



**City of Phoenix**  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**Staff Report Z-54-21-1**  
**November 5, 2021**

**North Mountain [Village Planning Committee](#) Meeting Date:** November 17, 2021

**[Planning Commission](#) Hearing Date:** December 2, 2021

**Request From:** C-O (Commercial Office – Restricted Commercial) (0.91 acres)

**Request To:** C-2 (Intermediate Commercial) (0.91 acres)

**Proposed Use:** Commercial uses within existing building

**Location:** Approximately 415 feet west of northwest corner of 31st Avenue and Cochise Drive

**Owner:** CHCT Arizona, LLC

**Applicant / Representative:** Withey Morris, PLC, William F. Allison

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval, subject to stipulations

<u><a href="#">General Plan Conformity</a></u>			
<u><a href="#">General Plan Land Use Map Designation</a></u>		Commercial	
<u><a href="#">Street Map Classification</a></u>	Cochise Drive	Local Street	30-foot north half street
<p><b><i>CONNECT PEOPLE AND PLACES CORE VALUE; BICYCLES; DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Development should include convenient bicycle parking.</i></b></p> <p>The development, as stipulated, will add bicycle parking to provide convenient opportunities for employees and patrons to secure their bicycle while in the business(es). The bicycle parking will also encourage employees and patrons to utilize nearby high-capacity transit options including the light rail station at Metrocenter Mall and the bus rapid transit service planned for 35th Avenue.</p>			
<p><b><i>BUILD THE SUSTAINABLE DESERT CITY CORE VALUE; TREE AND SHADE; DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Integrate trees and shade into the design of new development and redevelopment projects throughout Phoenix.</i></b></p> <p>The development, as stipulated, will add shade trees and landscaping between the building and Cochise Drive. The addition of trees on this developed site will reduce its urban heat island effect and increase thermal comfort which will make the area more walkable, bikeable, and sustainable.</p>			

**CONNECT PEOPLE AND PLACES CORE VALUE; OPPORTUNITY SITES; LAND USE PRINCIPLE: Support reasonable levels of increased intensity, respectful of local conditions and surrounding neighborhoods.**

The development provides a reasonable level of intensity that respects local conditions both in its current form and, as stipulated, if the site redevelops in the future. The compatibility of this project is achieved through its existing one-story character, the proposed zoning being consistent with adjacent properties north of Cochise Drive, and stipulations to bolster landscaping along Cochise Drive.

**Applicable Plans, Overlays, and Initiatives**

[North Mountain Character Plan](#): Background Item No. 4

[North Mountain Redevelopment Area Plan](#): Background Item No. 7

[Tree and Shade Master Plan](#): Background Item No. 8.

[Complete Streets Guidelines](#): Background Item No. 9.

[ZeroWaste Phoenix](#): Background Item No. 10.

**Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning**

	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
<b>On Site</b>	Medical Center	C-O
<b>West</b>	Office	C-O
<b>East</b>	Surface Parking	C-2
<b>North</b>	Assorted Commercial	C-2
<b>South (Across Cochise Drive)</b>	Multifamily	PAD-14

<b>C-2 (Intermediate Commercial)</b>		
<b><u>Standards</u></b>	<b><u>Requirements</u></b>	<b><u>Provisions in the Site Plan Provided</u></b>
Gross Acreage	-	0.91 acres
<i>Building Setbacks</i>		
Street (Cochise Drive)	Minimum 20 feet, Average 25 feet	Varies, 8 to 20 feet (Not Met)*
Interior (West, North, East)	Minimum 0 feet	North: Varies, 25 to 58 feet (Met)  East: 0 feet (Met) West: 14 feet (Met)
<i>Landscaped Setbacks</i>		
Street (Cochise Drive)	Minimum 20 feet, Average 25 feet	Varies from 8 feet to 20 feet (Not Met)*
Interior (West)	Minimum 10 feet, adjacent to C-O	West: 14 feet (Met)
Interior (North, East)	Minimum 0 feet, when adjacent to C-2	North: 0 feet (Met) East: 0 feet (Met)
Lot Coverage	Maximum of 50 percent	Not shown
Building Height	Maximum of two stories, 30 feet	Not shown. Approximately 20 feet (Met)
Parking	Requirement varies based on use.	Not shown. Shared parking with adjacent commercial provided*
<i>*Existing Condition</i>		

**Background/Issues/Analysis**

**SUBJECT SITE**

1. This request is to rezone 0.91 acres located approximately 415 feet west of the northwest corner of 31st Avenue and Cochise Drive from C-O (Commercial Office – Restricted Commercial) to C-2 (Intermediate Commercial District) for the purpose of allowing commercial uses within the existing structure. The site is located within one-quarter mile west from the North Mountain Village Primary Core and within one-half mile east of the planned Bus Rapid Transit line planned along 35th Avenue.

## SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

- The site is developed as a one-story medical office. The applicant is proposing to retain the existing building and using the requested zoning entitlement to allow a wider variety of uses.

To the north and east of the subject site is a single-story commercial development zoned C-2 which is comprised of restaurant, retail, and services uses. To the west of the subject site is a single-story commercial office building complex zoned C-O. To the south of the subject site across Cochise Drive is a two-story multifamily residential development zoned PAD-14 (Planned Area Development).

## GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP

- The General Plan Land Use Map depicts a designation of Commercial for all sites from Peoria Avenue on the north, Cochise Drive on the south, 32nd Lane on the west, and 31st Avenue on the east. The proposed commercial use and zoning is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map designation. South of the subject site across Cochise Drive is a multifamily complex with a designation of Residential 15+ Dwelling Units Per Acre.

*General Plan Land Use Map Excerpt; Source: Planning and Development Department*



## 4. [North Mountain Character Plan](#)

The North Mountain Village Character Plan was approved and adopted into the Phoenix General Plan through General Plan Amendment GPA-1-19. The proposal advances these concepts by integrating alternative transportation amenities, trees, and by providing additional use options to revitalize an existing structure.

- Design Principle: Integrate trees and shade into the design of new development and redevelopment projects throughout Phoenix.
- Design Principle: Development should be designed to include increased amenities for transit, pedestrian and bicyclists, such as shade, water, seating, bus shelters, wider sidewalks, bike racks, pedestrian scale lighting and wayfinding.

- Opportunities for Growth: Revitalizing commercial centers

## PROPOSAL

### 5. Conceptual Site Plan

The site plan depicts the building, parking, and vehicular circulation in its current state and the applicant is not proposing changes or redevelopment at this time. The existing medical office building has its primary entrance oriented to the north and its visitor and employee parking located to the east.

The north-facing façade of the existing building is stucco and contains stone accents. The other facades of the building, including the Cochise Drive frontage, are stucco with limited landscape plantings in the current configuration.

The commercial block bounded by Peoria Avenue on the north, Cochise Drive on the south, 32nd Lane on the west, and 31st Avenue on the east contains multiple points of vehicular ingress and egress from the perimeter streets and no internal barriers to inhibit cross-access.

To ensure consistency with other commercial developments in the vicinity, staff is recommending the following stipulations to enhance the condition of the site.

- Stipulation No. 2 to require the landscape setback along Cochise Drive be replenished with groundcover shrubs and shade trees to enhance the street interface of the site, to improve thermal comfort for pedestrians, and to mitigate the urban heat island effect.
- Stipulation No. 3.a. to require a shaded and detached sidewalk if the site redevelops in the future.
- Stipulation No. 5 to require a Vehicular Non-Access Easement along the full extent of the south site boundary to restrict new points of vehicular ingress and egress into the larger commercial block.

### 6. Building Elevations

The applicant is not proposing changes to the existing building.

To improve the interface of the site with the street, sidewalk, and other properties fronting on Cochise Drive, staff is recommending

*Existing Building, Image of North Facade; Source: Image Dated February 2021, Google Streetview.*



*Existing Building, Image of South Façade (Cochise Drive Frontage); Source: Image Dated February 2021, Google Streetview.*

Stipulation No. 1 to require architectural embellishments on the south building elevation oriented to Cochise Drive.

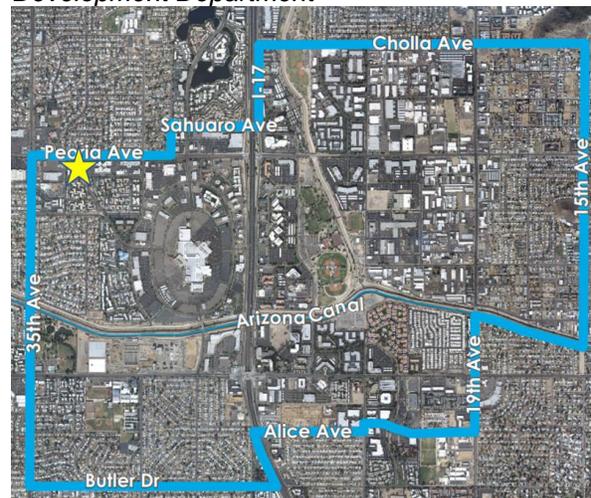


## STUDIES AND POLICIES

### 7. [North Mountain Redevelopment Area Plan](#)

The North Mountain Redevelopment Area Plan, adopted in 2013, examined the general vicinity of the subject site. The study calls for a myriad of efforts to advance economic development and quality of life in the area including recommendations in support of the redevelopment of Metrocenter Mall, the expansion of high-capacity transit, and the creation of alternative transportation infrastructure. The proposal will support walkability and renewed economic vitality on an underutilized site.

*Study Boundary for the North Mountain Redevelopment; Source: Planning and Development Department*



### 8. [Tree and Shade Master Plan](#)

The Tree and Shade Master Plan encourages treating the urban forest as infrastructure to ensure the trees are an integral part of the City's planning and development process. To advance the goals and intent of the Tree and Shade Master Plan, staff is recommending two stipulations to require shade trees and vegetation along Cochise Drive between the curb and the building front.

As described previously, Stipulation No. 2 requires that the existing landscape area along Cochise Drive be replenished with ground cover shrubs and shade trees per the requirements of the C-2 zoning district.

Stipulation No. 3 requires that, upon redevelopment, the sidewalk along Cochise Drive be shaded to 75 percent and detached from the street by a minimum five-

foot landscape area that will be planted with large canopy shade trees to create a comfortable sidewalk leading to the high-capacity transit, including light rail at Metrocenter and Bus Rapid Transit at 35th Avenue and Cheryl Drive.

9. **Complete Streets Guidelines**

The City of Phoenix City Council adopted the Complete Streets Guiding Principles and these principles are intended to promote improvements that provide an accessible, safe, connected transportation system to include all modes, such as bicycles, pedestrians, transit, and vehicles.

The subject site is near a high-ridership bus route on 35th Avenue which will soon become the city's first Bus Rapid Transit corridor with direct access into downtown Phoenix. Additionally, the site is near the North Mountain Village Core which will be served by light rail in 2024. To leverage these investments for community benefit, staff is recommending two stipulations to advance the goals and intent of the Complete Streets Guidelines.

- Stipulation No. 3 to require, upon redevelopment of the site, a shaded and detached sidewalk along Cochise Drive to facilitate safe and comfortable pedestrian movement toward high-capacity transit opportunities including light rail and Bus Rapid Transit.
- Stipulation No. 4 to require bicycle parking so employees and patrons, who may be utilizing transit, have a safe and convenient place for their bicycles while in the establishments.

10. **ZeroWaste Phoenix**

The City of Phoenix is committed to its waste diversion efforts and has set a goal to become a zero waste city, as part of the city's overall 2050 Environmental Sustainability Goals. One of the ways Phoenix can achieve this is to improve and expand its recycling and other waste diversion programs. Section 716 of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance establishes standards to encourage the provision of recycling containers for multifamily, commercial and mixed-use developments meeting certain criteria. The provision of recycling containers was not addressed in the applicant's submittals.

COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENCE

11. As of the writing of this report, no community correspondence has been received.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS

12. The Fire Department commented that the site plan must comply with the Phoenix Fire Code and further indicated there are no problems anticipated with the case. Further, the Department commented that they do not know the water supply at this site and noted that additional water supply may be required to meet the

required fire flow per the Phoenix Fire Code.

13. The Street Transportation Department provided two stipulations. The first requires a pedestrian pathway connecting the subject site to the commercial site to the north. The second requires all streets be constructed with all required elements and meet ADA accessibility standards. These are addressed in Stipulation Nos. 6 and 7, respectively.
14. The Public Transit Department commented on the need for a robust system of shaded pedestrian pathways with measures to delineate pedestrian crossings at drive-aisles. This is addressed in the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance.

#### OTHER

15. The site has not been identified as being archaeologically sensitive. However, in the event archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all ground disturbing activities must cease within 33-feet of the discovery and the City of Phoenix Archaeology Office must be notified immediately and allowed time to properly assess the materials. This is addressed in Stipulation No. 8.
16. Development and use of the site are subject to all applicable codes and ordinances. Zoning approval does not negate other ordinance requirements. Other formal actions such as, but not limited to, zoning adjustments and abandonments may be required.

#### **Findings**

1. The development is consistent with the Commercial General Plan Land Use Map designation.
2. The proposal is appropriate given the site's proximity to the North Mountain Village Core and future high capacity transit.
3. The development, as stipulated, is appropriate at this location due to its compatibility with the surrounding land uses.

#### **Stipulations**

1. The south building elevation shall contain architectural embellishments and detailing such as textural changes, pilasters, offsets, recesses, variation in window size and location, and/or other overhang canopies, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.

2. The developer shall replenish the existing landscape area along Cochise Drive per the C-2 streetscape landscape standards for planting type, size and quantity, with all trees being of a shade variety, as approved by the Planning and Development Department. Where utility conflicts exist, the developer shall work with the Planning and Development Department on alternative design solutions consistent with the creation of a comfortable pedestrian environment.
3. For any development that modifies the cumulative floor area by more than 10 percent, including demolition, from that depicted on the site plan date stamped July 30, 2021, the public sidewalk and landscaping along Cochise Drive shall be detached with a minimum 5-foot-wide landscape area located between the sidewalk and back of curb and planted to the following standards. Where utility conflicts exist, the developer shall work with the Planning and Development Department on alternative design solutions consistent with the creation of a comfortable pedestrian environment.
  - a. Large canopy, single-trunk, shade trees shall be placed 25 feet on center or in equivalent groupings, with a minimum 3-inch caliper.
  - b. At tree maturity, the trees shall shade the sidewalks to a minimum 75 percent.
  - c. Drought tolerant shrubs and vegetative groundcovers maintained to a maximum height of 24 inches to provide a minimum of 75 percent live coverage at maturity.
4. The developer shall provide four bicycle parking spaces, shaded to 50 percent, and installed per the requirements of Section 1307.H of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
5. The developer shall dedicate a 1-foot Vehicular Non-Access Easement (VNAE) along the south site boundary.
6. The developer shall provide enhanced pavement paint, markings or alternative material for pedestrian pathways overlapping a drive aisle to connect from the subject site to the commercial site to the north, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
7. The developer shall construct all streets within and adjacent to the development with paving, curb, gutter, sidewalk, curb ramps, streetlights, median islands, landscaping and other incidentals, as per plans approved by the Planning and Development Department. All improvements shall comply

with all ADA accessibility standards.

8. In the event archaeological materials are encountered during construction, the developer shall immediately cease all ground-disturbing activities within a 33-foot radius of the discovery, notify the City Archaeologist, and allow time for the Archaeology Office to properly assess the materials.

**Writer**

Nick Klimek

November 5, 2021

**Team Leader**

Samantha Keating

**Exhibits**

Zoning sketch map

Aerial sketch map

Site Plan date stamped July 30, 2021

Context Plan and Photos date stamped July 30, 2021 (5 pages)













6



8



13



14



15



16

