



MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 11, 2026
For August 27, 2026 Hearing

TO: Linus Kafka
Zoning Examiner

FROM: Koren Manning
Planning & Development Services
Interim Director

SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXCEPTION LAND USE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
TP-ENT-0626-00012 Church Steeple – S Midvale Park Rd, O-3 Zoning (Ward 1)

Issue – This is a special exception land use request in the O-3 Office zone by Bruce R. Call, AECM on behalf of the property owner, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The request is to allow a 67-foot steeple on a church proposed on a 3.49-acre parcel located at 5295 S Midvale Park Road. The steeple would exceed the 10 feet above maximum allowed building height in the O-3 zone for ornamental architectural elements, requiring approval through the Zoning Examiner Special Exception Procedure.

Height exceptions for ornamental architectural elements are governed by UDC 6.4.4.C.1. When an ornamental structure is proposed to exceed ten feet above the permitted height in a zone, it must be reviewed by the Design Review Board, who then forwards a recommendation to the Zoning Examiner on the proposal.

Planning and Development Services Recommendation – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of the height exception, subject to the attached preliminary conditions.

Background Information

Existing Land Use: The project is located on a vacant lot at 5295 S Midvale Park Rd. It is located in the middle of several residential subdivisions, and while not part of any of them it is identified in subdivision plat maps as a future site for a church.

Existing Zoning Description: Office (O-3) – This zone provides for mid-rise, office, medical, civic, and select other uses, such as urban agriculture and renewable energy generation, that provide reasonable compatibility with adjoining residential uses.

Surrounding Zones and Land Uses:

North – O-3; Residential Subdivision
East – R-2; Residential Subdivision
South – R-2; Residential Subdivision
West – R-2; Residential Subdivision

Previous Cases on the Property: There are no previous Special Exception cases on property.

Related Cases: None

Applicant's Request – The applicant request is for a special exception to allow a church steeple to exceed more than the maximum permitted building height of 10 feet in the O-3 zone. The proposed exception requires Zoning Examiner approval in accordance with UDC 3.4.3. The Zoning Examiner holds a public hearing and renders a decision 5 working days after the hearing.

Planning Considerations – Land use policy direction for this area is provided by *Plan Tucson* and the *Santa Cruz Area Plan*.

Plan Tucson: This location is within the Neighborhoods building block, which typically include places of worship. This project is supported by *Plan Tucson* policy.

Santa Cruz Area Plan: This development conforms with *Plan* policies, which indicates this parcel is long-term planned for Office use. Churches and other places of worship are allowed land uses in the Office Zone.

Design Considerations

Land Use Compatibility – The project proposal is an approximately 17,000 square-foot church on the currently vacant lot, with the front facing southwest towards the intersection of Midvale Park Road and Oak Tree Drive. Parking is arranged beside and behind the church.

The maximum building height in the O-3 zone is 40 feet, and most of the church is planned up to 27 feet high. The steeple extends up to 67 feet in height, which is 17 feet greater than would be allowed by-right. The steeple is placed on the southwest face of the building, closer to the intersection than any residential land use.

Drainage/Grading – The parcel is not located within a floodplain. No significant changes to grading are proposed.

Road Improvements/Vehicular Access/Circulation – Vehicle access is proposed from Newcastle Court Rd on the south side of the parcel, and Midvale Park Road on the west side. No off-site improvements are shown.

Use Specific Standards – Ornamental element height exceeding 10 feet above the maximum building height requires special approval through the Zoning Examiner Special Exception Procedure, in accordance with UDC Section 3.4.3. It must also be constructed in accordance with UDC Section 6.4.4.C, requiring:

- a) The ornamental element is an integral part of the building's architecture, and is not for human occupancy;

The applicant provided renderings showing a steeple as an integral part of the architectural design of the church and would not be for human occupancy.

- b) The ornamental elements proposed to exceed ten feet above the allowed structure height shall not be used for signage;

The applicant's materials demonstrate the ornamental element is not used for signage.

- c) The applicant shall demonstrate how the proposal minimizes impacts to existing land uses by including a viewshed analysis and an analysis of the project site grades and adjacent property grades as part of their submittal; or,

The applicant included viewshed analysis showing the steeple, while higher than any building in the area, is confined to a very small portion of the parcel. It is also smaller than existing tall objects – nearby power poles are 75 feet high.

- d) Setbacks required for the architectural element will be one foot for each additional foot in height that it exceeds the base allowance of ten feet.

Non-residential development in the O-3 zone has a minimum setback of 10 feet. The steeple exceeds the base allowance by 17 feet, which would require the steeple to be at least 27 feet from the property line. As presented, the church building is no closer than 40 feet from the western property boundary and so meets this standard.

Staff find the proposal to be in compliance with all applicable UDC Use-Specific Standards.

Conclusion –The proposal is in compliance with the performance criteria for a building height exception. The request is consistent with policy direction in *Plan Tucson*, and the *Santa Cruz Area Plan*. Subject to compliance with the attached preliminary conditions, approval of the requested special exception is appropriate.

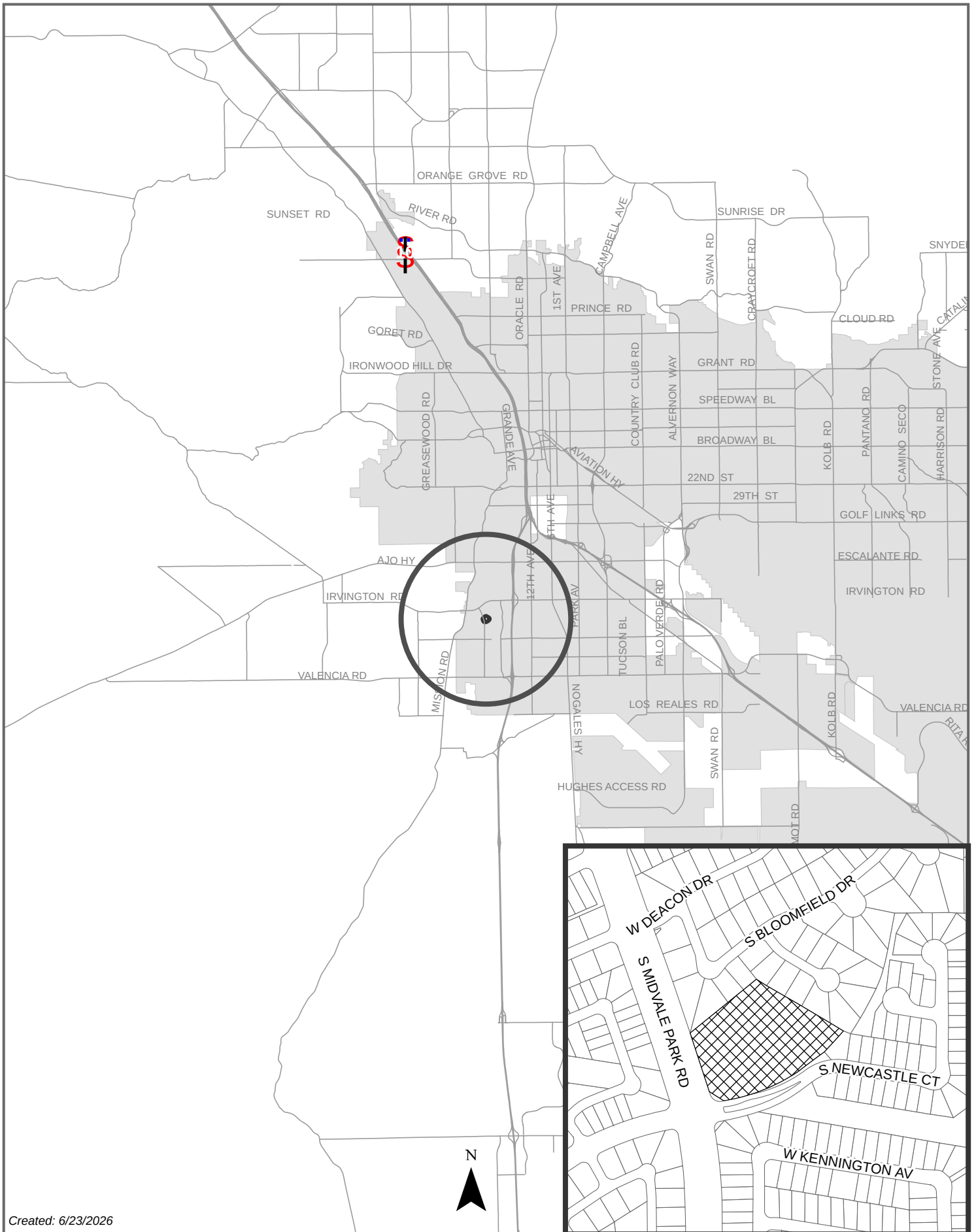
PROCEDURAL

1. A development package, in substantial compliance with the preliminary development package and required reports dated July 6, 2025, is to be submitted and approved in accordance with the *Administrative Manual*, Section 2-06.
2. Any relocation, modification, etc., of existing utilities and/or public improvements necessitated by the proposed development shall be at no expense to the public.
3. Five years are allowed from the date of initial authorization to implement and effectuate all Code requirements and conditions of rezoning.
4. A copy of the Special Exception decision letter shall be included with the site plan at the time of Development Package submittal.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

5. The maximum height of the steeple shall be no greater than 67 feet.

TP-ENT-0626-00012 - 5295 S MIDVALE PARK RD





 Area of Special Exception Request

Address: 5295 S MIDVALE PARK RD
Base Maps: Twp. 1503 Range 1302 Sec. 03
Ward(s): 1

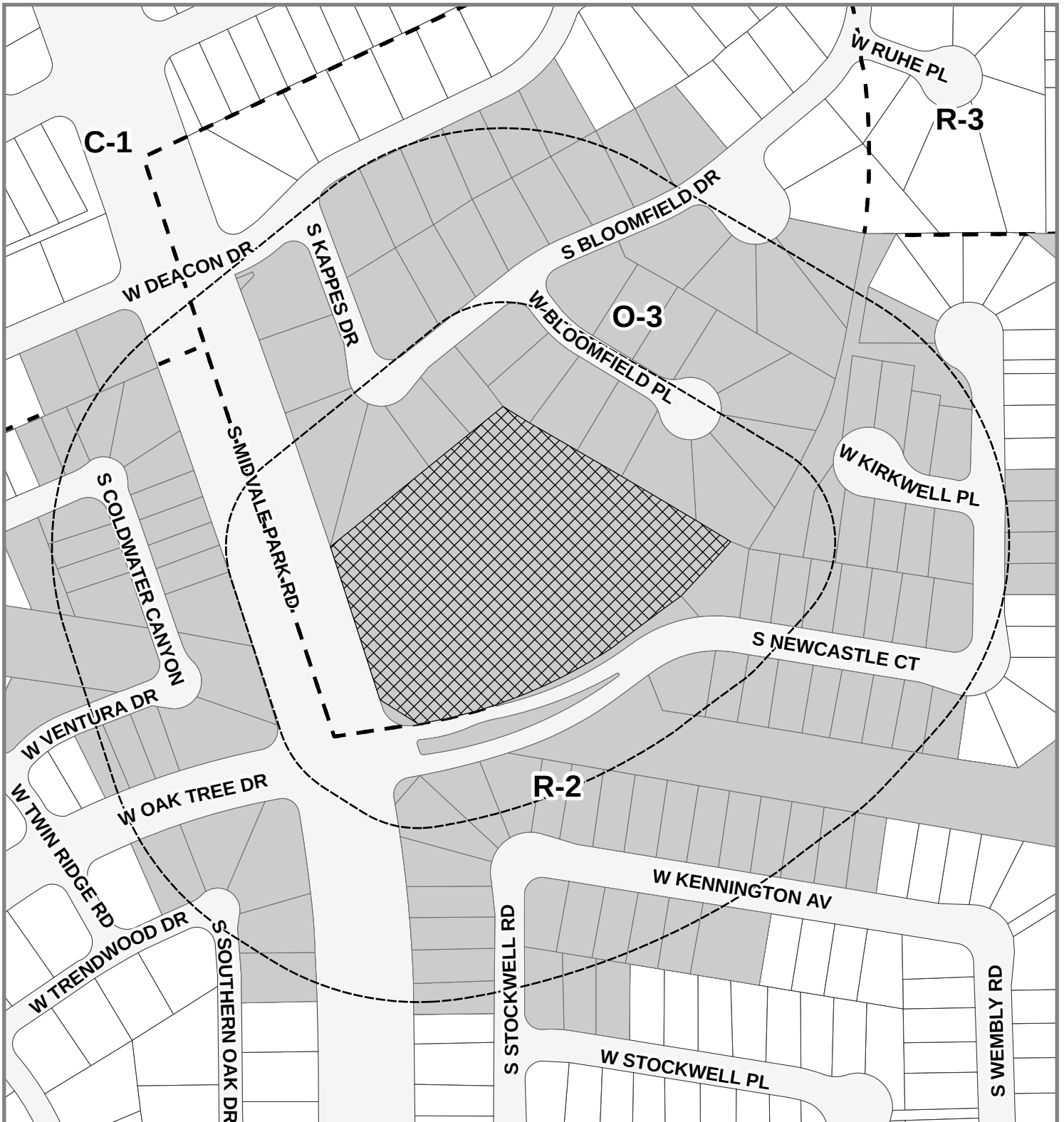


2023 Aerial
Created: 6/23/2026

0 90 180
Feet
1:2,358



TP-ENT-0626-00012 - 5295 S MIDVALE PARK RD



-  Area of Special Exception Request
-  Properties Notified
-  Zone Boundaries
-  400' Notification Area
-  Protest Area (150 ft. Radius)

Address: 5295 S MIDVALE PARK RD
Base Maps: Twp. 1503 Range 1302 Sec. 03
Ward(s): 1

0 90 180 Feet

1:2,358

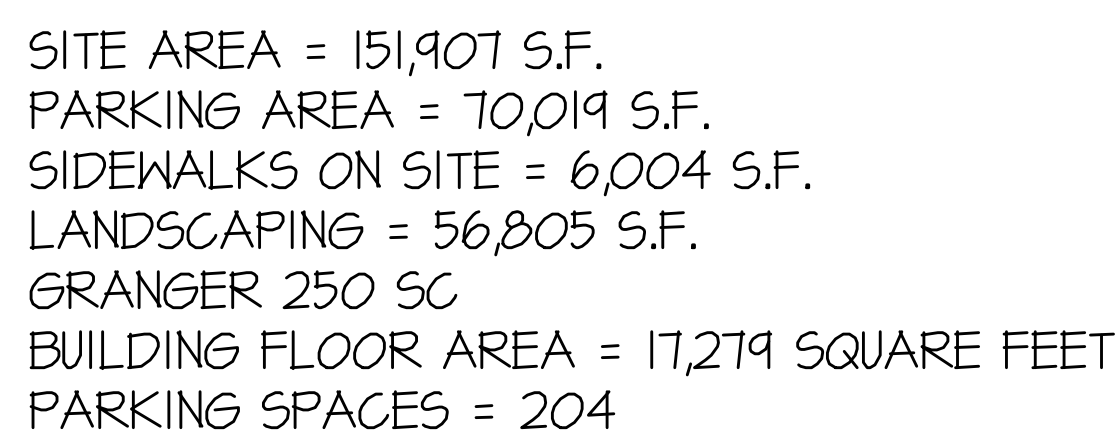


Preliminary Development Plan
TP-ENT-0626-00012 Date 07/06/2026
 Planning & Development Services

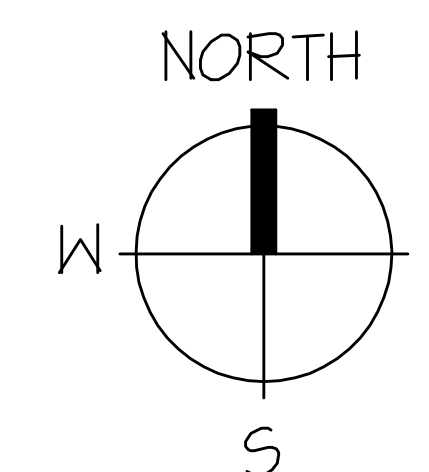


BEING A PORTION OF SECTION 3,
TOWNSHIP 15 SOUTH, RANGE 13 EAST
G&SR B&M, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA
TAX ID 137-11-430K

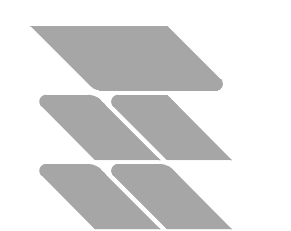
BUILDING AREA	17,279 S.F.	11.4%	} 58.6% < 70% COMPLIES
RAMADA AREA	18,000 S.F.	1.2%	
VEHICLE USE AREA	70,019 S.F.	46.0%	
WALKS	1,360 S.F.	0.9%	
LANDSCAPE	61,630 S.F.	40.5%	
TOTAL SITE AREA	152,088 S.F.	100.0%	



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

[illegible]

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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

ON SOL

TUCSON SOUTH
STAKE CENTER
5295 S. MIDVALE PARK ROAD
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85746

Subject Number:
502 0439 24010101

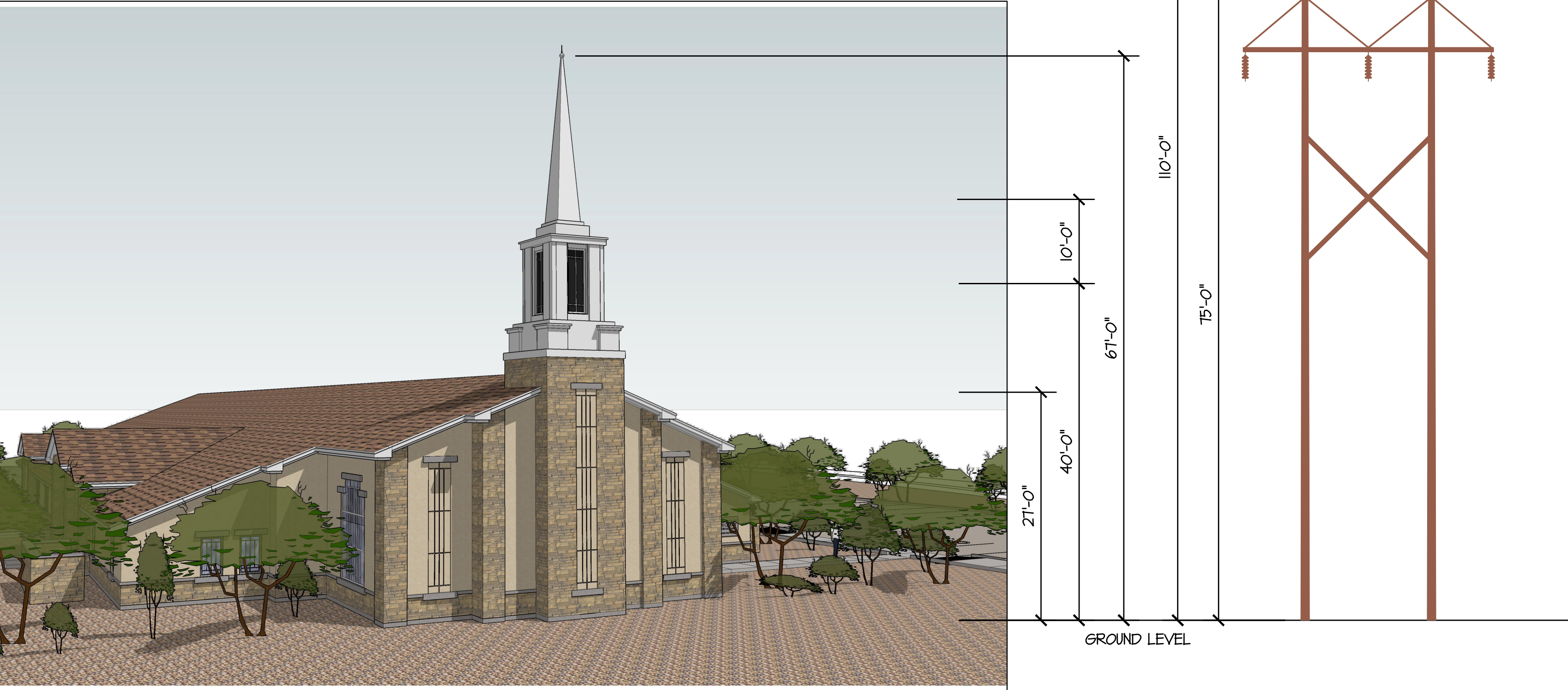
Granger 250SC

Property Number:
502 0439

Sheet Title:

RELIMINARY SITE PLAN

et:



EXISTING POWER POLES AT THIS LOCATION ALONG MIDVALE PARK ROAD VARY IN HEIGHT FROM 75' TO 110' ACCORDING TO TEP.

THE PROPOSED STEEPLE IS 67' TALL WHICH IS THE APPROPRIATE HEIGHT FOR THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THIS BUILDING. THE RIDGE LINE OF THE BUILDING IS 26'-9" HIGH. ONLY A SMALL SLIVER OF THE STEEPLE IS HIGHER THAN 50'.



PRELIMINARY RENDERED FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"

PROPOSED VIEW FROM MIDVALE PARK ROAD. COLORS AND MATERIALS ARE TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH NEIGHBORHOOD.

EXISTING POWER POLES
SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"

EXISTING VIEW FROM MIDVALE PARK ROAD.

Architect	Mark	Date (D-M-Y)	Description
Project for: THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS			
Project Name: TUCSON SOUTH STAKE CENTER 5245 S. MIDVALE PARK ROAD TUCSON, ARIZONA 85746			
Project Number: 502 0439 24010101			
Plan Series: Granger 250SC			
Property Number: 502 0439			
Sheet Title: PRELIMINARY ELEVATION COMPARISON			
Sheet: 5			

Architect

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Only a small portion (red oval) of the steeple is visible above 50'. The building is sited so that there is a large distance from any of the surrounding houses or streets. The power poles have a much greater visual impact.



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February 23, 2026

Gabriel Sleighter
Tucson Planning and Zoning
201 N. Stone Avenue
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Email: gabriel.sleighter@tucsonaz.gov

Re: Steeple Height Exception
Tucson South Stake Church Building
5295 S. Midvale Park Road

Dear Gabriel:

We are in the development plan process of a new church building at the referenced address. We met with Tucson Planners prior to the land purchase to address the usual site issues and were given the green light based on the UDC except we were informed that we would still need to go through the height exception for the steeple. The specific information for the project as shown in the attachments is as follows:

1. Zoning: O3 church is a permitted use
(This site was designated for a church when the development was initially platted.)
2. Site area: 151,907 s.f. (3.49 acres)
3. Building roof ridge line height is just under 27' (26'-9"). Steeple height = 67'
4. Building height allowed per UDC 6.3-3A: 40'
5. Ornamental element height allowed: 40' + 10' = 50'

Ornamental element height exceeding 10 requires special approval. We are therefore providing the following information as required by UDC 6.4.4.C:

- a) *The ornamental element is an integral part of the building's architecture, and is not for human occupancy; The attached rendering shows that the steeple is distinctly an integral part of the architectural design as a church and there is no human occupancy.*
- b) *The ornamental elements proposed to exceed ten feet above the allowed structure height shall not be used for signage; There is no signage associated with the steeple.*
- c) *The applicant shall demonstrate how the proposal minimizes impacts to existing by including a view shed analysis and an analysis of the project sites grades and adjacent property grades as part of their submittal; or, The renderings show that there is very little visual impact to the neighbors inasmuch as only the tapered top portion of the steeple is visible. The white color further minimizes the visual impact. In comparison to the nearby power poles (about 100 feet west) the steeple impact is negligible.*

Gabriel Sleighter
February 23, 2026
page 2

- d) *Setbacks required for the architectural element will be one foot for each additional foot in height that it exceeds the base allowance of ten feet.* The building is located on the site such that there is considerable distance from any of the adjacent homes with greater setbacks than required.

We have met with the HOA representatives and have provided the same information as presented herein. Their response letter is enclosed indicating that this is a positive addition to the area.

We respectfully request approval of this project with the steeple as presented. Please let us know if there is additional information required.

Thank you.



Bruce R. Call, P.E.
Architect

Enclosures