

What is a Special Exception Land Use?

Special exception land uses are uses which are not allowed by right within a zone but are permitted if all use-specific standards can be met and if approved through an established review procedure.

There are three types of Special Exception approval processes:

- PDSD Director Approval
- Zoning Examiner Approval
- Mayor and Council Approval

The type of Special Exception process is specified in the Unified Development Code based on the zone and proposed use.

Most Special Exception requests are for Wireless Communication Facilities – please see separate [document](#) regarding these applications.

How long does the process take and is there a fee?

Time: Depends on type of request. Typical timeframes below, may be extended based on circumstances of the case.

Mayor and Council Special Exception: 5-7 months

Zoning Examiner Special Exception: 3-4 months

PDSD Director Special Exception: 1-2 months

Fee: PDSD staff calculates fee, which will vary based on the site size and current zone. Included in the fee amount: staff review fee, public notice fee, and technology/archive fee.

What are the application requirements?

Applications should be submitted via [Tucson Development Center Online](#).

Zoning Examiner or Mayor and Council Special Exception

For a Zoning Examiner or Mayor and Council Special Exception request, select the appropriate Special Exception as your application type. The following attachments should be included:

- Project Narrative - describe how the project will be designed to be compatible with adjoining development and any applicable plan policies.
- [Neighborhood meeting documentation](#)
- Use-specific standards statement - describe how each of the applicable use-specific standards have been addressed
- Preliminary Development Package (PDP) including site analysis and design compatibility report – per standards of Admin. Manual 2-03.3 & .4
- Environmental Resource Report if required

PDSD Director Special Exception

Apply for a building permit or development package for your intended use. Include as an attachment the following materials:

- Explanation of request
- Proposed site plan
- Last approved site plan
- [Neighborhood meeting documentation](#)
- Statement describing how each of the applicable use-specific standards have been addressed

More Information and How to Start

Apply for a pre-application conference or submit your Special Exception application via [Tucson Development Center Online](#)

More information about the Special Exception process can be found in the Unified Development Code, [Section 3.4 Special Exception Land Uses](#)

For more information, email PDSD staff at Tucsonrezoning@tucsonaz.gov or visit [Planning & Development Services - Entitlements](#)

Special Exception Land Use Approval Processes

Decision Points

Pre-Application Meeting	Neighborhood Meeting	Application Submittal & Review	PDSB Director Approval	Zoning Examiner Hearing	Mayor & Council Action
<p>Applicant submits a pre-application meeting request with preliminary development plan & fee</p> <p>PDSB Staff schedules a meeting with the applicant to discuss the preliminary development plan & provide comments on code compliance</p>	<p>Applicant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must give notice, host, & document a public neighborhood meeting Presents information about the proposed project, identifies proposed land use changes, & listens to neighbor concerns & interests at the meeting <p>Members of the Public can submit comments</p>	<p>Applicant submits complete application according to checklist with fee</p> <p>PDSB Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews application for completeness within 10 working days of submittal Notifies public Forwards application for review & comment to City departments & outside agencies if needed Prepares a report for the Zoning Examiner (if applicable) that includes a recommendation to approve or deny the application based on existing policy & staff analysis 	<p>PDSB Director reviews the application and staff recommendation & makes a decision to approve or deny</p>	<p>Zoning Examiner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts a public hearing within 70 calendar days of application's acceptance May close or continue the public hearing Makes a decision to approve or deny the application within 5 working days of the closing of the hearing 	<p>Members of the Public must make any request for a public hearing in writing to the City Clerk within 14 calendar days of the close of the Zoning Examiner Public Hearing</p> <p>Mayor & Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May hold a public hearing or a public meeting on the application Consider the application, Zoning Examiner & City Manager recommendations, as well as public comments May approve, modify, or deny the application or take other appropriate actions

Approval Process:
UDC Section 3.4.2

PDSB Director Approval

Optional Recommended Required

Applicant notifies property owners within **100 feet** & registered Neighborhood Association of the site

PDSB Staff notifies property owners within 100 feet & registered neighborhood association of the site

Members of the Public can make comments to PDSB Staff within 10 calendar days

Approval Process:
UDC Section 3.4.3

Zoning Examiner Special Exception

Required Required n/a

Applicant must notify property owners within **300 feet** & registered Neighborhood Associations **within 1 mile**

If approved, the project may proceed to building permit review

Approval Process:
UDC Section 3.4.4

Mayor & Council Special Exception

Required Required n/a

Applicant must notify property owners within **300 feet** & registered Neighborhood Associations **within 1 mile**

Zoning Examiner prepares a recommendation to forward to Mayor & Council

If approved, the project may proceed to building permit review