



Development Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planning Manager
FOR: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Director
SUBJECT: Docket RZ25-14 (Sunsites Unit #7 – Sandal Street)
DATE: October 8, 2025

Docket RZ25-14 (Sunsites Unit #7 – Sandal Street)

The applicants request rezoning APN 205-12-347B from SR-22 (Single-Household Residential, one dwelling per 22,000 square feet) to RU-2 (Rural District, one dwelling per 2 acres). The parcel is located along Sandal Street about one mile west of Highway 191 in Sunsites Unit #7.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: David and Diane Ruozzi
Location: Sunsites #7
APN: 205-12-347B
Parcel Size: 3 acres
Current Zoning: SR-22
Proposed Zoning: RU-2
Growth Area: D – Rural Areas
Plan Designation: Rural
Existing Use: Undeveloped
Proposed Use: Residential

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	SR-22	Undeveloped
South	RU-4	Agriculture
East	SR-22, GB	Undeveloped
West	SR-22, GB	Undeveloped

II. PARCEL HISTORY

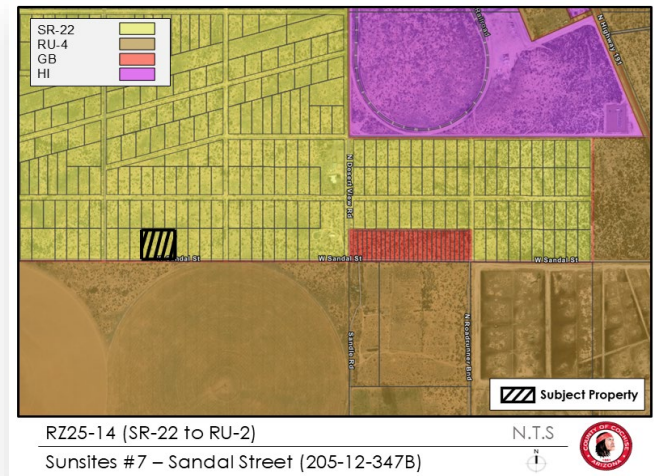
- 1961 – Arizona Sunsites Unit #7 subdivision plat
- 2015 – Code compliance action (outside storage)

III. NATURE OF REQUEST

The applicant requests rezoning from SR-22 to RU-2 to develop the property for residential land use. The property does not meet the 4-acre threshold to develop the site in accordance with County's owner-builder program – the future residence and all accessory structures will be subject to residential building code requirements.

Mandatory Compliance

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations requires zoning district boundaries be in accordance with Comprehensive Plan designations. In this case, the proposed rezone to RU-2 is consistent with rural Plan designations. The property is located about one mile north of the Mid-Sulphur Springs Valley Area Plan boundary (Low Density Residential).



Compliance with Rezoning Criteria

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations provides fifteen (15) criteria for evaluating rezoning requests:

1. Adequate Land Use/Concept Plan: Does not Comply

The applicant has not provided a concept plan but indicates an intent to develop the site for residential use (residence, shed/shop).

2. Compliance with Applicable Site Development Standards: Complies

The property totals about 3 acres and will subject to site development standards found in Section 2.15 of the zoning regulations if successfully rezoned to RU-4, including setbacks, height, distances between structures, and lot coverage.

3. Adjacent Districts Remain Capable of Development: Complies

The requested downzone does not prevent surrounding properties from being developed in a manner consistent with their SR zoning district classifications.

4. Limiting Creation of Nonconforming Uses: Complies

Rezoning the property to a Rural zoning district will not result in the creation of nonconforming uses since the property is undeveloped.

5. Compatibility with Existing Development: Complies

The area is characterized with sporadic single family residences, unimproved roads, and limited infrastructure. The prevailing development pattern within most of Sunsites is rural residential, and the applicant intends to build a permanent residence. The county has approved multiple requests to downzone properties in Sunsites, mostly to districts requiring a minimum of 4-acres (SR-174 and RU-4). The applicant's property total about 3-acres.

6. Rezoning to More Intense Districts: Not Applicable

A rezone to a more intense zoning district is not proposed. The applicant requests downzoning the subject property from SR-22 to RU-2, reducing allowed residential density.

7. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The property is located within the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) service areas, and the site will be served by an existing well and future septic system. The applicant has not identified electricity, fire protection, or waste disposal options.

8. Traffic Circulation: Complies

The property is accessible from Sandal Street, which is an unimproved public right-of-way (ROW) not maintained by the County. The nearest county-maintained road is Cochise Stronghold Road approximately ½ mile west while the nearest improved roadway is Highway 191 about one mile to the east. The site has an existing driveway – a County right-of-way (ROW) permit is not required since Sandal Street is an unimproved road outside of County maintenance.



9. Development Along Major Streets: Not Applicable

The parcel fronts unimproved local roads not maintained by the County.

10. Infill Compatibility: Not Applicable

This factor applies to rezoning requests to General Business (GB), Light Industry (LI), or Heavy Industry (HI) zoning districts.

11. Unique Topographic Features: Not Applicable

This factor applies to rezoning requests to more intense business or industrial zoning districts.

12. Water Conservation: Not Applicable

County-wide water conservation requirements identified in Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations apply to non-residential uses and properties. This proposed downzone reduces the number of allowed principal dwellings which suggests an overall reduction in water consumption. The property is located within the Willcox Active Management Area (AMA) and does have an existing well dating to 2014.

13. Public Input: Complies

Applications to downzone property are not subject to Citizen Review requirements identified in the zoning regulations. Staff posted the property, mailed notification letters, and published legal notice September 15-19, 2025.

14. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

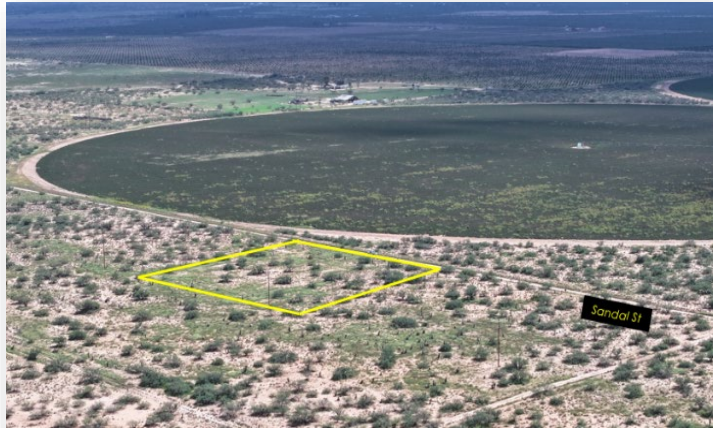
The applicant proposes a rural residential land use that does not involve hazardous materials.

15. Planning Policies: Complies

Downzoning to RU-4 is consistent with Comprehensive Plan designations (Rural, Growth Category D). The county generally supports downzones to less intense zoning districts that reduce residential densities and impacts to limited infrastructure or services. There are several properties within Sunsites #7 that are zoned General Business (GB) with the balance of properties being zoned SR-22 and totaling just under one acre. This Sunsites unit is bound by Apache Station to the north and east on lands zoned Heavy Industry (HI). Large tracts of agricultural and undeveloped lands zoned Rural (RU-4) are to the south and west. There is one property within Sunsites Unit 7 with an occupied residence (1974).

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicant is requesting a downzone to build a residence and accessory structures, utilizing the flexibility offered by rural zoning districts not offered by single-household residential districts (accessory structures prior to and larger than principal structures, housing type). The property does not meet the minimum 4-acre site area to qualify for the County's owner-builder program; consequently, future residential development will be subject to residential building code. Given the lack of infrastructure, Staff supports the applicant's request for Rural zoning, and RU-2 zoning is consistent with Rural land use designations identified by the Comprehensive Plan.



Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Complies with eight (8) of nine (9) applicable factors used to evaluate rezoning requests.
2. Proposed use is compatible with rural residential growth pattern.
3. Downzone reduces allowed residential density.
4. No opposition from nearby property owners.

Factors Against Approval

None identified.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors in favor of approval, Staff recommends forwarding Docket RZ25-14 to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval without special conditions, rezoning tax parcel 205-12-347B from SR-22 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 22,000 square feet) to RU-2 (Rural District, one dwelling per 2 acres).

Sample Motion

I move to recommend approval of Docket RZ25-14 to the Board of Supervisors without special conditions, rezoning tax parcel 205-12-347B from SR-22 to RU-2, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.