



Development Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planner II
FOR: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Planning Division Manager
SUBJECT: SU24-14 (Palominas RV Park)
DATE: August 14, 2024

Docket SU24-14 (Palominas RV Park)

A Special Use Authorization request for a 40 space recreational vehicle park.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: Rogelio and Judith Canez
Location: 10280/10290 E. Highway 92
APN: 104-67-004
Parcel Size: 14.88 acres
Zoning: RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4 acres)
Plan Designation: Rural
Growth Area: D – Rural Areas
Existing Use: Residential
Proposed Use: Residential and RV Park (7 acres)

Surrounding Zoning and Uses

North	RU-4	Undeveloped, Palominas Elementary School
South	RU-4	Single family residences
East	R-36, RU-4, GB	Single family residences, restaurant, church
West	RU-4	Undeveloped, single family residential

II. SITE HISTORY

- Single family residence (1974), accessory structures (1976, 1981, 2000)
- Septic system (1992), manufactured home (1992, replaced in 2000)
- Swimming pool – issued 27 June 2023
- No active code compliance cases

III. SPECIAL USE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

The applicants request special use approval for an RV park on seven acres out of a 14.8 acre parcel. The park will be serviced by an office with a retail storefront available to local entrepreneurs. Guest amenities include restroom/shower and washer/dryer facilities, horse stables, and secure dog yard.

IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS – COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL USE FACTORS

Section 2.48.160 of the Zoning Regulations identifies ten (10) factors to evaluate Special Use applications. These factors determine the suitability of a special use request, whether to recommend approval, and to determine if conditions and/or modifications are needed to mitigate potentially negative impacts on surrounding properties. With the information provided, eight (8) factors apply to this special use request with all applicable factors complying:

1. Compliance with Duly Adopted Plans: Complies

The subject property is designated “Rural” by the Comprehensive Plan and falls within Growth Area D (Rural Areas). The easternmost portion of the property with existing residences falls within the Southern San Pedro Valley Area Plan and is designated as “Business/High Density Residential.” The proposed RV park is located on the westernmost 7 acres of the property, falling within the “Rural” Comprehensive Plan land use designation. The current RU-4 zoning is not changing so the portion of the property intended for the RV park remains consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.



SU24-14 (Palominas RV Park)
10290 Highway 92 (APN 104-67-004)



2. Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose: Complies

Rural districts, which range in site area from 2 acres to 36 acres, allow residential and non-residential uses compatible with an area’s rural character. County zoning regulations specifically identify RV parks as an allowed use with approval of a special use authorization by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Parks must be “designed to ensure that the park fits into the rural landscape, such as clustering RV sites, maintaining perimeter open space, and enhancing existing vegetation using drought-tolerant vegetation.”

The property’s location is not overtly rural give the presence of a school, health clinic, restaurant, and convenience store within one mile of the site. However, the applicants are proposing to cluster the 40 spaces with a 7 acre portion of the approximately 15 acre property and include perimeter vegetation. Adjacent public lands to the west, south and north across Highway 92 limit the number of residences in the area, promoting an overall rural character. The zoning district encourages recreational services compatible with rural living and more intense non-residential uses provided they are developed with a sensitivity to the character of rural areas and natural environment and harmonious with existing development.

3. Development Along Major Streets: Complies

The intent of this factor is to consider limiting the number of access points on major thoroughfares, arterials, or collectors by using frontage roads, shared access, and no access easements. Incorporating such measures promotes fewer road cuts to avoid potentially unsafe traffic conflicts, hazardous traffic congestion, and roadway obstruction caused by traffic. The property takes direct access from Highway 92 which falls under Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) jurisdiction. ADOT requires a pre-

submittal form to determine whether a full traffic analysis, a traffic statement, or no traffic study will be required to assess project impacts. Basic information required to determine traffic study applicability area land use, estimated peak hour trips, and number and type of site access driveways. Detailed analysis and improvements are not required during the special use application process but are evaluated during permitting. Given ADOT’s jurisdiction, a county right-of-way permit (ROW) is not required.

4. Traffic Circulation: Complies

This Special Use Authorization factor stipulates:

1. The request is consistent with the preservation of the functions of surrounding streets as defined in the County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The request does not result in the use of any residential street for non-residential traffic.
3. Consideration of future circulation needs in the surrounding area has been considered through right-of-way dedication and off-site improvements if warranted.

The property has legal access via Highway 92, a State maintained and controlled highway falling under the jurisdiction of ADOT. The proposed recreational vehicle park is unlikely to affect the functional classification of Highway 92, and this highway is the only available public road access option. Right-of-way dedication is unlikely since the property fronts a full width 200’ ROW. Traffic analysis, encroachment authorization via State permitting, and off-site improvement requirements will be determined by ADOT.

5. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

Existing

residences on the property are serviced by private well and septic system. A new septic system is required for the recreational vehicle park, requiring review and permitting by Cochise County and potentially the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The property is located within both Arizona Public Service (APS) and Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) service areas and Palominas Fire District. Palominas Station #2 is located less than one mile west of the proposed RV park. The property is located within Flood Zone X.



6. Significant Site Development Standards: Complies

Applicable development standards contained in Sections 2.15 (RU Districts) and 2.51 (Mobile Homes, Manufactured Homes, and Recreational Vehicle Parks) apply to this project. The applicant has only requested one waiver, increasing allowed density above what is allowed by the existing rural zoning. Comparative analysis of Sections 2.15 and 2.51 is in the table below:

STANDARD	2.15 (RURAL DISTRICTS)	2.15 (RV PARKS)
Minimum Development Area	4 acres	No minimum (7 acres proposed)
Density	One dwelling per 4 acres	40 RV spaces. Estimated density 5.7 spaces per acre (7,623 ft ² per unit) at max capacity.
Perimeter Setback	20'	7.5' between spaces, 10' within park boundary
Maximum Building Height	30' (principal and accessory buildings)	30' (principal structures) / 20' (accessory structures) / 8' fences and walls
Maximum Site Coverage/Open Space	25%/0%	Site coverage 55% per space and for park, 75% for recreational areas. 10% dedicated to recreational facilities.
Principal Building Separation (include RVs)	15'	15'
Parking/Circulation	1 parking space per pad	1 per RV space. Internal 24' two drives, 12' one way drives.
Landscaping/Screening	Category D (Rural Areas): 6' solid screen when abutting rural residential	6' solid screen (fence, wall, vegetative equivalent)
Street Access	Access from public and/or private roads	Access to perimeter streets via designated park entrances only

AZGFD provided recommendations for this project relative to site development. Staff finds these recommendations useful to site planning and development and is including a condition of approval applicable recommendations be considered and incorporated into construction documents where appropriate.

7. Public Input: Complies

Section 2.48.160 of the Zoning Regulations states, “If public concerns have been raised, it is fair to ask if the applicant has made a reasonable effort to address these concerns through the Citizen Review Process.” The applicant sent letters to surrounding property owners on May 15, 2024, without response.

8. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

Hazardous or dangerous materials are not proposed for this special use.

9. Off-Site Impacts: Complies

This factor is intended to ensure adequate measures have been taken to mitigate off-site impacts such as dust, smoke, noise, odors, outdoor lighting, and traffic. See also Section 6 (Significant Site Development Standards):

- **Parking:** Off-site parking is not proposed. One space per RV is required, and Staff is recommending two-inch thick gravel to reduce dust. Driveways and parking areas must be properly drained to prevent collection of surface water.
- **Noise:** The RV park will operate seven days per week between 8am and 5pm. While significant noise is unlikely, the rural character of the area and lack of buildings can amplify noise. Staff recommends quiet hours to ensure nearby residences, about six within 1,000', are not negatively impacted during evenings and early mornings.
- **Lighting and Signs:** Park lighting is subject to Section 2.45 of the zoning regulations which requires shielded fixtures and limits overall brightness. Outdoor lighting and signs will be evaluated during the permitting process. Given the property's location along a state highway, freestanding signs

may be up to 80 ft² and 24' in height. Wall signs are also allowed. Signs are subject to a 25' setback from public rights-of-way and residential uses or zoning districts and are subject to a separate permit. Signs are subject to Section 2.54 of the zoning regulations.

- Landscaping: Landscaping installation and maintenance is not required for uses within Growth Areas C and D. However, perimeter solid screen is required per Section 2.51 of the zoning regulations. Staff recommends retaining perimeter vegetation where possible and planting a minimum of one (1) tree for every four (4) RV spaces.
- Odors: Horse stalls and corral is provided for visitors traveling with horses. Additionally, a secure dog yard/park is also provided for visitors. Staff recommends a condition to require regular maintenance and upkeep of these areas as stated in the application. Other potentially offensive odors are unlikely given the relatively small size of the park and limited residential uses nearby.
- Traffic: The site plan identifies two new drives to Highway 92. As a State highway, ADOT is the reviewing agency for new drives, trip count analysis, and the need for off-site traffic improvements of dedications of public right-of-way. Access to the park is via Highway 92 and the use of local roads or private drives is not required. The speed limit reduces from 55mph to 45mph near the proposed park site approximately 800' west of Palominas Elementary School property.

10. Water Conservation: Complies

County water conservation requirements apply to non-residential uses and properties, including this project. Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations require water saving strategies and the use of drought tolerant vegetation along with the preservation of established, native vegetation where possible. Since the project is located within the Sierra Vista Sub-Watershed, the use of misters is prohibited.



Creation of water features is also prohibited unless water harvesting is used and the features are functional to the development. The proposed recreational vehicle park will comply with applicable water conservation regulations and policies identified in the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff posted the property on July 12, 2024, mailing notification letters to property owners within 300' and publishing legal notice on July 17, 2024.

VI. WAIVERS

Section 2.15.030 of county zoning regulations states that manufactured home parks are subject to densities identified for each rural district. Density restrictions are not explicitly stated for recreational vehicle parks within rural district site development standards. Park size is estimated to be seven (7) acres with 40 proposed spaces,

increasing allowed density from one permanent dwelling per 4 acres to 5.7 recreational vehicle spaces per acre or one space per 7,623 SF. Remaining zoning district standards not superseded by Section 2.51.110 of the zoning regulations (*Mobile Homes, Manufactured Homes, and Recreational Vehicle Parks*) and applicable site development standards relating land clearing, outdoor lighting, signage, and outdoor storage remain applicable to development of the recreational vehicle park and will be reviewed during permitting.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicants request special use authorization approval for a 40-space recreational vehicle park on 7 acres in Palominas with new buildings supporting amenities such as washer/dryer and restroom/shower facilities, horse stalls, dog park, and park office with retail shop. The site is bound by State Highway 92 to the north, public land to the west, and both public and private lands to the south. The applicants own property, including residences, east of the proposed project site and two new drives onto Highway 92 will be evaluated by ADOT. Proposed hours of operation are seven days per week between 8am and 5pm with peak occupancy expected between November and April.

Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Complies with nine (9) of nine (9) applicable factors.
2. Business and high density residential uses are encouraged along major roadways.
3. Adjacent public lands to north, west, and south provide separation from less intense residential uses.

Factors Against Approval

None identified.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors in favor of approval, staff recommends approval of Docket SU24-14 to allow a 40-space recreational vehicle park with the following conditions:

1. Driveways and parking areas shall be improved with a two-inch thick gravel surface. A 5' landscape buffer along Highway 92 and minimum of one (1) tree for every four (4) RV spaces are required.
2. All park areas shall be kept in a sanitary condition. Temporary refuse and animal waste receptacles shall be appropriately sized and designed so as not to create an attractive nuisance for wildlife or pests.
3. Quiet hours shall be observed between 10pm and 6am seven days per week.
4. Consider AFGFD recommendations during final site design and development.

**Standard conditions related to condition acceptance, permitting timeframes, and special use modifications apply and have not been modified by this request.*

Sample Motion

Madam Chair, I move to approve Docket SU24-14 to allow a 40-space RV park with conditions recommended by staff, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.