



Board of Adjustment Report

Date	June 3, 2026	
Case No.	BOA26-00157	
Project Name	Living Word Church	
Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Use Permit (SUP) for a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) 	
Project Location	Located at 3520 East Brown Road	
Parcel No(s)	141-13-006J	
Project Area	15.7± acres	
Council District	District 1	
Existing Zoning	Agricultural (AG)	
General Plan Designation	Rural Residential	
Applicant	Summit West Signs	
Owner	The Living Word Bible Church	
Staff Planner	Emily Johnson, Planner II	

Recommendation

Staff finds that the requested Special Use Permit (SUP) for a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) meets the criteria outlined in MZO Section 11-46-3 and the required findings outlined in MZO Section 11-70-5.

Staff recommends approval with conditions.

Project Overview

Request:

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) for a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for a place of worship located in the Agricultural (AG) zoning district. Overall, the proposed CSP will allow for deviations to detached signage allowances.

Site Context

General Plan:

- The Placetype for the project site is Rural Residential and the Growth Strategy is Sustain.
- The Public/Semi-Public land use, which includes Places of Worship, is a supporting land use.

Zoning:

- The project site is zoned Agricultural (AG).
- Places of Worship are permitted within the AG District.

Surrounding Zoning & Use Activity:

Northwest (Across Miramar) AG (Proposed RS-15-PAD) Vacant (Proposed Single Residence)	North RS-35-PAD Single Residence	Northeast (Across Val Vista Dr.) RS-35 Single Residence
West (Across Miramar) AG (Proposed RS-15-PAD) Vacant (Proposed Single Residence)	Project Site AG Places of Worship	East (Across Val Vista Dr.) RS-35-PAD Vacant
Southwest (Across Brown Rd.) RS-15 Single Residence	South (Across Brown Rd.) RS-9 & OC Single Residence & Office	Southeast (Across Brown Rd.) OC Office

Site History:

- **August 25, 1979:** City Council annexed 2,225± acres, including the project site, into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 1277).
- **February 18, 1980:** City Council approved a rezoning for 821± acres, including the project site, from Maricopa County Rural-43, R1-35, and R1-35-SU to City of Mesa AG, SR (equivalent to current RS-43), and R1-35 (Case No. Z80-018; Ordinance No. 1313).
- **April 24, 1989:** City Council approved a Site Plan for 4.6± acres, and a rezoning from R-4 to C-2 for the northern 3.3+ acres, for development of a 32,440 square foot bowling alley and a 5,500 square foot free-standing pad building (Case No. Z89-009; Ordinance No. 2427).
- **December 3, 1997:** The Design Review Board reviewed the building elevations and landscape plan for The Living Word Bible Church (Case No. DR97-060).

- **December 14, 2010:** The Board of Adjustment approved a Special Use Permit to allow a Commercial Communication Tower in the AG zoning district (Case No. BA10-065).
- **July 11, 2018:** The Board of Adjustment approved a Special Use Permit to allow for a stealth wireless communication facility in the AG zoning district and a special Use Permit for a wireless communication facility to exceed the maximum height allowed in the AG zoning district (Case No. BOA18-00380).

Project/Request Details

Site Plan:

- **Access:** The Project Site's main entry is located on Brown Road with four additional ingress/egress drive aisles including, one on Brown Road, one on Miramar, and two on Val Vista Drive.
- **Street Frontage:** The Project Site has three street frontages including approximately 1,024-linear feet along Brown Road, 594-linear feet along Miramar, and 419-linear feet along Val Vista Drive.
- **Existing Signage:** The Project Site currently has two monument signs identified by the applicant as Monument A and Monument B. Monument A is a 32-square-foot, illuminated monument sign located along Brown Road that is proposed to remain unchanged, and Monument B is a non-illuminated monument sign located within the median of the main entrance along Brown Road which will be removed. There is no attached signage.

Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP):

The applicant is requesting a CSP to allow for modifications from the Sign Ordinance for signage at The Living Word Bible Church. The requested modifications include an increase to the maximum number of attached or detached signs permitted per street front, an increase to the maximum area per sign, and for the allowance of illumination.

The CSP proposes two detached signs, identified by the applicant as Monument A and Monument C, located along Brown Road. Monument A exists and will remain at the same location, approximately 115 feet from the western property line, and Monument C will replace Monument B within the main entry median, but it is proposed to be further south, closer to Brown Road. There will be approximately 787 feet between the two monument signs.

Monument C is proposed to be approximately 44 square feet, which exceeds the maximum sign area allowance of 32 square feet per sign (Monument A is 32 square feet).

Additionally, the CSP would allow for both the signs to be illuminated. Both signs are required to be in compliance with Section 11-41-3(B) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) for illumination, which includes conforming to the requirements of the Mesa Lighting and Electrical Code, Title 4, Chapter 4 of the Mesa City Code. Monument A is proposed to be illuminated on the western elevation and Monument C is proposed to be illuminated on both the west and east elevations. Monument C is proposed to include an electronic message panel which will be required to be in compliance with Section 11-43-5 of the MZO regarding the standards for message display and lighting controls. This includes the standard that electronic message panels located within 150 feet of single residences shall not be illuminated between 11:00 p.m. and sunrise.

Table 1 compares the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) standards for attached and detached permanent sign allowances in the AG district for a lot allowed to operate a non-residential land use with the proposed CSP modifications:

Development Standards	MZO Allowance	CSP Proposed
<u>Maximum Number of Permitted Signs</u> – MZO Table 11-43-3-A	1 sign per street front, attached or detached	2 signs on one street front (Brown Road)
<u>Maximum Area Per Sign</u> – MZO Table 11-43-3-A	32 square feet per sign	44 square feet (Monument C)
<u>Additional Requirements</u> – MZO Table 11-43-3-A	Non-illuminated	Illumination (Monument A and Monument C)

Approval Criteria – Section 11-46-3(D):

Per Section 11-46-3(D) of the MZO, the Board of Adjustment must find at least one of the following criteria are met in order to approve a CSP:

- 1. Unique or Unusual Physical Conditions:** The Project Site is large with three street frontages including approximately 1,024-linear feet along Brown Road. The sign code would allow up to one sign per street frontage; therefore, the Project Site is permitted three signs, one on each frontage. However, the applicant is requesting only two signs, both on Brown Road, as it is the most visible street frontage. The property’s scale combined with a larger setback requires enhanced signage to effectively identify the property.
- 2. Unique Characteristics of Land Use, Architectural Style, Site Location or other Distinguishing Features:** The Project Site consists of a place of worship serving the broader community and requires clear identification for visitors, special events, and community services that are provided on the campus.
- 3. Incorporation of Special Design Features:** The proposed signage is designed to improve communication for services, events, and community information while maintaining aesthetic compatibility with the surrounding area.

Special Use Permit:

Per Section 11-46-3(A), a CSP must be approved in conjunction with a SUP. Per Section 11-70-5(E) of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance, the Board of Adjustment shall also find the following criteria are met for approval of a SUP:

- 1. Advance the Goals and Objectives of and Consistency with the General Plan and other Plan/Policies:** The proposed CSP is consistent with the Rural Residential Placetype, and furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the Mesa 2050 General Plan. The proposed CSP will provide greater visibility for the place of worship and help to promote complete communities in this existing neighborhood (Strategy N1). It will also help create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods in a strategic manner (Strategy LU2).
- 2. Consistency with the Zoning District Purposes:** The proposed CSP is consistent with the location, design and operating characteristics and conforms to the goals and purposes of the AG zoning designation on the project site. Places of Worship are permitted as a

land use in the district and the site has developed with suitable infrastructure to support the use in the district.

3. **Project Impact:** There will be no injurious or detrimental impact to surrounding properties with the proposed signage and will only encourage harmonic growth for the surrounding area. The proposed signs will not be overbearing in size, and will not flash, blink, animate or emit any noise.
4. **Adequate Public Facilities:** The City of Mesa utilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

Required Notification

The applicant provided letters to surrounding property owners within 500 feet of the project site, notifying them of the public hearing.

As of writing this report, staff has not been contacted regarding the Proposed Project.

Conditions of Approval

Staff recommends **approval** of the Special Use Permit for the Comprehensive Sign Plan, subject to the following conditions:

1. Compliance with the final sign plan as submitted.
2. Compliance with the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, including all applicable City Development codes and regulations.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Department regarding the issuance of building permits.
4. Any sign components that become deteriorated, damaged, or weakened shall be promptly repaired or replaced.
5. All signage be reviewed and approved through a separate sign permit application.

Section 11-70-5 of the MZO allows for a revocation process if any condition, stipulation, or term of the approval of the SUP has been violated. In addition to the conditions of approval above, approval of the SUP is conditioned on the information provided by the applicant at the public hearing and in the application (including any accompanying narrative and other supplemental materials) not being false or materially misleading at the time of approval.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2 – Project Narrative

Exhibit 3 – Sign Plan

Exhibit 4 – Power Point Presentation