



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

**City Council Hearing**

**October 4, 2021**

CASE No.: <b>ZON21-00543</b>	PROJECT NAME: <b>Sossaman 202</b>
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Owner's Name:	Structures Investment LLC
Applicant's Name:	Reese Anderson, Pew & Lake, PLC
Location of Request:	Within the 7300 to 7600 blocks of the East Warner Road alignment (south side) and within the 4400 to 4800 blocks of the South Sossaman Road alignment (west side). Located west of the Sossaman Road alignment and south of the Warner Road alignment.
Parcel No(s):	304-30-010E
Request:	Rezone from Light Industrial (LI) and Agricultural (AG) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development (LI-PAD) overlay and Site Plan Review. This request will allow for the development of an industrial business park (including nine (9) industrial buildings).
Existing Zoning District:	Light Industrial (LI) and Agricultural (AG)
Council District:	6
Site Size:	112 ± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Industrial Park
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	<b>September 22, 2021 / 4:00 p.m.</b>
Staff Planner:	Cassidy Welch, Planner II
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

**HISTORY**

On **November 16, 2000**, the City Council annexed 1,571± acres of land that included the subject 112± acre site into the City of Mesa (Case No. A99-004; Ordinance No. 3815).

On **May 7, 2001**, the City Council approved a rezoning of the subject site from Maricopa County Airport District II (ADII) and Rural 43 to City of Mesa comparable zoning districts of Agricultural (AG) and Light Industrial (LI) and within the City's Airfield Overlay Area (Case No. Z00-087; Ordinance No. 3885).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background:**

The subject property is currently vacant and located north of the 202 San Tan Freeway, specifically on the southwest corner of the future Warner and Sossaman Road alignments. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from Agricultural (AG) and Light Industrial (LI) to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development Overlay (LI-PAD) to allow development of nine (9) industrial buildings on the property. The requested PAD overlay is to allow modifications to increase the maximum allowed building height within the requested LI zoning designation and reduce the required ratio for vehicular and bicycle parking for the proposed industrial development. Per Section 11-22 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the purpose of a PAD overlay is to permit flexibility in the application of zoning standards and requirements where a proposed development can demonstrate that it provides equivalent or superior standards in a creative way to meet the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance and General Plan. The proposed site plan meets the criteria for review of a PAD outlined in the MZO and the criteria for site plan review. From the submitted site plan, the proposed industrial development will include superior and high quality designs standards such as large open space areas and well defined pedestrian pathways that connects all buildings to each other and to the street network within the development.

### **General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:**

The Mesa 2040 General Plan character area designation on the property is Mixed Use Activity District/Employment. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, Mixed Use Activity Districts are large-scale community and regional activity areas that usually have a significant commercial component including shopping centers, power centers, or lifestyle centers that are designed and developed to attract customers from a large radius. Per the General Plan, Employment character areas typically have minimal connection to the surrounding area and are used for employment-type uses such as manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. The majority of the area surrounding the property has been developing over the years to be more consistent with the Employment character area designation. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the primary goal of the Employment character area is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high quality settings. The subject request to allow an industrial development on the property and provide employment opportunities to residents in the City conforms to the goals of the Employment character area.

### **Gateway Strategic Development Plan:**

The site is also located within the Inner Loop District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan area. Per the Strategic Plan, developments within the Inner Loop District should provide a high quality, mixed use environment that is compatible with increasing over-flight activities associated with Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport operations. Any development

proposed in this area should demonstrate that it will not impede future growth and development of the airport.

As a recommendation of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan, the City of Mesa conducted a specific land use study in 2018 (i.e. the 2018 Inner Loop Land Use Study) for the Inner Loop Area of the Plan. The intent of the study was to ensure appropriate allocation of land uses and distribution that aligns with the goals of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan. The study designated the area as Employment, Industrial. This designation was specific to the character area designations defined in the study, as well as the goals of the Employment character area envisioned in the General Plan. The proposed development meets the intent of the Inner Loop Land Use Study to provide locations appropriate for industrial operations.

Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The proposed warehousing and industrial uses are consistent with the goals on the Employment character area designation, as well as the intentions of the Inner Loop District of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

**Zoning District Designations:**

The subject property is currently zoned Agricultural (AG) and Light Industrial (LI). The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to Light Industrial with a Planned Area Development overlay (LI-PAD). Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, the proposed development of the property for industrial uses is permitted in the LI zoning district.

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

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the property is located within the City of Mesa Airfield (AF) Overlay District, specifically within the Airport Overflight Area Two (AOA 2). The location of the property within the AOA 2 is due to its proximity to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-7-2 of the MZO, the AOA 2 allows industrial-type uses. The Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff reviewed the subject request and did not express opposition to the proposed rezoning.

**Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay District – MZO Article 3, Chapter 22:**

The subject request includes a PAD overlay to allow modifications to certain required development standards of the MZO. Per Section 11-22 of the MZO, the purpose of the overlay is to allow for innovative design and flexibility that creates high-quality development for the site.

Table 1 below shows the MZO required standards, the applicant's proposed PAD standards, and staff recommendations:

Table 1

MZO Development Standards	Required	Proposed	Staff Recommendation
Maximum Building Height – <i>MZO Section 11-7-3</i>	40 feet	<b>50 feet</b>	As proposed
Required Parking – <i>MZO Section 11-32-3</i> - <i>Group Industrial Shell Buildings (no specified use)</i>	75% at 1 space per 500 square feet plus 25% at 1 space per 375 square feet	<b>1 parking space per 900 square feet of gross floor area</b>	As proposed
Required Bicycle Parking – <i>MZO Section 11-32-8(A)(1)</i> - <i>Spaces Required</i>	1 bicycle space per 10 on-site vehicle parking spaces; 1 bicycle space per 20 on-site parking spaces after the first 50 bicycle parking spaces	<b>10 bicycle spaces per building</b>	As proposed

As shown on the table above, the applicant is requesting the following modifications from the requested LI zoning district development standards on the property as outlined in Sections 11-7-3, 11-32-3 and 11-32-8 of the MZO.

Maximum Building Height:

Per Section 11-7-3 of the MZO, the allowed maximum building height in the LI zoning district is 40 feet. The applicant is requesting a maximum height of 50 feet for development on the property. According to the applicant, the requested increase in height is needed to accommodate the type of operations planned on the property.

Required Parking Ratio:

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, group industrial buildings with no specified uses or users shall be parked at a ratio of 75% at 1 space per 500 square feet and 25% at 1 space per 375 square feet. The applicant is requesting the development to be parked at a ratio of 1 space per 900 square feet. Per the applicant, the proposed parking ratio is consistent with the required parking ratio for warehousing, the anticipated primary use for the development. The proposed parking ratio is also consistent with similar industrial developments in the surrounding area.

Required Bicycle Parking:

Per Section 11-32-8 of the MZO, the proposed development shall include bicycle parking at a ratio of 1 space per 10 on-site vehicle parking space and 1 space per 20 on-site vehicle parking spaces after the first 50 bicycle parking spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting a bicycle parking ratio of 10 spaces per building. According to the applicant, the proposed

industrial development is not anticipated to have a large degree of bicycle users due to its location along a major highway and overall hours of operation.

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

The proposed site plan shows development of nine industrial buildings on the subject property. From the site plan, there will be seven vehicular access drives to the site. Five of the access drives will be from Sossaman Road and two on Warner Road. The site plan also shows the proposed buildings on the property will range in size from approximately 88,224 square feet to 494,192 square feet, and each building will include truck docks and loading areas, with some buildings including outdoor storage areas for trailer parking (See Exhibit 3.2 Site Plan, Buildings 3&4). Per the submitted plans, all the proposed truck docks and loading areas within the development will be screened from public view by an 8-foot opaque screen wall and face the interior of the development. The site plan also shows pedestrian walkway connectivity between the buildings and street network system within the development, as well as to open space and amenity areas within the development. The design of the pedestrian walkway connectivity conforms to the requirements for such design outlined in Section 11-7-3(B)(1)(d) of the MZO. According to the applicant, the site plan is proposed to be built in three phases with Phase 1 consisting of Buildings 1-3, adjacent to the 202 San Tan Freeway and Sossaman Road; Phase 2 consisting of Buildings 7-9, adjacent to the 202 San Tan Freeway; and Phase 3 consisting of Buildings 4-6, adjacent to Sossaman and Warner Roads (See Exhibit 3.2). Overall, the proposed site plan conforms to the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

**Design Review:**

The Design Review Board is scheduled to review the subject request on September 14, 2021. Staff will be working with the applicant to address any comments and recommendations from the Design Review Board.

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

<b>Northwest</b> (Across Warner Road) County RU-43 Agricultural	<b>North</b> (Across Warner Road) County RU-43 Agricultural	<b>Northeast</b> (Across Warner & Sossaman Roads) County RU-43 Vacant
<b>West</b>  LI Vacant	<b>Subject Property</b>  LI & AG Vacant	<b>East</b> (Across Sossaman Road) LI & AG Vacant
<b>Southwest</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway)  LI-PAD Industrial	<b>South</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway)  LI-PAD Industrial	<b>Southeast</b> (Across 202 San Tan Freeway & Ray Road) LI-PAD Industrial

**Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:**

The subject site is currently vacant. There are several existing and approved large industrial developments surrounding the property. Specifically, the properties to the south, across the 202 San Tan Freeway, as a similar large scale industrial development. The property to the east has also recently received site plan approval by City Council to be developed for industrial uses, similar to the subject request. There are also existing industrial developments to the northeast of the subject site within Maricopa County. The subject request for an industrial development on the property will not be out of character with the surrounding area.

**Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:**

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included mailing letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, as well as registered neighborhoods and HOAs within one mile of the site. The applicant held one (1) virtual neighborhood meeting on July 27, 2021. According to the applicant, there were no attendees.

As of writing this report, staff has not received any comments from surrounding property owners. The applicant will be providing an updated Citizen Participation Report to staff prior to the September 22, 2021 Study Session. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan, the Gateway Strategic Development Plan, and the purpose for a Planned Area Development overlay outlined in Section 11-22-1 of the MZO. Additionally, the request meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the request 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 to be installed with the first phase of construction.
4. Dedicate the right-of-way and easements required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, at the time of recordation of the subdivision plat, or at the time of the City's request for dedication whichever comes first.
5. 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 an effect to navigable airspace and 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.
6. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modifications

to the development standards as approved with this PAD and shown in the following table:

MZO Development Standards	PAD Approved
Maximum Building Height – <i>MZO Section 11-7-3</i>	<b>50 feet</b>
Required Parking – <i>MZO Section 11-32-3</i> - <i>Group Industrial Shell Buildings (no specified use)</i>	<b>1 parking space per 900 square feet of gross floor area</b>
Required Bicycle Parking – <i>MZO Section 11-32-8(A)(1)</i> - <i>Spaces Required</i>	<b>10 bicycle spaces per building</b>

**Exhibits:**

**Exhibit 1-Staff Report**

**Exhibit 2-Vicinity Map**

**Exhibit 3-Application Information**

- 3.1 Project Narrative
- 3.2 Site Plan/Preliminary Plat
- 3.3 Landscape Plan
- 3.4 Elevations

**Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Report**

**Exhibit 5-Avigation Easement**