



City of Apache Junction

Development Services Department



Date: June 4, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

Through: Bryant Powell, City Manager
Rudy Esquivias, Development Services Director

From: Kelsey Schattnik, Principal Planner

Subject: June 17, 2025, City Council Public Hearing:
P-24-104-CUP: Proposed Conditional Use Permit to allow
336-unit, three-story, multi-family residential rental
development - SWC of N. Apache Trail and Idaho Road

Background

Per historic Pinal County and city zoning records, parcel 101-11-005A has historically been zoned B-3 (City Center), or an equivalent county commercial zoning designation, but has never been developed.

Proposal

P-24-104-CUP is a proposed Conditional Use Permit request to authorize a multi-family use within the B-3 zoning district.

The subject area consists of approximately 18-acres, upon which 336-units are proposed, resulting in a density of 18.2 units per acre. The development plan proposes fourteen (14) three-story buildings. The residential units will include (48) 1-Bedroom/1-bath and (288) generously sized 2-Bedroom/2-bath units. Parking will consist of a mix of surface and covered parking stalls.

Access into the community is proposed on N. Apache Trail and Plaza Drive, with the N. Apache Trail entrance being designated the front and primary entrance. On-site amenities consist of a clubhouse, pool, dog park and community open space.

In addition to their CUP request, the applicant is requesting an 8.7% reduction of on-site parking. Per the City of Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance, this project requires a total of 729 parking space, however, the applicant is requesting a reduction of 65 stalls.

Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation

The Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing was held on April 8, 2025 (planning staff report and exhibits attached). The Commission voted 5:2 to deny case P-24-104-CUP.

The commission members who voted against the project expressed concerns about a potential increase in traffic along both Plaza Drive and N. Apache Trail, particularly during local events. They also raised objections to developing the property for residential use instead of commercial, citing the recent removal of the residential rental tax as a contributing factor.

In contrast, the commission members who supported the project emphasized that the proposal aligns with the voter-approved General Plan and Concentrated Downtown Master Plan. They believed it would attract additional year-round residents, thereby strengthening support for both existing and future downtown businesses. Supporters also pointed out that the site's limited frontage and lack of access to a main arterial make commercial development challenging. Additionally, they argued that a commercial use would likely generate more traffic than a residential one.

As this case was denied by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and pursuant to the Apache Junction City Code, Volume II, Zoning Ordinance, Article 1-16: Administration, § 1-16-12 (D)(7), the Developer submitted a formal appeal of the Planning and Zoning Commission's decision on April 23, 2025.

Updates Since Public Hearing

In response to concerns raised during and after the April 8th public hearing, the applicant has updated several submittal documents. A summary of these updates are provided below:

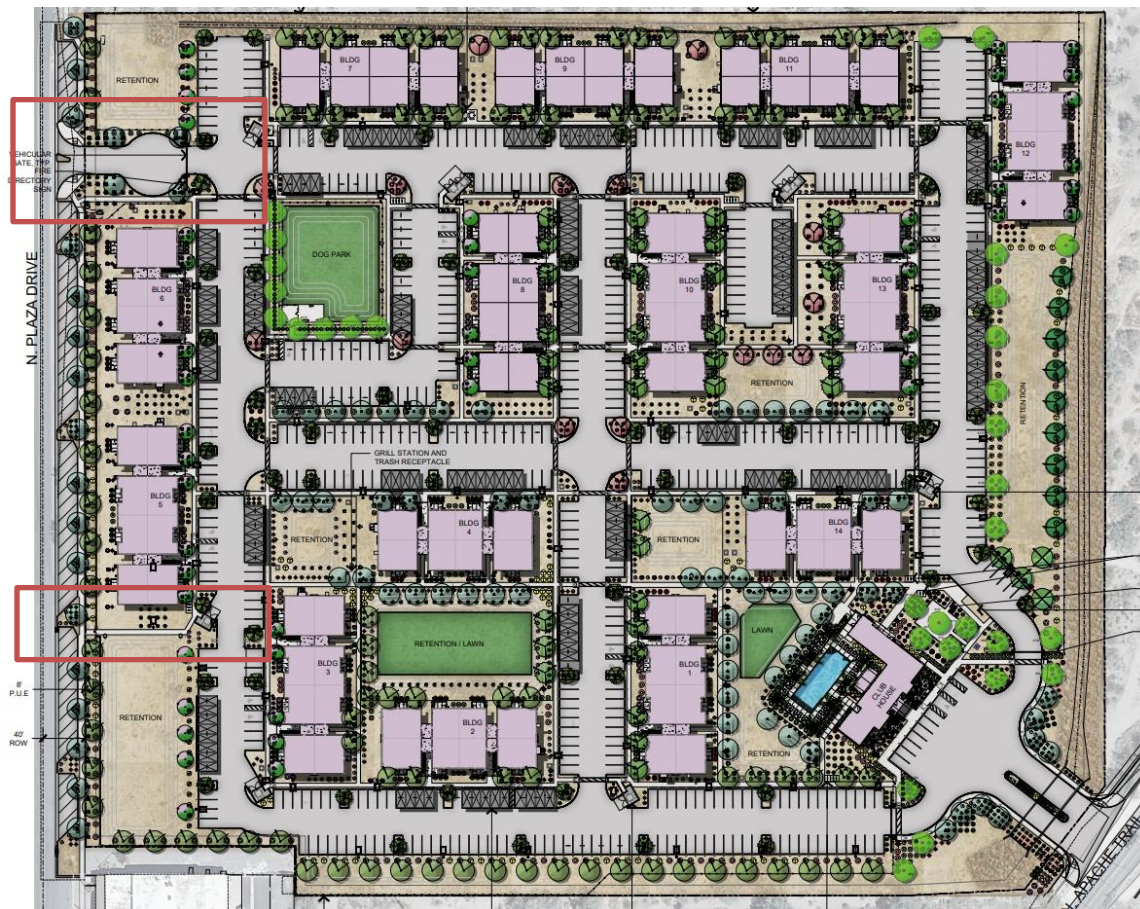
Traffic Impact Study

At the Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing, concerns were voiced about the timing of the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) produced by the applicant. Individuals noted that the TIA traffic counts were not taken during the winter months, which may impact their data. After hearing this concern, the applicant commissioned a revised Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) to compare collected traffic counts in September 2024 with available data from annual City counts collected in February and March, as well as public information available from ADOT and MAG.

Per the applicant's updated narrative, the traffic engineer found a 32% difference between peak and non-peak seasons, so a seasonal adjustment factor of 1.35 was used in the updated traffic study. By the year 2031, the multi-family development is expected to add about 3 seconds of delay per vehicle on the northbound approach at Plaza Drive and Superstition Boulevard during peak hours. At the intersection of Apache Trail and Idaho Road, the added delay is expected to be minimal—only about 0.2 to 0.5 seconds per vehicle during peak hours.

Site Plan

To help reduce potential traffic conflicts between the entrance to the Lost Dutchman RV Resort and the secondary access point for the proposed Wolff Company development, the applicant has shifted their secondary entrance further north along N. Plaza Drive. As a result of this adjustment, an additional pedestrian access point has been added along N. Plaza Drive to improve walkability and provide residents with easier access to and from the site.



Public Outreach/Final Participation Plan

On May 12, 2025, the applicant hosted a Listening Session for the local business community. A total of 15 business owner representatives attended the meeting. Individuals voiced general support for the project and that the additional, year-round residents would help support their businesses. The Final Participation Report for the project has been updated to reflect the discussions/comments heard at this meeting. That Report is attached.

Since the Public Hearing on April 8th Staff and the applicant also received multiple letters and emails both for and against the proposal. All letters both for and against the project have been included as an attachment.

Parking Reduction

As part of their submittal, the Wolff Company is requesting a parking reduction of 8.7%. The Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance allows the Zoning Administrator to allow a reduction of required parking stalls by up to 10% if a project meets the following requirements:

1. Technical evidence that the proposed use(s) generates a parking demand that is at least 10% less than the required parking standard.

The Wolff Company submitted a Parking Study conducted by EPS Group, which determined that the project would only require a maximum of 512 parking spaces (including guest spaces) during peak demand. This is considerably lower than the 684 parking spaces proposed by the applicant. In total, the applicant is providing a parking ratio of approximately 2 parking stalls per unit. The full Parking Study is included in the Staff Report for your review.

2. Determination by the Zoning Administrator that a portion of the required parking can be accommodated with existing public parking that is available within 100 feet of the property.

As part of their off-site improvements, the applicant is providing 45 public parking stalls immediately adjacent to the project along Plaza Drive.

Parking reduction requests are not submitted frequently and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, the

applicant is providing the required amount of parking for each residential unit and is primarily requesting a reduction in the number of required guest parking spaces.

As part of our review, we assessed comparable parking requirements in surrounding cities and found that our current guest parking requirement is higher than those in neighboring jurisdictions. Please see table below for a high-level parking requirement comparison completed by Staff. The first section of the chart outlines the standard parking requirements in nearby jurisdictions, while the second section of the chart provides a case study example of the Wolff Company project if it were to be proposed in said jurisdiction.

Municipality (Multi-Family)	all inclusive	efficiency	1 bedroom	2 or more bedroom	3 or more	guest	
Apache Junction		1	1.5	2		0.3	
Gilbert			1	2		0.25	
Mesa	2.1						
QC			1.5	2	2.5 +.5 per add bedroom		
Chandler		1	1.5	2+ .25 each add bedroom		0.25	
Apache Trail & Plaza Parking Scenario			48	288			Total Required
Apache Junction Required			72	576		101	749
Gilbert			48	576		84	708
Mesa	709						709
QC			72	576			648
Chandler			72	576		84	732

We also considered the availability of nearby on-street and shared parking that could reasonably accommodate overflow. As stated above, the applicant is providing a total of 45 off-site parking stalls. In addition to the parking stalls provided by the applicant, N. Plaza Drive currently has 45 existing parking stalls and N. Apache Trail currently has 54 parking stalls. These parking stalls are limited to 3-hour parking from 6am - 10pm and would not account for overnight parking.

For these reasons, as well as the information provided in the Parking Study, Staff is supportive of the requested reduction. As the parking reduction can be approved administratively, it will be granted if the project is approved by City Council.

Staff Recommendation

After reviewing the project proposal and CUP Findings of Fact, Staff supports proposed Conditional Use Permit Case No. P-24-104-CUP.

Staff supports the project due to its alignment with the voter-approved General Plan and the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan, which promotes residential development to strengthen the city's core and support sustainable economic growth. Additionally, the

site's limited access and lack of visibility from a main arterial make it less suitable for commercial development, reinforcing the appropriateness of the proposed residential use.

Furthermore, the property is currently zoned City Center ("B-3"), which, according to the zoning ordinance, is generally intended for commercial, recreational, and/or multi-family residential uses within the Core Downtown Area. The proposed multi-family development aligns with this intent and is expected to house additional year-round residents, providing support to existing commercial businesses and helping to attract future development, particularly within the nearby city-owned parcel envisioned as the core of a vibrant and walkable downtown.

Attachments:

- PZ Staff Report from April 8, 2025 (with all attachments)
- Updated Final Participation Report
- Updated Traffic Impact Analysis
- Retail Spending Analysis
- Emails/Letters Received by the City