



*City of Apache Junction*  
*Development Services Department*



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**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** June 24, 2025

**TO:** Planning and Zoning Commission

**THROUGH:** Rudy Esquivias, Development Services  
Director  
Sidney Urias, Development Services Deputy  
Director

**FROM:** Nicholas Leftwich, Senior Planner

**CASE NUMBER:** P-25-28-CUP

**OWNER:** Mohiuddin Mehmood Trust  
2304 Cortez Road  
Apache Junction, AZ 85119

**APPLICANT:** Dane Astle, Edifice Architecture

**REQUEST:** A proposed Conditional Use Permit ("CUP")  
to permit an event center and venue in the  
"B-1" General Commercial zoning district.

**LOCATION:** The subject site is located near the  
southeast corner of Lost Dutchman  
Boulevard and Apache Trail.  
(APN 100-25-043E)

**GENERAL PLAN/  
ZONING DESIGNATION:** Commercial / General Commercial "B-1"

**SURROUNDING USES:** North: General Commercial "B-1"  
properties;  
  
South: Low Density Single-Family Detached  
Residential "RS-54" properties;  
  
East: Low Density Single-Family Detached  
Residential "RS-54" properties;

West: Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential "RS-54" properties.

### **BACKGROUND**

Parcel 100-25-043E is located near the southeast corner of E. Lost Dutchman Boulevard & N. Apache Trail, totaling 4.18 acres. The property has been utilized as an RV & boat storage yard since around 2000.

### **PROPOSALS**

P-25-28-CUP is a request for the approval of a Conditional Use Permit for Parcel 100-25-043E to authorize the operation of an event center and venue, per the requirements of the Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance, §1-5-3 Non-Residential Use Regulations.

The proposed development comprises a 4,927.5 square foot building, with an adjacent outdoor ceremony area. At this time, only the west half of Parcel 100-25-043E is proposed to be developed, replacing the existing storage use with the new event venue and its associated parking and landscaping.

### **PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS**

As defined by the City Zoning Ordinance §1-16-12, Conditional uses are those uses that are generally compatible with the land uses permitted by right in a zoning district, but which require individual review and Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") approval of their location, design, operation and configuration along with the imposition of conditions in order to ensure the appropriateness of the use at a particular location.

According to §1-5-3 Non-Residential Use Regulations, "Event Centers and Venues" are permitted in the B-1, B-2, B-3, and B-4 zoning districts only after review and approval of a conditional use permit, with a footnote indicating the City Council as the decision authority.

Staff finds that the proposed use is consistent with the zoning of the property, but recommend conditions of approval that specifically mitigate potential noise concerns from adjacent residential properties. These conditions are noted in the recommended motion section of this staff report.

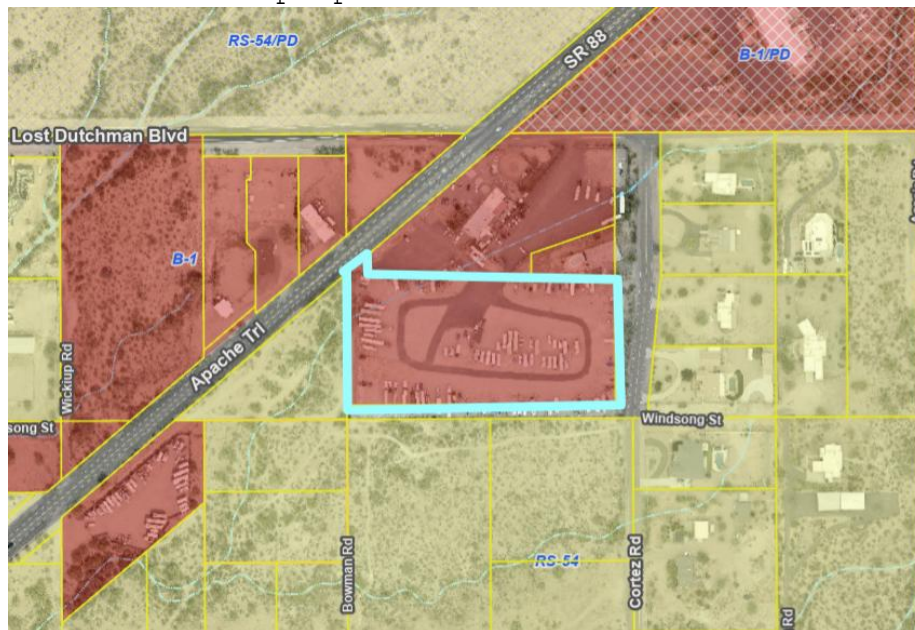
### *Relationship to General Plan:*

The subject site is designated by the city's General Plan as "Commercial," which is the General Plan land use designation generally designed for office, restaurant, retail, service industry type land uses, which the event venue falls under. The proposed event venue would replace a portion of the legal non-conforming storage yard, which helps facilitate the General Plan Goals (Economic Development Goal 5.1, Land Use Goal 11.2) to discourage further storage uses and encourage new businesses along our transportation corridors.

### *Zoning/Site Context:*

The subject property is surrounded by both General Commercial properties to the north along Apache Trail and Low Density Single Family Residential uses in the other directions, as noted:

- To the north of the property are "B-1" General Commercial properties, with the Hitching Post restaurant to the immediate north of the subject site.
- To the immediate south of the property are vacant Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential "RS-54" properties.
- To the east of the property are developed "RS-54" residential properties.
- To the west of the property is a vacant "RS-54" residential property, with "B-1" commercial properties to the northwest, across Apache Trail, and recently developed "RS-54" residential properties to the southwest.



### *Infrastructure & Site Improvements:*

All necessary and required on-site and off-site improvements, including retention basins, dust-proof surfacing, perimeter fencing, and landscape buffers will be built at the time of development.

### *Public Input:*

The applicant sent out neighborhood meeting notification letters to the property owners within a three hundred (300') radius, notifying neighbors of the proposed development and providing them contact information to learn more about the project. The neighborhood meeting was held at the Apache Junction Multi-Generational Center, 1035 N Idaho Rd, on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at 6:00 PM. One neighbor attended and expressed support for the development.

At the time of this staff report, Staff have received one e-mail from an adjacent neighbor regarding the proposed development, which expresses opposition and concern regarding noise and traffic. This e-mail has been included in the attached Public Participation Report.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**

As required by the Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance, a Conditional Use Permit request may be approved by the Planning Commission after consideration has been given to seven different criteria. The criteria is outlined in the text below:

1. Adequacy of roadways, off-street parking, public facilities and services to accommodate the proposed use;

*Applicant Response:* *The primary access to the site is off of East Apache Trail, a main arterial road, and the driveway access is already in place. There is existing off-street parking on site and additional parking is being added to the site. With an existing restaurant on an adjacent owner-owned property, the utilities to accommodate this new development.*

2. Negative impacts arising from the emission of odor, dust, gas, noise, lighting, vibration, smoke, heat or glare;

*Applicant Response:* *This is an event center so there will be no emission of odor, dust, gas, noise, lighting, vibration, smoke, heat, or glare. The events held here will be family and group*

events and will not produce additional 'pollution' to the surrounding area. The emissions are less than a restaurant development. Any sound and lighting issues potentially affecting the neighbors will be addressed by way of sound insulation and light shields. All outdoor activity resulting in music will be restricted to 10:00pm Arizona Time and any other outdoor activity will be restricted to 12:00am (midnight) Arizona Time. Visually, outdoor activity will be screened from adjacent properties by way of lining the property line with Mesquites and Palo Verdes.

3. Contribution to the deterioration of the neighborhood or the negative impact on neighborhood property values;

Applicant Response: This event center will be constructed in a high quality and will be improving the currently open storage lot to a usable property bringing activity and community to the area. This development will improve the area and increase property values.

4. Compatibility with surrounding uses and structures;

Applicant Response: There is currently a restaurant to the northeast of this site and it will remain open after the development of this project. The two will function in tandem with each other by continuing to cater to the surrounding community. The design of the Event Center will complement the surrounding area by maintaining a single story design and by using materials matching the adjacent buildings. Apache Junction has a Western, agricultural, and desert heritage, making the barn style an intentional nod to the local history: The barn with silo reflects the region's ranching and agricultural roots. The design enhances a sense of place and identity, anchoring the development in Southwestern tradition.

5. Conformance with the General Plan and City policies;

Applicant Response: The General Plan lists this property as being a commercial use so an event center will conform with the General Plan and City Policies.

6. Screening and buffering of uses; and

Applicant Response: This project is set back from the road by being on a parcel behind other parcels and the structure itself is set further back than required from the property lines

*allowing it to be screened naturally with landscaping and not intrude on adjacent properties.*

7. Unique nature of the property, use and/or development's physical characteristics.

*Applicant Response:* *The property has minimal street frontage so instead of outfitting East Apache Trail with a new driveway access point, the existing driveway will be used to offer intermingling of the existing and new functions. Existing and new site facilities will be shared and create a campus experience versus isolated functions. The views of the Superstition Mountains were considered heavily when planning and aligning the structure on site creating an event experience unparalleled with anything in the area.*

#### **PLANNING DIVISION RECOMMENDATION**

In review of the project proposal, Staff is supportive of the Conditional Use Permit Case P-25-28-CUP and respectfully recommends to the Commission a favorable recommendation to the City Council, subject to the conditions of approval noted below in order to facilitate greater cohesion and sensitivity to the surrounding residential properties. As always, Commissioners may recommend changes or additional conditions which they feel will improve the development plan.

#### **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the Apache Junction City Council the approval of the proposed Conditional Use Permit Case P-25-28-CUP, a request by Dane Astle of Edifice Architecture to permit the use of an Event Center & Venue on Parcel APN 100-25-043E, located near the southeast corner of Lost Dutchman Boulevard and Apache Trail, zoned General Commercial "B-1", subject to the following conditions of approval:

- 1) The project shall be developed in accordance with the plans attached to and associated with case P-25-28-CUP. All development shall meet the requirements of the applicable city codes.
- 2) This CUP is conditionally approved pursuant to Apache Junction City Code, Volume II, Land Development Code, Chapter 1: Zoning Ordinance, Article 1-16: Administration,

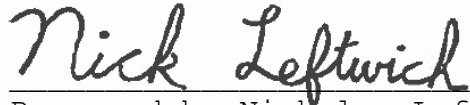
Cases P-25-28-CUP

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§ 1-16-12, Conditional Use Permits, Administrative Use Permits and Building Permits.

- 3) To screen the event venue from future residential development, a 6-foot tall opaque fence shall be constructed along the south and western borders.
- 4) All lighting shall comply with Apache Junction City Code, Volume II, Land Development Code, Chapter 1: Zoning Ordinance, Article 1-10: Outdoor Lighting Regulations. Lighting shall be "Dark Sky" compliant, wherein all light sources shall be down-lit, fully shielded, and the correlated color temperature ("CCT") shall not exceed 3,000 Kelvins.
- 5) Outdoor music shall end by 10:00 PM, Arizona Time. All outdoor activities shall end by 12:00 Midnight, Arizona Time, to prevent disturbances to the neighborhood.
- 6) Any signage to be installed on the property must comply with Apache Junction City Code, Volume II, Land Development Code, Chapter 1: Zoning Ordinance, Article 1-11: Sign Regulations. Signage should complement the building's architecture.
- 7) All music, audio, or noise shall not exceed 60 decibels when measured at 20 feet from the property's edge or from a complaining party's building footprint, as required in Apache Junction City Code, Volume I, Chapter 11: Noise, Article 11-1: Noise, § 11-1-6 Acts Or Conditions Declared As Excessive Noises.
- 8) Major deviations or proposed changes from the original plans associated with this case will require a major conditional use permit amendment. The Director or their designee shall interpret the proposed modification to be significant/major if, in the Director or Designee's opinion, the quality of project design is diminished, and/or the overall character of the project is contrary to the intent and spirit of the original City Council approval.

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Leftwich". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The first name "Nick" is written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Leftwich".

Prepared by Nicholas Leftwich  
Senior Planner

Attachments:

- Exhibit #1 - Project Narrative
- Exhibit #2 - Proposed Site Plan
- Exhibit #3 - Aerial Map
- Exhibit #4 - Proposed Landscape Plan
- Exhibit #5 - Proposed Elevations & Floor Plan
- Exhibit #6 - Public Participation Plan & Report