

The following guidelines have been established for use by the Planning Director to determine which cases can be referred to the Planning Hearing Officer for consideration. The goal of having the Planning Hearing Officer is to provide a more expeditious process for minor, routine cases that are unlikely to have a significant impact and/or have much concern by the public while still ensuring that cases they may warrant a more public review are still heard by the Planning and Zoning Board. When reviewing specific cases against the following guidelines, any cases in doubt shall be sent to the P&Z Board.

1. **Consistency with the General Plan, sub-area plans, neighborhood plans, specific plans, or other approved land use plans and policies.** Consistency with adopted plans will be evaluated by comparing the proposed development with the adopted plan(s) and policies that apply to the area in question. In order to be considered for hearing by the PHO, a proposal must be clearly consistent with approved land use related plans.
2. **The potential impact of the proposed development on adjacent properties/compatibility with surrounding uses.** Evaluation of this guideline will be based on comparing the potential impact of the proposed development to the surrounding existing or previously approved development. In order to be considered by the PHO proposed developments would have to demonstrate a minimal negative impact on surrounding properties. Key factors will include, but are not necessarily limited to:
  - The type of development on adjoining property – is it vacant, development with residential uses, commercial uses, etc.
  - Where is the proposed development in relationship to surrounding development – is it interior as part of an existing development or along the edge adjacent to a different type of development.
  - Whether or not the proposed development is a part of and consistent with a previously approved plan, particularly a Development Master Plan.
3. **The quality of the design.** Quality of design will be evaluated based on the compliance of the project with the adopted Design Guidelines and site development standards found in the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (Chapters 11-14 and 11-15), and general principles of good planning, landscape and architectural design. In order to be considered appropriate for consideration by the PHO projects will need to show a high quality of design that integrates well with the surrounding development.

4. **Need to request for variances, DIP, SCIP, overlay districts or other ordinance modifications.** This will be determined based on staff review of the proposed development compared to ordinance requirements. In order to be considered appropriate for hearing by the PHO, projects will typically be following all ordinance requirements. However, with infill sites, use of DIP's or SCIP's to address site constraints and make the proposed development more compatible with surrounding development will generally be considered appropriate for hearing by the PHO.
5. **Citizen/neighborhood input.** This will be evaluated based on the extent of the notification of the project made to surrounding property owners and residents, and the degree of citizen participation efforts that take place before the zoning application is officially filed. In order to be considered appropriate for hearing by the PHO, the development proposal will need to demonstrate a lack of concern with the proposed development by the surrounding residents and property owners.

Specific case types that will generally, but not necessarily always, be scheduled for consideration by the Planning Hearing Officer include:

- Comparable zoning for recently annexed land.
- PAD zoning for ownership of previously approved projects and existing/constructed projects.
- CUP's for schools when staff has not identified potential conflicts or concerns with the proposed location.
- Preliminary plats when considered alone.

Specific case types that will not be scheduled for consideration by the Planning Hearing Officer include:

- Amendments to a Council adopted land use plan or land use policy. This includes the General Plan, sub-area plans, neighborhood plans, corridor studies and specific plans. It also includes written policies such as the Social Service Facilities Guidelines, Freeway Landmark Guidelines or Commercial Communication Tower policies.
- Council Use Permits, except as noted above.
- Text amendments to the zoning ordinance.
- Proposals involving the use of overlay zoning districts to authorize significant departures from adopted zoning related development requirements, such as building setbacks, building heights or minimum lot sizes.