

**PLANNING SECTION
AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING MAP REPORT**

**PUBLIC HEARING
PC REZ 12-001**

DATE: November 5, 2012
MEETING DATE: November 14, 2012
REPORT BY: Neil Gullickson

REQUEST:

PC REZ 12-001; amend the zoning map for a site of approximately 9.02-acres at 2400 North Gemini Drive. The site is currently zoned Rural Residential (RR). The proposed amendment is to change the zoning to the Research & Development (R&D) zoning classification (conditional).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of PC REZ 12-001, subject to the conditions included at the end of this report.

PRESENT LAND USE:

Undeveloped property formerly used by Flagstaff Medical Center as a temporary parking lot while construction was taking place on the main hospital campus.

PROPOSED LAND USE:

Innovation Mesa is proposed to be a 75,000 square-foot Science and Technology Park. Phase 1, (25,000 sq ft building) will be a Tier 2 Business Accelerator facility where a variety of start-up businesses will research and develop new products and processes, commonly of a technical or scientific nature.

Phases 2 and 3 each includes a 25,000 sq ft building, and are intended to follow when additional capacity is needed. An exact timeline for expansion is difficult to predict at this time.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

North: USGS Offices, PF zoning classification
South: Undeveloped Land and Forest Avenue, RR zoning classification
East: West Forest Avenue and McMillan Mesa Village, R&D zoning classification
West: Undeveloped Land, RR zoning classification

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

STAFF REVIEW:

An application for an amendment to the Zoning Map shall be submitted to the Planning Director and shall be reviewed and a recommendation prepared. The recommendation shall be transmitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission prior to a scheduled public hearing. The staff report shall include the following: An evaluation of the consistency and conformance of the proposed amendment with the goals and policies of the Regional Plan and any applicable specific plans; A recommendation on the amendment and the grounds for the recommendation based on the standards and purposes of the zones set forth in Division 10-20.50, of the City of Flagstaff Zoning Code; A recommendation on whether the Zoning Map amendment should be

granted, granted with conditions to mitigate anticipated impacts caused by the proposed development, or denied

STANDARDS FOR REVIEWING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

An amendment to the Zoning Map may be approved only if all of the following findings are present: The proposed amendment is consistent with and conforms to the objectives and policies of the Regional Plan and any applicable specific plans; The proposed amendment will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City and will add to the public good as described in the Regional Plan; The affected site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics and the provision of public and emergency vehicle access (e.g., fire and medical), public services, and utilities (e.g., fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal), to ensure that the requested zone classification and the proposed or anticipated uses and/or development will not endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located.

STAFF REVIEW:

Introduction/Background

As noted above, the current zoning for this site is RR, which will not support the research and development land use proposed by the application. The application proposes to change the zoning classification to R&D, which is the appropriate classification for this land use.

This amendment is the first to be processed since the adoption of the new zoning code in November, 2011. The code identifies three tiers or classifications of map amendment applications. Because the subject application did not meet the thresholds for a Large-Scale Map amendment, staff has reviewed the application using the Medium-Scale Map amendment process.

The property is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Gemini Drive and Forest Avenue, adjacent to, and south of, the USGS campus and the existing NACET building. The bulk of the area to be rezoned was used by Flagstaff Medical Center as a temporary parking lot and was finished with pavement millings, which remain in place.

At the meeting of April 22, 2009, the Commission reviewed a different conceptual site plan and application to rezone the property for a proposed Science and Technology Center to be constructed by a private party. The Commission recommend denial of that application; the minutes from that meeting are attached for review. That application was withdrawn by the applicant and was not reviewed by the Council.

The current proposal includes three buildings, parking, landscaping, support infrastructure and other site amenities. Phase 1 includes a 25,000 sq ft single-story building and a conference/Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Construction is to be financed via several federal and state grants, with construction oversight to be managed by the City of Flagstaff's Capital Improvements Division. A conceptual site plan for the entire nine acres, along with a detailed plan of Phase 1, is included for the Commission's review. The applicant's memo to the Commission, dated August 31, 2012, is attached and provides additional detail regarding the development.

As noted above the site is 9.02 acres in size; Innovation Mesa includes three buildings each 25,000 square-foot in size, buildings one and two are single story, building three includes a two story section. The building

and developed space has been laid out to preserve the bulk of the on-site forest resources and to provide a logical connection to the existing NACET Business Incubator and the USGS campus. Parking is provided in several dispersed parking lots; pedestrian connections are provided between the buildings, the existing campus, and the public street system. Two of the buildings front on to the public streets but are set back far enough to allow room for adequate landscape screening. Open areas are located throughout Innovation Mesa and are intended to provide for landscaping, LID (stormwater), and to provide public demonstration area for products being developed on the campus. The site complies with the “campus” setting identified in the USGS Master Plan and the proposed zoning classification. A nineteen-hundred and seventy-one sq ft conference center/Emergency Operations Center is proposed to be located between the Phase 1 building and Gemini Drive and will provide visual interest to the site. Staff feels that the Innovation Mesa site design compliments the intended use, the Business Incubator, and the USGS campus.

For the Commission’s review, staff has attached a copy of a Staff Summary Report provided to Council, authored by Stacey Brechler-Knaggs, Grants Manager, which adds additional background information regarding the financing and history of the USGS Campus.

General Plan/Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan

The site is designated Office/Business Park/Light Industrial in the Flagstaff Area Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan. The primary objective of this land use category is to provide locations for a variety of workplaces, including light industrial, research and development activities, offices and institutions. Development of the site typically reflects an attractively landscaped, campus-like setting with activities carried out entirely within enclosed buildings. The category is intended to encourage the development of offices and planned business parks; to promote excellence in the design and planning of buildings, outdoor spaces, and transportation facilities; and to continue the vitality and quality of life in adjacent residential neighborhoods. Supporting amenities that complement the primary workplaces, and may be included as part of the overall planned development, include restaurants, hotels, child care, and convenience shopping. Sites designed to fit the category should have good access to existing or planned transportation facilities and compatibility with adjacent uses. Staff believes that the proposed Science and Technology Park (Innovation Mesa) development embraces the goals and policies of the Regional Plan.

In addition to meeting zoning code requirements, and the Regional Plan designation, the project has been designed to enhance the USGS Master Plan. The master plan includes site design guidelines addressing development patterns, open space, pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, stormwater and utility systems, landscaping, signage, lighting and other site amenities.

Zoning/Land Development Code

Because of the Regional Plan’s designated land use category of this site (Office/Business Park/Light Industrial), the current RR zoning is considered a “holding zone” until such time as circumstances warrant more intensive development, which requires a map amendment, as is the case with this proposal. R&D zoning is being proposed in order to permit the uses identified by the application. The following analysis is based on a general compliance review of the conceptual plan included with the application.

Proposed and Permitted Uses

The proposed business accelerator includes flexible space that may support offices, wet or dry laboratories, light industrial fabrication, and warehousing. Specific tenants and specific uses or distribution have not yet been determined. The R&D district is intended to include development of a mix of professional and

administrative facilities, research and testing institutions, light industrial/manufacturing uses, green technology facilities, and offices.

Bulk Standards

In addition to building setback requirements, which the attached site plan meets, the R&D district allows buildings up to 60 feet in height, and lot coverage of 25%. The proposal depicts buildings that are no more than 30-feet-tall, and lot coverage of 17.5%.

Site Capacity

The zoning code limits development in the R&D district to a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of .50, meaning the total floor area of any building on the site cannot exceed 50% of the square footage of the lot. The site is 392,040 square feet in size, with allowable floor area of 196,020 sq ft. A FAR of 19% is proposed, which constitutes 75,000 sq ft of building space.

Design Review Guidelines

The zoning code's architectural and site development divisions address building orientation, forms bulk, scale, fenestrations, materials and colors. Elevations for the building proposed to be developed in Phase 1 are included as part of this report. Staff feels that the exterior building materials, the mass of the building, the roof form and materials all work with the site elements to provide a supportable development proposal. Highlights include masonry, rusticated steel siding, steel structure elements, and standing seam metal roofing. Additionally, the USGS Campus Master Plan states, structures will be limited to one and two floors, all of the proposed structures comply with the plan.

Landscaping

The application includes a landscape plan for the Commission's review. The plan demonstrates that the landscaping requirements identified in the zoning code can be met. Landscaping includes number and types of plants, although specific species have not been identified, and are not expected to be provided until the Phase 1 development proposal is submitted to the IDS Board for concept and Site Plan reviews.

Lighting

The site is located within Astronomical Zone II, which allows for 50,000 lumens per acre. A total of 451,000 lumens are permitted for the 9.02-acre site. A lighting plan and lumen calculation have been provided. The plan proposes to incorporate fully shielded, low pressure sodium (LPS) lighting fixtures for outdoor lighting. Total exterior lighting output proposed is 450,580 lumens, which is under the maximum limit for the site. The final lighting plan will be reviewed and approved as part of the IDS Site Plan review.

PUBLIC SYSTEMS IMPACT ANALYSIS:

Traffic/Access/Transit/Pedestrian

Traffic Impact Analysis

A traffic impact analysis was not required for this proposal in that the traffic generated by the development did not meet the minimum threshold requirements. However, the potential traffic impacts were evaluated by the City's transportation staff, and future alternatives to mitigate impacts at the Gemini/Forest Avenue intersection have been identified. Please reference the attached memorandum dated February 6, 2009 from Jerry Jack, Transportation Project Manager that addresses traffic issues.

Required Street Improvements

The proposal does not require any physical improvements to City right-of-way at this time, in that Gemini Drive and Forest Avenue are completely improved to city standards, and no additional improvements are required.

Parking

The parking for the site is based upon a rough 80/20 split between office and industrial flex space. Parking reductions have been offered in exchange for bicycle parking spaces (10-spaces) and the close proximity of a transit stop (10-spaces). One-Hundred-eighty-seven standard parking spaces and eight-universal (handicapped) spaces are proposed.

The applicant also proposes to incorporate pervious pavement or other similar product intended to allow water filtration for the parking stalls. The details regarding this component of the development will be finalized as part of the Site Plan review by staff.

Transit

There are public transit stops (both east and west of the site) on Forest Avenue. Both transit stops are in walking distance from the site.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Systems

Pedestrian and bicycle access will be provided from the existing public sidewalks along Gemini Drive, which connect to the sidewalk systems along Forest Avenue. A connection to the FUTS is located at the northeast corner of the USGS campus and also via the signalized intersection at Gemini and Forest Avenue to the east of the site.

Water and Wastewater Impact

Water and sewer impacts were analyzed with the USGS Campus Master Plan and the service requirements are based on that analysis. Water is proposed to route throughout the site via a new 8-inch PVC water main which eventually will service all three proposed buildings, as well as associated fire protection requirements.

Sewer flows are proposed to be handled with a private grinder pump and lift system that will connect to a gravity fed public sewer main northwest of the site. Each phase or building is proposed to be developed with a pump/grinder that will serve its needs. The grinders are to be located south of the phase 3 building and are shown on sheet A-7 of the attached plan set. The pressurized portion of the system is to be private. The NACET Building located adjacent to the site currently uses a private pressure system.

Stormwater

Low Impact Development techniques will be used to create a volume metric reduction in stormwater runoff equal to the first inch of rainwater that will fall on the new impervious areas of the site. Areas for detention features have also been identified on the site plan, and have satisfied the requirements of this level of review. Staff will require that a stormwater management plan(s) be submitted with the site plan application.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Resources

A forest resource plan has been included as part of the map amendment application and is attached to this report. The plan indicates that there are 91-trees located within the boundaries of the site. These trees

PCREZ 12-001
November 14, 2012

represent a total of 158-forest-resource points. The plan indicates that 74% (117 points) or 50 trees will be saved. The plan indicates that the forest resources being maintained far exceed the 30% requirement.

No slope or flood plain resources have been identified on the site.

Citizen Participation

Division 10-30.60 of the Zoning Code requires that a neighborhood meeting be held prior to the public hearing and that a Record of Proceedings be included with the map amendment application. Such a meeting was held on August 30, 2012. Three citizens attended the meeting. One provided written comments. A copy of the Final Report, Public Participation Plan and comments are included with this report.

Public hearings before the Commission and the City Council are conducted in conjunction with requests for map amendment. In accordance with state statute, notice of the public hearing was provided by placing an ad in the Arizona Daily Sun, posting notices on the property, and mailing a notice to an extended list of property owners around the site. A public hearing has been scheduled for the December 18, 2012 City Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission forward the map amendment request to the City Council with a recommendation for approval subject to the following condition:

1. Development of the Science and Technology Park (Innovation Mesa) is in substantial conformance to the submitted conceptual plan(s) as presented with this request.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Application
- Ad notice
- Vicinity Map
- Applicable sections of the USGS Master Plan
- P&Z Commission Minutes of April 22, 2009
- IDS Application Review Minutes of October 1, 2012
- Memo to the Commission of August 31, 2012
- City Transportation Memo of February 6, 2009
- Public Participation Report
- Staff Summary Report of November 6, 2012
- Development plan set