

COUNCIL MINUTES

September 4, 2025

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in the Study Session room at City Hall, 20 East Main Street, on September 4, 2025, at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mark Freeman
Rich Adams*
Jennifer Duff
Alicia Goforth
Francisco Heredia
Julie Spilsbury

COUNCIL ABSENT

Scott Somers

OFFICERS PRESENT

Scott Butler
Holly Moseley
Jim Smith

(*Participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Mayor Freeman conducted a roll call.

Mayor Freeman excused Vice Mayor Somers from the entire meeting.

1. Review and discuss items on the agenda for the September 8, 2025, Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflict of interest: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

In response to a request for clarification from Councilmember Duff regarding Item 6-a, **(A resolution declaring the documents filed with the City Clerk titled "Chapter 14 - Employment Opportunity District" to be a public record and providing for the availability of the documents for public use and inspection with the City Clerk.)**, on the Regular Council agenda, Assistant Planning Director Rachel Phillips displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Phillips provided an overview and explained that the text amendment to Chapter 14, Employment Opportunity (EO) District creates an expedited review process for major employment-generating projects. (See Pages 2 through 4 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Phillips discussed the proposed amendments and general language modifications for clarity. (See Pages 5 and 6 of Attachment 1)

Responding to a question posed by Mayor Freeman, City Manager Scott Butler explained that political subdivisions are part of the City's partnership with Arizona State University (ASU) to develop the potential of the ASU Innovation Zone at the Polytechnic campus. He noted that the zoning is a prerequisite to finalizing agreements with ASU and stated that the plan includes guidelines allowing development to evolve based on market demand. He referenced examples of the Novus corridor in Tempe and ASU that set parameters and collaboration with the Economic Development Team to ensure the proper uses are aligned with the types of businesses, opportunities, and environments that the City wants to attract, for a vibrant mixed-use development.

In response to a question from Councilmember Heredia, Ms. Phillips explained that 140 contiguous acres is a requirement to utilize the EO District.

Mr. Butler explained that the City has engaged with school districts and other entities to explore future opportunities for land reuse and optimization. He added that the City has expressed a strong willingness and desire to collaborate on helping large organizations maximize the best potential of their land holdings.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Adams, Ms. Phillips answered that there are a limited number of parcels that contain 140 or more contiguous acres.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown added that the purpose of modifying the minimum area requirements to 140 contiguous acres is to focus on job creation for large-scale employment type areas.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Ms. Phillips replied that as part of utilizing the EO District for a political subdivision, an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) or Development Agreement (DA) with the City is required, as well as parameters on the amount of commercial property that can be developed with the project.

In response to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Ms. Kopaskie-Brown explained that if the City Council approves the EO amendments, the next step will be for ASU to submit an EO Development Plan.

Mayor Freeman thanked staff for the presentation.

Downtown Transformation Manager Jeff McVay introduced Economic Development Project Manager Jimmy Cerracchio, regarding Item 5-a, **(Approving and authorizing the City Manager to enter into a ground lease, development agreement, and option to purchase agreement; and three phase-specific development agreements and real estate sales agreements between the City of Mesa and RN 1 Real Estate, LLC (aka, Culdesac) to lease and for the development and sale of approximately 25-acres of City-owned land at the southwest corner of University and Mesa Drives. (District 4))**, on the Regular Council agenda. He provided an overview of the ground lease that will function as both a Development Agreement (DA) and an option to purchase the property. He emphasized that rather than negotiating three separate agreements, one comprehensive agreement was drafted and then replicated with any necessary adjustments. He highlighted the three phases of the Culdesac project, as well as the commercial, open space, and residential amenities.

Mr. Butler clarified that there have not been any substantial changes to the lease or agreements since the last Council presentation.

In response to a question from Mayor Freeman, Mr. McVay stated that Culdesac will be responsible for the maintenance of the public access to the green space within the development.

2-a. Hear a presentation, discuss, and provide direction on the proposed Center Street Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project between Main Street and University Drive.

Interim Transportation Director Erik Guderian displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 2)**

Mr. Guderian provided an overview of the Center Street Project and discussed funding limitations. He indicated that staff has benefited from three feasibility studies conducted to determine the best recommendations possible for Center Street. He described the scope and goals of the Center Street Project and highlighted the enhancements. He highlighted the staff recommendations, including the improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, and parallel parking. (See Pages 2 through 7 of Attachment 2)

In response to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Guderian answered that the speed limit on First Avenue is 30 miles per hour.

Mr. Guderian reviewed the proposed recommendations for a roundabout on 2nd Street and the benefits of the improvement. He noted that further design work is needed to determine whether a roundabout can be effectively implemented and will consider any impacts to the current parade route. (See Page 8 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Guderian discussed the next steps and requested Council's direction to move forward. (See Page 9 of Attachment 2)

Responding to a question from Councilmember Spilsbury, Mr. Guderian replied that staff will update Council with details as the design process moves forward.

Discussion ensued regarding safety and connectivity for cyclists, accommodating bus stops, and traffic flow.

In response to multiple questions from Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Guderian stated that Center Street is a four-lane collector street that can accommodate from 15,000 to 20,000 vehicles daily. He advised that staff evaluates each street project for capacity and any challenges with traffic to determine the best option.

Mayor Freeman acknowledged that the consensus of Council is to proceed on the proposed Center Street Project.

Mayor Freeman thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

3-a. Historic Preservation Advisory Board meeting held on April 1, 2025.

3-b. Housing and Community Development Advisory Board meeting held on March 6, 2025.

3-c. Public Safety Committee meeting held on June 24, 2025.

It was moved by Councilmember Spilsbury, seconded by Councilmember Goforth, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Adams–Duff–Goforth–Heredia–Spilsbury

NAYS – None

ABSENT – Somers

Mayor Freeman declared the motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. Current events summary including meetings and conferences attended.

Mayor Freeman and Councilmembers highlighted the events, meetings, and conferences recently attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings.

City Manager Scott Butler stated that the schedule of meetings is as follows:

Monday, September 8, 2025, 5:15 p.m. – Study Session

Monday, September 8, 2025, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council

Thursday, September 11, 2025, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:33 a.m.

MARK FREEMAN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 4th day of September 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

EMPLOYEEMENT OPPORTUNITY DISTRICT (EO) TEXT AMENDMENTS

September 8, 2025

Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director

Rachel Phillips, Assistant Planning Director

Cassidy Welch, Principal Planner

WHAT IS AN EO DISTRICT?

2

- An Employment Opportunity (EO) District is a flexible zoning district which allows applicants to establish unique:
 - Land uses and land use groups (LUGs)
 - Development standards
 - Review processes
- Adopted in 2016 by City Council to support:
 - Facilitate entitlements for employment-generating projects with innovative land uses
 - Provide market flexibility while incentivizing high-quality development
 - Enable creative, site-specific design solutions

NEXT AMENDMENT OVERVIEW

3

- Repeal and Replace Chapter 14 - Employment Opportunity District
- Amendments to Section 11-86-1(A), the purpose and applicability statement for use type classifications

NEXT AMENDMENT PURPOSE

4

- To enhance the utility of the EO District and encourage its use for large, mixed-use projects undertaken by political subdivisions of the State of Arizona
- Amendments create a regulatory framework that identifies :
 - Exemptions of political subdivisions of the State of Arizona; and
 - Land uses under the City's authority to review

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

5

GENERAL TOPICS:

- Update General Plan references
 - From: Employment and/or Employment/Mixed Use Activity District
 - To: Regional Center or Regional Employment Center
- Modify minimum area requirements for an EO District
 - Allow land to be added to an existing EO District with no minimum area requirement

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

6

GENERAL TOPICS:

- Provide flexibility in the review process for adjustments to development standards
 - Establish unique review criteria - may be based on categories of land use, development activity, project, or site
 - May require an associated development agreement or intergovernmental agreement
- Modify language and organization of the chapter for clarity

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

7

SPECIFIC TO POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS:

- Modify minimum area requirements to establish an EO District
 - 140 contiguous acres
- Require that an EO District become the zoning designation immediately - not established as a “floating zone”
- Require an Intergovernmental Agreement or development agreement concurrent with the rezone

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

8

SPECIFIC TO POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS:

- Expand ability to categorize land use
 - In addition to establishing the permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses
 - Identify land uses, development activities, projects, and sites that are exempt from the City's review
 - Subject to the political subdivisions site plan review, modification, and expirations
- Requiring all signs to comply with the MZO

QUESTIONS?







MESA MOVES
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACES

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Attachment 2
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Center Street Project – Main Street to University Drive

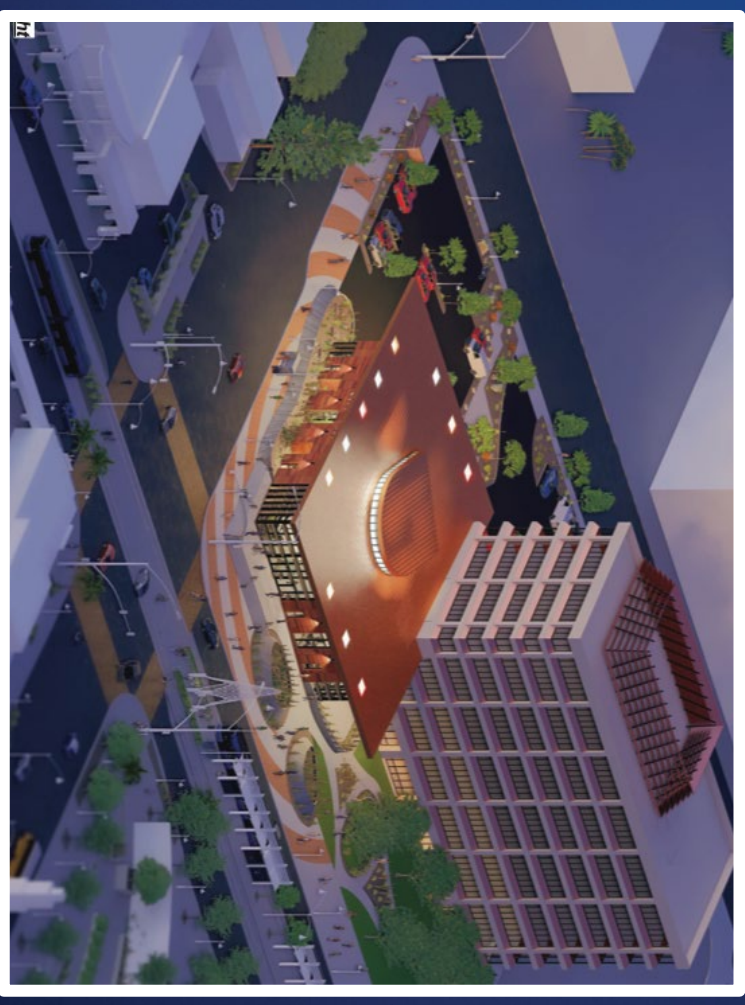
Erik Guderian

Interim Transportation Department Director

September 4, 2025

Presentation Overview

- History
- Project Scope
- Project Elements
- Preferred Alternative
- What's Next?



History – Center Street Project



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2020 Mesa Moves Program

- Design Concept Report (2024)
- 2024 Bond - \$7M allocated for Streets Projects
- Downtown Micromobility and Parking Study (2025)
- Convention Center Master Plan (2025)



FACILITY IMPROVEMENT STUDY FOR THE MESA CONVENTION CENTER AND AMPHITHEATRE

MARCH 20, 2025

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Scope

Focus of today is on Main Street to University Drive

Goals

- Enhance travel for people walking and bicycling to/from Downtown and within Downtown
- Provide a gateway into Downtown – A sense of arrival
- Connect Convention Center to Downtown businesses

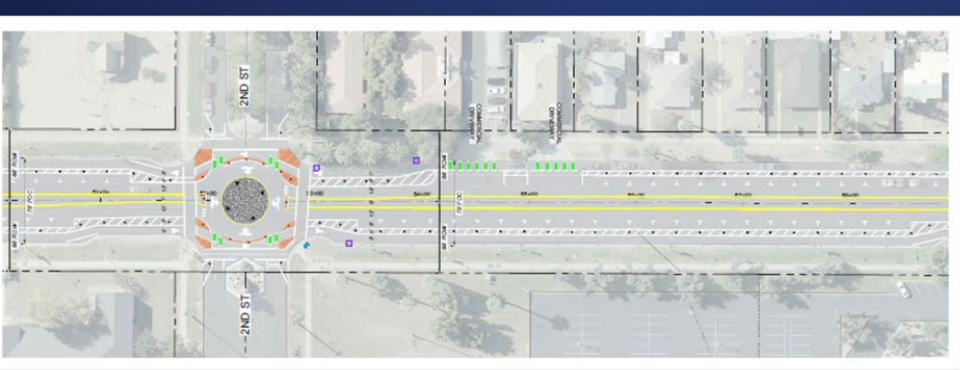


Project Elements

Remove Travel Lane

Provide Enhanced Bike Lanes

- Provide Parking as a Buffer
- Elevate Pedestrian Experience
 - Wider Sidewalks
 - Shade
- Install Roundabout at 2nd Street
- Provide Turn Lane at Intersections
- Reduce Speed Limit to 25mph



Preferred Alternative – Staff Recommendations

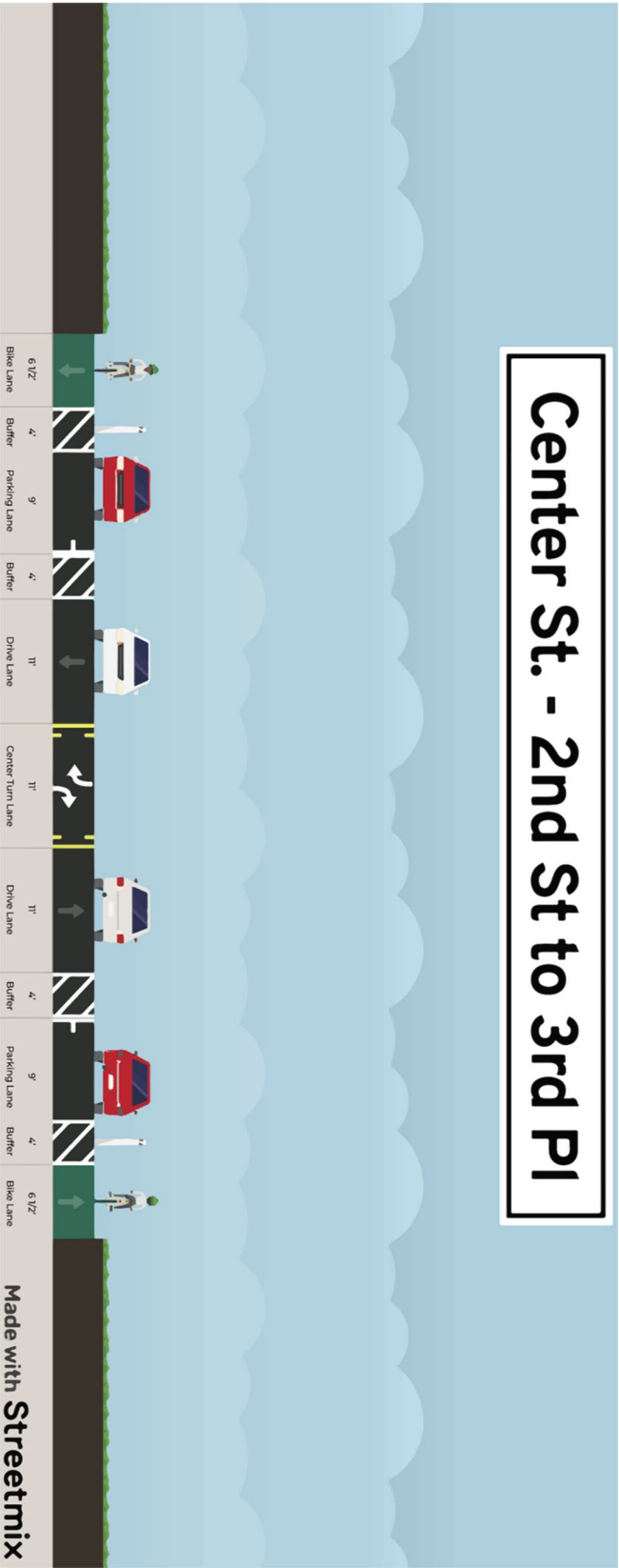


- Wider Sidewalk (Main Street to 2nd Street)
 - Provide shade
 - Possible curb reconstruction
- Separated Bike Lanes (Curb Side)
 - 6.5-foot lane
 - 4-foot buffer

Preferred Alternative – Staff Recommendations



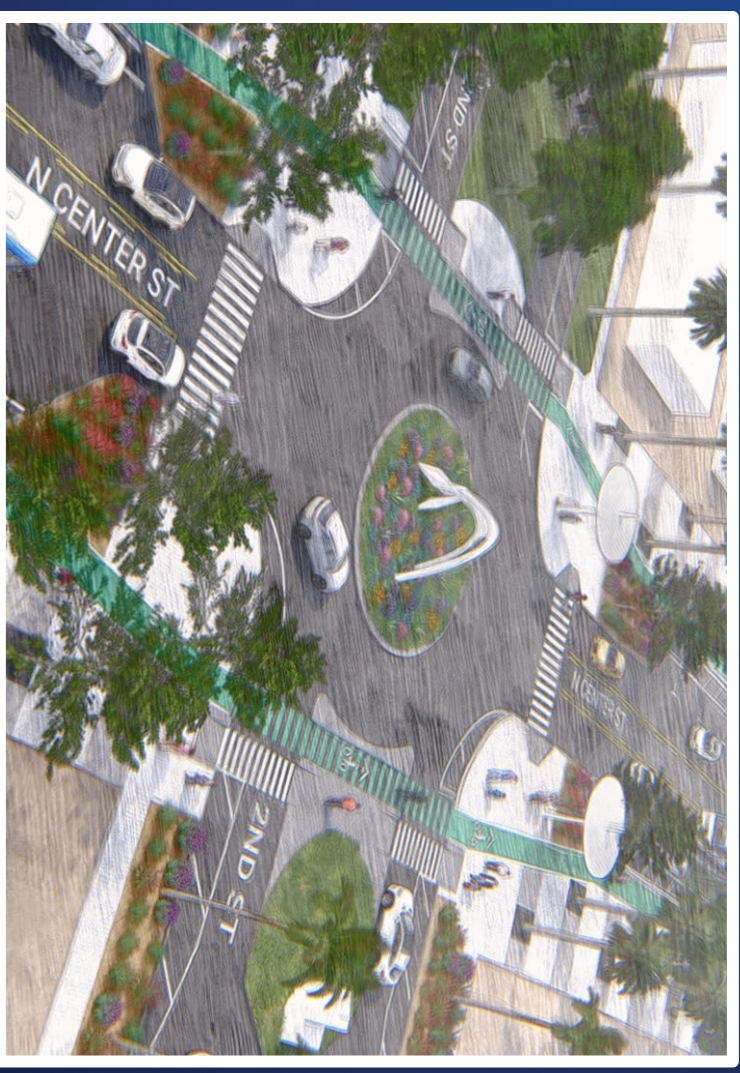
Center St. - 2nd St to 3rd Pl



- Parallel Parking
- Buffer between parked vehicles and travel lane
- Retain turn lanes at intersections

Preferred Alternative – Staff Recommendations

- Roundabout at 2nd Street
 - Traffic calming effect
 - Gateway feature into Downtown Mesa
 - Maintain access for large vehicles and parade route



What's Next

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- Direction to move forward with design of staff recommendation
- Hire a designer
- Design Process
 - Provide more detail
 - Involve public outreach
 - Identify utility conflicts
 - Refine cost estimate



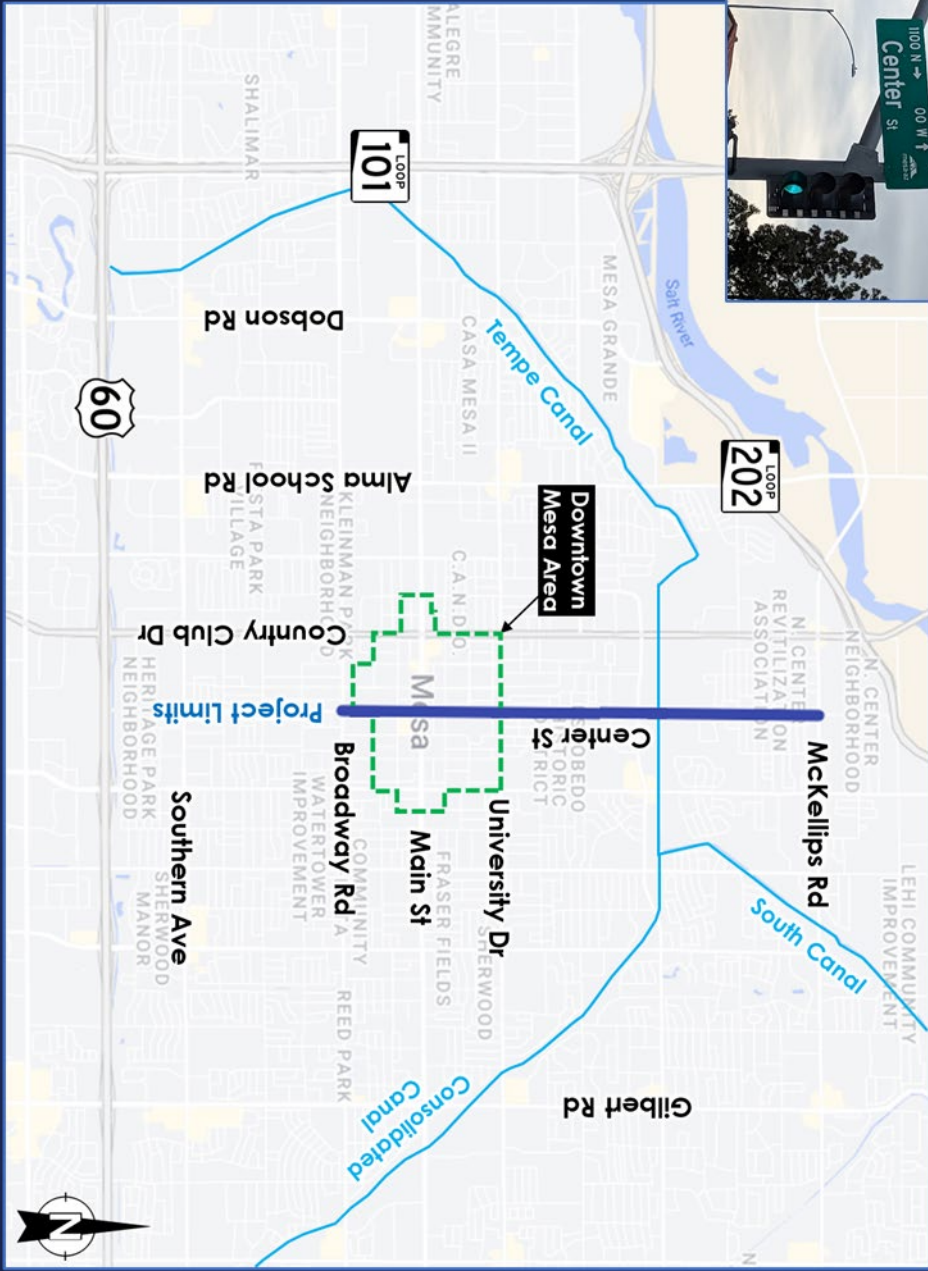
Questions?

research.az

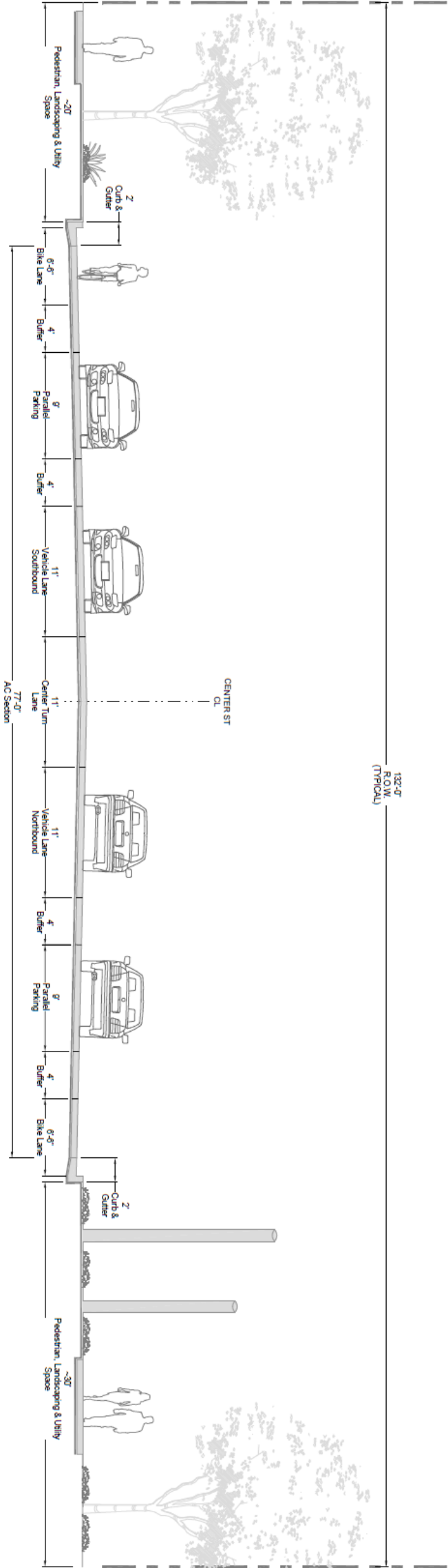




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Preferred Alternative – Staff Recommendations



CENTER STREET COMPLETE STREETS CONCEPT - 2ND ST TO 3R PL

