

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 19, 2025

The Community and Cultural Development Committee of the City of Mesa met in the Study Session room at City Hall, 20 East Main Street, on May 19, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Julie Spilsbury, Chairperson
Jennifer Duff
Scott Somers

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Candace Cannistraro
Lauren Lowe
Holly Moseley

Chairperson Spilsbury conducted a roll call.

1. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

2-a. Discuss the potential expansion of zoning districts where portable storage containers may be permanently permitted in the City of Mesa.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown introduced Assistant Planning Director Rachel Philips, Code Compliance Director Angelica Guevara, and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown confirmed that a Councilmember requested the Committee discuss the potential expansion of zoning districts where portable storage containers could be permanently permitted. She provided the definition of portable storage containers (PSCs) and reviewed the dimensions. She pointed out that PSCs are temporary structures with no foundations, used only for storage. She presented photo examples of PSCs not permitted and she reviewed the existing zoning districts where PSCs are permitted. (See Pages 2 through 4 of Attachment 1)

Discussion ensued regarding the current code and how PSCs are currently being used.

Responding to a question from Chairperson Spilsbury, Ms. Guevara explained that when permitted for construction use, PSCs may remain on the job site for up to six months.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the use of PSCs and how they differs from accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown clarified that today's discussion focused on portable storage units, which differ from ADUs, and staff is inquiring whether Council has interest in expanding the zoning districts for PSCs.

Government Relations Director Miranda DeWitt verified that State law does not specifically allow or prohibit storage units.

Development Services Deputy Director John Sheffer discussed the requirements for obtaining a permit for an ADU using a PSC and confirmed that the permit standards are quite different for living quarters compared to a shed.

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown shared a map identifying the area that currently allows permanent PSCs, identifying approximately 1,655 parcels. She outlined all the possible expansion areas which would add another 10,385 parcels making the allowed area three times larger than what is permitted in the current code. (See Pages 5 through 7 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown reviewed the potential impacts, including the pros and cons of expanding the zoning area for storage containers. She presented a comparison of the COM code to other neighboring municipalities. (See Page 8 of Attachment 1)

Discussion ensued regarding placement of PSCs on residential lots.

Ms. Guevara provided an overview of the annual number of code complaints related to PSCs and provided examples. She confirmed that a code compliance officer conducts an in-person inspection for each complaint received and does follow-up inspections if necessary. (See Page 9 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Cannistraro confirmed that the discussion was intended to provide staff with information to develop a presentation, should the topic be brought before the full Council.

Chairperson Spilsbury clarified that the consensus of the Committee was to not recommend expanding the zoning area where PSCs are permanently permitted. She recommended that staff obtain additional information on code compliance procedures related to storage containers in neighboring cities, including the number of complaints received. She requested that any additional presentations to the Council should include definitions and additional information related to permitting storage containers being used as an ADU.

Chairperson Spilsbury thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Community and Cultural Development Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 19th day of May 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.



HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK



Community and Cultural Development Committee Portable Storage Containers in Residential Areas

Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director

Angelica Guevara, Code Compliance Director

May 2025

MZO - Definition of Portable Storage Containers

- A device in the shape of a rectangular solid; constructed of metal, consisting of four vertical walls, a floor and a ceiling in which at least one vertical end is designed as door (typically either as a side-hinged door, or as an overhead bay door).
- Lengths may vary in increments of 10-feet (10-feet, 20-feet...) but may not exceed nominal 40-feet in length.
- PSCs include devices initially designed to facilitate the shipping of containerized cargo and constructed entirely of steel in a manner consistent with ISO 6346, and are being reused to facilitate secure storage, and/or temporary offices or studios, but not habitable space as defined in the Mesa Building Code.
- The dimensions of a PSC shall not exceed 8 feet, 6-inches in height and 8 feet in width.

PSCs are temporary structures – no foundation

PSCs are NOT storage sheds available for sale at most hardware stores

Examples of PSCs Not Permitted by MZO



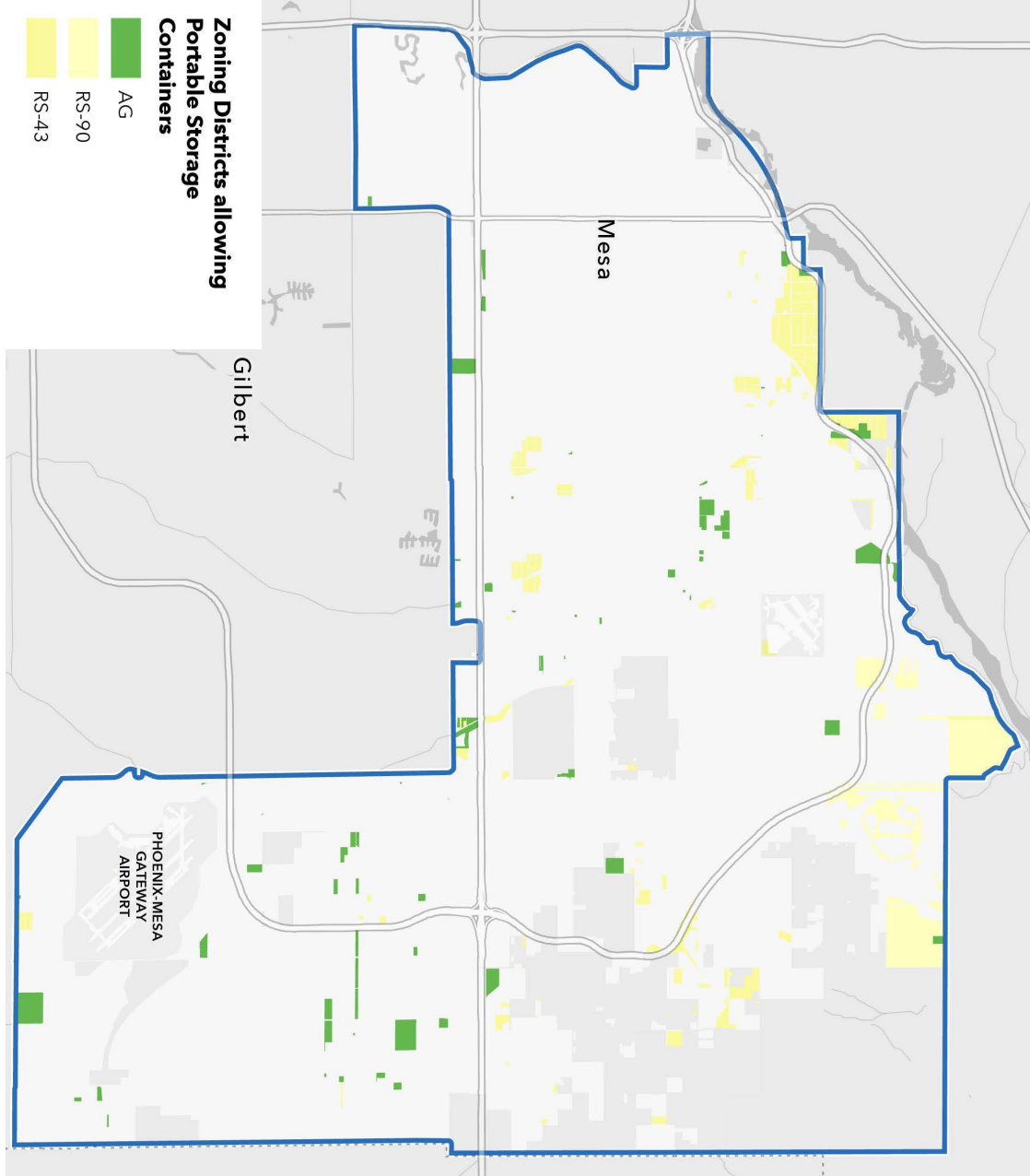
Today - Where Are PSCs Permitted?

Zoning District	Permitted
AG	P
RS-90	P
RS-43	P
Other RS, RSL and RM	Temporary Only
DB-2	SUP
Commercial (NC, LC, GC, OC and MX)	Temporary Only (SUP)
Industrial (PEP, LI, GI, HI)	P or SUP

Allowed for Permanent Use - Residential Districts

Currently allowed for permanent
use:

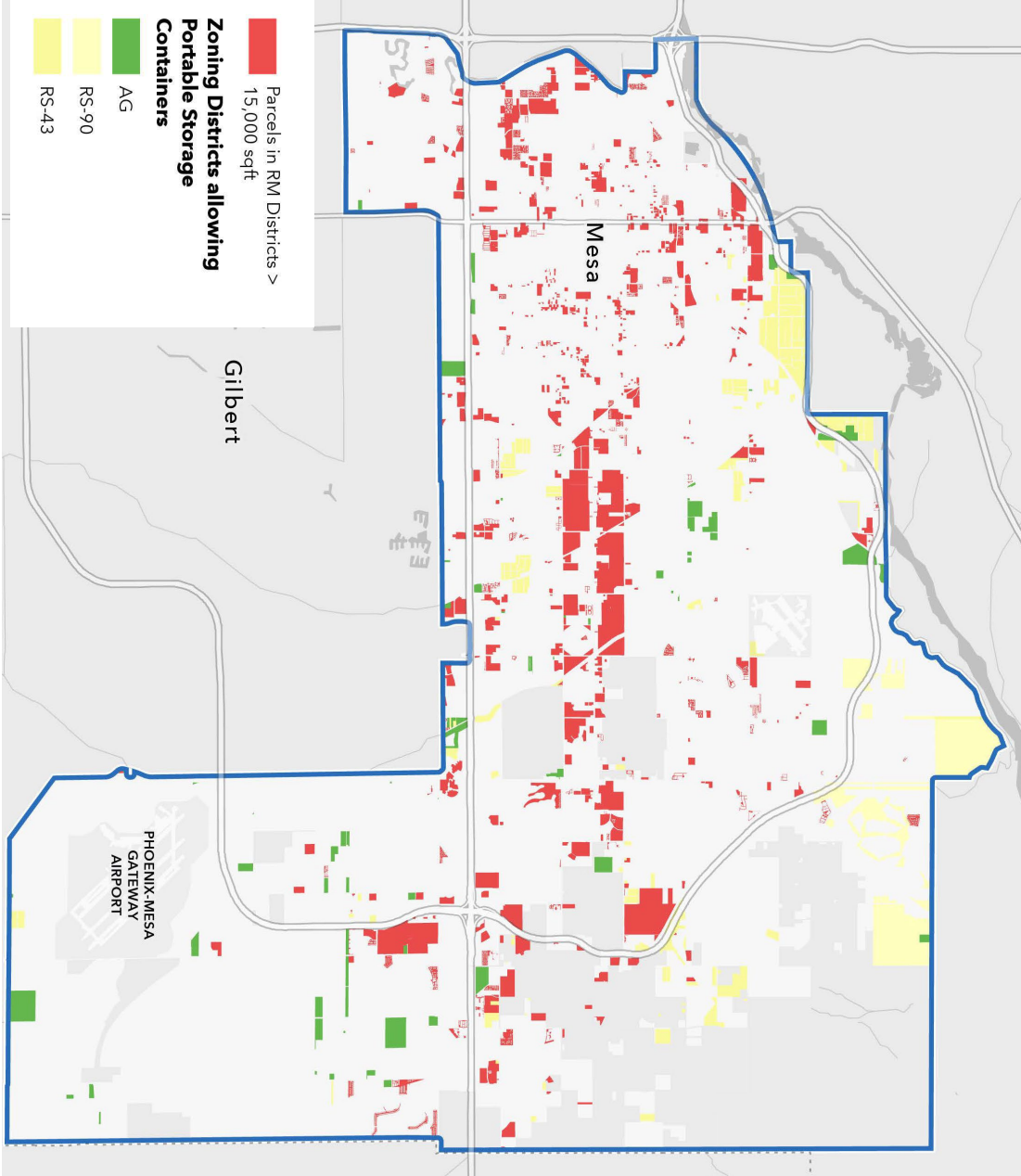
- AG (164 Parcels)
- RS-90 (141 Parcels)
- RS-43 (1,350 Parcels)
- **TOTAL – 1,655 Parcels**



Land for Permanent Use - Multi-family Lots >15,000 SF

Consider allowing on MF lots >15,000 SF:

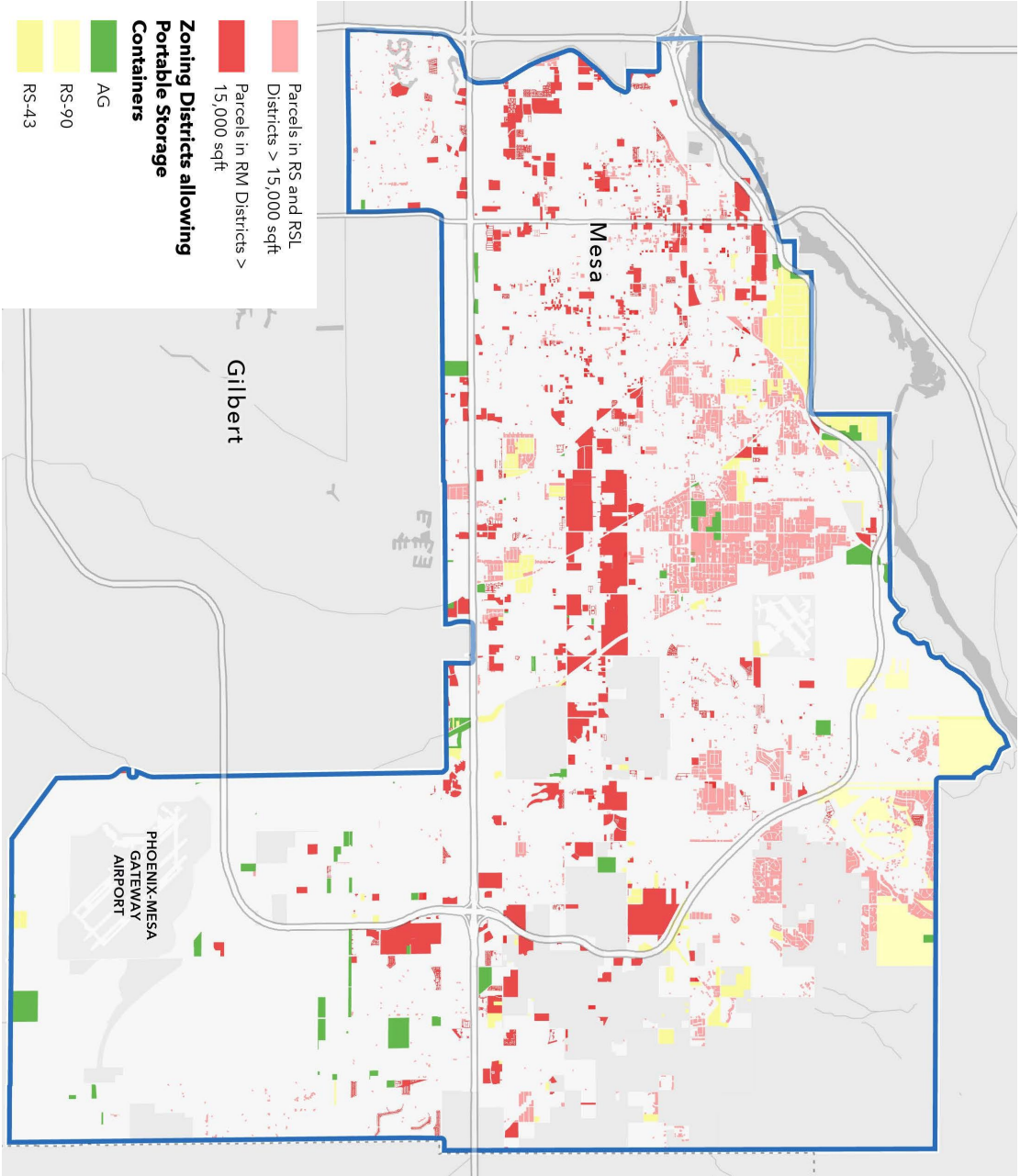
- AG (164 Parcels)
- RS-90 (141 Parcels)
- RS-43 (1,350 Parcels)
- **RM Districts (1,281 Parcels)**
- TOTAL – 2,936 Parcels



and for Permanent Use - All Residential Lots >15,000 SF

Consider allowing on all residential lots >15,000 SF:

- AG (164 Parcels)
- RS-90 (141 Parcels)
- RS-43 (1,350 Parcels)
- **All Residential Districts
(8,730 Parcels)**
- **TOTAL – 10,385 Parcels**



Potential Impacts

Pros

- Durable
- Flexibility on what can be stored
- Recycled Container
- Secure

Cons

- Potential Neighborhood Incompatibility
 - May be visible over a 6-ft wall - typically - 8 ft tall
 - Placement within setbacks – could be up to 40 ft wide
- Design/Aesthetics (façade, landscaping, screening)
- Proper cleaning and inspection
- Disposal at end of life (approx. 25 yrs)

PSC Complaints By Year

Complaint Year	# of Violations	No Violation	Inspections by Year
2025	10	30	40
2024	41	122	163
2023	43	140	183
2022	39	94	133
2021	31	114	145
2020	53	124	177
2019	23	157	180
2018	22	153	175
2017	10	90	100
Total	272	1,024	1,296

Municipal Comparison

Municipality	PSCs Permitted in Residential Districts		Notes
	Permanent	Temporary	
Phoenix	N/A	N/A	Code is silent
Gilbert	No	Yes	Temporary – Maximum size: 160 square feet Max duration: 30 days in conjunction with building permit Permanent – Not permitted per code
Chandler	N/A	Yes	Temporary – Administrative Use Permit required. PSC must be used in conjunction with construction work Permanent – Code is silent
Scottsdale	N/A	N/A	Code is silent
Tempe	N/A	Yes	Temporary – Allowed in conjunction with a building permit for construction; must be removed within 24 months Permanent – Code is silent



Questions?