



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Planning and Zoning Board

October 23, 2024

CASE No.: ZON24-00602	PROJECT NAME: Mesa Royale
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Owner's Name:	Mesa Royale East Motel LLC, Nuevas Vistas on Main, LLC, and Mesa Royale West LLC
Applicant's Name:	Benjamin W. Graff, Esq., Quarles & Brady LLP
Location of Request:	Within the 600 block of West Main Street (north side). Located west of Country Club on the north side of Main Street.
Parcel No(s):	135-57-027, 135-57-031, 135-57-032, 135-57-029A, 135-57-069, 135-57-070, 135-57-071, 135-57-074, 135-57-086, and 135-57-125
Request:	Rezone from General Commercial (GC) to GC with a Planned Area Development overlay (GC-PAD), Council Use Permit (CUP), and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for a multiple residential development.
Existing Zoning District:	General Commercial (GC)
Council District:	4
Site Size:	3.3± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Multiple Residence
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	October 23, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Jennifer Merrill, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **June 10, 1930**, the City Council annexed 551± acres into the City of Mesa including the southern portion of the project site (Ordinance No. 157).

On **December 6, 1948**, the City Council annexed 2,420± acres into the City of Mesa including the northern portion of the project site (Ordinance No. 228).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

This request is to rezone 3.3± acres from General Commercial (GC) to GC with a Planned Area Development overlay (GC-PAD), and for approval of a Council Use Permit (CUP) to allow residential uses in a commercial district, and Site Plan Review, for a multiple residential development (Proposed Project). The applicant represents Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc. (CPLC), a developer and owner of affordable housing in the Southwest. The proposal is to construct two three-story buildings containing 89 new residences. The site is comprised of ten parcels, and is currently vacant, but formerly contained the Mesa Royale mobile home park and two motels, the Kiva Lodge and a Motel 6.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

Per the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the project is within the Neighborhood character area with a Traditional Sub-Type, and within the Transit Corridor district. The intent of the Neighborhood character area is to provide safe places for people to live where they feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community. Although GC is not a listed zoning district, at the time the site and surrounding area was originally zoned GC, it complied with the General Plan and the area has subsequently moved to the Neighborhood Traditional character area. The proposed development is not seeking to change its underlying zoning district which was consistent with the General Plan, but instead merely add a PAD. Primary land uses for the Traditional character area include single and multi-residence uses. The proposed development includes a mixture of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, a community area, and a landscaped and amenity area located between the buildings, including a pedestrian path, shade structures and seating, which will offer opportunities for residents to enjoy their community.

The Transit Districts character type includes the light rail corridor, bus rapid transit corridors, and areas designated for a consistent high level of transit options. The focus in this character type is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. This character type overlays the other character types and is used to transition the area into a more transit and pedestrian oriented development form. The Corridors sub-type applies to development of the corridors between stations and stops and will be less intense, but still evolve into a more urban pattern with buildings brought close to the front property lines and parking behind or beside buildings. Streets should maintain a pedestrian orientation. Buildings are encouraged to be at least two-stories tall, located close to the street front to help frame the public realm, and designed to engage the street with a principal functional entry to face a public space. The southern building includes a community center that fronts onto Main Street and offers residents a primary entrance to the development near an existing bus stop. Staff's analysis is that the proposed development is in conformance with the Mesa 2040 General Plan. To the extent that the addition of the PAD is not in conformance with the zoning districts for character areas, Council may use its discretion to approve a minor deviation pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, which staff recommends based upon the size of the development, conformance and compatibility with the surrounding property zoning districts, and because the development's land uses are

primary and secondary land uses for both the Neighborhood Traditional and Transit Corridor character areas.

Central Main Street Area Plan

The project site is located within the Transit Adjacent – Residential character type of the Central Main Street Area Plan. These areas are envisioned to transform to a more urban environment with improved streetscape and an emphasis on medium- to medium-high-density residential development with limited mixed-use. Development in the Transit Adjacent – Residential type should include urban neighborhood development form that engages the street, building heights of two to three stories, and building fronts that engage pedestrians along the public rights of way. The primary focus in this area along West Main Street is to improve the Main Street environment with better sidewalks and street trees. Redevelopment that orients and engages buildings towards Main Street, consolidates parcels, and minimizes the prominence of surface parking is encouraged. Given the proximity to the Country Club Drive light rail station, redevelopment should focus on residential use with concentration of neighborhood-scale commercial uses at the intersections with Date and Extension Road. The proposed development meets the intent of the Central Main Street Area Plan.

West Main Street Area Plan

The project site is also located within the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Corridor Area of the West Main Street Area Plan. This Plan encourages high-density multi-family residential uses of at least 17 dwelling units per acre, and building heights of two to five stories. It also encourages reductions in the number of parking spaces required for transit-supportive developments. This request meets the intent of the West Main Street Area Plan.

Zoning District Designations:

The subject site is currently zoned General Commercial (GC). Per the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) Chapter 6, the purpose of the GC district is to provide indoor retail, limited outdoor display and related service-oriented businesses that serve a large surrounding residential trade area within a four- to five-mile radius. The permitted uses in the GC district include automobile-oriented uses and similar support services related to automobiles, welding, and light assembly and fabrication related to an on-site commercial use. Other supportive uses may include, but are not limited to commercial lodging, automotive, restaurant, office uses and public- and semi-public uses. Per MZO Table 11-6-2, multiple residence is a permitted use in the GC zoning district provided that a minimum of 60 percent of the gross floor area (GFA) of all the buildings for the project is reserved for commercial uses; a minimum of 65 percent of the ground floor of the building is reserved for commercial uses; and the maximum density is 25 units per acre. Any modifications to the commercial floor area and density requirements require approval of a Council Use Permit (CUP).

Council Use Permit

This request includes a Council Use Permit to allow the multiple residence use, with approximately 3.7 percent of the GFA of all the buildings for the project reserved for commercial uses, approximately 11 percent of the ground floor of the buildings reserved for commercial uses, and a density of 28 units per acre.

Section 11-31-31(F) outlines the criteria for approval of a Council Use Permit for residential uses in commercial districts:

- A. The use is found to be in compliance with the General Plan, Sub-Area Plans and other recognized development plans or policies, and will be compatible with surrounding uses; and

The proposed development is in compliance with the General Plan, as well as with both the Central Main Street Area Plan and the West Main Street Area Plan. Per the narrative, the development is uniquely located to implement the shared policies and strategies to create a high intensity, transit-oriented development.

- B. A finding that a plan of operation has been submitted, which includes, but is not limited to, acceptable evidence of compliance with all zoning, building, and fire safety regulations; and

A Plan of Operation has been provided, and together with the Site Plan provides evidence of compliance with zoning, building, and fire safety regulations.

- C. A finding that a "good neighbor policy" in narrative form has been submitted, which includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of acceptable measures to ensure ongoing compatibility with adjacent uses; including measures to assure that commercial activity will remain as a viable activity on this site; and

A Good Neighbor Policy was provided, which describes how the proposed development will fit with the adjacent townhomes to the north and the small businesses along Main Street.

- D. Evidence that acceptable documentation is present demonstrating that the building or site proposed for the use is in, or will be brought into, substantial conformance with all current City development standards, including, but not limited to, landscaping, parking, screen walls, signage, and design guidelines; and

Per the narrative, site plan, landscape plan, elevation drawings, and additional materials submitted with this request, the proposed development is in substantial conformance with City development standards including the Quality Development Design Guidelines.

- E. The overall project conforms to the intent and character of the zoning district and is part of a well integrated mixed-use project.

Per the narrative, the application demonstrates how this property is only one part of a larger variety of housing options and mixed-use developments CPLC is bringing to this stretch of West Main Street. This includes the Residences on Main, currently under construction and located at the northwest corner of Main Street and Country Club Drive, which will provide 19,000 square feet of commercial/retail in addition to market-rate housing.

Requests for a CUP shall also follow the review criteria set forth in Section 11-70-6(D) of the MZO:

- A. 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 request conforms to the goals of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the Central Main Street Area Plan and the West Main Street Area Plan, and meets the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1), by providing a pedestrian-oriented development within walking distance of transit stops, providing a strong pool of new employees and commercial/retail/restaurant customers in West Mesa, providing appropriate infill development, and improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area.

- B. 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;

The base zoning district, GC, allows for multi residential use with approval of a Council Use Permit. Per the narrative, new residents drawn to the area will capitalize on the shared policies and strategies of the West Main Street Area Plan and the Central Main Street Area Plan to be a walkable environment near existing commercial, retail, and service industries, while helping to invigorate both Downtown Mesa and West Mesa.

- C. 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; and

The development is appropriately situated within the commercial areas and buffered from the nearby single-family residential areas.

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

Due to the development's location along Main Street as a redevelopment proposal, the Property is fully served by all necessary infrastructure needs.

PAD Overlay Modification – MZO Article 3, Chapter 22:

The subject request includes a Planned Area Development overlay (PAD) to allow for modifications to certain required development standards of the MZO on the property. Per Section 11-22 of the MZO, the purpose of the PAD overlay is to allow innovative design and flexibility that creates high-quality development for the site where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development provides equivalent or superior standards. Table 1 below shows

the MZO required standards and the applicant’s proposed PAD standards, with requested modifications in bold font.

Table 1: Development Standards

Development Standards	MZO Required	PAD Proposed	Staff Recommendation
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A	30 feet	37 feet 4 inches	As proposed
<u>Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Proportion of Private and Common Open Space</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A & Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(a)	Open space may be provided in any combination of private and common open space, as long as studio and one (1) bedroom units have at least 60 square feet of private open space, two (2) bedroom units have at least 100 square feet of private open space and three (3) bedroom or more have at least 120 square feet of private open space	Open space may be provided in any combination of private and common open space, as long as studio and one (1) bedroom units have at least 64 square feet of private open space, two (2) bedroom units have at least 67 square feet of private open space and three (3) bedroom or more have at least 70 square feet of private open space	As proposed
<u>Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Accessibility and Location</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A & Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(e)(i)(1)	Private open space located at the ground level (e.g., yards, decks, patios) shall have no dimension less than ten (10) feet	Private open space located at the ground level (e.g., yards, decks, patios) are permitted one dimension less than six (6) feet, all other dimensions shall have no less than (10) feet	As proposed
<u>Materials and Colors</u> – MZO Section 11-6-3(B)(5)(d)	No more than fifty percent (50%) of the total facade may be covered with one (1) single material	No more than 67% of the east or west building elevations may be covered with one (1) single material	As proposed
<u>Required Parking</u>			

<p><u>Spaces by Use</u> – MZO Table 11-32-3.A –<i>Apartments: Development site not located within ¼ mile radius (1320-feet) of bus rapid transit or light rail station, regardless of bedroom count</i></p>	<p>Minimum of 2.1 spaces per dwelling unit (187 spaces)</p>	<p>Minimum of 1.15 spaces per dwelling unit, including office/retail area (104 spaces)</p>	<p>As proposed</p>
<p><u>Covered Spaces</u> – MZO Section 11-32-3(D)(2)</p>	<p>Multiple-residence projects shall provide a minimum of 1 covered parking space per unit</p>	<p>Multiple-residence projects shall provide a minimum of 0 covered parking space per unit</p>	<p>As proposed</p>

Maximum Building Height

Per the MZO Table 11-6-3.A, the maximum building height in the GC district is 30-feet, and the applicant is proposing three-story, 37’-4”-tall buildings. The parapet heights vary by two feet, to meet the requirements for roof articulation.

Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Proportion of Private and Common Open Space

Per the MZO Table 11-6-3.A, the minimum outdoor living area required for residential development in the GC district needs to follow the criteria in Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(a): Development Standards for the RM District, Standards for Required Open Space. Per that section, open space may be provided in any combination of private and common open space, as long as studio and one (1) bedroom units have at least 60 square feet of private open space, two (2) bedroom units have at least 100 square feet of private open space and three (3) bedroom or more have at least 120 square feet of private open space. The request is to provide at least 64 square feet of private open space for one bedroom units, at least 67 square feet of private open space for two bedroom units, and at least 70 square feet of private open space for three bedroom units. The proposal also includes a large common open space and amenity area located between the buildings, providing landscaping, seating, shade structures, and a walkway. Overall, the total amount of open space provided per unit exceeds the minimum required per the MZO.

Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Accessibility and Location

Per the MZO Table 11-6-3.A & Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(e)(i)(1), private open space located at the ground level (e.g., yards, decks, patios) shall have no dimension less than ten (10) feet. The proposal includes ground floor patios that are 10 feet wide by six feet deep, so one of the dimensions does not meet this criterion.

Materials and Colors

Per the MZO Section 11-6-3(B)(5)(d), no more than fifty percent (50%) of the total facade may be covered with one (1) single material. The wide elevations of each of the two buildings meet this criterion; however, the narrow (east and west) building elevations show stucco material covering a maximum of 67% of the elevations.

Required Parking Spaces by Use

Per the MZO Table 11-32-3.A, for multiple residence developments that are not located within ¼ mile (1,320-feet) of bus rapid transit or a light rail station, regardless of bedroom count, are required to provide a minimum of 2.1 parking spaces per unit, which equates to 187 total required parking spaces. The applicant is requesting a reduction to 1.15 spaces per unit, which is similar to apartment developments that are within ¼ mile of a light rail station. This development is located 1,500 feet from the light rail station located at Main Street and Country Club Drive, and it is located adjacent to a bus stop. The applicant also provided a Parking Analysis to support this request.

Covered Spaces

Per the MZO Section 11-32-3(D)(2), multiple-residence projects shall provide a minimum of one covered parking space per unit. Per the narrative, due to the use of landscape islands and the heights of both the Mesa Royale three-story apartments and the adjacent three-story townhomes, the majority of parking spaces will be shaded throughout the day. Trees are strategically located to provide ample shade, a visual transition between the site and adjacent uses, and frame elements of the architecture.

PAD Justification

Per the narrative, the proposed project offers a creative, high-quality development for both residents and the surrounding area, providing new employees and customers for nearby businesses. The site plan includes a community center to support small business development, and a 25,000 square foot landscaped courtyard with a path, playground, seating and other amenities. The site plan exceeds the required minimum outdoor living area of 150 square feet per unit by providing 280 square feet of shared open space in the courtyard, plus at least 64 square feet of private open space per unit. The proposed building and site design offers and encourages connections to the nearby community with street-facing units and pedestrian walkways linking to Main Street. These qualities demonstrate how the proposed development meets the intent of the PAD Overlay District outlined in Section 11-22-1 of the MZO.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The site plan shows two apartment buildings and a 25,000 square foot amenity area between them. The buildings are both three stories and include a total of 28 one-bedroom, 44 two-bedroom, and 17 three-bedroom units. The proposed buildings meet the required setback requirements from the property lines. The southern building fronts onto Main Street and includes a leasing office and a 4,542 square foot community center on the first floor, with the entry to the community center leading directly onto the public sidewalk adjacent to an existing bus stop. Residents can enter the development through the community center. Per the narrative, the intent of the community center is to provide community services that benefit woman-owned start-ups and businesses, including business training services operated by CPLC. The amenity area includes a pedestrian path, shaded playground, seating areas, over 50 trees,

and turf areas for games and picnics. The amenity area provides 280 square feet of shared open space per residential unit.

The site is accessed from several points along Main Street; pedestrian access is shown to each ground floor unit and to the community center, and vehicular access is provided via two driveways off of Main Street on the east and west ends of the development. A drive aisle is shown along the west, north and east property lines, with parking provided along both sides of the drive aisle. The request includes reductions to perimeter landscape yards along the west, north and east property lines with a minimum width of eight feet, which is wide enough to accommodate trees.

Overall, the site plan meets the review criteria set forth in Section 11-69-5.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board is scheduled to review the subject request on October 8, 2024. Staff will be working with the applicant to address any comments and recommendations from the Design Review Board.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest RM-3 Single Residence	North RM-3-PAD and RM-2 Multiple residential	Northeast RM-2 Single Residence
West GC Auto Sales	Subject Property GC Vacant	East GC Multiple Residence, Restaurant
Southwest (Across Main St.) GC Retail, Auto Sales	South (Across Main St.) GC Office, Auto Sales	Southeast (Across Main St.) GC Office

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The surrounding properties contain single and multiple residence, restaurant, auto sales, retail and office uses. CPLC is currently developing townhomes adjacent to the north of the project site. The proposed apartment use, with a community center and pedestrian access to Main Street, is compatible with the surrounding uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation process including notifying surrounding property owners within 1,000 feet, HOAs within one mile and registered neighbors within one-half mile, and the Councilmember and Council District Coordinator. A neighborhood meeting was held at Emerson Elementary School on September 16, 2024. Prior to the neighborhood meeting, several residents contacted the applicant, including two who shared concerns with Planning staff regarding parking overflow on Pepper Place, construction traffic, noise and

security. Those emails are included in the packet materials. No nearby residents or property owners attended the neighborhood meeting.

School Impact Analysis:

Planning staff provided Mesa Public Schools with information about the proposed multiple residence development. The development is located within the boundaries of Emerson Elementary, Carson Junior High, and Westwood High Schools. Planning received confirmation from the Associate Superintendent that the local public schools have capacity to serve the anticipated number of students.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff finds the subject request is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the intent of the PAD overlay outlined in MZO Section 11-22-1, the criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in MZO Section 11-69-5 of the MZO, and the review criteria for Council Use Permits to modify density and floor area requirements for residential uses in commercial districts outlined in MZO Sections 11-31-31(F) and 11-70-6.

Staff recommends approval with the following **Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with the Plan of Operation and Good Neighbor Policy submitted.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review Case No. DRB24-00603.
4. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
5. All off-site improvements and street frontage landscaping must be installed in the first phase of construction.
6. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modification to the development standards as approved with this PAD overlay as shown in the following table:

Development Standards	PAD Approved
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A	37 feet 4 inches
<u>Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Proportion of Private and Common Open Space</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A & Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(a)	Open space may be provided in any combination of private and common open space, as long as studio and one (1) bedroom units have at least 64 square feet of private open space, two (2) bedroom units have at least 67 square feet of private open space and three (3) bedroom or more have at least 70 square feet of private open space
<u>Minimum Outdoor Living Area, Accessibility and Location</u> – MZO Table 11-6-3.A & Section 11-5-5(A)(3)(e)(i)(1)	Private open space located at the ground level (e.g., yards, decks, patios) are permitted one dimension less than six (6) feet, all other

	dimensions shall have no less than (10) feet
<u>Materials and Colors</u> – MZO Section 11-6-3(B)(5)(d)	No more than 67% of the east or west building elevations may be covered with one (1) single material
<u>Required Parking Spaces by Use</u> – MZO Table 11-32-3.A <i>-Apartments: Development site not located within ¼ mile radius (1320-feet) of bus rapid transit or light rail station, regardless of bedroom count</i>	Minimum of 1.15 spaces per dwelling unit, including office/retail area (104 spaces)
<u>Covered Spaces</u> – MZO Section 11-32-3(D)(2)	Multiple-residence projects shall provide a minimum of 0 covered parking space per unit

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Staff Report
- Exhibit 2 – Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 3 – Project Narrative
- Exhibit 4 – Site Plan
- Exhibit 5 – Landscape Plan
- Exhibit 6 – Grading and Drainage Report
- Exhibit 7 – Elevations
- Exhibit 8 – Citizen Participation Plan
- Exhibit 9 – Citizen Participation Report
- Exhibit 10 – Emails from two neighbors
- Exhibit 11 – Plan of Operation
- Exhibit 12 – Good Neighbor Policy
- Exhibit 13 – Parking Analysis
- Exhibit 14 – Power Point Presentation