



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Planning and Zoning Board

May 25, 2022

CASE No.: **ZON22-00040**

PROJECT NAME: **Gateway Commerce Center II**

Owner's Name:	GCC II GP LLC
Applicant's Name:	Michael Van Omen, Deutsch Architecture Group
Location of Request:	Within the 7300 to 7500 blocks of South Sossaman Road (west side). Located north of Germann Road on the west side of Sossaman Road and on the north side of the railroad.
Parcel No(s):	304-61-0023P & 304-61-023N
Request:	Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit. This request will allow for an industrial development.
Existing Zoning District:	General Industrial (GI)
Council District:	6
Site Size:	28± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Industrial Development
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	May 25, 2022 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Jennifer Merrill, Planner II
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **December 18, 1989**, City Council annexed 3,346± acres of land, including the subject parcel (Case No. A89-003; Ordinance No. 2473).

On **March 5, 1990**, the City Council approved municipal zoning for 3,331± acres including the subject site, and the subject site was zoned M-2, which is equivalent to GI (Case Z90-007; Ordinance No. 2496).

On **September 4, 1990**, the City Council approved a request for the northern 10± acres of the subject site for a Council Use Permit and Site Plan Review for an automobile restoration and salvage business (Case No. Z90-029; Ordinance No. 2558).

On **May 6, 2002**, City Council adopted an area land use plan for the area south of Williams Gateway Airport to ensure that future development would be complementary to the airport (Z01-029; Resolution No. 7838).

On **June 5, 2017**, City Council approved the Pecos Road Employment Opportunity Zone (PREOZ) to establish zoning to guide future development of employment and industrial uses for 1,102± acres including the subject site (Z17-013; Ordinance No. 5386).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting Site Plan Review approval of an Initial Site Plan to allow the development of an industrial building on a 28-acre property. The property owner is not opting-in to the PREOZ. Currently, the site is vacant and located north of Germann Road on the west side of Sossaman Road. The proposed 448,933 square foot building has a “cross-dock” design with loading docks on the north and south sides of the building.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The General Plan character area designation on the property is Employment. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, examples of Employment districts are large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. The goal of the Employment Character area designation is to provide a wide range of employment opportunities in high quality settings. Staff reviewed the request and determined the proposal is consistent with the criteria for review of development outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan:

The subject property is also located within the Logistics and Commerce District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan. This designation applies to areas south of the Airport/Campus District and the Williams Gateway Freeway. Heavy industrial, light industrial, business parks, and commercial uses should be the predominant uses within this district. The proposed development meets the goals and intent of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the site is located within the Airfield Overlay District, specifically within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3). The location of the property within the Airfield Overlay is due to its proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, the AOA 3 allows development of industrial and warehouse uses.

The proposed development is also not in the direct flight path of the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway airport runways; however, the development will likely experience noise from the airport. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the proposal and didn’t have any concerns.

Zoning District Designations:

The site is currently zoned General Industrial (GI). Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, industrial uses are permitted in the GI zoning district. Per Section 11-7-1 of the MZO, the purpose of the GI

zoning district is to provide areas for manufacturing, processing, assembly, research, wholesale, and storage, and similar activities that require separation from residential uses due to noise, vibration, use of hazardous materials, or other characteristics. These activities principally take place indoors but may also include some outdoor activities. This district also allows a range of commercial activities. The proposed rezoning and intended development of the site for industrial uses conforms to the goals of the GI district.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The proposed site plan shows the development of a 448,933 square foot industrial building. The design is referred to as “cross-dock” because truck docks are located on opposite sides of the building (See Exhibit 3.2). The truck dock areas are screened with eight-foot-tall walls and gates. The site will be accessed via three entrances off of Sossaman Road. Standard size parking spaces are proposed east and south of the building, and trailer parking spaces would be located in the loading areas.

Per Section 11-30-12 of the MZO, solid waste and recycling-containers are required to be enclosed for new industrial developments in which the aggregate gross floor area exceeds 10,000 square feet. The applicant is requesting that solid waste and recycling-containers not be required to be enclosed when located within loading areas. This is because the loading areas will be screened with eight-foot-high screen walls. Enclosures located outside of these areas will follow standards requirements. Per Section 11-30-12(A)(2) of the MZO, alternatives to these requirements may be considered by the Planning Director and Solid Waste Management Director. The Directors reviewed the request and because these areas are screened from public view, determined the intent of Section 11-30-9(G) of the MZO, which aims to reduce visual clutter of trash and refuse collection areas, are met with the proposed design.

Overall, the proposed site plan conforms to the criterial and requirements of a site plan review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

Special Use Permit:

Section 11-66-2(C)(2) of the MZO allows the Planning and Zoning Board to hear and take action on a SUP when requested in conjunction with another request requiring action or recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board.

Parking Reduction:

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, the proposed shell industrial building requires a total of 971 parking spaces. The applicant is requesting to reduce the number of parking spaces from 971 to 455, a 516-space reduction. Section 11-32-6 of the MZO establishes criteria for approval of a SUP to allow the reduction in the number of parking spaces. Below is a summary of the criteria for the SUP and findings:

Parking Reduction Required Findings (MZO Section 11-32-6)	Findings
1. Special conditions – including but not limited to the nature of the proposed operation; proximity to frequent transit service; transportation characteristics of persons residing, working, or visiting the site exist that will reduce the parking demand at the site.	The proposal includes a Parking Analysis which states that the anticipated operations will not require the parking spaces required by the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. Based on the Analysis provided, 455 parking spaces will provide enough parking for the proposed use.
2. The use will adequately be served by the proposed parking.	Per the applicant, the proposed parking spaces will adequately serve the use. Also, the proposed parking ratio is consistent with similar developments in the area.
3. Parking demand generated by the project will not exceed the capacity of or have a detrimental impact on the supply of on street parking in the surrounding area.	Per the Parking Analysis submitted with this request, the parking demand is not anticipated to exceed the capacity provided or impact the supply of on- street parking in the area.

Height Increase:

Per Table 11-7-3 of the MZO, the maximum building height permitted in the GI zoning district is 50-feet. The proposed elevations show a maximum building height of 55-feet. The subject site is located in Airfield Overlay District Three, and per Section 11-30-3(B) of the MZO, in the Airfield Overlay District there shall be no exceptions to the specified height limits unless authorized by the approval of a Special Use Permit in accordance with Chapter 70, Conditional Use Permits.

Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, the granting of an SUP must advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and not be detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the city. As previously stated, the proposed industrial building is consistent with the goals of the General Plan by providing employment. According to the applicant, the parking provided is sufficient to meet the needs of the end user, and the 40-foot interior height of the building is designed to accommodate industrial warehouse, distribution and manufacturing uses.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board reviewed the proposed building elevations and landscape plan at their April 12, 2022 Work Session. Staff is working with the applicant to address the Design Review Board's comments.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest GI Vacant	North Employment Opportunity (EO) Proposed industrial development	Northeast (Across Sossaman Road) LI Charter School
West	Subject Property	East

GI Vacant	GI Vacant	(Across Sossaman Road) LI Vacant
Southwest (Across Canal and Railroad) Town of Queen Creek	South (Canal and Railroad) Town of Queen Creek	Southeast (Across Sossaman Road, Canal and Railroad) Town of Queen Creek

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The majority of land surrounding the subject site are vacant properties zoned for industrial uses. The proposed industrial development is compatible with the zoning and anticipated land uses in the area.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process which included mailing letters to property owners within 500 feet of the site. There are no HOAs within ½ mile or registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. As of writing this report, neither the applicant nor staff have received any comments/concerns from surrounding property owners. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on May 25, 2022.

Staff Recommendation:

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan and with the Gateway Strategic Development Plan. Additionally, the request meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
3. All off-site improvements and street frontage landscaping must be installed with the first phase of construction.
4. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:
 - a. Owner must execute the City's standard Avigation Easement and Release for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prior to or concurrently with the recordation of the final subdivision map or the issuance of a building permit, whichever occurs first.
 - b. Due to the proximity to the 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. A completed form with a response by the FAA must accompany any building permit application for structure(s) on the property.
 - c. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within one mile of the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.
5. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1-Staff Report

Exhibit 2-Vicinity Map

Exhibit 3-Application Information

3.1 Project Narrative

3.2 Site Plan

3.3 Landscape Plan

3.4 Elevations

3.5 Parking Analysis

3.6 Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit 5-Avigation Easement