



PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

March 24, 2021

CASE No.: ZON21-00057	PROJECT NAME: Ryan at Phoenix Mesa Gateway
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Owner's Name:	Prairie Dog Investments III, LLC.
Applicant's Name:	Ryan Companies US, Inc.
Location of Request:	Within the 8800 to 9100 blocks of East Ray Road (north side) and within the 4900 block of South Ellsworth Road (west side). Located north of Ray Road and West of Ellsworth Road.
Parcel No(s):	304-31-011F
Request:	Site Plan Review; and Special Use Permit to allow for an industrial development.
Existing Zoning District:	Light Industrial (LI)
Council District:	6
Site Size:	35.2± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Industrial / Warehouse
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	March 24 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Jennifer Gniffke, Planner I
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **October 6, 2000**, the City Council annexed 1,571.41± acres of land, including the 35.2± acre subject property, into the City of Mesa and established Agriculture (AG) zoning on the property (Case No. Z00-087, Ordinance No. 3815, and Ordinance No. 3885).

On **November 20, 2006**, the City Council approved a rezoning of the property from Agricultural (AG) to Light Industrial (LI) with a condition that all future development of the site require site plan review (Case No. Z06-059, Ordinance No. 4623).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting approval of a site plan to allow for the development of six industrial buildings, totaling approximately 510,351 square feet, on the subject site. According to the applicant, the buildings will be used for general manufacturing and warehouse/storage uses. Per Section 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), a variety of industrial uses including general manufacturing and warehouse/storage are allowed in the LI zoning district. The submitted site plan shows there will be four vehicular accesses onto the site; one access from Point Twenty-Two Boulevard located on the north side of the site; one access from Ellsworth Road located on east side of the site; and two points of access from Ray Road on the south side of the site.

Additionally, the subject request includes a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow the buildings to exceed the permitted height in the Airfield Overflight Area (AOA). The maximum building height in the LI District is 40 feet; the applicant is requesting a maximum building height of 46 feet. Section 11-30-3 of the MZO allows the Planning and Zoning Board to approve an increase in height for proposed developments through a Special Use Permit.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The General Plan character area designation on the property is Mixed Use Activity District/Employment. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the Mixed Use Activity Districts are large-scale (over 25 acres) community and regional activity areas that include typical uses such as retail, restaurants, offices, services, and entertainment. Per the General Plan, the primary focus of the Employment character area designation is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high-quality settings. Examples of employment-type land uses include areas for large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business park type uses.

The proposed development for general manufacturing and warehousing uses is consistent with the goals of the Employment character area and the Mixed Use Activity District as the use will create opportunities for various employment types and contribute to the General Plan's goals of creating employment within the City. Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the criteria for review of development outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Gateway Strategic Development Plan:

The subject property is also located within the Mixed Use Community district of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan (MGSDP). The Mixed Use Community district is envisioned to provide a variety of uses including low to high density residential, commercial and employment uses. The MGSDP also identifies freeway corridors as locations to encourage development of business parks, light industrial and other employment related uses. The proposed location near AZ State Route 24, as shown on the site plan, conforms to the goals of the MGSDP that encourages location of such industrial parks and uses.

Zoning:

The subject property is zoned Light Industrial (LI). Per Section 11-7-2 of the Mesa Zoning

Ordinance (MZO), the proposed development of the property for industrial uses including warehousing and storage is allowed in the LI zoning district.

Airfield Overlay – MZO Article 3 Section 11-19:

Per Section 11-19 of the 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, AOA 3 allows industrial and warehouse uses. The development is not in the direct flight path of the airport runways; however, it will likely experience noise from the airport. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the subject request and did not express opposition to the proposed development of the site.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The site plan shows development of six industrial buildings on the property. Specifically, three larger buildings will be constructed in the western section of the property, and three smaller buildings in the narrower eastern section of the property.

The proposed site plan shows access to the site from Ellsworth Road located to the east of the site, Point Twenty-Two Boulevard located to the north of the site, and Ray Road located to the south of the site. Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, 645 parking spaces are required for the proposed development; the proposed site plan shows 729 parking spaces. Per Section 11-32-3(C) of the MZO, the maximum number of surface parking spaces for a development shall not exceed 125% of the minimum required parking spaces. Based on the minimum parking requirement of 645 spaces, the maximum number of parking spaces allowed (125% of the required) is 806 spaces. Therefore, the proposed number of parking spaces conforms to the requirement of the MZO.

Section 11-7-3 of the Zoning Ordinance requires common open space and amenities to be provided for the useful enjoyment of employees and visitors to the site. Specifically, the MZO requires one percent (1%) of the 510,351 square feet of gross building floor area to be utilized for common open space. Based on this requirement, 5,104 square feet of open space is required for development of the site. The site plan shows 9,651 square feet of common open space will be provided in compliance with the MZO.

Alternative Landscape Plan:

As part of the subject request, the applicant has submitted an Alternative Landscape Plan (ALP). Section 11-33-7 of the MZO allows certain modifications to the City's landscaping requirements if the proposal exceeds, in whole or in part, the City's landscape standards and conforms to the intent of the landscaping requirements. The applicant is proposing a reduction in the required width of the foundation base. Per Section 11-33-5 of the MZO, along exterior walls with public entrances, a 15-foot-wide foundation base shall be provided, measured from face of building to face of curb along the entire length of the exterior wall. The applicant is proposing a 12-foot foundation base along the frontages of Buildings One, Two and Three in order to provide a fire apparatus lane along those portions of the buildings.

To offset the proposed deviations, the applicant is proposing a diverse plant palette of low-water use, drought tolerant plants, as well as larger trees to give the site a more mature

landscape feel in a shorter amount of time. Staff reviewed the request for the Alternative Landscape Plan and has determined it is consistent with the design principles and required findings outlined in Section 11-33-7 of the MZO.

Special Use Permit (Building Height):

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to exceed the maximum building height in the Airport Overflight Area (AOA) for three of the six proposed buildings. Per Table 11-7-3 of the MZO, the maximum height allowed in the LI zoning district is 40 feet. The applicant is requesting a 46-foot height for Buildings One, Two, and Three.

Section 11-66-2(C) of the MZO allows the Planning and Zoning Board to consider an increase in the maximum building height when reviewed in conjunction with another request requiring action or recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board. Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, requirements for granting an SUP to allow for an increase in height include: (1) Demonstrating that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and other city policies; (2) Demonstrating that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the project are consistent with the purpose of the zoning district designation on the property; (3) Ensuring the project will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas; and (4) Demonstrating that there are adequate public services and infrastructure to support the development.

The proposed development size, shape, and characteristics conform to the goals and purposes of the LI zoning district designation on the property and the General Plan Employment character area designation. Allowing the increase in height of the proposed buildings will not be detrimental to the surrounding development. The adjacent property to the north is zoned LI-PAD and intended for similar industrial development. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the surrounding uses and character and will not negatively impact surrounding properties.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board will review the proposed building elevations and landscape plan at its April 13, 2021 work session. Staff will work with the applicant to include any recommended changes from the Design Review Board as they pertain to the building elevations and landscape plan.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest LI-PAD Vacant (approved industrial development)	North LI-PAD and LC-PAD, and (across Point Twenty-Two Boulevard) RM-4-PAD Vacant (approved industrial, commercial and multi- residential development)	Northeast (across Ellsworth Road) PC Vacant
West AZ State Route 24 Freeway	Subject Property LI	East (across Ellsworth Road)

	Vacant	PC Vacant
Southwest AZ State Route 24 Freeway	South AG Vacant, and (across Ray Road) AG Vacant	Southeast (across Ellsworth road) PC Vacant

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject property is immediately adjacent to the 24 Gateway Freeway to the west. Currently, the property surrounding the site is vacant. The property to the north was recently approved for a Planned Area Development (PAD) consisting of a mixture of uses including industrial (LI), multi-residential (RM-4) and retail (LC). The future industrial uses to the north are consistent with the proposed development. Both the multi-residential and the commercial developments proposed to the north are adjacent to the east end of the subject property. The proposed site plan shows smaller buildings located within the eastern portion of the site, which are compatible with the scale of the proposed multi-residential and commercial buildings to the north. In addition, the proposed multi-residential portion to the north will be separated from this site by Point Twenty-Two Boulevard and 20 feet of landscaping. Overall, the proposed development of the property will not be out of character with the surrounding area or uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

As part of the completed Citizen Participation Process, the applicant mailed notification letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, Homeowner Associations (HOAs) within ½ mile of the site, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. As of writing this report, the applicant has not received any comments or concerns from surrounding property owners. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on March 24, 2021.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the application received and the proceeding analysis, staff finds that the subject request is consistent with the General Plan, the Gateway Strategic Development Plan, the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO and meets the review criteria for a Special Use Permit outlined in Section 11-70-5 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 City development codes and regulations.
3. Compliance with the conditions of approval from Z06-059.
4. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
5. All off-site improvements and street frontage landscaping to be installed with the first phase of construction.
6. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:

- a. Owner shall execute and record the City's standard Avigation Easement and Release for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prior to the issuance of a building permit.
- b. Due to the proximity to 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. If required, an FAA determination notice of no hazard to air navigation shall be provided prior to building permit issuance.
- c. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within 1 mile of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1- Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2- Staff Report

Exhibit 3- Application Information

3.1 Project Narrative

3.2 Site Plan

3.3 Landscape Plan

3.4 Elevations

Exhibit 4- Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 5- Citizen Participation Report

Exhibit 6- Avigation Easement