annexing agreement” and the high demand for this new Class A facility in the immediate neighborhood has been attached (Exhibit B).

The finishes for Pads A and B are consistent with the surrounding commercial properties, and were designed in accordance with the comments from the Mesa Planning Department addressing new drive-thru restaurant designs and layouts.

The proposed storage facility on Pad C is an expansion to the existing Extra Space Storage property to the East, located at 448 N. Greenfield Road and continues the finishes as approved on that project. Direct access to the new facility will be through a drive-aisle connection to the existing Extra Space Storage site with an emergency access connection available through the restaurant/retail site. We believe due to the unique layout of this

vacant commercial parcel; our proposal achieves the highest and best use of this land. We also were sensitive to the existing neighboring properties by limiting windows on the North side of the proposed self-storage facility. It should also be noted, that back in 2006, the City of Mesa City Council approved a self-storage facility on this site. Our new plan upgrades the previous first-generation submittal with a more clean, modern, and aesthetically pleasing Class A climate-controlled project ideal for this unique location.

The perception of a self-storage facility as an unattractive use is no longer accurate. Opposition to such developments stems from the typical unsightliness of the “first generation” projects. The renderings provided as part of the submittal package illustrate that the project will be very attractive and will smoothly integrate into the surrounding neighborhood and existing Extra Space facility.

Self-storage projects have been proven to be excellent neighbors to adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential developments due to their quiet nature, minimal use of local utilities, low traffic, and compatible hours of operation. The perimeter buildings and walls will screen internal loading activities from both University Drive and from Greenfield Road. They will also provide a secured enclosure for the entire storage facility.

We believe the proposed uses are an excellent fit for this location and neighborhood, and achieves the highest and best use for this site; eliminating an unattractive infill vacant parcel within the City of Mesa. It will also serve an existing demand for self-storage in the neighborhood, as evidenced by the adjacent existing Extra Space Storage facility achieving one of the most rapid lease-ups in the history of the company when it was built a few years ago.

## II. Consistency with the General Plan

The General Plan character area designation for the property is Neighborhood Village. The existing Limited Commercial (LC) zoning for the property is a primary zoning district within the Neighborhood Village character area. This project’s proposed retail and restaurant uses explicitly comply with the intent of the Neighborhood Village designation and are listed as primary land uses in the General Plan.

The LC zoning district allows Mini-Storage uses subject to obtaining a CUP. The review criteria to grant a CUP requires that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of, and is consistent with, the policies of the General Plan. Mini-storage or indoor self-storage is not listed as a primary or secondary land use in any general plan character area of the City but it does advance the goals of the Neighborhood Village and complies with the objectives of the City of Mesa General Plan in the following ways:

- A. The proposed development meets the Criteria for Review of Development (See Development Review Page 15-1)
  1. The proposed development is consistent with and furthers the intent and

direction of the General Plan by meeting the storage needs for the neighborhoods in this area. The proposal also supports a diverse and stable economy by supporting a viable new development in this area. (See “Guiding Principles” Page 3-7)

2. The proposed development is consistent with the adopted sub-area or neighborhood plans including as discussed in Paragraph B below.
  3. The proposed development is consistent with the standards and guidelines established for the Neighborhood Village character type including as discussed Paragraph B below.
  4. The proposed development will strengthen this Neighborhood Village character area by providing:
    - i. *Appropriate infill development.* Appropriate infill development necessitates analysis of the surrounding area and the viability of the proposed use. In this case, the proposed enclosed mini-storage facility is a two-story building which does not encroach into required building or landscape setbacks in the LC district and is generally regarded as a low intensity use including with regard to vehicular and pedestrian activity.
    - ii. *Adding to the mix of uses to further enhance the Neighborhood Village.* This Neighborhood Village area includes various retail businesses, full and limited-service restaurants, a fuel station, auto service shop, and other commercial uses. Adding additional mini-storage, restaurant, and retail uses will further enhance options for residents in Mesa.
    - iii. *Improving safety within the area.* The mini-storage use provides higher than typical security measures for commercial uses including by utilizing walls, gates, cameras, lighting measures, and indoor self-storage units. These security measures are in place to the positive benefit of surrounding properties.
    - iv. *Exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area.* This project is subject to review by the City of Mesa Design Review Board. As such, it will be held to the high standards of the established City of Mesa Commercial Design Review Guidelines.
- B. *The proposed mini-storage facility will service the needs of the nearby population (See Neighborhood Village Center Focus Page 7-16).* As indicated by the high performance of the adjacent Extra Space Storage site, this area of the City has strong demand for an additional mini-storage facility. The area within a two-mile radius of this project is marked by residential use with multiple higher density mobile home parks and multi-

family communities in the immediate vicinity, particularly directly south of University Drive. Mini-storage use is often a companion need for Mesa residents utilizing mobile home parks, apartments, and smaller lot residences because those housing types often lack physical space for storage needs.

- C. *The proposed mini-storage facility is a better option than alternative land uses for this site.* The project provides appropriate infill development and adds to the mix of uses to further enhance the intended character of the area and is the highest and best use for the location. Appropriate infill development necessitates analysis of the surrounding area and the viability of the proposed use. In this case, the proposed enclosed mini-storage facility is a two-story building which does not encroach into required building or landscape setbacks in the LC district and is generally regarded as a low intensity use in terms of vehicular and pedestrian activity. At the same time, security measures are in place which have a positive benefit to surrounding properties. The storage use is economically viable as indicated by the adjacent Extra Space Storage site. The subject site is tucked away from arterial frontage whereas other commercial uses, such as retail or restaurants, would typically need high visibility.

### III. Council Use Permit

Mini-storage is allowed in the LC district with approval of a Council Use Permit (CUP). The proposal conforms to all of the following criteria for CUP approval:

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.  
*Answer: Please see General Plan Conformance section of this narrative.*
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 with any other applicable City plan or policies.  
*Answer: Please see General Plan Conformance section of this narrative. We also note that the high-quality two-story design, adequate building setbacks, and gated operation, will ensure that the proposed project is harmonious with both the surrounding residential and commercial uses, including the adjacent Extra Space facility to the east.*
3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area of the proposed project or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City.  
*Answer: The proposed enclosed mini-storage facility is a two-story building which does not encroach into required building or landscape setbacks in the LC district and is generally regarded as a low intensity use in terms of vehicular and pedestrian activity.*

*The mini-storage use provides higher than typical security measures for commercial uses including by utilizing walls, gates, cameras, and lighting measures.*

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

*Answer: University Drive and Greenfield Road are fully improved right of way with utilities already installed to meet the needs of new commercial opportunities in this area.*

#### **IV. Special Use Permit**

The building design calls for use of mechanical screening up to 34 feet (4 feet above the base 30 foot building height). This mechanical screening would typically be allowed as a mechanical penthouse under the City's height allowances under MZO Table 11-30-3. Because this property is located in AOA3, any proposal that exceeds the base height limit, must obtain a Special Use Permit to ensure that such additional height is not a hazard to air navigation. For the following reasons, this proposal meets the criteria for granting a Special Use Permit under MZO Section 11-70-5(E).

- 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 City of Mesa allows exceptions to building height limits in various instances as outlined in MZO Table 11-30-3. Of course, an apparent conflict could exist when the height exception is applied within an Airflight Overlay, which Overlay is intended to assist with safe flight navigation. The height increase at this location does not conflict with the intent of the Airfield Overlay District purpose and intent. Importantly, this property is located on the fringe of the AOA-3 area and over 2 miles from Falcon Field. The request is for a de minimis 4-foot increase to the allowed 30-foot base height. The increase is for rooftop mechanical screening elements which would otherwise be allowed as exceptions to the height limits under the "mechanical penthouse" definition of MZO Section 11-30-3(A).

- 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 with any other applicable City plan or policies;***

Please see General Plan Conformance section of this narrative. The high-quality two-story design, adequate building setbacks, and gated operation, will ensure that the proposed project is harmonious with both the surrounding residential and commercial uses, including the adjacent Extra Space facility to the east.

- 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;***

There is over a 70-foot buffer between the residential property north of the site and the proposed building height increase. This is a significant buffer particularly given the limited scope of this request which is only triggered because the proposal is within the AOA-3.

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

University Drive and Greenfield Road are fully improved right of way with utilities already installed to meet the needs of new commercial opportunities in this area.

## **V. Conclusion**

Envisioned in this application is a mixed-use commercial development including new restaurants and retail offerings and a low intensity, indoor, climate controlled storage facility that is designed to be consistent with the surrounding properties. This new plan upgrades the previous storage approval with a more clean, modern, and aesthetically pleasing Class A climate-controlled project, ideal for this unique location. The project meets or exceeds the development standards of the LC zoning district, which contributes to appropriate transitions to the surrounding properties, and meets the neighborhood self-storage demand as shown in the Exhibit B Extra Space letter. As submitted, the proposed development will promote security and certainty on the site, thus contributing to neighborhood stability and value. The proposal will have a positive impact on the area by bringing new investment and providing services that will support the growing needs of local residents, businesses and employers.

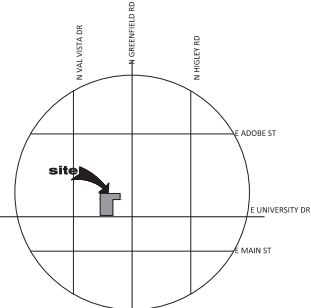




**PROJECT DIRECTORY**

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**Exhibit A**



**VICINITY MAP**

SCALE: N.T.S.

**UNIVERSITY MULTI-USE**  
 4312 E UNIVERSITY DRIVE  
 MESA ARIZONA 85205  
 DATE: 04-10-2023 (PRELIMINARY)

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SP-1

RKAA# 19066.00







September 28, 2022

City of Mesa Planning & Zoning Department  
Cooper Companies  
Reg Cooper & Mark Hanneken

Re: Letter of Interest

To Whom It May Concern:

Extra Space Storage (“Extra Space”) is a national leader in the self-storage industry and operates over 2,100 self-storage facilities. As part of its structure, Extra Space created a “Management Plus” program specifically designed for third party owners who seek professional management services for their respective self-storage properties. Pursuant to a management agreement, Extra Space operates and manages such properties for these third-party owners, bringing with it years of storage experience and expertise.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm Extra Space’s interest in managing the self-storage facility (or future self-storage facility) located at 4312 E University Dr, Mesa AZ (the “Property”) on behalf of Cooper Companies. This property will be run as an “annex” to our existing neighboring store at 448 N Greenfield Rd; which since opening, has been an extremely high performing facility. A normal self-storage facility may take anywhere from 2-3 years to reach 90% occupancy, otherwise known as “stabilization.” Greenfield Rd took 7 months to reach stabilization, one of the fastest lease ups in our company’s history. It continues to show very strong demand for storage as it is 99.2% occupied with only 9 units out of 610 available to rent. It is Extra Space’s view that this Mesa submarket has additional need for storage, and we look forward to partnering with Cooper Companies in meeting this need.

If you have any questions about this letter, please reach out to Dylan Taylor at 801-365-4907 or by e-mail at [dylan.taylor@extraspaces.com](mailto:dylan.taylor@extraspaces.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dylan Taylor".

Dylan Taylor  
Director, Third Party Management  
Extra Space Storage