



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 Board of Supervisors
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planning Manager
FOR: Sharon Gilman, County Administrator
THROUGH: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Development Services Director
SUBJECT: Docket RZ25-18 (Joe Hines Rd/Packing Plant Rd)
DATE: January 27, 2026

Docket RZ25-18 (Joe Hines Rd/Packing Plant Rd)

The applicant requests rezoning a portion of APN 202-24-001C from R-36 (Residential District, one dwelling per 36,000 square feet) to GB (General Business District). The property is located at the southwest corner of Joe Hines Road and Packing Plant Road near Willcox.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: Stan Chaffin
Location: SW Corner of Joe Hines and Packing Plant Roads
APN: 202-24-001C
Parcel Size: 40 acres
Current Zoning: R-36
Proposed Zoning: GB
Growth Area: B – Community Growth Areas
Plan Designation: Developing
Area Plan: None
Existing Use: Agriculture
Proposed Use: Commercial

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	R-36	Residential
South	R-36	Residential
East	R-36	Residential
West	R-36	Residential

II. PARCEL HISTORY

The property has multiple existing wells and an existing chicken coop and garden area. The applicant recently submitted an exemption application for existing agricultural activities (AE25-15).

III. NATURE OF REQUEST

The applicant requests rezoning 5 acres out of a 40 acre parcel to allow commercial development.

Mandatory Compliance

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations requires zoning district boundaries be in accordance with comprehensive or area plan designations. In this case, the proposed rezone to GB is consistent with existing *Developing* and *Growth Area B* Comprehensive Plan designations.

Compliance with Rezoning Criteria

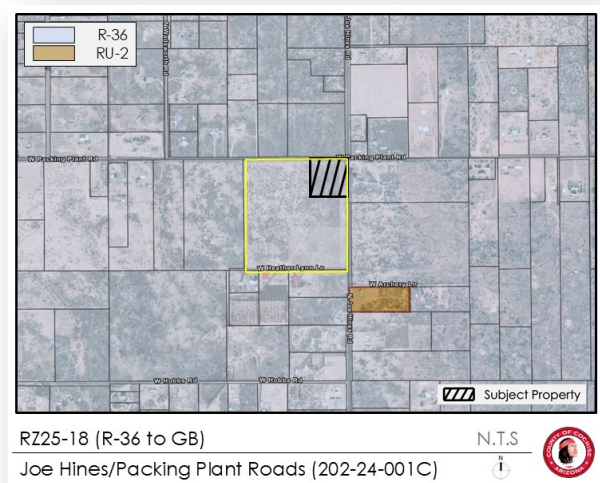
Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations provides fifteen (15) criteria for evaluating rezoning requests:

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

The applicant has not provided a land use/concept plan as specific uses are to be determined. Land use(s) and site development are subject to County, State, and other applicable permitting requirements.

2. Compliance with Applicable Site Development Standards: Complies

The rezoning area totals 5 acres and is located at the hard corner of Joe Hines and Packing Plant Roads. Future development will be subject to site development standards found in County zoning regulations if successfully rezoned to GB, including minimum setbacks, maximum height, required screening, maximum lot coverage, landscaping and other applicable requirements. It is reasonable to assume the parcel can support one or more business uses and comply with applicable County regulations.



3. Adjacent Districts Remain Capable of Development: Complies

The requested rezone to General Business does not prevent surrounding properties from being developed in a manner consistent with their R-36 zoning classifications. Development limitations on adjacent land uses typically apply to properties being rezoned to a more intense zoning district and not those with existing residential or non-residential zoning districts yet to be developed. Adjacent parcels share the same Comprehensive Plan designations as the subject property and could be subject to similar rezoning requests in the future.

4. Limiting Creation of Nonconforming Uses: Complies

Rezoning the property to GB will not result in the creation of nonconforming uses since the portion of the property being considered for rezoning is undeveloped (the property is currently taxed as Agriculture/Vacant Land by the County). The southern portion of the property is being used for agriculture (crops, egg production).

5. Compatibility with Existing Development: Complies

Being at a hard corner and consisting of 5 acres, the land area identified for rezoning has no adjacent properties other than the parent parcel owned by the applicant. That portion of the property remaining R-36 serves as a significant buffer to properties to the south (which are also owned by the applicant) and to the west. The parcel immediately to the north is undeveloped and, given its similar Comprehensive Plan designations, could be a suitable location for rezoning to allow business uses in the future or for residential development as allowed by the current zoning. The nearest residences are to the east and

northeast across Joe Hines Road. Rezoning the entire 40 acre property to GB could pose substantial incompatibility issues for nearby properties given the potential scale of non-residential development; however, in this case, rezoning 5 acres at the hard corner of an intersection not only keeps non-residential development to a lower intensity but also reduces off-site impacts due to proximity. Otherwise, applicable County standards, particularly those regulating setbacks, access and lighting, will limit impacts to residential properties to the east.

6. Rezoning to More Intense Districts: Complies

This factor states that rezones to more intense zoning districts are required to demonstrate that adjacent, less intense zoning districts and uses are protected. The Zoning Regulations require the following considerations:

- The proposed District is buffered by an intermediate District of sufficient size to provide a reasonable transition of intensity from the existing area (as a guide, a reasonable transition is considered to be a difference of intensity or density of two levels as defined in Paragraph 2).
 - *Much of the area northeast of the City of Willcox within County jurisdiction is zoned R-36 but, for most of the area within 2 miles, current Plan designations would allow rezones to more intensive business and industry districts. Zoning districts other than R-36, such as RU-4, GB, and HI, are sporadic and typically consist of small acreages. Individual properties have been zoned to GB over the course of several years and these are mostly located at intersections or along the frontage of collector or arterial roads, including the closest GB zoned property at Packing Plant and Fort Grant Roads ¾ of a mile to the west. Given current Plan designations, residential or non-residential development would be allowed and should be expected with the most significant restraint in the region being the significant floodplain extending south to the Willcox playa west of the city. There is no intermediate zoning district between the subject property and adjacent parcel; however, the rezoning area's location at an intersection and sequestration from adjacent parcels to the west and south being a portion of a larger parcel negates incompatibilities that would be otherwise expected by rezoning a property to GB within an area dominated by R-36 zoning, i.e., spot zoning.*
- The proposed District is a reasonable extension of a similar density District within the area.
 - *The applicant does not propose residential land uses for the 5 acre portion of the property identified in the rezoning application. The size of the rezoning area combined with applicable development standards will limit the type of land uses and area available for improvement.*
- The proposed District provides a transition between an existing less intense District and a more intensive District or an arterial street; or, the proposed District is designed to provide adequate protection to the adjacent less intense development in the form of enhanced screening, landscaping, setbacks, large lot size, building orientation, or other design measures. (Note: When an HI District is proposed in a Comprehensive Plan Rural Area, this factor may be the only applicable factor because it is unlikely that a reasonable transition can be provided between the existing Rural Zoning District and the HI District.)
 - *The subject property is at the intersection of two improved County-maintained roads in an area with a variety of lot sizes mostly developed for low density residential use. The most common non-residential land use is agriculture (including a substantial portion of the subject property). The applicant's own property serves as a buffer from adjacent properties zoned R-36 and having established residences. Applicable County regulations required by the proposed zoning district and current growth area designation will mitigate most off-site impacts*

potentially created by allowed GB land uses.

7. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The zoning regulations include this factor to measure the viability of a rezone to a more intensive zoning district and the uses that district would allow. Specifically, this factor considers impacts on roadways, infrastructure, and public facilities such as traffic volumes, roadway conditions, and required street, water, and sewer improvements. Given the property's location at the corner Joe Hines and Packing Plant Roads, access is available from either roadway or perhaps both roads as determined by the County during the right-of-way (ROW) permitting process. The property has existing water and is located within the Sulphur Springs Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) service area. New commercial buildings are required to meet County building standards.



8. Traffic Circulation: Complies

Rezoning a portion of the property to GB will not result in the re-classification of either Joe Hines Road or Packing Plant Road both of which are rural local roads. Additionally, the proposed use is unlikely to require right-of-way dedications or off-site improvements to support a new business use. The County will require improved driveways along Joe Hines and/or Packing Plant Roads to accommodate commercial traffic through the ROW permitting process relative to surfacing and width.

9. Development Along Major Streets: Not Applicable

This factor considers limiting the number of access points along major roads by using frontage roads, shared access, no access easements, and other methods to reduce the creation of unsafe traffic conditions, congestion, or obstructions. The property is not located along a major street, being at the corner of two improved rural local roads in County maintenance. Improvements beyond commercial driveway standards for new vehicular entries along Joe Hines or Packing Plant Roads will be formally reviewed during the County's ROW permitting process.

10. Infill Compatibility: Complies

Similar to other factors above, this factor applies to rezoning requests to General Business (GB), Light Industry (LI), or Heavy Industry (HI) zoning districts and encourages non-residential uses in areas with established similar uses to reduce sprawl and potentially negative impacts on less intense, residential land uses. The property is an area about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of the City of Willcox predominately zoned R-36 with a few parcels in the vicinity having established rural or business zoning (the nearest GB zoning is located less than a mile to the west along Fort Grant Road).

This area is characterized by a varying lot sizes of less than one acre to more than 20 acres and a mix of parcels with established single family residences or that have remained undeveloped. The rezoning area proposed by the applicant is buffered by the applicant's own property to the west and south which will retain its R-36 zoning. Parcels to the north zoned R-36, across Packing Plant Road, are currently undeveloped while parcels to the east, across Joe Hines Road, typically have existing residential uses. Most undeveloped properties in this area are also candidates for rezoning to business due to their

Comprehensive Plan designations. Established residences to the east that may be impacted by future commercial development, but requirements in the Zoning Regulations, including setbacks, screening, and lighting apply to future development and are more intensive when adjacent to parcels zoned residential. Future development will also comply with applicable County building, engineering, and floodplain regulations.

11. Unique Topographic Features: Complies

Similar to infill compatibility above, this factor applies to rezoning requests to more intense business or industrial zoning districts and promotes protection of areas with unstable soils, steep slopes, washes, and floodplains. There are numerous topographical features in the vicinity and much of the Willcox area are located within a floodplain. The subject property is generally flat and unremarkable except for the frontage along Joe Hines Road where drainage infrastructure channels stormwater flows. County floodplain regulations and other drainage-related standards will apply to future commercial development.

12. Water Conservation: Complies

The property is located within the Willcox Active Management Area (AMA) which involves an additional layer of water-related regulations by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). County-wide water conservation requirements identified in Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations apply to non-residential uses and properties. The site has two existing well sites so water is available to support future business uses and future water conservation requirements will be identified at permitting, focusing primarily on new structures.

13. Public Input: Complies

The applicant mailed notices to property owners within 750' on October 28, 2025, noting one nearby property owner has expressed opposition to business zoning. Staff published legal notice, posted the property, and mailed notification letters to the same property owners on 17 December 2025, receiving written responses in favor and in opposition.



14. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

The applicants indicate the general intent to sell eggs and vegetables produced on their property along with other possible retail or service uses. Manufacturing, processing, and other intense land uses involving hazardous materials are not permitted in the General Business zoning district.

15. Planning Policies: Complies

A rezone to GB is consistent with Comprehensive Plan designations. The *Developing* designation generally describes areas experiencing non-rural growth that are characteristic of scattered residential and non-residential development while *Growth Area B* suggests areas with development potential due to improved streets and available infrastructure that serve as intermediate areas between growing urban areas and traditionally rural areas. The applicant expresses an interest in selling goods and providing services to local residents, developing a small commercial center in the future.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicant resides on an adjacent property to the south and requests rezoning 5 acres out of a 35 acre parcel to allow business uses consisting of retail and service uses. The remainder of the property will continue to be used for agriculture or possibly residential development in accordance with its R-36 zoning.

Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Proposed GB zoning is consistent with Comprehensive Plan future land use designations.
2. Complies with 13 of 14 applicable factors used to evaluate rezoning requests.
3. Located at the intersection of two County-maintained roads.
4. Support from a nearby property owner.

Factors Against Approval

1. Land use/concept plan not provided with application.
2. Opposition from a nearby property owner.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the factors in favor of approval, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of Docket RZ25-18 (7-0) during its meeting on January 14, 2026, without special conditions.

Staff also recommends approval of Docket RZ25-18 without special conditions.

Sample Motion

I move to approve Docket RZ25-18 without special conditions, rezoning 5-acres out of tax parcel 202-24-001C from R-36 to GB, the factors in favor constituting the findings of fact.
