

April 11, 2023

**Re: Google Fiber PHX HUT 114 – Board of Adjustments - SUP
Project Narrative
City of Mesa Development Services
N. Center Street Mesa, AZ 85201**

Hut Owner/ Operator

*Google Fiber
380 Aspen Ave, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
Contact: Kent Steinbach, Lead Program Manager
Phone: 417-839-1020 Email: ksteinbach@google.com*

Engineer/ Applicant

*BHC
7101 College Blvd, Suite 400
Overland Park, KS 66210
Contact: Robert Vaccaro, P.E. Phone: 913-905-1523 Email: Robert.vaccaro@ibhc.com*

Project General Plan

This project is for the construction of a utility equipment shelter compound site to house an unmanned fiber network equipment building. This building, typically referred to as a “hut”, supports Google Fiber's construction of a fiber network to offer high speed internet service to the city of Mesa’s community. Multiple utility conduits that will house fiberoptic cable will be extended between an on-site utility vault to new utility vaults that will be placed in the right-of-way of Gilbert Rd. The compound will also contain a backup power generator that will run on a natural gas service. As a point of clarity this site will not house any sort of antenna, tower, or wireless communication transmission devices.

Description of building façade and screening

The hut building will be a 12’x30’ (360sqft) pre-manufactured utility structure with tan aggregate siding and a flat roof. The proposed site will utilize an 8’ tall masonry brick wall that will match the existing screening wall nearby on the property for security to safeguard against any unsanctioned interaction with the on-site facilities. This wall will also act to screen the building equipment and will shield the majority of the building completely from view. The site will be accessed through the use of either a 3’ wide man gate that is accessible by key card or a larger 8’ wide gate that can accommodate a vehicle.

Special Use Permit Findings Statement

The site is currently zoned Limited Commercial and therefore requires approval of a Special User Permit (SUP) by the Board of Adjustment for a new freestanding communications facility. Specifically, the proposed SUP shall comply with the criteria for review outlined in MZO Sections 11-70-5 & 11-35-6(E).

The following are presented as Required Findings, 11-70-5-E, for the Board's Consideration:

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;
This Hut will serve as a critical part of fiber internet infrastructure
2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;
The site will generally conform with the character of the surrounding developments.
3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and
The site will be secured and screened from view, and will not impact neighboring properties.
4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.
The site will consume low levels of gas and electricity that will not put any stress on available utilities; its minimal change in ground cover impervious area will have a negligible impact to public drainage systems

The development also complies with MZO Section 11-35-6-E, in order to approve any Special Use Permit for a facility subject to regulation by this Chapter, the decision-making authority must find, based on substantial information in the record including, where required, technical analysis by an approved radio frequency engineers, calculations by a State-licensed structural engineer, or other evidence that:

1. The proposed telecommunication facility will comply with all applicable state and federal standards and requirements;
This facility will comply with all applicable state and federal standards and requirements
2. The proposed project is consistent with the general requirements of this Chapter and any specific requirements applicable to the proposed facility;
This project is consistent with the general requirements of Chapter 35 that are not specific to requirements pertaining to antenna as this development

does not have an antenna or other wireless transmission device. All specific requirements applicable to this proposed facility will be met.

3. The proposed antenna or related facility, operating alone and in conjunction with other telecommunications facilities, will comply with all applicable state and federal standards and requirements; and either:

- a. Will not be readily visible; or
- b. Will be readily visible, but it is not feasible to incorporate additional measures that would make the facility not readily visible.

This project will not be readily visible as it is setback in the far northeastern corner of the property and will be shielded from view from the ROW of Gilbert Rd due to existing buildings both on the property and the neighboring property to the west. It will also be shielded from view by the proposed masonry wall and solid gates.

4. The facility, if it is not a microcell or co-located, is necessary to prevent or fill a significant gap in coverage or capacity shortfall in the applicant's service area, and is the least intrusive feasible means of doing so;

This is not a tower site and is also necessary in this location to service the surrounding homes with fiber internet service.

5. If the proposed facility is a satellite dish or parabolic antenna exceeding 39 inches in diameter, that a smaller or less intrusive antenna cannot feasibly accomplish the provider's technical objectives and that the facility will not be readily visible;

This facility does not have a satellite dish or antenna.

6. If a new antenna support structure is proposed or the applicant proposes to extend the height of an existing tower, that the applicant has made good faith and reasonable efforts to locate a telecommunication facility on a support structure other than a new monopole or lattice tower or to accomplish co-location and that no existing tower or structure in the vicinity can accommodate the applicant's proposed antenna;

This facility does not have a satellite dish or antenna.

7. If a modification of height, separation, setback, landscaping or other requirements of Section 11-35-5 is proposed, that the proposed modification is consistent with the purposes of this Chapter and will be the least intrusive feasible means of meeting the service provider's objectives;

Any modification proposed for this project is consistent with the purposes of Chapter 35 and the proposed facilities are designed to be as least intrusive as possible while providing fiber service.

8. If the proposed location is in a Residential district that the location is necessary for the provision of personal wireless services to Mesa residents and businesses, or their owners, customers, guests, or invitees, or other persons traveling in or about the City based on substantial evidence that siting the facility outside of a Residential district is infeasible and without the proposed facility, the operator will be unable to provide personal wireless services to its customers in the proposed coverage area, or unable to provide the capacity necessary to meet call volumes

Does not apply to this project

9. If the proposed location is readily visible from the habitable area of a dwelling unit within 300 feet or from a public right-of-way, public park, or other public recreation or cultural facility, that:
 - a. It is not feasible to provide the service at another location or to incorporate additional measures such as a decrease in height, increase in the number of number of facilities, increase in setback, change in design, relocation relative to other structures or natural features, that would further reduce its visibility; and
 - b. The proposed telecommunication facility provides an important link in applicant's service area build-out and is necessary to meet its service needs to City residents.

The location of this facility has been adjusted north from the initial submittal to sit closer to the existing utility sites while continuing to meet required setbacks. Additionally through discussion with reviewer, two alternate locations (1) north of existing tower and (2) just west of existing pump site, were ruled as not feasible and less desirable due to current property access requirements and the benefits of additional screening from existing neighboring building.

This location provides an important link in the service area build-out and is necessary to meet services needs to City residents.

Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) Required Findings

The property has an existing Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) from 2009, **ZA09-029**, that granted the Grace United Methodist Church campus 4 years to install phased improvements to the site including the installation of a new parking lot in the location of the proposed facility. As the property is not in conformance with the conditions of the SCIP, a new SCIP will be required. The proposed Site Improvement Plans and provided parking study are intended to supersede the improvements proposed in SCIP ZA09-029 while still making meaningful upgrades to the property in the form of landscaping for the existing northwestern parking lot and Right-of-way of Gilbert Rd.

The new SCIP request will be addressing the requirements from the 2009 request by providing landscaping missing from the west parking lot off of Gilbert Road as required by ZA09-029. A new landscape plan has been provided for landscape updates along Gilbert Road. A parking study has also been provided justifying the parking reduction to return back to the original two parking lots on the site as part of the SUP for a parking reduction.

Per MZO Section 11-73-3: A SCIP shall not be granted unless the Zoning Administrator, acting as a Hearing Officer, or Board of Adjustment shall find upon sufficient evidence that:

- A) The entire development site will be brought into substantial conformance. Substantial conformance shall mean physical improvements to the existing

development site which constitute the greatest degree of compliance with this Ordinance that can be attained without causing or creating any of the following conditions:

- 1) The demolition or reconstruction of existing buildings or other significant structures (except signs); or
No demolition or reconstruction of existing buildings is proposed by this project.
 - 2) The cessation of the existing conforming use, or the preclusion of any other lawful, permitted use.
There is no change in the use of the existing buildings or property as a whole. The specific area of proposed improvements that will be used for the communications shelter will be reviewed for SUP approval by the Board of Adjustments as outlined above.
 - 3) The creation of new non-conforming conditions.
No new non-conforming conditions will be brought about by this project. This new SCIP will address some areas of existing non-conformance by providing landscaping that meets current Mesa ordinances to the northeast parking lot and along the Right-of-way of Gilbert Rd.
- B) The improvements authorized by the SCIP will result in a development that is compatible with, and not detrimental to, adjacent properties or neighborhoods.
The proposed improvements are both compatible and not detrimental to adjacent properties and neighborhoods.

Special Use Permit for Parking Reduction

Per MZO Section 11-32-6, the required parking for any use may be reduced through the approval of a Special Use Permit pursuant to Chapter 70, and the following:

- A. Criteria for Approval
 1. Special Conditions
 2. The use will adequately be served by the proposed parking;
 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.
The current parking provided has exceeded the demand generated by the current property uses for the 14 years since the parking lots were remodeled. The addition of the utility structure will not contribute to the current parking demand for the property.
- B. Parking Demand Study
A parking demand study has been provided as part of this permit submittal (2023-4-5_GF Hut 114 -Parking Study).
- C. Optional Transit Reduction.
This parking reduction SUP is not requested on the basis of this clause; however it should be noted that a bus rapid transit stop is located in the Right-of-Way of Gilbert Rd adjacent to the church building.

The following are presented as Required Findings, 11-70-5-E, for the Board's Consideration:

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;

This parking reduction allows the placement of the hut that will serve as a critical part of fiber internet infrastructure which will advance the goals and objective of the General Plan and other City policies.

2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;

The parking reduction does conform with the characteristics of the surrounding developments and conforms with the General Plan and other applicable policies.

3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and

The parking reduction allows for the incoming freestanding communication facility to be placed in an area that reduces visibility and impact on the surrounding properties and will not be injurious or detrimental.

4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.