



Zoning Code Amendment Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: OV714-014

MEETING DATE: January 6, 2015

AGENDA ITEM: 4

STAFF CONTACT: Roosevelt Arellano, Planner
rarellano@orovalleyaz.gov (520) 229-4817

Request: Zoning Code Amendment to Section 24.9, Economic Expansion Zone (EEZ) Overlay District

Recommendation: Approve Zoning Code Amendment

SUMMARY:

The Economic Expansion Zone (EEZ) Overlay District was adopted in 2012, and was intended to streamline the development in Innovation Park by enabling an administrative review process. Since the adoption, there has been several EEZ projects which have highlighted areas of needed improvement including: 1) Efficiency of the site plan approval process and 2) Efficiency of the approval process for a modified number of required parking spaces. The proposed code amendment seeks to address these issues by:

1. Eliminating the administrative review of a Conceptual Design Plan and allowing EEZ projects to proceed to Final Design.
 2. Enabling developers the ability to obtain administrative approval of an alternative parking ratio, which is a request to provide more or less parking spaces than the Zoning Code requires.
-

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

The intent of the EEZ is to encourage economic development in Innovation Park by expediting the development review and approval process. When companies are looking to relocate or expand, they typically evaluate multiple sites in multiple jurisdictions. It is important to position Oro Valley to be competitive as these future economic development opportunities present themselves. The proposed amendment would improve the overall review time of EEZ projects and help attract targeted industries.

The following is background information on the two components of the amendment.

Conceptual and Final Design Review

The current EEZ process consists of two steps. The first step is the Conceptual Design Review which ensures that a project's overall design (i.e. site layout, architecture and public art) is functional and compatible within its boundaries and the surrounding area. Under the EEZ process, the Conceptual Design is administratively approved and does not require the normal Conceptual Design Review Board recommendation and Town Council approval. The second step is the Final Design Review which ensures that a project is consistent with the approved Conceptual Design and other applicable zoning provisions.

After two years of implementing the EEZ process, it has been determined that the information and review components of the Conceptual Design can be incorporated into a Final Design application. This approach will eliminate one step in the process, and will result in time efficiency and promotion of economic development within the overlay district.

Parking Standards

The current EEZ provisions do not enable developers the ability to request administrative approval of an alternative parking ratio. An alternative parking ratio (i.e. request to propose more or less parking spaces than required by the Zoning Code) requires Conceptual Design Review Board approval.

Under the current code, an EEZ project which normally would be reviewed administratively, is elevated to the Conceptual Design Review Board and Town Council based on an alternative parking ratio request. The alternative parking ratio request is a technical analysis which can be adequately decided by the Planning and Zoning Administrator and maintain the intended streamlined process for project approval. Alternative parking ratio requests will continue to require conformance with the approval criteria. The purpose of the criteria is to ensure that an alternative parking ratio request more accurately reflects the parking demand of the use than the current parking standards.

DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS:

Proposed Amendment

The proposed code amendment (Attachment 1) would:

1. Eliminating the administrative review of a Conceptual Design Plan and allowing EEZ projects to proceed to Final Design.
2. Enabling developers the ability to obtain administrative approval of an alternative parking ratio, which is a request to provide more or less parking spaces than the Zoning Code requires.

Zoning Amendment Analysis

The proposed amendment (Attachment 1) would make the application process more efficient by incorporating the Conceptual Design Review process into the Final Design Review. The proposed amendment would also enable developers the ability to request administrative review of an alternative parking ratio, which maintains the intended streamlined process for EEZ projects.

The following is a list of benefits related to the proposed amendment:

Benefits of Amendment

- Eliminates unnecessary work and reduces the review time by 30 to 60 days.
- Provides a more efficient and streamlined process.
- Further enables and incentivizes the EEZ Overlay District.
- Allows a more accurate number of required parking spaces based on the parking needs of various job industries.

General Plan Conformance Analysis

Goal 3.1 To ensure long-term financial and economic sustainability for the Town of Oro Valley.

Staff Comment: The proposed code amendment assists in attracting and retaining skilled, professional level jobs in targeted industries. These primary jobs create wealth for the community and have a multiplier effect by creating additional jobs in the retail and service sector due to the increased demand for goods and services from the income generated by primary jobs. This contributes directly and indirectly to the economic long-term sustainability of other sectors of the local economy, including retail, service, and government services.

Policy 3.1.1 The Town shall ensure that future growth reflects the desires of the community in balance with an analysis of the Town's financial needs...to ensure that future development will complement community values and implement the community's economic vision for the future, while maintaining the ability of Oro Valley to attract and retain desirable businesses.

Staff Comment: The proposed amendment serves to “implement the community’s economic vision for the future” by encouraging established Innovation Park businesses to grow and expand while providing a desirable incentive for new businesses to locate to Oro Valley.

Policy 3.1.2 The Town shall continue to strive for a diverse economic base that will help reduce Oro Valley's dependence on revenues derived from growth-related sources. Encourage and support the following types of uses as means of diversifying the local tax base, increasing local employment opportunities, and decreasing expenditure leakage to nearby communities.

Staff Comment: As discussed, the creation of professional level jobs enhances the economic stability and vitality of the community in a number of important ways, including increasing revenue for existing retail and service businesses.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public notice has been provided as follows:

- All HOAs in the Town were notified of this hearing
- Public hearing notice was posted:
 - In the Territorial newspaper
 - At Town hall
 - On the Town website

No comments have been received to date.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The proposed amendment (Attachment 1) represents a logical approach to increasing the effectiveness of the EEZ Overlay District. The amendment will establish process efficiencies which will maintain the original intent of the EEZ process to incentivize economic development through a streamlined approval process.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the following findings, the proposed amendment would enable:

- A more efficient and streamlined process.
- Better serve the parking needs of targeted job industries.
- Further incentivize the EEZ Overlay District.
- Be consistent with the intent of the EEZ Overlay District.
- Meet the relevant Goals and Policies of the General Plan.

It is recommended that the Planning and Zoning Commission take the following action:

Recommend approval to the Town Council of the requested Zoning Code Amendment OV714-014.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

I move to recommend approval of the Zoning Code Amendment, based on the finding that the request would further enable and incentivize the EEZ Overlay District, subject to the revisions depicted in Attachment 1.

OR

I move to recommend denial of the Zoning Code Amendment, as depicted in Attachment 1, as the request does not meet the finding that _____.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Zoning Code Amendment

Bayer Vella, AICP, Planning Division Manager