

Design Review Narrative

PACIFIC PROVING TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS

CASE No.: DRB24-00191

**LOCATION: NORTHEAST CORNER OF PECOS ROAD AND CRISMON ROAD
ALIGNMENT**

(PARCEL NUMBERS: 313-25-859Z AND A PORTION OF 313-25-859Y)

Overview

On behalf of Pacific Proving / Mesa BA Land, LLC (“Pacific Proving”), the property owner, this application proposes to develop ± 178 acres located at the northeast corner of Pecos Road and the Crismon Road alignment (the “Property”). Pacific Proving is planning to develop the Property into an industrial project (the “Pacific Proving Technology Campus”). The proposed development is envisioned to be a data center and technology employment campus, which is the “right fit” for this location and capitalizes on the significant technology infrastructure investments made in the area by the City of Mesa and Salt River Project to supply power and technology resources to the area. The proposed hybrid data center and technology employment campus will continue to encourage additional growth in these technological users/businesses.

Applications have been submitted to annex the Property into the City of Mesa (Case: ANX24-00192) as well as to amend the General Plan from Mixed Use Community to Employment and to rezone the Property (with Site Plan approval) to Light Industrial (“LI”) with Planned Area Development (“PAD”) overlay (Case: ZON24-00190).

The Request

This Design Review submittal package will finish off the requisite entitlements for the proposed Pacific Proving Technology Campus. Pursuant to the City of Mesa’s review process (11-71-6: - Review Criteria) the proposed project conforms with the criteria outlined below.

- 1.** The project is consistent with:
 - a.** Applicable goals, objectives and policies of the general plan and any applicable sub-area or neighborhood area plans;
 - b.** All of the development standards of this Ordinance;
 - c.** Other adopted Council policies, as may be applicable; and
 - d.** Any specific conditions of approval placed on the zoning of the property.

Responses to 1a.-1d:

As noted, the Property is designated as Mixed Use Community by the City's 2040 General Plan. Pacific Proving is requesting to update the General Plan designation on the Property to Employment to accommodate the proposed light industrial development. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Employment districts typically have minimal connection to the surrounding area and are used for employment-type uses such as manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. Per the Plan, one of the goals for Employment districts is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high-quality settings. The subject proposal for industrial warehouse buildings is a typical land use in the employment character area and will help further the goal of the General Plan Character Area.

The Property also abuts the City's Pecos Advanced Manufacturing Zone ("PAMZ") to the south, which envisions the area developing with high-skilled technical manufacturing and ancillary uses. In addition, the Property is located within the Gateway Area Business District and the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Logistics and Commerce District, which is intended to create a high-quality employment environment that is compatible with increasing over-flight activities associated with Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Finally, the Property is located within Airfield Overflight Area-2 ("AOA-2"), due to its general proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The Airfield Overflight Area is an overlay zone to provide compatibility and airspace protection for the airport. AOA-2 corresponds to those areas exposed to long-term future noise (DNL 60 to DNL 65) and identifies incompatible uses such as: residential, hospitals, schools, etc. The proposed use fits within the AOA-2.

The City's LI zoning district provides a desired level of uses and development standards for the project, while the PAD overlay will provide for appropriate modifications for the specific proposal and intended end users. The proposed LI PAD zoning is consistent with the City's General Plan and the zoning of nearby properties. Pacific Proving's proposed project is well-suited for the immediate area and compatible with planned and existing development. The Property is ideally located just south and east of Mesa Gateway Airport – the second major airport serving the Greater Phoenix metro region – and within easy access to the nearby State Route 24 freeway extension and Loop 202 freeway, which are important regional transportation corridors. The proposed uses within the Pacific Proving Technology Campus are consistent with the desired land uses for the area as identified in the City's planning and policy documents, which include evolving industrial, and employment uses with a significant technology footprint and other similar uses. The proposal is compatible with the increasing over-flight activity of the adjacent airport.

The proposed development will be in conformance with these goals by providing for appropriate, airport-adjacent use. The proposed data center and technology employment campus represents an ideal use within the AOA-2.

2. The overall design of the project including its scale, massing, site plan, exterior design, and landscaping will enhance the appearance and features of the project site, the street type, and surrounding natural and built environment.

Response:

The massing and scale of the buildings will be broken up using wall texture, color, material changes, shadow lines, and other façade treatments. The building massing and scale is compatible with existing and anticipated developments in the area which will primarily be industrial and manufacturing in nature. Plant material has been selected for color, texture, scale, and seasonal flowering and placed in a thematic pattern to reinforce the landscape theme throughout the project.

The common/amenity areas will be designed and arranged as usable, functional spaces and be furnished with shaded and open-air eating, seating, and gathering amenities. Thus, the overall design of the project will enhance the appearance and features both onsite and offsite for the betterment of the surrounding environment.

3. The overall design will create a distinctive and appealing community by providing architectural interest in areas visible from streets, sidewalks, and public areas.

Response:

The overall project design will contribute to the creation of an inviting and interesting employment hub. The project takes into context its surroundings by articulating and orienting the building entrances towards more prominent/visible areas and locating loading and parking areas between or behind the buildings, if possible. In addition, the building's designs create an attractive street frontage by including the enhanced building design as well as plenty of open landscaped areas that connect to the abutting streets.

4. The project site plan is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide a suitable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community.

Response:

The buildings have been oriented to provide a strong relationship with the street while screening internal truck loading dock areas from public right-of-way. Outdoor public spaces for sitting, eating, gathering, etc. have been provided within the site. Buildings have been placed on the site in a coordinated manner to provide order to employees and visitors.

As opposed to a large single parking lot providing the dominant visual feature of the site, the proposed parking areas have been dispersed throughout the site with a central focus for employees/visitors along spine road and internal to the site or by the freeway. The enhanced landscaping/open areas along the streets and along the spine road/office building will provide greater comfort and visual enrichment for those using the facility and as those driving by. Drive aisles/widths have been specifically designed to delineate car and truck traffic to provide a safe environment for cars and pedestrians, as much as possible. As mentioned, parking areas are

buffered by landscaped setbacks and screen walls, where appropriate, obscuring views of the parking areas while still providing a line of sight to the buildings beyond.

The proposed entry drives along Pecos Road (main entrance and secondary) will be enhanced with ornamental landscaping, low-level decorative walls, monument type signs, and/or special paving/asphalt to emphasize the main entrance to the site. Loading and service areas will be clearly delineated to avoid conflicts with pedestrians, employee/visitor vehicles or bikes.

5. Project details, colors, materials, and landscaping, are internally consistent, fully integrated with one another, and used in a manner that is visually consistent with the proposed architectural design and creates a safe, attractive, and inviting environment at the ground floor of buildings on sides used by the public.

Response:

The proposed robust buildings and landscaping design provides a successful combination of aesthetics and function. These elements provide interest, safety, etc. for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

The design of the proposed warehouse and data hall/shell buildings is informed by the modern vernacular of the primary office building while being adapted to the anticipated function. The proposed data hall/shell buildings are designed to have varying interior clear heights, which will provide flexibility to accommodate data systems or other future employment uses. Exterior wall design is concrete tilt panel construction, with large semi-uninterrupted volumes. On the long sides of the buildings, the panels will feature a palette of complementary colors and variation in textures or materials to “break up” and enhance the facades. To avoid the typical long, single-parapet height with a length of several hundred feet often seen in buildings of this size, the service court sides of the buildings will have varying parapet heights to provide more architectural movement on the roofline. Administrative office areas for the data halls will be oriented towards the entry drive and articulated to create a distinctive entry. Service and loading areas will be provided on the opposite sides of the buildings to minimize undesirable views from the primary employee access areas and entry drive.

The proposed landscape theme has been prepared to illustrate the layout, quantities, and sizes of plant material. The landscape plan has been prepared to provide a level of detail to illustrate the landscape theme for the common open space areas and the foundation base landscaping. Placement and massing are intended to show compatibility with the project’s architectural design theme.

6. The project is compatible with neighboring development by avoiding big differences in building scale and character between developments on adjoining lots in the same zoning district and providing a harmonious transition in scale and character between different districts.

Response:

The larger area (i.e., south of State Route 24 and east of Mesa Gateway Airport) is planned for, or is being developed currently for, other similar light industrial and employment uses as well as a freight rail extension (i.e., PIRATE). The proposed development, building design, and landscape theme are compatible with the proposed uses being developed and will blend well with those future uses too, due to the quality of the overall design. Thus, it is envisioned that additional similar zoning cases will continue to occur in the area with similar styles of development types/designs providing for a harmonious transition as this area of the city continues to prosper and develop.

7. The project contributes to the creation of a visually interesting built environment that includes a variety of building styles and designs with well-articulated structures that present well designed building facades on all sides, rooflines, and building heights within a unifying context that encourages increased pedestrian activity and promotes compatibility among neighboring land uses within the same or different districts.

Response:

The buildings are designed to provide flexibility within the interior volume as well as exterior. Screening of any rooftop mechanical equipment will be provided by the parapets.

The design provides architectural interest and variety that relate to the human scale in the following ways.

- *Changes in plane - As identified on the elevations and on the building plans with enlarged plan details. Recessed entries also create additional visual depth.*
- *Change in texture - Through use of concrete patterns, both smooth and patterned with lines.*
- *Pattern - Reveals are utilized to significantly break up large wall expanses.*
- *Windows – Use of glass strategically throughout and at focal/entry points.*
- *Equivalent Elements:*

Overhead doors – The overhead doors are integral parts of any industrial building, and the data center user has some as well. These doors provide a percentage of the façade to provide visual interest. Hence, they are a

separate and distinct material from the concrete walls. The overhead doors subdivide the façade helping to reduce the scale.

Suffice to say, the buildings design is compatible with the proposed use, the zoning within the surrounding area, and both neighboring/future development projects in the immediate area.

8. The project creates visual variety and relief in buildings and avoids a large-scale, bulky, or box-like appearance.

Response:

The exterior wall design is concrete tilt panel construction, with large semi-uninterrupted volumes, with focus on the corners of the building for the suite entry points. Main entry points have identifiable design/attributes. The use of texture, color, material changes, glass, shadow lines, and other façade treatments will be used to add visual interest and avoid large monotonous facades.

Building facades and entries on the short sides are oriented towards, as much as possible, the future private drives, providing easily recognizable entry areas and providing a more attractive look. Additionally, lighting in the parking lot areas and along pedestrian walkways shall enhance the architectural features of the building structures and reinforce design concepts.

The building massing and scale is compatible with existing and anticipated developments in the area which will primarily be industrial in nature.

9. The streetscapes, including street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture, are consistent with the character of activity centers, commercial districts and nearby residential neighborhoods.

Response:

The proposed development's streetscape design will be compatible with the proposed use, the proposed/surrounding zoning and neighboring projects which will complement the area.

10. Street frontages are attractive and interesting for pedestrians and provide for greater safety by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere.

Response:

The landscape design will create an attractive street frontage along the public street frontages. The project will also include an 8' decorative perimeter screen wall to conceal undesirable views and create a more appealing and inviting streetscape. The automobile parking has been sited to minimize conflict with truck maneuvering and to conveniently serve the employee and visitor entries. The unique constraints of the site due to the storm drainage along Pecos Road has allowed the building and minimal parking areas to be significantly setback from Pecos Road and

Crismon Road (future alignment) along with a decorative landscaping, which minimizes the building scale and creates a softer “edge” along the streetscape. Employee areas have also been located to avoid utilitarian areas and to provide visual interest to the internal street systems.

11. The proposed landscaping plan is suitable for the type of project and site conditions and will improve the appearance of the community by enhancing the building and site design; and the landscape plan incorporates plant materials that are drought-tolerant, will minimize water usage, and are compatible with Mesa's climate.

Response:

Landscaping will consist of all Low Water Use Plant Materials. A lush landscape appearance will be achieved through the careful placement of colorful shrubs and flowering ground covers. The landscape design is a combination of formal and semi-formal masses of singular plants in rows with colorful accent plants that will look good year-round and create a dynamic landscape theme. The project features well-landscaped parking areas to create a shaded pedestrian friendly atmosphere. All parking areas include planted landscape islands to add visual appeal and breakup the pavement. Thus, the impression is a well-designed, lush, and interesting/biodiverse landscape environment.

12. The project has been designed to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, building siting, and landscape design. The project also mitigates the effects of solar exposure for users and pedestrians. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that meet environmental standards such as LEED™, Green Globes, or equivalent third-party certification are considered to be energy efficient.

Response:

As previously stated, the buildings are designed to provide some flexibility. However, the site lends itself nicely to allowing a north/south orientation, which is optimal in hot climates to minimize exposure along the hottest east/west elevations. Through this orientation the loading dock areas can also be screened internally, somewhat, by the buildings themselves, which allows for shade/cooling for workers.

The proposed landscape design provides screening, visual interest and shade to the site using low water use desert adapted planting material and is in compliant with city of Mesa code requirements, ADA requirements, and crime prevention through environmental design guidelines.

As a result of the above, the buildings and landscaping will be a successful combination of both aesthetics and function, providing interest for vehicles and pedestrians on the street and the users of all the adjacent properties.

Alternative Compliance Request

It is worth noting, Pacific Proving also proposes the following amendments to design standards.

1. Building facades that are in areas behind screen walls or not visible from public streets shall **not** be considered ‘publicly visible’.
2. Use of form liners for concrete wall panels are to be considered separate and distinct materials with different form liners considered separate and distinct from each other.
3. At least one-color variation is to be considered as a separate and distinct material.
4. Horizontal reveal joints and/or scoring shall be considered ‘parapet detailing’. Reveal joints shall be considered part of the subdividing of areas to meet wall articulation requirements.
5. Allow parking for employees and visitors fronting Crismon Road (future alignment), Pecos Road, and State Route 24 freeway with enhanced landscaping provided for shade/screening/visual enrichment.

In addition to all previously stated Amendments to Design Standards (IV.C.), Pacific Proving is seeking Alternative Compliance for the following provisions from Section 11-7-3.B of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance:

- a. Publicly visible facades (i.e., viewed from rights-of-way), may not have blank, uninterrupted wall lengths exceeding 50-feet without including at least two (2) of the following: change in plane, change in texture or masonry pattern, windows, or an equivalent element that subdivides the wall to create proportionality.
- b. Vary building height, providing at least two (2) changes in height or roof forms over different portions of the building through changes in pitch, plane, and orientation.
- c. All parapets must have detailing such as cornices, moldings, trim, scoring, or variations in texture.
- d. Primary entrances along major facades shall be clearly defined with facade variations, porticos, roof variations, recesses and projections, or other integral building forms.
- e. To reduce the apparent massing and scale of buildings, facades shall incorporate at least three (3) different and distinct materials.
- f. No more than fifty percent (50%) of the total façade may be covered with one (1) single material.

Due to the large scale of the data center/shell buildings and the standard method of construction for these buildings, it is challenging to create the same type of detailing that is used on smaller commercial buildings. Multiple changes in plane for the tilt-up walls create structural inefficiencies and are not conducive to this type/size of building. The design team has used a combination of design characteristics (i.e., form, color, texture, and material

where logical and appropriate) to give the building visual interest and appropriate scale, where possible. The primary entries have been designed as focal points with additional forms, materials, and glazing.

The following proposals shall be considered as Alternative Compliance:

- a. We propose a “change in articulation” in lieu of 50-feet due to the large scale and practical function of the warehouse and data hall/shell buildings. The buildings have been designed with ample articulation along the façades. This articulation includes the employee entries, windows, changes in tonality and pattern (i.e., reveals or patterns in the concrete), and the provision of building height changes (as appropriate to indicate use) to enhance the overall visual appeal of the buildings. There is also further articulation and use of accent materials to define employee areas and to add architectural interest.
- b. Change in plane happens at offset panels which create shadow lines and plane change. Changes in pitch, plane and orientation are achieved through the incorporation of color, forms, and textures into the façade design as well as height changes. We feel that the addition of cornice or cap elements to these panels would weaken the massing and would minimize the “change in plane” that is in place.
- c. The varied materials include painted/integral concrete, board form concrete, reveals in the concrete, rustic or finished metal, glass, and/or color changes. As noted, we are proposing that the different use/treatment (e.g., reveals, etc.) of concrete be treated as distinct materials. The proposed elevations include a table with a detailed breakdown of the various façade elements.
- d. The proposed elevations will include a table with a detailed breakdown of the various façade elements. The concrete tilt wall construction is common for these types of buildings and the design team has worked diligently to ensure that there are visual elements of interest via the color, material and/or texture, windows, etc. along the façades.

Conclusion

The proposed Pacific Proving Technology Campus has been designed to accommodate not only a data center and technology employment campus but a variety of light industrial and employment users. The quality of the proposed overall design is appropriate for the area and consistent with prior approvals as well as provides the necessary flexibility needed for end-users. Special attention to screening (i.e., landscaping, and interior loading views) along with unique and interesting building design features were primary design objectives when developing the project’s design.