

# Kitchell Development Company

Northwest Corner of Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive

Site Plan and Design Review applications  
Case Numbers: ZON20-00800 & DRB20-00801

Prepared: November 19, 2020

REVISED April 13, 2021



## Development Team

### PROPERTY OWNER/DEVELOPER

#### **Thomas Val Vista, LLC**

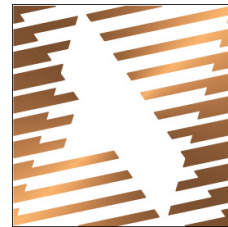
an Arizona limited liability company  
Its: Managing Partner  
By: Kitchell Development Company  
an Arizona corporation  
1707 East Highland, Suite 100  
Phoenix, Arizona 85016  
*Contact: Brad Anderson, Director of  
Design and Construction*  
P: (602) 631 - 6101  
E-mail: [Banderson@kitchell.com](mailto:Banderson@kitchell.com)



### ARCHITECT

#### **McCall & Associates Architects, Inc.**

4307 N. Civic Center Plaza  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251  
*Contact: Jeff McCall*  
P: (480) 946-0066  
F: (480) 946 - 2082  
E-mail: [www.mcaarch.com](http://www.mcaarch.com)



### ATTORNEY

#### **Earl and Curley, P.C.**

3101 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1000  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012  
*Attorney: Rodney Q. Jarvis*  
*Principal Planner: Ricardo Toris*  
P: (602) 265 – 0094  
E-mail: [rjarvis@earlcurley.com](mailto:rjarvis@earlcurley.com)  
E-mail: [rtoris@earlcurley.com](mailto:rtoris@earlcurley.com)



## TABLE OF CONTENT

|                                                  | Page |
|--------------------------------------------------|------|
| A. Introduction.....                             | 4    |
| B. Background.....                               | 5    |
| C. Details of Request.....                       | 5    |
| D. Quality Development Design Guidelines.....    | 6    |
| E. Adherence With Site Plan Review Criteria..... | 8    |
| F. Adherence With Design Review Criteria.....    | 11   |
| G. Conclusion.....                               | 13   |

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

Northwest Corner of Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive and  
Site Plan and Design Review applications  
Case Numbers: ZON20-00800 & DRB20-00801

### A. INTRODUCTION

This request is submitted by Kitchell Development Company (“Kitchell”), one of the nation’s leading developers and builders of office buildings, business and industrial parks and commercial/multi-family real estate. Founded in 1950 by Sam Kitchell, the company has provided construction management and general contracting services in the Western United States. Having been in business for more than 70 years, Kitchell has proven its long-term stability and financial strength.

Kitchell is submitting both a Site Plan application and a companion Design Review Board application for an approximate 13.19 (net) acre site located at the northwest corner of Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive (APNs 141-21-004J and 141-21-004F). The subject site is a irregular shaped lot with two street frontages and zoned GI (General Industrial) by the City of Mesa. There are two parcels located with the boundaries of Kitchell’s property that are owner by the Arizona Department of Transportation and Salt River Agriculture Improvement and Power District that are not part of this request.



## **B. BACKGROUND**

The site is general bounded by the Loop 202 Freeway along the north, Val Vista Drive along the east, future residential to the west, and Thomas Road on the south. The City's General Plan Land Use Map designates this site as Neighborhood Village Center but pursuant to Chapter 16 of the General Plan, the zoning ordinance describes the permitted development on each parcel. The City's zoning map identifies this parcel as being zoned GI (General Industrial) and such, must comply with the list of uses and development standards under the GI section of the Ordinance.

The property is an oddly shaped parcel with many challenges. The property's eastern frontage, Val Vista Drive, narrows to approximately 90-feet and yet widens to approximately 428-feet along its western boundary. Development must work around existing wireless cell towers, massive underground utility development and an SRP well site. The property's northern edge is curved rather than straight following the alignment of the Loop 202 Freeway; the southern boundary consists of approximately 1,875 feet along Thomas Road. Thomas Road is designated as an arterial road but is currently improved with three lanes (two west bound, 1 center turn lane, 1 east bound, plus two turning lanes east bound at Val Vista Drive).

The site enjoys excellent regional access due to its strategic location at the Loop 202 Freeway interchange with Val Vista Drive. The Loop 202 Freeway, in turn, connects to the US 60 Freeway, Loop 101 Freeway, the I-10 Interstate Freeway and both Sky Harbor International Airport and Gateway Airport; thus this site enjoys convenient access to and from the entire Valley and beyond. Principal access to this property will be from Thomas Road with an adjacent diamond interchange at the Loop 202 Freeway on Val Vista Drive.

The uniquely shaped property has minimal street frontage along Val Vista Drive and backs to the Loop 202 Freeway. The property's frontage faces Thomas Road, the only access to the site. Historical aerial photographs show the property has been vacant for decades.

## **C. DETAILS OF REQUEST**

As mentioned, the Site is located on the north side of Thomas Road, the south side of the 202, and the west side of Val Vista Drive. It is 13.19 net acres in size. The first phase of the project consists of one single speculative building (that has been designed to accommodate a single user or multiple users), an outdoor screened storage area, parking, and landscaping. A future building, parking and landscape may occur on the east side of the outdoor storage area. This future phase is subject to a separate Design Review process and approval. Currently there is no specific user(s) for the building. As part of Phase 1, Kitchell proposed to install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages.

The general industrial speculative multi-tenant building will be approximately 46 feet in height and approximately 108,000 building square feet. This building is designed to either accommodate a single user or multiple users. There will be some screened outdoor storage on the middle portion of the site, towards Val Vista Drive. The parking area will contain approximately 234 spaces. All of these design attributes are permissible within the property's general industrial zoning. A future phase is located between the outdoor storage yard and the existing SRP well site. This phase will require a separate review and approval.

The site has been strategically designed to meet the high-quality design and development standards the City of Mesa strives for while providing an appropriate development capable of meeting the needs of a single or multiple users and today's industrial market. The building provides varying depth to create visual interest.

Because of the irregular shaped lot, the primary face of the building will be oriented to the south towards Thomas Road.

#### Important Aspects of this Proposal:

- The City has encouraged the applicant to develop the site under the existing zoning criteria in order to foster employment opportunities at this site.
- Kitchell proposes to install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages as part of Phase 1.
- Significant building and landscape setbacks are proposed along the west side of the site. Approximate 78-foot wide landscape buffer is provided along the west property line. This landscape buffer is more than three times the City's required 25-foot landscape buffer along the west side.
- Kitchell's proposed development conforms to the existing zoning design criteria and no zoning changes or variances are being requested nor required for this development.
- This project will occupy a vacant site on the 202 freeway, creating with its buildings a visual screen to and from the freeway and helping to minimize freeway noise impacts to the area south of the site.

#### **D. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES**

This application has been prepared to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Mesa Quality Development Design Guidelines dated December 2019 pertaining to the industrial developments.

## 1. Site Design.

### Building Placement and Orientation

The site is designed to provide the most efficient use of the oddly shaped property. The single building is placed in the western portion of the site to efficiently use the site, while providing a strong visual interest and relationship to the street. A future phase is located between the outdoor storage yard and the existing SRP well site. This phase will require a separate review and approval. The proposed exterior storage area is located on the east side of the building, between the building and the existing substation to the east. The storage area yard will be screened with an 8-foot high screen wall along the north, east and south side. The design of the wall is intended to complement the building and overall project. All outdoor storage will be required to comply with City's zoning ordinance for screening and outdoor storage.

The building is orientated to face Thomas Road and the building entrances are clearly visible through visual design features which help orientate visitors to the front of the building. The building is designed in an east-west orientation to mitigate solar exposure and to enable natural light where possible, while also concealing the loading and service areas from public view.

The building is currently designed for a single tenant, however, it can be designed or broken up into smaller tenants if needed in the future. The building frontage will provide smaller demising partitions, varying roof height, varying wall planes, varying colors, the use of glass at the entrances, and enhanced building details and site lighting to create a beautifully designed building and a nice streetscape.

The specific building is designed for a user and includes an office component in the front development area in the fabrication in the back portion of the building. It is anticipated that there will be light vehicular parking requirements but more intense trucking needs in the rear. The building is setback approximately 137 feet from the west property line and provides a 78-foot wide landscape buffer along the west property line.

The site provides five driveway entrance points (as shown on the Site Plan) from Thomas Road. One driveway is for the existing SRP well site; two driveways are for Phase 1; and two driveways are for the future phase development. Parking will be provided on the west, south, and east sides of the building. Loading and unloading service areas will be provided at the rear of the building and all work will be done within the building, except for the storage of material and product that we be placed in the outdoor storage area.

### Parking, Loading and Vehicular Access

Parking is dispersed along the east, south and west sides of the site to provide convenience for employees and visitors. The loading and service areas for the project are internal to the site, screened from public view by the building. The outdoor storage area will be screened by an 8-foot high masonry wall along the north, east and south

side. A three-foot-high parking screen wall will also be provided along Thomas Road in front of the vehicular parking. Landscaping is provided throughout the parking areas (except in loading areas).

#### Landscaping and Shading

Low maintenance, drought tolerant plants will be utilized in the project's landscaping. Kitchell proposes to install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages as part of Phase 1.

#### Exterior Lighting

Lighting fixtures have been chosen to be harmonious with the overall building design and architectural theme of the building. Lighting is used to accent focal features such as the building entry and will be compatible with the project. Multiple light sources will be used, including decorative facade lights on the building, dramatic site lighting at the public and employee entrance gathering areas, decorative lighting sconces on all building's entries and general area lighting in service areas. Lighting shall be shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillage.

#### Service Area and Outdoor Storage Area

The overall site layout has been designed and oriented to keep service, loading and utility areas screened from public view. The service, loading and utility areas are located internal to the site, behind the building away from public view. While the outdoor storage area is located east of the building this area will be screened by an 8-foot high wall. This area is primarily used for storage of product and materials.

## **2. Architectural Design.**

As part of the overall request, we respectfully request the use and acceptance of Per MZO 11-7-3.6. b. iv: - Development Standards/Alternative Compliance for this project that are not in strict compliance with current design standards and ordinances. The proposed alternative compliance design features are aesthetically complementary to the site and overall design, enhance the building architectural, fit seamlessly into context of the area, and meets the spirit of the City's design objectives.

The site plan has been thoughtfully designed to minimize impacts on adjacent properties while achieving a high-quality visual appearance through building design and enhanced landscape setbacks.

#### **MZO 11-7-3.6. b. iv: - Development Standards/ Alternative Compliance items include the following:**

Per Section 11-7-3-B-5 of the MZO, buildings and structures, no more than fifty percent (50%) of the total façade may be covered with one (1) single material. The request seeks acceptance for the predominant use of precast concrete tilt panel construction.

- Kitchell seeks the use of precast concrete tilt panel construction for this site. The concrete tilt panels include various paint schemes, reveals, changes in plane and elevation heights. Larger industrial buildings use tilt panel construction. Exceeding the 50% use of precast concrete tilt panel construction is consistent with larger industrial building projects of this type, because the perimeter wall construction can also serve as load bearing construction supporting roofs.
- Exception to the use of precast is where there are doors and window penetrations and glazed curtainwall systems at building offsets.
- Using alternative materials to reduce the amount of concrete panels would generally require inappropriate amounts of applied materials such as an exterior finish on top of the structural concrete panels. Applying stuck on materials to the panels would negatively impact costs, increase leasing costs and is counter to market demands and expectations for such industrial facilities.

The highest level of architectural details for the project are focused on the building public frontage but consistent features are shared with all the other elevations. The nature of the anticipated industrial use requires a large building, with tall internal clear storage capacity, and good freeway visibility. The façade design has the building visually broken up into smaller components by wall details, including color, material changes, shadows, and changes to the roof line.

The proposed building design is generally consistent with Industrial buildings conforming to MZO 11-7-3 “Development Standards”.

Building massing has been reduced on publicly visible facades by providing at least three (3) different and distinct materials including precast concrete tilt panels with various reveal patterns, distinctive paint schemes with accent color, aluminum storefront, and painted decorative steel.

Building entrances are oriented towards the predominant public view and street frontage. Building entrances are served by pedestrian walkways and are also clearly defined by the build design elements. The primary vehicular entrance to the property is from Thomas Road. Gated entry will be provided to the service and storage area.

The building massing and scale is reduced by vertical or horizontal wall offsets articulated to provide visual interest and visual relief. Façade articulation is provided along visible, more public facades including roofline variation and plane changes.

## **E. ADHERENCE WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW CRITERIA**

The project has been designed to adhere to the SPR criteria specifically noted in Ordinance Section 11-69-5. A - Review Criteria.

- 1. The project shall be consistent with and conform to the adopted general plan and any applicable sub-area or neighborhood area plans, is consistent with all of the development standards of this Ordinance, and is consistent with any specific conditions of approval placed on the zoning of the property.**

Response: The City's General Plan Land Use Map designates this site as Neighborhood Village Center but pursuant to Chapter 16 of the General Plan, the zoning ordinance describes the permitted development on each parcel. The City's zoning map identifies this parcel as being zoned GI (General Industrial). Thus this site must comply with the list of uses and development standards under the GI section of the Ordinance.

- 2. The overall design of the project including its scale, massing, site plan, exterior design, and landscaping will enhance the appearance and features of the project site and surrounding natural and built environment.**

Response: The project is designed with features that enhance the appearance. Although the nature of the proposed use requires a large building, the building massing is reduced by vertical or horizontal wall offsets/articulated details around entrances, varying roofline, color or other methods of visual relief. Furthermore, Kitchell proposes to install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages as part of Phase 1. This will provide a finished streetscape look for the neighbors and area.

- 3. The project site plan is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide a suitable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community.**

Response: The site plan is designed and the building are placed to most efficiently use the site, while providing a suitable environment for tenants, visitors and the general community. The building provides a strong relationship to the street and visual interest is provided in other areas visible from public view. Service, loading and utility areas are internally located within the site and oriented so as to be screened from public view.

- 4. Project details, colors, materials, and landscaping, are internally consistent, fully integrated with one another, and used in a manner that is visually consistent with the proposed architectural design.**

Response: Project details, colors, materials and landscaping are consistent throughout the site. The building colors and materials reinforce the overall building design. An architectural mix of decorative masonry and concrete is provided along with metal window frames with insulated glazing. Landscaping is internally consistent.

- 5. The project is compatible with neighboring development by avoiding big differences in building scale and character between developments on adjoining**

**lots in the same zoning district and providing a harmonious transition in scale and character between different districts.**

Response: While there are no developments in the same zoning district, adjacent to this site, the site is compatible with existing and proposed development in the immediate vicinity. The project is bounded by the Loop 202 Freeway on the north, a substation and Val Vista Drive on the east, and Thomas Road on the south. While there is planned residential to the west, the building is setback approximate 137-feet from the west property line. As designed, the project provides significant building setbacks from all property lines. Specifically, the building provides approximately 137-foot building setback to the west property line, approximately 101'-8" foot building setback along Thomas Road, and over 1,098 foot building setback to Val Vista Drive. It is also important to note that Thomas Road is a 130-foot wide right-of-way which provides a signification separation to the development to the south. When consideration is given to the Thomas Road right-of-way, the large building setbacks, the building design and project perimeter landscaping, the scale of the building fits well within the character and context of the area. All these elements help reduce the visual scale of the building.

- 6. The project contributes to the creation of a visually interesting built environment that includes a variety of building styles and designs with well-articulated structures that present well designed building facades, rooflines, and building heights within a unifying context that encourages increased pedestrian activity and promotes compatibility among neighboring land uses within the same or different districts.**

Response: As previously noted, the buildings include vertical or horizontal wall offsets/articulated details around entrances, roofline variation, changes in materials or other methods of visual relief and interest. Differing roofline heights provides variation across front facade. Pedestrian activity is encouraged through sidewalks which connect throughout the site.

- 7. The streetscapes, including street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture, are consistent with the character of activity centers, commercial districts and nearby residential neighborhoods.**

Response: New landscaping and streetscape improvements will provide a more pedestrian friendly frontage along Thomas Road. A 15-foot landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the building and a 20-foot wide landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the storage area. A 78-foot wide landscape setback is provided along the west property line.

- 8. Street frontages are attractive and interesting for pedestrians and provide for greater safety by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere.**

Response: As noted above, new landscaping and streetscape improvements will provide a more pedestrian friendly frontage along Thomas Road. A 15-foot landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the building and a 20-foot wide landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the storage area. To help provide a finished streetscape appearance for the neighbors and area, Kitchell proposes to install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages as part of Phase 1.

- 9. The proposed landscaping plan is suitable for the type of project and site conditions and will improve the appearance of the community by enhancing the building and site design; and the landscape plan incorporates plant materials that are drought-tolerant, will minimize water usage, and are compatible with Mesa's climate.**

Response: The landscaping is suitable for this type of industrial development. Particular attention has been paid to the more publicly visible street frontage along Thomas Road. Additional parking lot landscaping islands have been provided, along with a 15-foot landscape setback along the south. A 78 feet wide landscape setback is provided along the west property line and a 20-foot wide landscape setback is provided along the south side of the storage area. Finally, to help enhance the streetscape appearance for the neighbors and area, will install all the landscaping within the 15' wide landscape area in front of their property along Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive frontages as part of Phase 1. Low maintenance, drought tolerant plants will be utilized in the project landscaping.

- 10. The project has been designed to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, building siting, and landscape design. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that meet environmental standards such as LEED™, Green Globe or equivalent third-party certification are considered to be energy efficient.**

Response: The developer will work with the General Contractor to identify efficient, sustainable building practices and products including energy efficient systems and construction methodologies.

## **F. ADHERENCE WITH DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA**

The project has been designed to adhere to the DR criteria specifically noted in Ordinance Section 11-71-6.A - Review Criteria. Several overlapping sentiments and criteria exist between SRP and DR and therefore the responses to this section will be condensed somewhat to avoid duplication.

- 1. The project is consistent with the applicable goals, objectives and policies of the general plan and any applicable sub-area or neighborhood area plans; all of the development standards of this ordinance; other adopted Council policies,**

**as may be applicable; and any specific conditions of approval placed on the zoning of the property.**

Response: The City's General Plan Land Use Map designates this site as Neighborhood Village Center but pursuant to Chapter 16 of the General Plan, the zoning ordinance describes the permitted development on each parcel. The City's zoning map identifies this parcel as being zoned GI (General Industrial); thus development/use of this site must comply with the list of uses and comply with development standards under the GI section of the Ordinance.

- 2. The overall design of the project including its scale, massing, site plan, exterior design, and landscaping will enhance the appearance and features of the project site, the street type, and surrounding natural and built environment.**

Response: (See response in Section E.2 above)

- 3. The overall design will create a distinctive and appealing community by providing architectural interest in areas visible from streets, sidewalks, and public areas.**

Response: The design team has worked hard to provide an attractive and appealing design with particular attention paid to the more publicly visible aspects of the project. At 15-foot landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road. New landscaping and streetscape improvements will provide a more pedestrian friendly frontage along Thomas Road. A 15-foot landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the building and a 20-foot wide landscape setback is provided along Thomas Road in front of the storage area. A 78-foot wide landscape setback is provided along the west property line. The building in particular is designed with a strong presence towards Thomas Road. Building entrances are oriented towards the predominant public view. Building entrances are clearly defined by building design elements including store front designs. The service, loading and utility areas are internally located within the site and oriented so as to be screened from public view. While the outdoor storage area is located to the east of the site, it is the only location where it can be located. It is important to note that this area will be screened by a 8-foot high wall that complements the overall project.

- 4. The project site plan is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide a suitable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community.**

Response: (See response in Section E.3 above)

- 5. Project details, colors, materials, and landscaping , are internally consistent, fully integrated with one another, and used in a manner that is visually consistent with the proposed architectural design and creates a safe , attractive and inviting environment at the ground floor of buildings on sides used by the public.**

Response: (See response in Section E.4 above)

- 6. The project is compatible with neighboring development by avoiding big differences in building scale and character between developments on adjoining lots in the same zoning district and providing a harmonious transition in scale and character between different districts.**

Response: (See response in Section E.5 above)

- 7. The project contributes to the creation of a visually interesting built environment that includes a variety of building styles and designs with well-articulated structures that present well designed building facades on all sides, rooflines, and building heights within a unifying context that encourages increased pedestrian activity and promotes compatibility among neighboring land uses within the same or different districts.**

Response: (See response in Section E.6 above)

- 8. The project creates visual variety and relief in building and avoids a large-scale, bulky, or box-like appearance.**

Response: Although the nature of the proposed use requires a large building, the building massing is reduced by vertical or horizontal wall offsets/articulated details around entrances, color treatments or other methods of visual relief to avoid a boxy appearance. The differing roofline of the building heights also provides variation across the full site.

- 9. The streetscapes, including street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture, are consistent with the character of activity centers commercial districts and nearby residential neighborhoods.**

Response: (See response in Section E.7 above)

- 10. Street frontages are attractive and interesting for pedestrians and provide for greater safety by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere.**

Response: (See response in Section E.8 above)

- 11. The proposed landscaping plan is suitable for the type of project and site conditions and will improve the appearance of the community by enhancing the building and site design; and the landscape plan incorporates plant materials that are drought-tolerant, will minimize water usage, and are compatible with Mesa's climate.**

Response: (See response in Section E.9 above)

- 12. The project has been designed to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, building siting, and landscape design. The project also mitigates the effects of solar exposure for users and pedestrians. For purposes of this criterion, buildings that meet environmental standards such as LEED™, Green Globes, or equivalent third-party certification are considered to be energy efficient.**

Response: (See response in Section D.10 above)

## **G. CONCLUSION**

The parcel size, the irregular shape and physical barriers make this site challenging to develop for any use, however, the nearby freeway access makes this site particularly well suited for this industrial use, and the site plan responds to the physical challenges inherent with the site, creating a high-quality employment development.

The proposed development will provide an exceptional opportunity for the City of Mesa to capture business and industry opportunities, which in turn will create job opportunities for existing and future residents. This remnant parcel is being developed with the existing zoning on the property and in accordance with the City desire to encouraged the applicant to develop the site under the existing zoning criteria, it fostering employment opportunities at this site.