

Freeway Landmark Monument CUP

SEC 202 Santan Freeway and Power Road

GALLERY PARK



Submitted by:

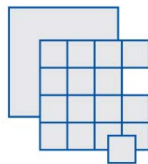
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On Behalf of:

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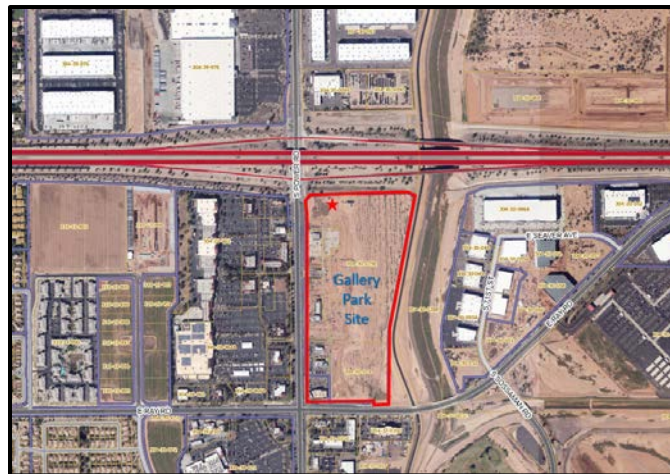
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Introduction and Request

Pew & Lake, PLC, on behalf of Power 202 Mixed-Use LLC, is pleased to submit this narrative and related exhibits for a Freeway Landmark Monument Sign (“FLM,” or alternatively “Freeway Landmark Sign”) request at Gallery Park, an approved mixed use regional destination on approximately 40 acres located at the SEC of 202 Santan Freeway and Power Rd. in Mesa. The site where the sign will be located is identified on the Maricopa County Assessor’s Map as APN 304-30-075 (the “Property”). The purpose of this application is to request approval of a Council Use Permit to allow for a single Freeway Landmark Monument Sign in Gallery Park that is larger than the square footage allowed under the strict application of the code.

Specifically, our request is for:

- Approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and modifications from the Freeway Landmark Monument Guidelines to allow one (1) Freeway Monument Sign with a total sign area of 763 square feet per side, at the location shown on the Site Plan included in the application materials and shown in the illustrative graphic below.



Gallery Park Background

Originally approved in May 2019, Gallery Park is a mixed-use regional destination located at the boundary of Mesa and Gilbert and with direct frontage on the 202 Santan Freeway. It has a mix of executive offices, vertical loft residential-commercial, and other entertainment and commercial uses. Gallery Park marks a primary entrance into Mesa’s Gateway Airport area. A significant number of people use the adjacent freeways from Mesa, Gilbert, Queen Creek, Santan Valley and elsewhere. Regional visibility in the area has increased with the recently completed SR 24 interchange near the Property. Gallery Park’s dynamic mix of uses and vibrant design character make it a destination for jobs and visitors to Mesa at this key gateway to the city. This development is the City’s only existing vertical mixed use residential and commercial development in the area. It is a distinguishing landmark project that has enhanced the visibility and marketability for the City.

In the approved zoning for Gallery Park, site planning and detailed design guidelines were reviewed and incorporated into the PAD. This freeway sign request complies with the PAD design themes and subsequent comprehensive sign plan. During various stages of the development process, the FLM sign was referenced in the plans and in discussions with the City staff. The applicant clearly conveyed the intention to apply for Freeway Landmark Sign as proposed in this request.

FLM Description

The proposed Freeway Landmark Monument sign mirrors the contemporary architectural design and sophisticated colors and materials approved in the Gallery Park project. A combination of dark grey, warm browns and wood tones provide a sleek aesthetic for the sign. Additionally, the sign is enhanced by the tasteful addition of the trademark graphics, logos and linework unique to Gallery Park. The center logo is designed with slats made from synthetic wood, with the Gallery Park logo laser cut in the middle. The sign appropriately identifies the Gallery Park mixed-use destination and will provide safe and adequate wayfinding to the Gallery Park mixed-use development. The following page illustrates the design of the FLM. This design includes static signs and an electronic message panel on both sides of the sign (which could be replaced with static sign panels if necessary).



Proposed FLM Design (w/electronic message panel)

The monument sign is necessary to invite customers to this premier mixed-use development, and to provide critical identification for current and future tenants of Gallery Park. This important location in the City of Mesa is the primary entrance to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Until the airport is expanded on its northern boundary, as planned, Power Road remains the only direct access to the airport from the freeway and serves as the main entrance to the airport terminal. It is important to note that no other freeway signs are likely to be proposed in the 2-mile stretch of freeway east of the Property due to a large Maricopa County Flood Control canal and associated right-of-way, the 202-SR 24 freeway interchange, and large industrial projects that do not typically use commercial freeway signs.

There are other physical characteristics in the vicinity that impede visibility, requiring an oversized freeway sign. There is a large ADOT drainage retention basin along the northern boundary of the property that creates a 300-foot distance from travel lanes of the freeway to the proposed sign. There is also a tall sound barrier wall running parallel to the freeway, west of Power Road that significantly reduces the visibility from the eastbound freeway offramp. Finally, the freeway is elevated by approximately 30 feet at this location. The sound barrier wall, retention basin and elevated freeway combine to require a 75-foot-tall freeway sign.

FLM Guidelines

An FLM is permitted in the LC zoning district, so long as the property is designated as a Mixed-Use Activity District in the General Plan and subject to approval of a Council Use Permit. In addition to the CUP findings outlined in Section 11-70-6 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Council must find that the FLM complies with the FLM Guidelines.

This request addresses the **purpose** of the FLM guidelines, as follows:

1. **Harmony:** The proposed sign complements and advances the mixed-use commercial character of Gallery Park and the nearby Mesa Gateway airport development.
2. **Preventing Over-Concentration:** This request is for a single sign. The sign is necessary to provide identification for Gallery Park along an elevated freeway that has a tall barrier wall near the exit ramp leading to Power Road. With the canal east of the Property, the industrial park east of the canal and at the end of the airport runway, this sign will likely be the only FLM in Mesa for two miles on the south side of the freeway.
3. **Enhancing the flow of Traffic:** This proposal provides an aesthetically appealing sign that will promote adequate wayfinding from the 202 Santan Freeway. A clear view of the sign will allow visitors to safely approach Gallery Park and maneuver smoothly once on the site.
4. **Protection of Travelers:** The proposed FLM does not obstruct views or provide distraction to the drivers along the 202 Freeway. The proposed sign will be located approximately 300 feet from the travel lanes of the elevated freeway. The sign has been designed at a size that provides visibility from the freeway, but without being obtrusive or distracting.

Moreover, this request addresses the intent of the FLM Guidelines, as follows:

1. **Regulate advertising distractions for public safety purposes.** The proposed FLM is approximately 300-feet away from the freeway travel lanes. Moreover, the travel lanes at this location are elevated by about 30-feet above the Gallery Park grade level. The distance and change in elevation combine to create a safe separation between the signs and passing motorists.
2. **Minimize conflict with public beautification measures:** There are no beautification measures that have been implemented in this area. The freeway in this location contains no public art or any other type of installation that would be diminished by the proposed FLM.
3. **Create a pleasing visual environment:** The proposed FLM has been designed by a professional sign company, in collaboration with the Gallery Park developer. The sign has been designed to be compatible with the architecture, style and materials of the Gallery Park buildings, and in conformance with the robust Gallery Park design guidelines.
4. **Require sign maintenance for safety and visual appearance.** Through the Gallery Park property owner’s association, the entire site, including the sign, will be maintained at all times. Lighting within the sign will be monitored and elements will be replaced quickly, and tenant signs will be removed and replaced as necessary.

Shown below is a graphic representing how this proposed FLM complies with the FLM guidelines. The figure in **red bold** text represents the single modification from the guidelines contained in this request, (the speed at which messages may be changed) and would be required only for the FLM with the electronic messaging panel.

Standard	FLM Guideline	Provided
Min. site area	30 acres	40 acres
Max. Signs within 1 mile on one side of freeway	3 signs per 1 mile on 1 side of freeway	1 sign in 2+ miles, south side of freeway
Sign Quantity	More than 1 sign if: Min. 2,000 LF freeway frontage, & Min. 60 ac. development	1 sign for 40-acre development
Focus on destination name	Clearly visible, emphasized on sign	Clearly visible, Emphasized on sign

Location of destination name	Visible, Top of sign, min. 20% suggested	Visible, top and middle of sign, Complies
Tenant Names	Tenant signs allowed; Destination should be prominent	Complies
Min. Separation to other FLM on same side of freeway (ft.)	2,000	776 ft. (in different jurisdiction)
Min. Setback to Residential Use	10 times sign height 750 ft. (0.1 mile)	4,700 ft (0.9 mile)
Max. distance from property line abutting the freeway (ft.)	Max. 200	+/-30
Horizontal width to be less than 1/3 the vertical height.	< 1 : 3	0.9 : 3
Electronic Message Display		
Electronic Message Display	Limited to text No animation or video	Text, and static graphics and images that change are proposed
Limitations to changes in messages and sequence	Min. 1-hour changes in sequence, no continuous or scrolling displays	Continuous changes in displays are proposed with intervals of min. 8 seconds , sufficient for 1 change for cars driving by at 75 MPH and consistent with existing electronic displays installed in Mesa.
LED levels (nits)	LED color intensity (nits) Full color: 7,000 daytime 2,500 nighttime	Proposed are industrial ISA standards comparable to what other municipalities adopted more recently. Daytime brightness: None (competing with sun) Nighttime: 0.3 foot candles Product shall include an ambient light sensor to dim based on ambient light (dawn, dusk, overcast days)
Provide written certification from sign manufacturer	Manufacturer certification regarding LED brightness standards required at permitting as approved by Building Safety	Complies

As provided for in Section V of the FLM Guidelines, if a proposed sign is unable to comply with the FLM Guidelines, modifications may be approved when the following criteria are met:

- A. *The proposed Freeway Landmark Monument incorporates special design features or unique architectural elements that represent superior quality.*

Response: As described in this narrative and shown in the submitted sign plan, the proposed sign incorporates special design features and upscale architectural elements. The Gallery Park sign type, trademark and logo are distinctive and have been approved in the Comprehensive Sign Plan. The colors, materials, layout of the FLM sign are in conformance with the Gallery Park design guidelines and exceed the standards of comparable developments. The sign is designed to exceed industry and consumer expectations in both quality and materials, and also to exceed the City's FLM guidelines which were first approved in 2004 and amended in 2006.

The simple, modern form of the sign, along with the dark colors and wood accents creates an elegant design that is rarely seen on freeway signs.

- B. *Such modifications or alternatives are consistent with the intent of these Guidelines and will result in conditions that are commensurate with or superior to these Guidelines.*

Response: The proposed sign meets the objectives of the Sign Guidelines to promote safety and quality design. Safety is promoted by locating the sign further away from the freeway than other signs in the city. The sign will not obstruct views of cars traveling on the freeway but will instead promote adequate and safe wayfinding to Gallery Park. As noted previously, the proposed design is consistent with the approved PAD design guidelines and exceeds expectations for comparable developments.

- C. *At least one of the following three factors are present:*

- 1. *An individualized assessment reveals the existence of extraordinary conditions involving topography, land ownership, **adjacent development** (emphasis added), parcel configuration, or other factors related to the development site; or*

Response: As previously noted, An ADOT drainage area on the south side of the 202 freeway creates a 300-foot separation from the Gallery Park property line to the 202 freeway. This separation is much larger than that enjoyed by most other freeway-adjacent sites. Additionally, there is a tall sound barrier wall on the south side of the Power Road freeway offramp, that significantly reduces the desired one-mile visibility range to which most signs are designed. Additionally, the 202 Santan Freeway is elevated to approximately 30 feet above ground level. These three factors- the drainage channel, freeway elevation and barrier wall- combine to create extraordinary conditions that require a slightly larger FLM.

2. *The proposed or existing development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest or other distinguishing feature that represents a clear variation from conventional development; or*

Response: The unique features include those described in the above extraordinary conditions. Additionally, the mixed-use nature of Gallery Park, with a dynamic mix of residential and retail uses, demands a sign that is commensurate with the size and scale of the overall project. The gateway site at the entry into the Gateway Airport area also represents a historic condition not present in any other mixed-use site in Mesa. The proposed sign offers a unique architectural style embedded in the Gallery Park mixed use project. The sign is designed with distinguishing features that are consistent with the approved comprehensive sign plan and design guidelines.

3. *The proposed site is designated Mixed Use Activity District/Employment by the Mesa General Plan Land Use Map and such property is located within two (2) miles of two (2) intersecting freeways.”*

Response: The Property is designated as a Mixed-Use Activity District Character Area and is located within 2 miles of the 202 – SR24 freeway interchange.

As required by the FLM Guidelines, the Applicant complied with the requirements to have a pre-submittal conference and conduct an onsite “balloon test” – or location analysis – with city planning staff to determine appropriate locations and configurations of the signs. The Applicant used an enhanced procedure using a crane and banner of different lengths to indicate the sign’s prospective height from different angles along the 202 Santan Freeway. This analysis was critical to understanding the distances needed to make the signs legible while protecting traffic safety along the freeway. Included in the application materials are renderings depicting views of the proposed sign from the freeway. The renderings show that the signs are appropriate in scale to the surrounding structures and uses and pose no safety threat to motorists traveling on the freeway or near the development site.



Conditional Use Permit Evaluation

The drawings submitted with this are consistent with the Gallery Park Design Guidelines and modern site planning principles. Sign Standards in this application will comply with the city standards and guidelines, except as modified in this request. Freeway Landmark Monument Signs are governed by the Sign Ordinance (Mesa Zoning Ordinance, “MZO,” Article 5), and the Freeway Landmark Sign Guidelines (Res. #8700). The table on the next page outlines the zoning standards applicable to this CUP request. (CUP modifications to the zoning ordinance in **bold** font in the “Provided” column).

Zoning Standards		
Standard	MZO	Provided
Definition of Freeway Landmark MZO 11-50-3	Min. 16 feet height 120 sq.ft. area Visible from freeway	Complies
Permitted Zoning District MZO 11-43-7.D	LC or GC	Complies LC
General Plan Character Area MZO 11-43-7.D	Mixed Use Activity District	Complies Mixed Use Activity District

Max. Sign Area per sign (SF) MZO 11-43-7.E	750 SF	<u>763 SF</u>
Max. Sign Area per sign, LF of Freeway Frontage MZO 11-41-7-A., 11-43-7.D	1,071 LF of frontage 535.5	1,071 LF of frontage on 202 763 SF

Compliance with CUP Requirements

In addition to the findings required for an FLM modification, the proposed Freeway Landmark Monument contained in this request complies with general CUP requirements contained in Section 11-70-6-D of the Zoning Ordinance, as follows:

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.*

Response: The mixed-use activity district is designed for community and regional activity areas with a significant retail component for lifestyle centers. As demonstrated in the approved PAD zoning for Gallery Park, the proposed development implements that vision. This CUP likewise complies with the intent of the General Plan by designing signage of the scale and quantity and style that embraces the themes and PAD guidelines of the approved mixed-use center with recreational, lifestyle, shopping, and commercial uses.

Additionally, the signage is appropriately designed for a large project site that is located at a key intersection of two major arterial streets at the City’s boundary. The prominence of the signage and monumentation combine to create a gateway into the project that lies at the boundary between Mesa and Gilbert in the Power Road corridor, with the goal of attracting patrons from multiple communities to this regional development. Design themes, dimensions, and colors and materials of the signs incorporate quality and durable materials and achieve enduring themes that are attractive and suitable for the commercial and residential anchors to the project.

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.*

Response: The proposed development has more than 1,000 linear feet of frontage on the 202 Santan Freeway and 2,000 feet of frontage along Power Road. If the site was oriented differently, with the longer side against the freeway, the deviation from the maximum sign area based on frontage would not be necessary. However, at 40-acres, this site is large enough to support the proposed location, size, design, and operation of the signage proposed in this application. Signage design is appropriately scaled to the size of the regional mixed use activity center and unique design themes of the project. The proposed design complies with the approved zoning and design

standards for the Gallery Park PAD.

- 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.*

Response: The size of the signs visible from the street are appropriate to the scale, location, and type of regional development that Gallery Park represents. The signs are in the range that is reasonable for this type of regional scale development. The size type, and design of the signs will enhance the value of this project and surrounding properties that will indirectly benefit from their proximity to this visible development. The nature of the project and its complementary signage are appropriate and reasonable for a property that is in the middle of a commercial and industrially designated area. Sign location and sizes will comply with standards and will not block vehicular site visibility triangles and therefore will not pose any unreasonable impacts on surrounding traffic patterns.

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

Response: This project is located adjacent to existing services. There are adequate public services and infrastructure to support the proposed project, as it was approved in the underlying zoning. Proposed utility services will tie-into nearby facilities. Signage is located outside of the public right-of-way and will not conflict with the utilities or right-of-way improvements.

- 5. The proposed development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest, or other distinguishing features that represent a clear variation from conventional development.*

Response: This locational requirement is met because Gallery Park is a dynamic mixed-use development and one of the only developments in southeast Mesa with a vertical residential mixed-use component. It is planned for restaurant, retail/commercial, office, and other uses, which is unlike a conventional development in the city. The standards and layout incorporate distinguishing features that set a high standard compared to conventional development.

- 6. The proposed signage incorporates special design features such as lighting, materials and craftsmanship, murals, or statuaries that reinforce or are integrated with the building architecture.*

Response: The proposed signage contains impactful design features with a character that complies with the approved design guidelines for the Gallery Park PAD

The mix of surrounding land uses suggests that the proposed sign will not have a detrimental effect on surrounding properties, but instead will effectively and safely attract patrons to businesses within Gallery Park. No residential neighborhoods are located near the property, only commercial and employment uses, each with similar signage.

Conclusion

The proposed Freeway Landmark Signs are an important component of the Gallery Park mixed-use development, which is located at a key intersection at the 202 Freeway and Power Road. This location on Power Road is the highly visible entrance to the Mesa Gateway Airport. The sign proposed in this request is appropriate and necessary to identify the Gallery Park project and attract visitors and consumers into the City of Mesa from multiple jurisdictions.

Infused with similar design features as the Gallery Park PAD, the proposed sign has a compelling design that is appropriately suited to the surrounding area. The dimensions and location of the sign have been thoughtfully planned and fulfill the objectives of the City's Freeway Landmark Guidelines.