



**PLANNING DIVISION  
STAFF REPORT**

**Planning and Zoning Board**

**July 28, 2021**

CASE No.: **ZON21-00394**  
**202**

PROJECT NAME: **AirPark**

Owner's Name:	Gateway Business Park LLC/Tonto Corp
Applicant's Name:	Wendy Riddell, Berry Riddell LLC
Location of Request:	Within the 7600 to 7800 block of east Warner Road (south side) and within the 4400 to 4700 block of the South Sossaman Road alignment (east side). Located east of the Sossaman Road alignment on the south side of Warner Road.
Parcel No(s):	304-30-017A, 304-30-017D, 304-30-019C, 304-20-017E, 304-30-017F, 304-30-019B
Request:	Rezone from Light Industrial (LI) and Agricultural (AG) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development (LI-PAD) overlay; and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for the development of an industrial business park. Also consider the preliminary plat for "AirPark 202".
Existing Zoning District:	LI and AG
Council District:	6
Site Size:	101.7± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Industrial Park
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
Hearing Date(s):	<b>July 28, 2021 / 4:00 p.m</b>
Staff Planner:	Kellie Rorex
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	No

## HISTORY

On **November 16, 2000**, the City Council annexed 1,571± acres of land, including the 101.7± acre subject property, into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 3815).

On **May 7, 2001**, the City Council approved a rezoning of the property from Maricopa County Airport District II (ADII) and Rural 43 to City of Mesa comparable zoning districts of Agriculture (AG) and Light Industrial (LI), within the City of Mesa Airfield Overlay Area (Case No. Z00-087; Ordinance No. 3885).

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Background**

Currently, the subject site is vacant and is located north of the 202 San Tan Freeway, on the southeast corner of Warner Road and the future Sossaman Road alignment. The applicant is requesting to rezone six (6) lots from Agricultural (AG) and Light Industrial (LI) to LI with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD) to allow for a three-lot industrial park. The requested PAD overlay is to allow modifications to certain development standards on the property. Specifically, the proposed modifications include increased building height, a reduction to the eastern landscape yard width, a reduction to the number of trees adjacent to the freeway, an increased size requirement for trees adjacent to the freeway, modified outdoor storage requirements, modified screening requirements, a reduced parking area ratio, an increase to the number of parking spaces allowed in a single parking cluster, and a decrease of foundation base area. Per Section 11-22 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the purpose of a PAD overlay is to permit flexibility in the application of zoning standards and requirements and demonstrate that the proposed development provides equivalent or superior standards in a creative way to meet the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance and General Plan. The proposed site plan meets the criteria for review of a PAD outlined in the MZO and the criteria for site plan review.

Additionally, part of this request is for site plan review (i.e., initial site plan) for six (6) proposed industrial buildings and approval of the preliminary plat, "AirPark 202". The proposed industrial park will be of superior quality and consists of large amenitized open space areas, well defined pedestrian pathways connecting all six (6) buildings, and enhanced building elevations.

### **General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals**

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character Area designation on the property is Mixed Use Activity/Employment. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Mixed Use Activity areas are large scale community and regional activity areas that usually have a significant commercial component including shopping centers, power centers, or lifestyle centers that are designed and developed to attract customers from a large radius. Alternatively, 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. The area surrounding the site has been developing over the years to be more consistent with the Employment

Character Area designation. 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 an industrial park advances this goal and conforms with the primary land uses envisioned in the Employment Character area.

**Gateway Strategic Development Plan:**

The site is also located in the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan Area, specifically within the Inner Loop District. Developments within the Inner Loop District should provide a high quality, mixed use environment that is compatible with increasing over flight activities associated with Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport operations. Any development proposed in this area should demonstrate that it will not impede future growth and development of the airport. In addition, the development should show how it will contribute to the overall goal of establishing a major job center.

Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. Surrounding properties have been developing over the past few years into a major industrial corridor in southeast Mesa. The proposed warehousing and industrial use are consistent with the goals of the Mixed-Use Activity/Employment Character Area designation, as well as the intentions of the Inner Loop District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

**Zoning District Designations:**

The subject property consists of six (6) separate parcels, five (5) of which are zoned AG and one (1) that has a split zoning of AG and LI. The applicant is requesting a rezone of all six (6) parcels to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD). Per Section 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the proposed development of the property for an industrial park is allowed in the LI zoning district.

**Airfield Overlay – MZO Article 3 Section 11-19:**

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the site is located within the City of Mesa Airfield (AF) Overlay District; specifically, within the Airport Overflight Area Two (AOA 2). The location of the property within the AOA 2 is due to its proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, the AOA 2 allows industrial type uses.

**Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:**

The proposed site plan shows development of six industrial buildings on three lots that share two main shared drives. The buildings will range between 130,318 sf to 508,480 sf. Per the site plan, each building on the property will include truck dock areas and outdoor storage areas for trailer parking. The outdoor storage areas are planned to front along internal drives of the industrial park and will be screened by an 8-foot block and metal wall. The site plan also shows pedestrian connectivity between the sites and open space amenity areas which comply with MZO Section 11-7-3(B0(1)(d)). Overall, the proposed site plan conforms to the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

**Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay District – MZO Article 3, Chapter 22:**

The subject request includes a PAD overlay to allow for modifications to certain required development standards of the MZO. Per Section 11-22 of the MZO, the purpose of the overlay is to allow innovative design and flexibility that creates high-quality development for the site.

Table 1 below shows the MZO required standards, the applicant’s proposed PAD standards, and staff recommendations:

**Table 1**

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>MZO Required</b>	<b>PAD Proposed</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-7-3</i>	40 feet	<b>60 feet</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.a</i> - Landscaping for non-single residence uses adjacent to other non-single residence (East property lines adjacent to AG)	15 feet	<b>10 feet minimum</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.c</i> - Number of plants in landscape yard for southern property lines adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway	A minimum of 3 trees and 20 shrubs per 100 linear feet of adjacent property line.	<b>1 tree per 20 linear feet of property line adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.d</i> - Size of plants in landscape yard for southern property lines adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway	A minimum of 50 percent of the required trees shall be at least 24-inch box size. The balance of the required trees shall be at least 15-gallon-size trees.	<b>All trees shall be 36-inch box trees along the 202 San Tan Freeway</b>	<b>As Proposed</b>
<u>Outdoor Storage</u> – <i>MZO Table 11-30-7</i>	Not permitted in front or street-facing side yards.	<b>Outdoor storage areas permitted in compliance with wall/storage exhibit</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Truck Docks, Loading and Service Areas</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-30-13(C)</i>	Docks, loading and service areas shall be	<b>Docks, loading and service areas permitted in</b>	<b>As proposed</b>

	screened from public view. Screening shall consist of a solid masonry wall at least 8 feet in height or opaque automated gates.	<b>compliance with wall/storage exhibit</b>	
<u>Required Parking Ratio</u> – <i>MZO Table 11-32-3(A)</i> <i>- Warehousing and Storage</i>	1 Space per 900 square feet	<b>1 Space per 1,100 square feet</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Parking Area Design</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-32-4(G)(2)</i> <i>- Warehousing and Storage</i>	No more than 200 parking spaces shall be allowed together in one group or cluster	<b>Maximum 300 parking spaces allowed together in one cluster</b>	<b>As proposed</b>
<u>Foundation Base</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-5(A)(1)</i> <i>- Exterior walls with a Public Entrance</i>	15 feet wide foundation base area	<b>Minimum 12-foot foundation base area</b>	<b>As proposed</b>

As shown on the table above, the applicant is requesting the following modifications from the LI zoning district development standards as outlined in Sections 11-7-3, 11-30-7, 11-30-13, 11-32-3, 11-32-4, 11-33-3, and 11-33-5 of the MZO:

Maximum Building Height:

Per Section 11-7-3 of the MZO, the maximum building height in the LI zoning district is 40 feet. The applicant is requesting a maximum height of 60 feet. According to the applicant, the requested increase in height is needed to accommodate the type of operation planned on the property. The Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the subject request and had no concerns with the proposed development or requested height.

Required Landscape Yards:

Per Section 11-33-3(B)(2)(a) of the MZO, non-single residence land uses adjacent to other non-single residence land uses shall have a minimum 15-foot landscape yard. Currently, the applicants are providing a minimum 16-foot landscape yard along the eastern property lines adjacent to the AG parcel to the east, however, the applicants are requesting a deviation from the required 15-feet to ten (10) feet. As stated in the applicant’s narrative, the AG zoned parcel to the east of the proposed industrial park is anticipated to be rezoned and developed as a future industrial use and be consistent with the General Plan character designation of Mixed-Use Activity District/Employment. Per table 11-7-3 of the MZO, the building setback between

industrial zoned lots is 0 feet. Due to the potential that the site to the east will be rezoned to an industrial district and be allowed to have a 0-foot setback adjacent to the proposed development, the applicant is requesting a reduced landscape yard from 15 to 10 feet. This ten (10) foot width would maintain adequate buffering between the proposed site and potential Industrial development to the east.

Per Section 11-33-3(B)(2)(c) of the MZO, non-single residence land uses adjacent to other non-single residence land uses are required to provide a minimum of 3 trees and 20 shrubs per 100 linear feet on the perimeter of the property. The applicant is requesting a modification to reduce the minimum number of required trees within the landscape yard along the southern property line, adjacent to the 202 San Tan Freeway. According to the applicant, the proposed reduction is to allow more room for larger trees that will help screen bay doors from the freeway. Per Section 11-33-3(B)(2)(d) of the MZO, a minimum of 50 percent of the required trees shall be at least 24-inch box size and the balance of the required trees shall be at least 15-gallon-size trees. The applicant is proposing all trees along the southern perimeter of the site to be 36-inch box trees.

Outdoor Storage:

Per MZO Table 11-30-7, outdoor storage areas are not permitted in front or along street facing side yards in the LI district. The proposed site plan shows outdoor storage areas located along internal street facing sides for five (5) of the six (6) buildings. The current site layout was designed to hide outdoor storage yards from Sossaman, Warner, and the 202 San Tan Freeway as well as facilitate circulation around each building. The applicant has requested a deviation to permit outdoor storage yards along internal street facing side yards and has proposed a wall and storage plan that screens storage areas from internal drives; maintains screening of storage yards from Sossaman, Warner, and the 202 Freeway; and is more responsive to the industrial uses and circulation envisioned within the industrial park. Additionally, the applicants are providing 8-foot screen walls and landscaping around all outdoor storage areas facing internal drives.

Truck Docks, Loading and Service Areas:

Per Section 11-30-13(C) of the MZO, docks, loading and service areas in the LI district shall be screened from public view by a solid masonry wall at least 8 feet in height or opaque automated gates. The applicant is requesting compliance with the proposed wall and storage plan which shows 8-foot walls that are partial block walls with iron view fencing. The applicant believes that the proposed partial block walls offer a more cohesive and aesthetic design within the group industrial development and that solid block walls would isolate individual buildings from the rest of the business park. As mentioned previously, these screened areas will also be landscaped to aid in screening truck docks and outdoor storage areas.

Required Parking Ratio:

Per Table 11-32-3(A) of the MZO, one parking space is required for each 900 square feet of warehouse and storage uses. The applicant is requesting to provide one parking space per 1,100 square feet of area. According to the applicant, the anticipated users do not require the

same degree of required parking spaces. The reduction in the number of parking spaces is also to minimize unused parking spaces within the development. The requested parking ratio is consistent with approved parking ratios for other industrial developments within the City of Mesa.

**Parking Area Design:**

Per section 11-32-4(G)(2) of the MZO, no more than 200 parking spaces shall be allowed together in one group or cluster. The applicant is requesting a maximum of 300 spaces in a single cluster. This request is to provide adequate parking for building six, shown on the site plan, which is over 508,000 square feet. To break up the large cluster of parking spaces the applicants have provided two shaded pedestrian pathways, ensuring safe and convenient passageway through the parking area.

**Foundation Base:**

Per section 11-33-5(A)(1) of the MZO, exterior walls with a public entrance shall have a 15-foot-wide foundation base area, measured from face of building to face of curb. The applicant has requested a deviation to provide a minimum 12-foot foundation base area to comply with the City of Mesa Fire Code. Section 503.8.3 of the City of Mesa Amended Fire Code requires that the building access routes shall be no less than 15 feet and no more than 30 feet from the front of a building. Proposed parking spaces are a minimum of 18 feet in depth and with a 15-foot foundation base, the fire access route would be over 30 feet. In order to comply with fire requirements, the applicant has proposed a minimum 12-foot-wide foundation base.

The proposed development conforms to the criteria for a PAD. Per Section 11-22 of the MZO, the purpose of a PAD is to encourage unique, innovative developments of superior quality. The proposed configuration of the buildings provides maximum screening of storage yards and bay doors from public streets. The site design provides well-integrated open space areas with several amenities for the use and enjoyment of employees and visitors. Landscaping design is intentional, providing shaded amenity and pedestrian areas, increased tree sizes along the freeway and increased landscape yards adjacent to Warner, Sossaman, and the 202 San Tan Freeway to screen industrial uses. With the requested deviations the applicant has proposed a well designed and unified industrial business park.

**Design Review:**

The Design Review Board is scheduled to review the subject request on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021. 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:**

<b>Northwest</b> (Across Warner Road) Maricopa County Vacant	<b>North</b> (Across Warner Road) Maricopa County Vacant	<b>Northeast</b> (Across Warner Road) Maricopa County Industrial
<b>West</b>	<b>Subject Property</b>	<b>East</b>

(Across future Sossaman Road) AG/LI Vacant	AG/LI Vacant	AG Vacant
<b>Southwest</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway and Ray Road) LI Industrial	<b>South</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway and Ray Road) LI-PAD Industrial	<b>Southeast</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway) LI-PAD Industrial

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The subject site is currently vacant. Across the 202 San Tan Freeway, south of the site, there are several similar large scale industrial developments. The property to the west of the site is zoned LI and is anticipated to be developed to be consistent with the subject request. There are also existing industrial developments to the northeast of the site within Maricopa County. Over the last few years this area, north of Mesa Gateway Airport, has been developing into an industrial node within southeast Mesa and thus the subject request will not be out of character with the surrounding uses.

**Preliminary Plat:**

The applicant is requesting preliminary plat approval with the subject request. The proposed preliminary plats show 3 lots. Section 9-6-2 of the Mesa Subdivision standards requires approval of all subdivision plats located in the City to be processed through four progressive stages. Review and approval of a preliminary plat is the second stage in the series of the progressive stages. This review includes the evaluation of the overall design of the subdivision and details, such as utilities layout, ADA compliance, and detention requirements. The preliminary plat is reviewed and approved by the Planning & Zoning Board. Per section 9-6-2 of the City’s subdivision regulations, all plats are subject to Final Plat approval through the City Council. The request meets the review criteria for approval of a preliminary plat outlined in Section 9-6-2 of the Mesa Subdivision Regulations.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments**

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included mailing letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, as well as registered neighborhoods and HOAs within one mile of the site inviting them to a virtual neighborhood meeting that was held on May 25, 2021. No neighbors attended the meeting and as of writing this report, staff has not received any comments/concerns from adjacent property owners. Staff will provide the Board an updated Citizen Participation Report during the scheduled Study Session on July 28, 2021.

**Staff Recommendations:**

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan, the Gateway Strategic Development Plan, and the purpose for a Planned Area Development overlay outlined in Section 11-22-1 of the MZO. Additionally, the request meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO and meets the review criteria for approval of a preliminary plat

outlined in Section 9-6-2 of the Mesa Subdivision Regulations. Therefore, staff recommends Approval of the request with the following conditions:

**Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Regulations.
2. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
4. All off-site improvements and street frontage landscaping to be installed with the first phase of construction.
5. Dedicate the right-of-way and easements required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, at the time of recordation of the subdivision plat, or at the time of the City's request for dedication whichever comes first.
6. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:
  - a. Owner shall execute and record the City's standard Avigation Easement and Release for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prior to the issuance of a building permit.
  - b. Due to the proximity to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, any proposed permanent, or temporary structure, as required by the FAA, is subject to an FAA filing, for review in conformance with CFR Title 14 Part 77 (Form 7460) to determine any effect to navigable airspace and air navigation facilities. If required, an FAA determination notice of no hazard to air navigation shall be provided prior to building permit issuance.
  - c. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within 1 mile of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.
7. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modifications to the development standards as approved with this PAD and shown in the following table:

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>PAD Approved</b>
<u>Maximum Building Height</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-7-3</i>	<b>60 feet</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.a</i> <i>- East property lines adjacent to AG</i>	<b>10 feet minimum</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.c</i> <i>- Number of plants in landscape yard for southern property lines adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway</i>	<b>1 tree per 20 linear feet of property line adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway</b>
<u>Required Landscape Yards</u> – <i>MZO Section 11-33-3.B.2.d</i> <i>- Size of plants in landscape yard for southern property lines adjacent to 202 San Tan Freeway</i>	<b>All trees shall be 36-inch box trees along the 202 San Tan Freeway</b>

<u>Outdoor Storage –</u> <i>MZO Table 11-30-7</i>	<b>Outdoor storage areas permitted in compliance with wall/storage exhibit</b>
<u>Truck Docks, Loading and Service Areas –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-30-13(C)</i>	<b>Docks, loading and service areas permitted in compliance with wall/storage exhibit</b>
<u>Required Parking Ratio –</u> <i>MZO Table 11-32-3(A)</i> <i>- Warehousing and Storage</i>	<b>1 Space per 1,100 square feet</b>
<u>Parking Area Design –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-32-4(G)(2)</i> <i>- Warehousing and Storage</i>	<b>Maximum 300 parking spaces allowed together in one cluster</b>
<u>Foundation Base –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-33-5(A)(1)</i> <i>- Exterior walls with a Public Entrance</i>	<b>Minimum 12-foot foundation base area</b>

**Exhibits:**

**Exhibit 1- Vicinity Map**

**Exhibit 2- Staff Report**

**Exhibit 3- Application Information**

- 3.1 Project Narrative
- 3.2 Site Plan
- 3.3 Landscape Plan
- 3.4 Wall/Storage Exhibit
- 3.5 Elevations
- 3.6 Preliminary Plat

**Exhibit 4- Citizen Participation Plan**

**Exhibit 5- Citizen Participation Report**