



**Development Services**

520-432-9300  
 developmentservices@cochise.az.gov  
 www.cochise.az.gov  
 1415 Melody Ln, Bdg F  
 Bisbee, Arizona 85603

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission  
**FROM:** Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planner II  
**FOR:** Christine McLachlan, AICP, Interim Director/Planning Division Manager  
**SUBJECT:** SU25-07 (Outdoor Arena)  
**DATE:** May 14, 2025

**Docket SU25-07 (SU23-14 Modification – Outdoor Arena)**

A Special Use Authorization modification request to SU23-14, changing approval for an enclosed arena to allow an outdoor arena for equestrian-related events. The original staff memo found compliance with all ten (10) factors of approval with recommended conditions relating to five (5) of the factors. Proposed future development, a “phased feed store and covered riding arena,” was found to fit into the area’s rural character.

**I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES**

Applicant: Al Armenta  
 Location: 8191 E. Barataria Blvd  
 APN: 107-62-009A  
 Property Size: 21 acres  
 Zoning: RU-4  
 Plan Designation: Rural Residential  
 Growth Area: D – Rural Areas  
 Existing Use: Feed Store and Outdoor Arena  
 Proposed Use: Feed Store and Outdoor Arena

**Surrounding Zoning and Uses**

North	RU-4	Single Family Residential
South	RU-4	Single Family Residential
East	RU-4	Single Family Residential (applicant’s property)
West	RU-4	Undeveloped, Single Family Residential

**II. SITE HISTORY (SINCE SU23-14 APPROVAL)**

- Signs, change of use (retail sales, riding stables), right-of-way, special event
- No active code compliance actions

**III. SPECIAL USE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST**

The applicant requests a special use modification to change approval from an indoor arena to an outdoor arena.

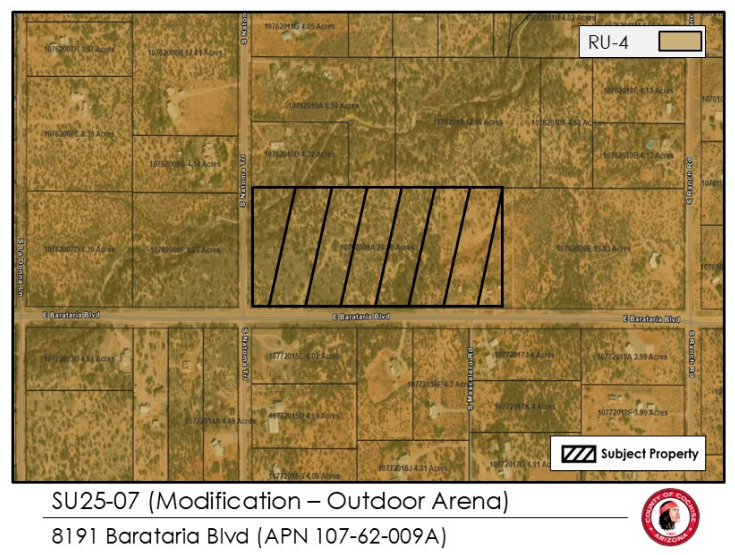
**IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS – COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL USE FACTORS**



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, nine (9) factors apply to this special use modification request with all applicable factors complying with conditions:

### 1. Compliance with Duly Adopted Plans: Complies

The property is designated *Rural Residential* and *Category D (Rural Areas)* by the Comprehensive Plan. The requested modification does not contradict staff analysis for the original special use application, finding proposed uses of the property consistent with Plan goals of preserving Cochise County's agricultural uses and tourism as well as supporting economic and development opportunities that are appropriate in rural areas. Additionally, the property's rural zoning will remain in place and align with current Plan designations.



### 2. Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose: Complies

The requested modification remains consistent with the purpose of rural zoning districts, including non-residential uses that serve local needs, preserve of agricultural character, provide recreational resources, and maintain rural character. The property's perimeter is heavily vegetated and, combined with its topography, poses little visual impact to many surrounding properties. The property owner intends to cover the arena in the future, understanding this improvement will enhance event experiences for competitors and attendees and potentially limit impacts on adjacent properties that otherwise could be created by an open arena.

### 3. Development Along Major Streets: Complies

The project site takes access from Barataria Boulevard, an improved and county-maintained Rural Local road spanning the property's frontage. The applicant obtained a county right-of-way permit in 2024 as required by the original special use approval that required a hard-surface apron for the easternmost driveway. Interior drives have been treated to reduce dust. It is unclear if the applicant has secured an easement from his adjacent property; an alternative solution would be to combine his parcels. The property has secondary access along Barataria Boulevard to the west approximately 300' from Natoma Trail, a maintained minor access local road. There is a small sign at this entrance indicating access to the arena.

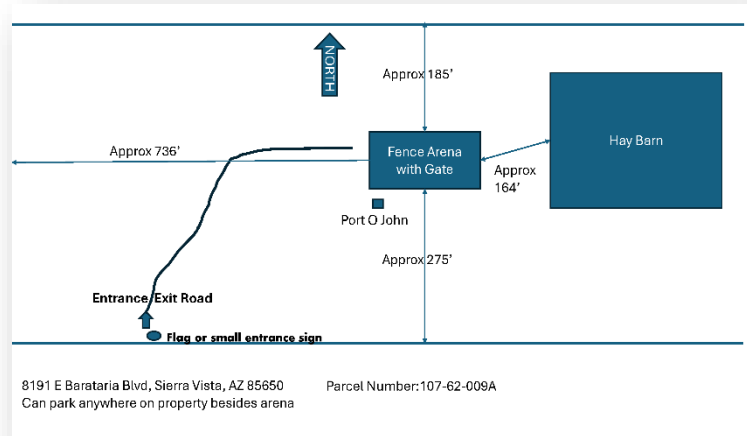
### 4. Traffic Circulation: Complies

This factor considers impacts to residential streets by non-residential traffic and the possible requirements for right-of-way dedications or off-site improvements. The property also has frontage along Natoma Trail, a

maintained county road without a hardened surface, but access along this road has not been established. The original approval included a condition requiring traffic analysis at full build-out of the site.

### 5. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

This factor considers impacts on roadways, infrastructure, and public facilities such as traffic volumes, roadway conditions, and required street, water, and sewer improvements. Per original staff analysis and the application, the site has a private well and existing electrical service through Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC). A commercial septic system will be required when the site reaches build-out. Currently, temporary restrooms are on the site. A condition of approval under the original special use requires the applicant to provide a traffic analysis during phase two (the arena use) to assess local impacts and whether off-site improvements will be required by the county.



### 6. Significant Site Development Standards: Complies

Future site development must comply with applicable standards identified in the zoning regulations, notably Section 2.15 (*Rural Zoning Districts*). Applicable provisions include allowed uses and bulk standards such as setbacks, height, distances between structures, and maximum lot coverages. Development of the site to date suggests compliance with zoning district standards.

### 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 mailed notices to property owners within 750' on February 13, 2025, receiving no responses.

### 8. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

The use of hazardous materials is not proposed.

### 9. Off-Site Impacts: Complies w/Conditions

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

- **Noise:** Noise could be heard during events, particularly during evening hours. The applicant proposes daylight events only until the arena is enclosed. Staff recommends a condition limiting outdoor arena events to daylight hours.
- **Lighting:** The applicant is not proposing outdoor lighting for the open arena. Future lighting relative to brightness and shielding is subject to Section 2.45 of the zoning regulations.

- Odors and Smoke: Arena events are unlikely to generate significant odors or smoke.
- Parking: Adequate parking is available onsite but may require additional clearing and measures to reduce dust. The property is located within *Growth Area D* which does not require improved parking or driveway areas; however, a condition of the original special use was to utilize dust proof material such as gravel on driveway, parking, and maneuvering areas to prevent fugitive dust.
- Landscaping: Landscaping is not required for properties located in Growth Area D and the site has abundant native vegetation.
- Traffic: A condition of the original special use was to provide a traffic analysis when both uses (feed store, arena) are active. This condition remains in effect and staff recommends a condition requiring a right-of-way permit and hard-surface apron for the easternmost driveway along Barataria Boulevard used for arena traffic.



#### **10. Water Conservation: Complies**

County water conservation requirements apply to non-residential uses and properties. Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations requires water saving strategies and applicable water conservation regulations and policies identified in the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan are typically identified at permitting. Approved uses require permanent restrooms and a commercial septic, and the applicant proposes low flow fixtures and water catchment systems to offset water usage and comply with this factor.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Staff mailed notices to property owners within 750', published legal notice, and posted the properties April 11-16, 2025.

#### **VI. WAIVERS**

None.

#### **VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The applicant requests modification to an approved special use authorization for an indoor arena, allowing an outdoor arena, believing the original approval allowed an open arena at start-up which would be enclosed at a later time. The original special use included the following special conditions:

1. With the non-residential permit the Applicant shall obtain a right-of way permit. The driveway connection shall be paved. *Applicant obtained a right-of-way permit for the easternmost, i.e. feed store, entrance. Obtaining a right-of-way permit for the westernmost entrance, i.e. the Outlaw Arena entrance, is recommended if the modification is approved.*

2. Should the applicant wish to continuing uses the existing driveway on the adjacent parcel to the east an ingress/egress easement shall be recorded. *Staff recommends modifying this condition to allow a recorded easement, lot combination, or lot line adjustment.*
3. Outside of County right-of way, the driveway, parking, and all maneuvering areas shall consist of dust proof material such as gravel to prevent fugitive dust from leaving the site. *This condition remains in effect and will not be amended if the modification is approved.*
4. In conjunction with phase two a traffic analysis shall be provided. Any offsite improvements required by that document will be required. *This condition remains in effect and is also a condition for the modification.*
5. In conjunction with the commercial permit for phase 2 the applicant shall install a commercial septic and restroom facilities, in compliance with the Building Regulations in place at that time. *This condition remains in effect.*
6. In conjunction with the non-residential permit the applicant shall provide a fully detailed and dimensioned site plan that meets the minimum submittal requirements. *This condition remains in effect.*
7. All disturbed areas of the site outside of driveways, parking and maneuvering areas shall implement methods to control erosion and could include a dust polymer, hydroseed or other approved methods. *This condition remains in effect.*

#### **Factors in Favor of Approval**

1. Complies with all applicable factors with conditions.
2. Previously approved special use authorization

#### **Factors Against Approval**

1. Opposition from nearby property owners.

#### **VIII. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the factors in favor of approval, staff recommends approval of Docket SU25-07 to modify Special Use Docket SU23-14, allowing an outdoor arena subject to the following conditions:

1. Outdoor arena events shall occur during daylight hours only.
2. Obtain a right-of-way permit for the secondary arena access along Barataria Boulevard.
3. If primary access to tax parcel 107-62-009A is through tax parcel 107-62-009E, applicant shall record an ingress/egress easement. The applicant may combine the tax parcels or adjust property boundaries in lieu of an easement.
4. Provide a traffic analysis to the county.
5. Within 30-days of approval of the Special Use, the applicant shall provide the County a signed Acceptance of Conditions form and a Waiver of Claims form arising from ARS Section 12-1134. Prior to operation of the Special Use, the applicant shall apply for a building/use permit for the project within 12-months of approval. The building/use permit shall include a site plan in substantial conformance with the approved special use concept plan, the completed Special Use permit questionnaire and application, and appropriate fees. A permit must be issued within 12-months of the Special Use approval otherwise, the

Special Use may be deemed void upon 30-day notification to the applicant.

6. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain any additional permits, or meet any additional Conditions, that may apply to the proposed use pursuant to other federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
7. Any changes to the approved Special Use will be considered a Modification to this Special Use and will require review and approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.



#### **Sample Motion**

I move to approve Docket SU25-07, modifying Docket SU23-14 to allow an outdoor arena with conditions recommended by staff, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.