



Development Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planner II
FOR: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Director
SUBJECT: SU25-10 (RV Park)
DATE: July 9, 2025 (tabled at the June 11th meeting)

Docket SU25-10 (RV Park)

A Special Use Authorization request for a recreational vehicle park with up to 12-spaces.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: Pamela Colabella
Location: Calle En Cielo
APN: 106-34-041C
Property Size: 8.1 acres
Zoning: RU-4
Plan Designation: Rural
Growth Area: D – Rural Areas
Existing Use: Undeveloped
Proposed Use: 8-space RV Park

Surrounding Zoning and Uses

North	RU-4	Undeveloped
South	RU-4	Undeveloped (State Trust Land)
East	RU-4	Single Family Residences
West	RU-4	Single Family Residence

II. SITE HISTORY

- No property history or code compliance actions

III. SPECIAL USE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

The applicant requests a special use to allow a recreational vehicle park. The site is currently undeveloped. The applicant proposes a phased development where improvements for up to 12-spaces including water, septic, and power hookups with guest shower and bath house for phase one and a clubhouse with small gift shop for phase two.

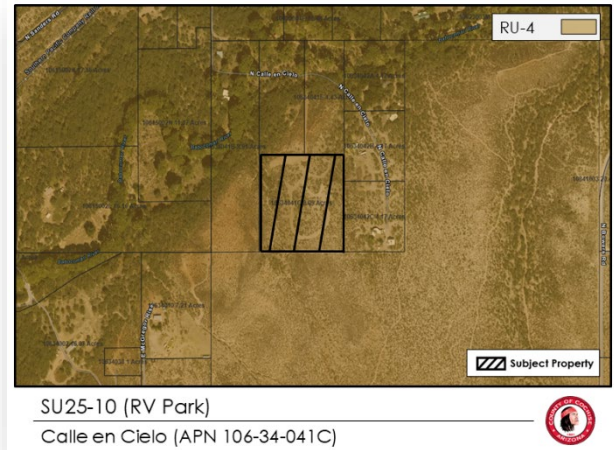
IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS – COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL USE FACTORS

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, seven (7) factors apply to this special use 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, and the existing rural zoning district is consistent with both Plan designations. The applicant seeks to develop an RV park on an undeveloped 8-acre parcel. The proposal for 12-spaces exceeds the permitted rural density of one dwelling per 4 acres. Rural areas are categorized by low rates of growth, unimproved roads, large tracts of public and private land, and agricultural production. Non-residential development is geared towards local services, tourism (commonly supported by recreational vehicle parks), or otherwise intensive uses not appropriate in more dense areas.



2. Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose: Complies

Rural districts allow non-residential activities that provide services serving local needs, recreational support services, and are generally compatible with rural living. These zoning 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 is itself is of rural character, consisting of about 8 acres and being located less than ½ mile of the Babocomari River basin. Additionally, the property has abundant native vegetation. 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: Not Applicable

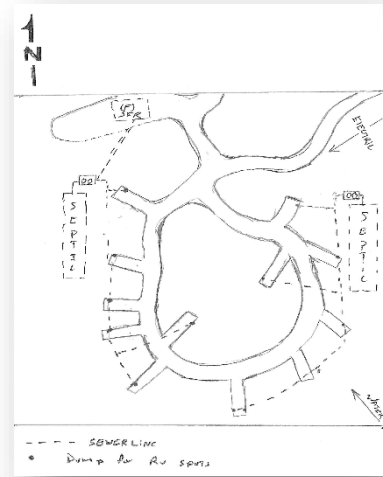
The project site takes access from a public easement that connects to Calle En Cielo, an unimproved road not maintained by the county; subsequently, a county right-of-way permit is not required. Calle En Cielo itself connects to Sanders Road, an improved, county-maintained Rural Local road.

4. Traffic Circulation: Not Applicable

The proposed 12-space RV Park is not an intense use requiring re-classification of or off-site improvements to Calle En Cielo or Sanders Road. It should be noted, however, that Calle En Cielo does traverse the Babocomari River basin and could potentially be obstructed during a significant rain event. Further, Calle En Cielo, though traversable by most passenger vehicles, is narrow and generally unimproved. The private easement that access the property from Calle En Cielo has an elevation change of about 30' which might be difficult for some recreational vehicles.

5. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The site is currently undeveloped, requiring water and sanitation services along with power. The applicant proposes a new well with supplemental 30,000 rain harvesting tank to serve up to 12-spaces. The property is located within the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) service area and Whetstone Fire District (Whetstone station #3 is less than one mile north along Sanders Road). Although the property is within ½ mile of the Babocomari River basin, its elevation is significant enough that it’s not located within any flood zones associated with the basin. Significant property upgrades beyond the addition of water, septic, and power are unlikely.



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. Comparative analysis of Sections 2.15 and 2.51 in the table below:

<u>STANDARD</u>	<u>2.15 (RURAL DISTRICTS)</u>	<u>2.15 (RV PARKS)</u>
Minimum Development Area	4 acres	No minimum (roughly half the 8 acres site will be developed with 12 RV spaces and amenities)
Density	One dwelling per 4 acres	Density determined by base zoning district (up to 2 RV spaces allowed, waiver required)
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

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 1000’ on April 10, 2025, receiving both favorable and unfavorable responses as documented in the applicant’s submittal.

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: Off-site impacts generated by noise are unlikely but staff recommends quiet hours as with most RV park requests and the applicant addresses this in their submittal.
- Lighting: Outdoor lighting relative to brightness and shielding is subject to Section 2.45 of the zoning regulations.
- Odors and Smoke: The proposed is unlikely to generate significant odors or smoke.
- Parking: Adequate parking is available onsite (the zoning regulations requires a minimum of one parking space per RV space). The property is located within *Growth Area D* which does not require improved parking or driveway areas. The applicant proposes using gravel to reduce dust.
- Landscaping: Landscaping is not required for properties located in Growth Area D and the site has abundant native vegetation.
- Traffic: New driveways or modification to the existing driveway is not proposed.



10. Water Conservation: Complies

County water conservation requirements apply to non-residential uses and properties, including those located within the Sierra Vista Sub-Watershed like the subject property. Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations requires water saving strategies such as low-flow fixtures, and applicable water conservation regulations and policies identified in the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan are typically identified at permitting.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff mailed notices to property owners within 1000', published legal notice, and posted the property May 8-14, 2025. Staff received email correspondence on May 19th, representing a nearby property owner and an intent to speak in opposition to the special use during the public hearing. Fort Huachuca, via email correspondence on May 21st, requested the applicant be made aware the property is located near a civil/military airport with departure/arrival traffic patterns routinely overflying the area that could generate considerable noise.

VI. WAIVERS

County zoning regulations restrict the number of recreational vehicles on a parcel to the zoning district's density of one dwelling per 4-acres. The applicant requests a waiver to increase the number of units to allow a maximum of 12 recreational vehicle spaces on the 8 acre parcel, equating to an increase in residential density to 1.5 dwellings per acre. The perimeter of the site is generally intact as the proposed park will occupy the central 4-acres.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicant requests special use authorization approval to develop a recreational vehicle park with 12-spaces on an undeveloped parcel consisting of 8 acres. A 2,000 square foot clubhouse will be included in the phased development. As proposed, the park will comply with specific RV park provisions relative to the property's rural zoning district, including setbacks, site coverage, landscaping, and density with an approved waiver.

Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Complies with all seven (7) applicable factors with conditions.
2. Clustered, low impact rural residential use
3. Support from nearby property owners

Factors Against Approval

1. Opposition from a nearby property owner.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors in favor of approval, staff recommends approval of Docket SU25-10 to allow a recreational vehicle park subject to the following conditions:

1. RV park is limited to 12 spaces.
2. Quiet hours shall be observed 8pm to 8am seven days per week.
3. Park areas shall be kept in sanitary condition to prevent attracting wildlife or pests.
4. Road access and internal driveways shall be treated with two-inch gravel or other stabilizing material to reduce dust.
5. Perimeter open space shall be retained and existing vegetation shall be replaced or supplemented with new, drought-tolerant vegetation as needed.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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 SU25-10 with conditions recommended by staff, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.