

Main 45 Townhomes – SWC Sossaman & Main

PAD Rezoning & Site Plan

Project Narrative



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Contents

1. Introduction and Request	3
2. Existing Site Conditions and Relationship to Surrounding Properties	3
3. Project Description	5
4. Development Standards	6
Justification for Development Standard Deviations	7
Alternative Compliance	10
5. Proposed PAD Overlay District Zoning	10
6. General Plan Conformance	12
Urban Design Characteristics	12
Contribution to the Guiding Principles	13
7. Conclusion	14

Exhibits

Figure 1 – Site Aerial	3
Figure 2 – City of Mesa 2040 General Plan Map	4
Figure 3 – City of Mesa 2050 General Plan Map	4
Figure 4 – Existing City of Mesa Zoning Map	4
Figure 5 – Conceptual Site Plan	6
Figure 6 – Conceptual Street View to Front Yard Buildings and Walls	8
Table 1 – Surrounding Context	5
Table 2 – Modified Development Standards	7

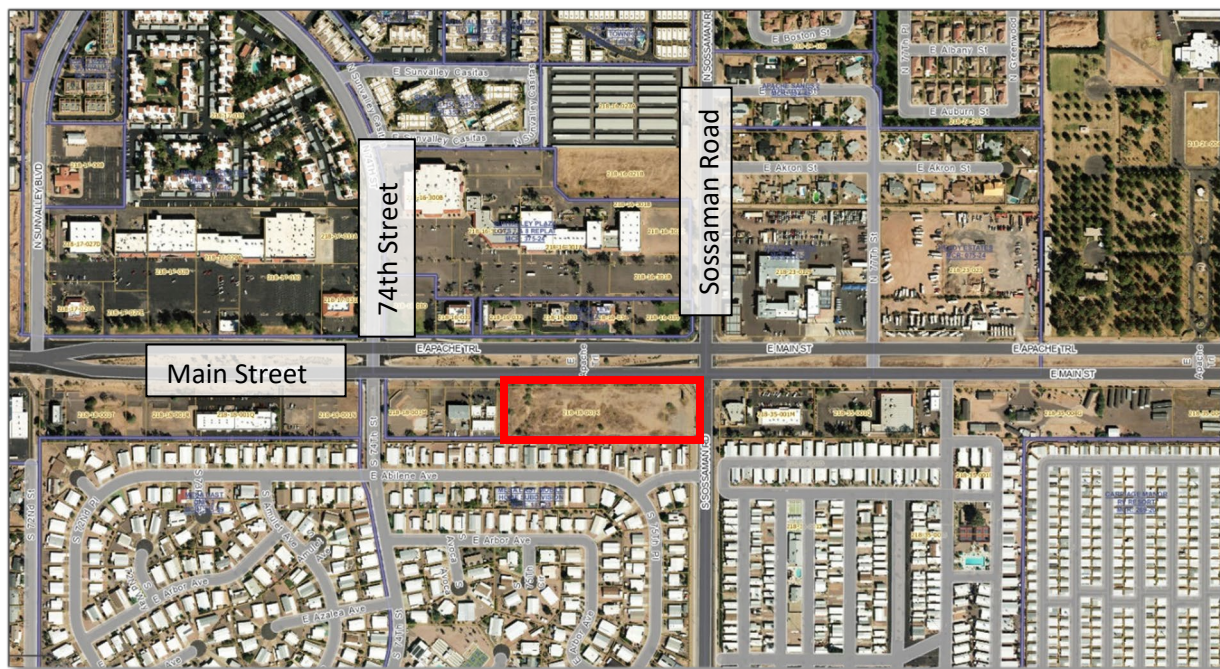
1. Introduction and Request

Rose Law Group pc, on behalf of our client, Elliot Barkan Development, LLC, is pleased to submit this project narrative for a proposed residential development at the southwest corner of Sossaman Road and Main Street in Mesa. This proposal is for a 45-unit multi-family townhome style community on 3.51 net acres (12.8 DU/acre). This community will be a dynamic addition to the area and reflect a significant investment into the neighborhood.

The specific requests being made with this application are to rezone the property from Limited Commercial (LC) to Multiple Residence (RM-2) with a PAD overlay along with a Site Plan Review.

The subject property is a narrow, vacant piece of land and identified as APNs 218-18-001K and 218-18-001J on the Maricopa County Assessor Map. An aerial photo of the site is shown below with the subject parcel outlined in red.

Figure 1 – Site Aerial



2. Existing Site Conditions and Relationship to Surrounding Properties

Currently the property is vacant with no sidewalk/curb on the Main Street side (such improvements to be installed with development). There is a legal nonconforming billboard at the northeast corner of the site which will be removed as a part of this development. The site topography is largely unremarkable.

As shown on the figures on the next page, the subject site (outlined in blue) is zoned Limited Commercial (LC) and was previously designated under the City of Mesa General Plan as Mixed Use Activity District. After this application was submitted, the City of Mesa adopted an updated General Plan which designates the property under the Neighborhood Center – Evolve placetype. We note that the proposed multiple residence use is a supporting land use within the Neighborhood Center - Evolve character area.

Figure 2 – City of Mesa 2040 General Plan Map

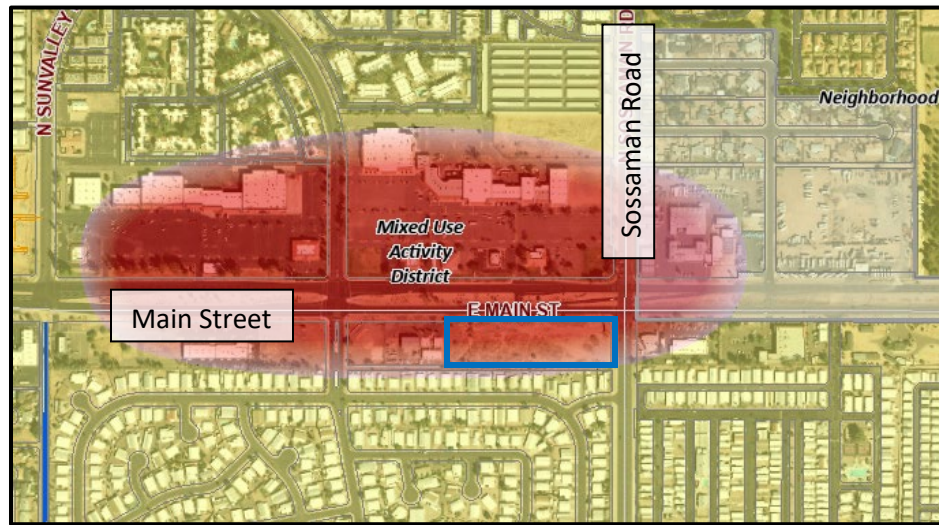


Figure 3 – City of Mesa 2050 General Plan Map

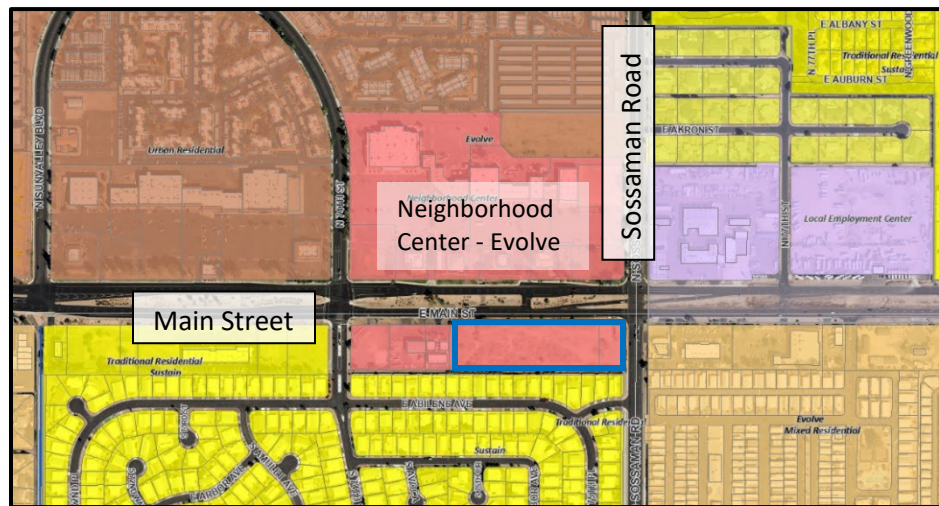
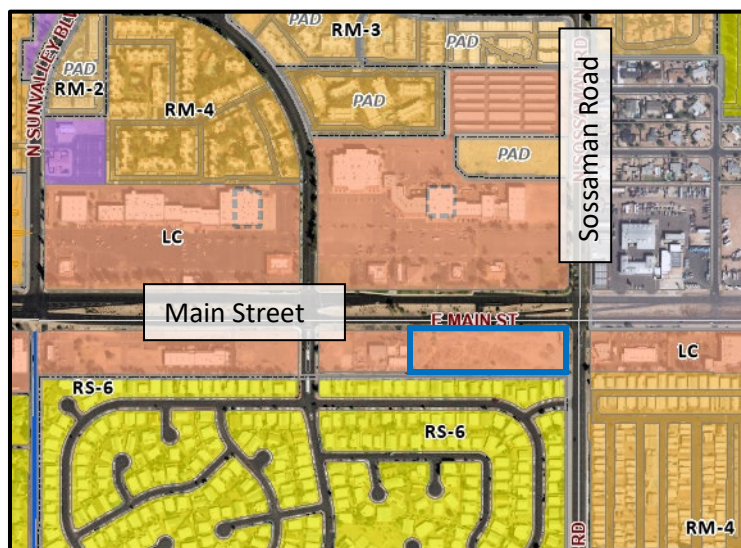


Figure 4 – Existing City of Mesa Zoning Map



North of the site is Main Street followed by the Sun Valley Plaza shopping center. West of the site is a professional office built in 1978. South of the site is a 20-foot public alleyway followed by the Mesa East Mobile Home Subdivision. To the east is the Sossaman Road major arterial.

The sign on site is a Legal Nonconforming Billboard because it has dimensions over 32 square feet. The sign will be removed upon construction of the site.

The table below further details the adjacent land uses.

Table 1 – Surrounding Context

Direction	Existing General Plan Designation	Existing Zoning	Existing Use
Subject Property	Neighborhood Center - Evolve	LC	Vacant with Legal Nonconforming Billboard at Northeast Corner
North	Neighborhood Center - Evolve	Roadway followed by LC	Divided Main Street roadway then Sun Valley Plaza Shopping Center
East	Mixed Residential - Evolve	Roadway followed by LC	Sossaman Road then Commercial Flooring Business
South	Traditional Residential - Sustain	RS-6	Unfenced Public Alley then Mesa East Mobile Home Subdivision
West	Neighborhood Center - Evolve	LC	Professional Office

3. Project Description

This proposed residential development features 45 townhome style units with centralized open space and community amenities. Entry into the community is marked by a centralized large open space area marked with a covered ramada, BBQ grill, seating, child playground equipment, and turf area for family focused activities. An additional dog park amenity area will be located at the southwest corner of the community and accessible via the internal pedestrian network. The south side of the site is marked by a forty (40) foot building setback to the southern mobile home neighbors with twenty (20) feet of public alley and twenty (20) foot deep rear yards for Main 45 residents.

The public ROW facing units are designed to engage the public street with private open space that exceeds the City standard and parking areas being shielded from public view. The City's parking standards are being exceeded with a total of 2.3 spaces per unit provided where 2.1 per unit is required. Each unit benefits from a single-car garage unit and one additional reserved uncovered space.

The proposed community intends to achieve appropriate in-fill development situated between commercial and mobile home uses. The public alley and large twenty (20) foot deep rear yards contribute to a sensible transition between two-story townhomes and the existing mobile homes south of the site. The developer is proposing to install an 8 foot block wall on the southern boundary as requested by the neighbors to the project.

The proposed site plan is provided in Figure 5 on the next page.

Figure 5 – Conceptual Site Plan



The proposed building architecture is a contemporary design featuring variety in roof lines, desirable massing, and a sophisticated mixture of materials. The mixture of building materials provided includes hardy board, brick, stucco, and glass which is balanced with pitched roofs, parapets, and worthwhile articulation. The applicant exceeds the material percentage requirements of Mesa’s quality design standards by ensuring that a combination of brick, concrete tile, glass and hardy board exceeds 25% on every elevation. The proposed building architecture is a contemporary design featuring variety in roof lines, desirable massing, and a sophisticated mixture of materials. The mixture of building materials provided includes hardy board, brick, stucco, and glass which is balanced with pitched roofs, parapets, and worthwhile articulation. Building heights are primarily two stories with a single-story unit also being provided at the primary entry to the site. The unit product consists of primarily 3 bedroom/2.5 bath units with open layouts. The proposed architecture provides superior quality to justify the PAD standards.

Building heights are primarily two stories with a single-story unit also being provided at the primary entry to the site. The unit product consists of 1,590 square foot units with 3 bedroom/2.5 baths and open floor plan layouts. Each garage unit in the development will be prewired to provide electric vehicle charging capability. Each unit benefits from a large private open space with yards varying from 196 SF to 613 SF (422 SF average per unit).

4. Development Standards

The preliminary development plan establishes building setbacks, buffers, and a landscape plan which largely complies with City of Mesa RM-2 standards. However, certain PAD deviations are requested to ensure a superior design on this smaller in-fill site which has constrained property characteristics such as limited frontage and narrow depth. Table 2 on the next page details the proposed modified development standards for this project. The deviations which do not meet the RM-2 development standards are highlighted in **red**.

Table 2 – Modified Development Standards

Standard	RM-2 Required	Proposed
Minimum Yards:		
Front & Street-facing sides-6-lane arterial (North Side; Main St) (ft.)	30	-14 to 6 ft. wall -20 to Building
Front & Street-facing sides-4-lane arterial (East Side; Sossaman Rd) (ft.)	20	15 to 6 ft. wall
Interior Side and Rear - adjacent to Non-Residential District (West Side) (ft.)	30	-0 to 6 ft. wall -20 to Building
Interior Side and Rear - adjacent to RS District (South Side) (ft.)	30	-0 to 6 ft. wall -20 to Building
Landscape Yard -6-lane arterial (North Side; Main St) (ft.)	30	14
Landscape Yard -4-lane arterial (East Side; Sossaman Rd) (ft.)	20	15
Perimeter Wall Height (South Side) (ft.)	6	8
Parking lot landscape islands shall be installed at each end of a row of stalls.		Per Plan
Landscape islands shall be a minimum of eight feet wide and 15 feet in length for single-row.		Per Plan
Foundation base on exterior wall without a public entrance.		Per Plan
Private open space shall be accessible to only one (1) living unit by a doorway to a habitable room or hallway.		Per Plan

Justification for Development Standard Deviations

As detailed below, the modifications listed in the above table are warranted given the site constraints such as the narrowness of the acreage and the proposed overall superior design features of the project. Strict application of the zoning provisions would not enable the proposed development to offer the cohesive design and creativity needed to promote the intended vibrant and sustainable development.

The proposed community intends to achieve appropriate in-fill development situated between commercial, arterial roadway, and mobile home uses. The project is ideally situated for multi-family development with its location along an arterial road and in close proximity to public transit options adjacent to the site.

a. Street Facing Setbacks

The 20-foot building setback to the Main Street ROW is proposed to conform with the urban framework of the area. Providing a reduced Main Street setback benefits the area by allowing increased southern buffering to neighboring residential. A deviation is also requested for the minimal instances where 6' high perimeter walls are setback 14' from Main Street and 15' from Sossaman Road. These walls are designed to integrate with the superior quality of the street facing building facades.

These development standards are justified by the quality architecture which is visible to the public view as shown in Figure 6 on the next page.

Figure 6 – Conceptual Street View to Front Yard Buildings and Walls



The proposed building is integrated with the 6' high site walls to create a street scene which is exciting and balanced. The proposed building and wall materials (including hardy board, brick, stucco, glass, and CMU) exceed standards for number of required materials (five materials provided where two required) and building articulation (including use of diagonal projections). This urban design is appropriate along Mesa's Main Street and is executed with building plane offsets and the use of a batter stack CMU wall design on integrated private open space areas.

Notably, the proposed 20-foot arterial building setbacks exceed the existing 15 foot Limited Commercial standard applicable to the property. With the existing entitlement in mind, this PAD request is de minimis as it is limited to requesting an approximately thirty (30) foot stretch of 6-foot-high screen wall being placed at fourteen (14) feet from the property line.

Further, we note that the proposed development will be installing public sidewalk improvements and that the buildings will in reality be built forty-seven (47) feet from the back of the sidewalk improvement. This significant setback condition will afford the City the future flexibility to expand the width of Main Street without hindering the urban design of this project.

b. Interior Side Setback to Commercial

A deviation is sought to the required building setback next to the western commercial use (20-foot building setback where 30 feet required). Main 45 seeks to provide an elevated private open space experience which exceeds typical multi-family standards. To accomplish this, the rear yards on the western boundary are extended to the property line where they provide between 540 to 685 square foot yards. Importantly, the perimeter landscape requirements of the City are being exceeded as two 24" box trees will be located in each of the five (5) yards which abut this western side (resulting in 10 trees being provided where 6 is required). The use of landscaping and large rear yards on this western portion of the site ensures compatibility with the commercial office use and a superior PAD condition.

c. Interior Rear Setback to Residential

The technical deviation for the southern rear building setback (20 feet where 30 feet is required) is appropriate given the public alley which adds an additional 20 feet of buffer. Ultimately, the

actual building setback to the mobile home property line is 40 feet, which exceeds the standard. Building articulation, common open space areas, and tree placement will ensure a superior transition between the properties. By providing improvements to the public alley, the neighbors will have more security and cleaner maintenance of this currently unimproved area.

Meaningful landscaping (47 trees provided where 31 required) and unique building architecture ensure that superior design is being provided along the southern boundary and justify the proposed deviation.

d. Landscape Island Dimensions and Foundation Base at Exterior Wall without a Public Entrance

Foundation base rules are largely complied with throughout the development but the 200-foot site depth necessitates encroachments which provide minimum 3 foot foundation base at several home entries. Similarly, landscape island and drive aisle adjacent landscaping deviates from the standards in order to provide better sidewalk integration which secures an elevated pedestrian experience while also providing for total parking that exceeds the city requirement. These deviations secure parking standards above the Mesa requirement and allow for placement of accessible trash enclosures.

The total open space provided within the community far exceeds standards (587 sq. ft./unit provided where 200 sq. ft./unit required). This contributes to ensuring that superior transitions between buildings, asphalt and open space are provided for the community and further justify these deviations.

These modifications are proposed to be allowed in accordance with the submitted site plan and if the site plan is amended then similar design quality must be provided in order to justify the deviations.

e. Perimeter Wall Height

This PAD requests that the southern wall be allowed to be installed as an eight (8) foot wall as requested by adjacent neighbors to the property. The wall will step down to six feet height along the western boundary of the site. This design characteristic provides increased visual buffers and ensures additional security for the area.

f. Private Open Space Accessibility

The site plan designates that eleven (11) of the units (identified on the Open Space Plan as Units 101, 104-106, 108-110, 138, 141-142, and 145) will have between 196 to 204 square feet of private open space area which is accessible near the front door of the unit as opposed to being accessible from a doorway or habitable room. As noted above, the private open space areas provided within this community far exceed the standards of the MZO which requires 120 square feet of private open space. These eleven (11) units open space areas are designed with private access placed at the walkup to the front door and near the reserved parking for the unit. This design consideration is justified by the overall superior private open space provided for the project and the sensible location of the private open space near the front door of the unit.

Alternative Compliance

The proposed architecture yields a creative, high-quality approach on a unique parcel of land. The architecture complies with the standards of the City of Mesa's design guidelines in all respects except that the second required building material on several facades is less than 25% as required by the MZO. However, the proposed architecture is a much better alternative because instead of only having two (2) kinds of primary exterior materials, the proposed architecture has five (5) primary exterior materials (stucco, hardy board, brick, concrete tile, and glazing). The specific material calculations for each façade are provided on Architectural Sheets ZA1.11 to ZA1.16.

The site plan has seven building types, which creates architectural interest in and of itself for a relatively small development site, but each building individually has a variety of materials. For example, Building 'A' North elevation is a superior alternative because it uses hardy, brick, concrete tile, and glazing to aggregate to a total of 32.2% primary materials (more than the 25% baseline standard) in addition to the 45% stucco. A similar approach is taken throughout the development with stucco never exceeding 60% as the primary material, hardy board never exceeding 48%, brick never exceeding 27%, and concrete tile never exceeding 26%. Thus, a large variation in quality materials is provided with this design, the project avoids being stucco dominant, and great architectural interest is achieved.

5. Proposed PAD Overlay District Zoning

As discussed in Section 11-22-1 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the Planned Area Development Overlay district is to allow for "innovative design and flexibility in projects of sufficient size that are planned for development as a cohesive unit." The proposed development complies with the superior design standards of Section 11-31-32 as shown below:

- A. *Holistic Approach to Project Design.* Answer: The project architecture includes six (6) material types including hardy board, brick, stucco, concrete tile, glass, and metal. These varied building materials are placed with appropriate massing and detailed articulation which integrates the project from ground-level patios to pitched roof elements. Superior private open spaces are integrated into the architecture with batter stack CMU wall design.
- B. *Responsive Approach to Site and Sub-Area Context.* Answer: The key design element is a two-story building that is setback from the mobile home property line by forty (feet) which is ten (10) feet more than the typical multi-family requirement. This design ensures that the proposal integrates with the physical conditions immediate to the site.

To create a unique sense of place, the proposal includes monument signage and a site entry wall that creates diagonal interest to support the singular pitched roof elements of the design.

- C. *Sustainable Design.* Answer: This development contributes to sustainable design by utilizing an in-fill lot with existing public facilities that have capacity for higher density development. The project maximizes use of common and private open space areas and

the building and landscape layout will function to provide significant shading. This modern development will be prewired to provide electrical vehicle charging capability in every garage.

- D. *Exceeds Standards.* Answer: As discussed above in the Justification for Development Standard Deviations section, this project exceeds the multi-family development standards with regards to private open space, total open space, building setbacks to residential, electric vehicle charging, and architectural quality.
- E. *Great Public Spaces.* Answer: This community provides families and residents with large private open space areas to complement minimum 1,590 square foot units which are large multi-family offerings for the area. The units are also integrated into practical common areas which are distributed evenly throughout the site and include a dog park, ramada with BBQ grill, children play amenity, and a grass area with seating.

The proposal also meets the requirements outlined in the Purpose Statement of the PAD Overlay District:

- A. *The proposed development must be more than five acres.* Answer: The project is 3.51 net acres but with 45 units proposed it complies with the size requirement for a PAD established in the Zoning Ordinance.
- B. *Well designed and integrated open space and/or recreational facilities held in common ownership and of a scale that is proportionate to the use.* Answer: The proposed development features an amenity package that is well integrated, scaled to an appropriate size and will be desirable to prospective residents. The centralized common area will feature a barbeque grill and shaded seating next to a grass area which can be utilized for activities and a child play place. The dog park on the west side of the site will provide a dedicated running area for pets. These common amenities provide additional benefits to residents who will be benefiting from comparatively large private yard areas (422 SF of average private yard where 120 SF is the standard in RM-2 zoning districts).
- C. *Options for the design and use of private or public streets.* Answer: This development will feature landscaping around the amenity areas and private drives. The driveways will remain private and be maintained by the property manager.
- D. *Preservation of significant aspects of the natural character of the land.* Answer: The existing vacant lot contains no significant features or character that requires preservation.
- E. *Building design, site design, and amenities that create a unique and more sustainable alternative to conventional development.* Answer: See discussion regarding community design above.
- F. *Sustainable property owners' associations.* Answer: The number of homes in this community will contribute to a sustainable association.

- G. *Maintenance of property held in common ownership through the use of recorded covenants, conditions, and restrictions.* Answer: The entire project will be maintained by the property manager. Residents will be held to the highest of care standards through the use of management rules that will be crafted to ensure that this community is well-maintained over time.
- H. *Single or multiple land use activities organized in a comprehensive manner, and designed to work together in common and in a synergistic manner to the benefit of both the project and the neighboring area.* Answer: This community is comprised solely of residential housing and the community has been designed holistically to ensure that it presents a coherent aesthetic and so that each resident has access to the amenities provided within the community.

6. General Plan Conformance

The proposed development is consistent with the Mesa 2050 General Plan which designates the property as Neighborhood Center with an Evolve growth strategy. Under the General Plan, multifamily residential is appropriate at this location because it is a supportive use to the existing principal commercial uses in the area. This proposal is appropriate because greater than 70% of the developments in this vicinity are established with principal land uses.

The proposed project will contribute to creating a pedestrian friendly space by installing over 850 feet of public sidewalk along Main Street and utilizing a two-story building design to integrate with surrounding development.

Urban Design Characteristics

Main 45 contributes to the growth strategy and urban design characteristics of the area. Buildings are oriented towards the street to provide spatial definition with parking located behind the buildings. The building located at the corner of Sossaman and Main is off set from the intersection to create visual interest and additional landscape area. A monument sign is also proposed to create additional visual interest and will complement the unified architectural style of the buildings and fencing. Solid waste enclosures and utility boxes are screened from the public street and located away from residential entries. The project entry is marked by a central gathering space to enhance the pedestrian experience and sense of community. Each unit is connected to the common open space areas with a clearly delineated five (5) foot wide path.

In support of the general plan designation, this residential community proposes multi-family housing which is commensurate with the parcels adjacent to the property. The south side of the site is marked by a forty (40) foot building setback to the southern residential neighbors with twenty (20) feet of public alley and twenty (20) foot deep rear yards for Main 45 residents. This significant setback between two-story buildings and mobile home units mitigates potential impacts on the neighboring mobile home lots and supports the proposed in-fill community situated between commercial and mobile home uses.

This request proposes to develop the property in a manner that is harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed PAD zoning flows out of the fabric of the community

and nearby commercial, multi-family, and mobile home uses. The proposed quality multi-family product establishes a high-quality transition to the Main Street arterial and will appeal to the highly demanded need for housing in the City.

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

The project complies with the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the General Plan as follows:

Great Neighborhoods - Our Neighborhoods are Vibrant, Diverse, and Safe Places Where Our People Thrive.

Neighborhoods are the foundation of great communities and cities. In promotion of a complete community (*Strategy N.1*), this community benefits from appropriate internal open space and amenities while also serving to bolster current and future restaurant, retail, and employment opportunities along Main Street.

This bypassed vacant in-fill parcel will provide vibrancy to an area of the City which has long gone without new development (*Strategy N.2*). This investment will lead to increased property values and improve the safety of the area by upgrading the land use. As a part of the development of this parcel, the applicant has engaged with the surrounding landowners to ensure that local priorities are met (*Strategy N.4*).

Housing – Our Housing is Attainable for All

Main 45 contributes to providing diverse housing options for Mesa’s residents (*Strategy H.1*). This area of east Mesa is defined by various housing options including single-family, multi-family, and mobile homes. Utilizing this land will provide an additional housing option for residents and families seeking a townhome style community that provides larger 3-bedroom, 2.5 bathroom units with large private open space. The floor plan and amenities offered within this community are unique because they can meet the needs of families who are vulnerable to rising housing costs (*Strategy H.2*). The proposed development supports the objective to encourage a range of housing options in all areas of the City in order to allow people to stay in their neighborhood as their housing needs change.

The proposed community is located on Main Street which is a transit and activity hub which can reduce reliance on personal vehicles (*Strategy H.4*).

Land Use and Urban Design - Our City offers Integrated and Balanced Land Uses with a variety of neighborhoods and business opportunities

This vacant land is ideally situated for multifamily development that integrates into the current framework of the area (*Strategy LU.1*). Main 45 preserves the quality of life enjoyed by adjacent neighborhoods by restricting building height to two stories in tandem with building setbacks that

exceed typical multifamily requirements. Access to the community is from Main Street which ensures that no impact will be felt by the neighbors.

The proposed community creates beneficial placemaking by providing a unique entry feature and signage (*Strategy LU.2*). The architecture for this project creates a high-quality urban form that will benefit current and future generations (*Strategy LU.4*). As discussed above, it is a modern design that integrates a variety of materials and high degree of articulation and visual interest.

This in-fill development will utilize existing infrastructure to maximize the city investment in this area and ensure a fiscally responsible city (*Strategy LU.3*). The private streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and open space/recreation areas within this community will be controlled by a single property association. This mechanism will oversee the efficient management of site maintenance for open space amenities and shared landscaped areas. Lighting throughout the development will be low level in nature and will meet City of Mesa requirements. In addition, the driveway and parking improvements will meet City standards.

This property is an important contributor to a developing area in east Mesa. The proposal will bring a new residential use to the area, continuing the multi-family residential in-fill pattern of development that is established in the area to support struggling commercial development. With the well-conceived site plan that is provided with this application, the use is implemented on the site with orderly development, quality design, and careful attention paid to the surrounding properties.

7. Conclusion

The proposal for this project will provide a high-quality residential project and create an opportunity for additional housing choices within the City of Mesa.

This application is consistent with the land use patterns already established in the immediate area and is therefore compatible with the vision established by the City of Mesa General Plan and the standards established in the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant and property owner look forward to working with the City of Mesa to bring this quality project to fruition.