



**PLANNING DIVISION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Meeting**

**January 9, 2023**

CASE No.: **ZON21-00080**

PROJECT NAME: **Mesa Premier RV & Boat Storage**

Owner's Name:	R&S Development Group LLC
Applicant's Name:	Russell Skuse, Horrocks Engineers
Location of Request:	Within the 3600 to 3800 blocks of North Higley Road (east side) and the 5200 to 5500 blocks of East Thomas Road (south side). Located east of Higley Road on the south side of Thomas Road.
Parcel No(s):	141-38-047A
Request:	Rezone from Single Residence 90 (RS-90) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD), Council Use Permit (CUP), and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for a boat and recreational vehicle storage facility.
Existing Zoning District:	Single Residence 90 (RS-90)
Council District:	5
Site Size:	11± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Boat and Recreational Vehicle Storage
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
Hearing Date(s):	<b>September 14, 2022 / 4:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Josh Grandlienard, AICP, Planner II
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions (Vote: 6-0)
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

**HISTORY**

On **January 23, 1983**, the City Council annexed approximately 2,335± acres of land (Ordinance No. 1682), including the subject property, and subsequently zoned the property Single Residence 90 (RS-90) (Ordinance No. 1710, Case No. Z83-037).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background:**

The subject property is currently vacant and located north of the 202 Red Mountain Freeway, east of Higley Road, and south of Thomas Road. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from Single Residence 90 (RS-90) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD), approval of a Council Use Permit, and approval of an Initial Site Plan to develop the site for boat and recreational vehicle (RV) storage. Per Table 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), boat and RV storage facilities require a Council Use Permit within the Light Industrial zoning district.

### **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, the purpose of the Employment character area designation is to provide employment type land uses with such areas typically having minimal connection to the surrounding area. Examples of Employment districts include areas for large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks.

Staff reviewed the request for a proposed boat and RV storage facility and determined it is consistent with the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The request for Light Industrial zoning complies with the Employment Character Area, as LI zoning is a listed primary zoning district. Additionally, the proposed development will be consistent with the surrounding area, as the area has been developing into an industrial area with many developments supporting the nearby Falcon Field Airport.

### **Falcon Field Sub Area:**

The subject property is located within the Falcon Field Sub Area and the proposed use is consistent with the intent of the area by reducing the impact of aviation related uses from neighboring residential uses. The proposed boat and RV storage use will act as a buffer between the airport and the residential uses to the northeast as well as reducing the impact of the 202 Red Mountain Freeway for those properties to the north.

### **Zoning District Designations:**

The subject property is currently zoned RS-90. The applicant is requesting a rezone to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay and a Council Use Permit (LI-PAD-CUP). Per Section 11-7-1 of the MZO, the intent of the Light Industrial zoning district is to provide areas for limited manufacturing and processing, wholesaling, research, warehousing, and distribution activities take place within enclosed buildings, with restricted accessory outdoor storage as needed to support the primary uses. Light Industrial areas can be used to buffer General Industrial uses from other less intense uses. This district also provides for a full range of commercial activities, generally on a limited scale, including high-impact commercial uses, outdoor display, and outdoor sale. Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, boat and RV storage is permitted in the LI zoning district with approval of a Council Use Permit, and is consistent with

the intent Light Industrial district by providing for a buffer for the residential uses to the east from the general industrial uses located further west of Higley Road.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the property is located within the Airfield (AF) Overlay District. Specifically, within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3). The location of the property within the AOA 3 is due to its proximity to the Falcon Field Airport. Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, there are no use limitations beyond those set by the base district.

**Council Use Permit:**

Per Table 11-7-2 of the MZO, boat and RV storage is permitted in the LI District subject to approval of CUP. Section 11-70-6(D) of the MZO, outlines the review criteria for approval of a CUP. These requirements include showing that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and other city policies, and demonstrate that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the project are consistent with the purpose of the zoning district designation on the property. The CUP is also required to show that approval of the project will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas, and there is adequate public services and infrastructure to support the development.

The proposed development conforms to the criteria for approving a CUP outlined in Sections 11-70-6(D) of the MZO. The proposed development advances the goals and objective of the General Plan and Employment character area by providing pedestrian walkways and improving the streetscape along Thomas Road. The proposed development is consistent with the LI District which allows for areas and uses that can be used to buffer general industrial uses from less intense uses. In addition, upon entering into a Development Agreement with the City, adequate public services and infrastructure will be present to support the proposed development until CIP improvements are constructed to provide permeant service. In summary, the proposed development will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas and will contribute to creating a strong neighborhood.

**PAD Overlay Modification – MZO Article 3, Chapter 22:**

The subject request includes a Planned Area Development overlay (PAD) to allow for modifications to certain required development standards of the MZO on the property. Per Section 11-22 of the MZO, the purpose of the PAD overlay is to allow innovative design and flexibility that creates high-quality development for the site. Table 1 below shows the MZO required standards and the applicant's proposed PAD standards.

Table 1: Development Standards

<b>Development Standards</b>	<b>MZO Required</b>	<b>PAD Proposed</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
<u>Fences and Freestanding Walls –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-30-4(B)</i> Maximum Height -Front yards and required street side yards (north,	3.5-foot-tall	<b>8-foot-tall</b>	As proposed

south, and west property lines)			
<u>Outdoor Storage –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-30-7(B)</i> -Setback	A setback shall be provided for material stored outdoors at a ratio of 1:1 from all lot lines equal to the total height of the material above the required 8-foot screen wall	<b>No setback from lot lines is required for boats and RVs stored outdoors.</b>	As proposed
<u>Landscape Yards –</u> <i>MZO Table 11-7-3</i> -Front facing and street facing sides adjacent to a freeway (south property line)	30 feet	<b>5 feet</b>	As proposed

#### Fences and Freestanding Walls:

The applicant proposed to increase the allowed wall height within the front and street facing side yards to allow for the screening storage of boats and RVs on site. The provided eight foot screen wall will effectively reduce the visual impact of the facility and help to mitigate the overall impact of the items stored on site. Due to elevation changes on site and general location of the facility, the proposed deviation would be consistent with surrounding uses while maintaining all required setbacks from Thomas Road.

#### Outdoor Storage:

The applicant proposed to reduce the setback ratio for outdoor storage to allow for the storage of boats and RVs to be placed directly adjacent to the required eight foot screen wall. Per Section 11-30-7(B) stored material with a height above eight feet must be setback from the property line at a ratio of one foot for every foot in height in which the material exceeds eight feet.

#### Landscape Yards:

Per Table 11-7-3 of the MZO, landscape yards must be landscaped according to the setbacks widths and according to the requirements of Section 11-33-3(A). Per the MZO requirements, the setback for the southern property line along the 202 Red Mountain Freeway is 30 feet. The applicant is requesting to reduce the landscape yard to five feet on the southeast corner of the property to accommodate a drive aisle turn around. According to the applicant, the proposed reduction will allow for consistent turn movements and will allow for the consistent wall height and additional screening to the east to reduce the visual impact of the storage facility. The reduced setback will only apply to the area adjacent to the private drive and meets all other requirements for landscape setbacks.

**Justification:**

The applicant's justification for the requested deviations are enhanced building elevations, enhanced screen walls, and landscaping along Thomas Road. Landscaping along Thomas Road will be increased to have a 15-foot width. Additional landscaping above what is required by the MZO will be provided north of the screen walls adjacent to Thomas and Higley Roads.

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

The site plan shows construction of a single building with a total size of 1,530 square feet. The site plan also show construction of 414 parking spots for covered boat and RV storage on the site. The building elevations submitted with the application show the height of the building to be less than 30 feet. According to the information shown on the site plan, there will be one access point to the site from the private drive on the east side of the property and will be accessed from Thomas Road. The primary access will be at the southeastern portion of the site, specifically near the proposed leasing office, and will be used for both ingress and egress onto the site.

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, a minimum of four parking spaces are required for a mini-storage use. Overall, the site plan shows four parking spaces, which provides the minimum number of parking spaces. The submitted site plan shows the location of an entry plaza in front of the leasing office, which located at the east side of the building and along the private drive and south of Thomas Road. Overall, the proposed site plan conforms with the MZO including the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the City of MZO.

**Development Agreement:**

Due to no existing sewer infrastructure in the area, a development agreement is required to allow for temporary septic on site until sewer is readily available in the area. The property owner will be required to tie into the sewer once the line has been completed to the frontage of the subject parcel. The proposed development agreement will be heard by City Council in at the same hearing as this subject request.

**Design Review:**

The Design Review Board reviewed the subject request at their September 13, 2022 meeting. Staff is working with the applicant to address minor aesthetic comments and recommendations from the Design Review Board that do not impact the site plan.

**Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:**

<b>Northwest</b> (Across Higley Road) LI Vacant	<b>North</b> (Across Thomas Road) RS-90 Vacant/Single-Residence Homes	<b>Northeast</b> (Across Thomas Road) RS-90 Vacant/Single-Residence Homes
<b>West</b> (Across Higley Road) LI Vacant	<b>Subject Property</b> RS-90 Vacant	<b>East</b> (Across Thomas Road) RS-90/LI-PAD Vacant
<b>Southwest</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Southeast</b>

(Across 202 Red Mountain Freeway) LI Vacant	(Across 202 Red Mountain Freeway) RS-90 Commercial	(Across 202 Red Mountain Freeway) RS-90 Commercial
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**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The subject site is currently vacant. To the north of the site are existing single residence homes and directly to the east of the site is vacant land zoned RS-90. South of the site is the 202 Red Mountain Freeway, and to the west of the site is a vacant land zoned Light Industrial zoning. The proposed industrial development is compatible with the surrounding development and land uses.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process which included notifying property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, as well as HOAs within ½ mile, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. As of the date of this report, staff has not been contacted by any resident or property owner to express support or opposition to this request.

**Staff Recommendations:**

Based on the application received and the preceding analysis, staff finds that the requested rezone, Council Use Permit, approval criteria for a Council Use Permit per Section 11-70-6(D) of the MZO, and Site Plan Review criteria outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions.

**Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review case DRB21-01173.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
4. Execute and comply with the Development Agreement.
5. 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 Falcon Field 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 Falcon Field 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. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within two miles of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.
6. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modification to the development standards as approved with this PAD as shown in the following table:

<b>Development Standards</b>	<b>Approved</b>
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<u>Fences and Freestanding Walls –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-30-4(B)</i> Yards within the front yard	8-foot-tall
<u>Outdoor Storage –</u> <i>MZO Section 11-30-7</i> Material stored outdoors	No setback from lot lines is required for boats and RVs stored outdoors.
<u>Landscape Yards–</u> <i>MZO Table 11-7-3</i> -Front facing and street facing sides adjacent to a freeway (south property line)	5 feet

**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 Grading and Drainage Report

3.6 Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Report