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Arizona

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planning Manager
THROUGH: Sharon Gilman, County Administrator
SUBJECT: Docket CPA26-03 / RZ26-07 (Wakefield Street)
DATE: November 10, 2026

Dockets CPA26-03 / RZ26-07 (Wakefield Street)

Comprehensive Plan and zoning amendment requests to change land use designation from *Developing* to *Rural*; growth area category from *B* to *D*; and zoning district from MH-72 *(Multiple-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 7,200 square feet)* to *RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4 acres)*.

I. Description of Subject Parcel and Surrounding Uses

Applicant:	Carl Mashburn
Location:	Wakefield Street (Sierra Vista)
APN:	107-65-121D
Parcel Size:	9.2 acres
Current Zoning:	MH-71
Proposed Zoning:	RU-4
Growth Area:	B
Plan Designation:	Developing
Existing Use:	Undeveloped
Proposed Use:	Single Family Residential

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	Sierra Vista	Undeveloped
South	MH-72	Single Family Residential
East	MH-72, RU-4	Single Family Residential, Undeveloped
West	Sierra Vista	Undeveloped

II. Parcel History

- No property history or active code compliance actions.

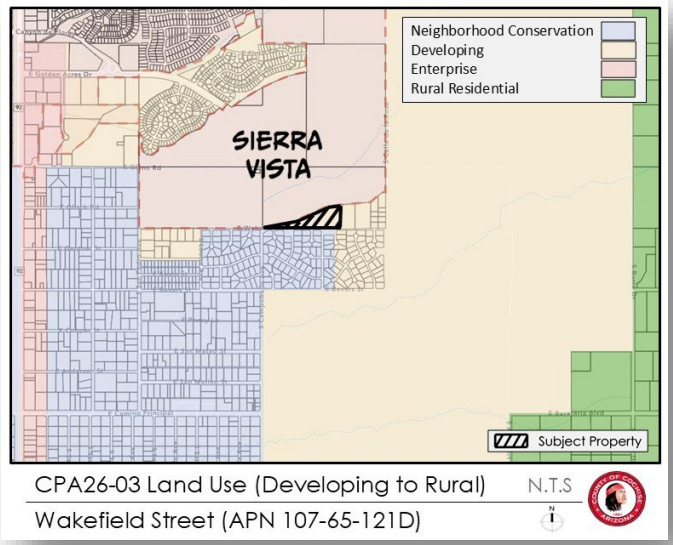
III. Compliance with Land Use Criteria

Cochise County Comprehensive Plan land use designations and growth area categories are designed to guide land development from a regional scale to individual parcels, promoting orderly development that preserves character, facilitates cohesive development, and encourages efficient uses of land. The Plan may be amended by major or

minor amendment from time to time, and State law requires comprehensive plan updates at specific intervals, typically every 10 years. Plan updates ensure goals, objectives, and land use designations do not become obsolete due to rapid development, significant changes in use patterns, or anticipated development trends that have not occurred. Cochise County most recently amended the Comprehensive Plan in March of 2026. Individual Plan amendments are those that appear periodically as a response to changes in growth patterns, development needs, or public policy and generally amendments are intended to:

1. *Protect the existing character of an area.*
2. *Ensure that amendments are justified by specific evidence showing that the current land use category no longer reflects the actual or projected growth patterns.*

The presumption is that existing land use and growth area categories should be retained unless evidence demonstrative the above considerations is provided whether the proposed Plan amendment is major or minor. Consistent with state law (ARS §11-805), major amendments involve a substantial alteration of Cochise County's land use mixture or balance that increases potential densities or intensities of uses for an area of 2,000 acres or more. Minor amendments are requests that fall below the threshold of a major amendment. In this case, the applicant is requesting a minor Plan amendment, changing land use and growth area designations of 9.2 acres to facilitate a downzone from MH-72 to RU-4.



Chapter 9 of the current Plan identifies six (6) factors requiring evaluation:

1. Infrastructure and Services (Availability of roads, water, sewer, utilities to serve the proposed development): Consistent.

The property is adjacent to multiple properties under both Cochise County and City of Sierra Vista jurisdiction in an area generally characterized by low density residential development. Additionally, access from Wakefield Street, a hard-surfaced local road in County maintenance, is available as are water and power. A private septic system is proposed. There are several undeveloped tracts to the north within the City of Sierra Vista that have not been developed in accordance with the approved residential Ventana de Flores master plan. While the zoning district itself is not consistent with zoning districts in the area and arguably constitutes spot zoning, the proposed single family residential use is consistent with the prevailing development pattern of the area.

2. Land Use Patterns (Existing zoning, land use, and density compared to the surrounding area): Not Consistent.

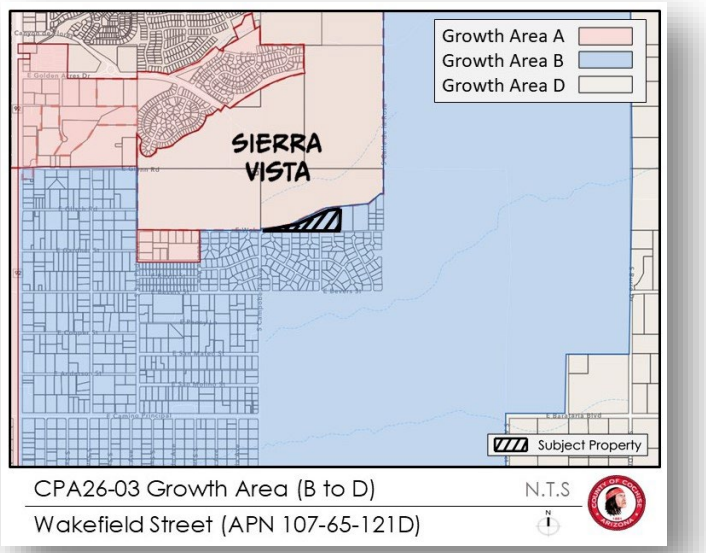
The subject parcel can be developed for residential use with the current zoning at a density of approximately six dwellings per acre, and the applicant's property totals about nine acres and constitutes one of the larger privately owned parcels in this area. The nearest parcels with rural zoning are held in State Trust, and are about ¼ mile to the east extending roughly from Buffalo Soldier Trail to Ramsey Canyon Road. If the proposed rural land use designation and zoning are successful, the applicant proposes

residential development using the County's Owner-Builder Amendment.

This factor anticipates amendment requests to allow more intense land uses or increases in residential densities in the planning area. The applicant is requesting Rural zoning to provide to allow more flexibility in developing the site, and approval of the requested Plan and zoning amendments allows one principal dwelling per 4 acres which is significantly less than what is allowed by the current MH-72 zoning.

3. Compatibility with Surrounding Areas (How well the proposed land use fits with nearby uses, including buffers and transitions): Consistent.

This factor anticipates Plan amendments that propose more intense developments such as non-residential business or industrial uses or high density residential uses that could conflict with existing development patterns. The applicant proposes the opposite, downzoning the property to preserve the parcel's larger acreage, reducing residential density allowed by the current zoning district, and to establish eligibility to participate in the County's owner-builder program. The proposed land use is residential, which is consistent with the prevailing development pattern of the immediate area.



4. Development Plans (Completeness and adequacy of submitted plans, including master or detailed development plans): Consistent.

The applicant provided a concept plan describing proposed residential development, and the submitted application identifies available infrastructure and services.

5. Tribal Coordination (Coordination with potentially affiliated Tribes regarding cultural or natural resource concerns): Not applicable.

This factor does not apply as there are no federally recognized tribal lands located in Cochise County.

6. Community Input (Input from property owners, neighbors, and local organizations, including written comments and endorsements): Consistent.

The applicant proposes a *Rural* land use designation of the property, and the Comprehensive Plan requires a 1000' notification area to change the current category B growth area to category D. The applicant mailed letters on July 14, 2026, stating at the time of application submittal no responses had been received. Staff completed the required notification process between September 21 and 25, mailing public hearing notices to 142 property owners within 1000' notification boundary which included the applicant. At the time of this report, staff received four responses with two in support and two in opposition.

<u>Plan Amendment – Factors in Favor</u>

- Consistent with four factors.
- Proposed Comprehensive Plan land use designation significantly limits residential density.

- Support from nearby property owners.

Plan Amendment – Factors Not in Favor

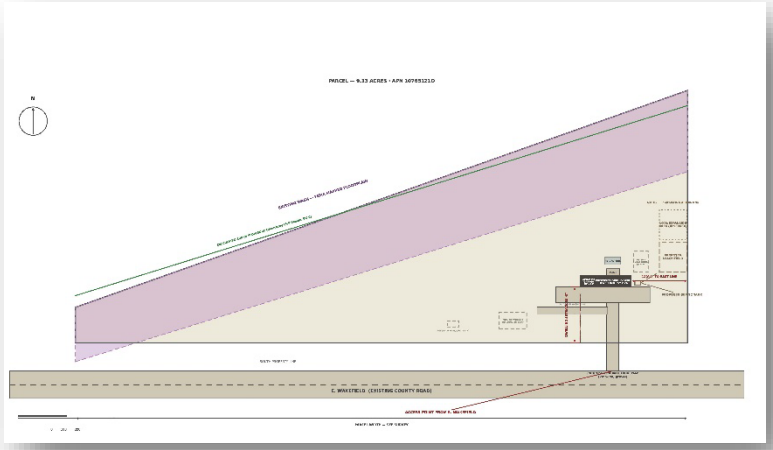
- Not consistent with one factor.
- Proposed rural zoning next to an established residential subdivision.
- Opposition from nearby property owners.

IV. COMPLIANCE WITH REZONING CRITERIA

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 RU-4 is consistent with the *Rural* comprehensive plan designation requested with the concurrent Comprehensive Plan application and complies with eight (8) of nine (9) applicable factors.

1. **Adequate Land Use/Concept Plan: Complies**

   The rezoning application includes a land use/concept plan depicting proposed improvements.



2. **Compliance with Applicable Site Development Standards: Complies**

   The property totals about 9.2 acres and, if successfully rezoned to RU-4, will be subject to site development standards found in Section 2.15 of the zoning regulations, 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 residential (R-36) and rural (RU-4) zoning classifications.

4. **Limiting Creation of Nonconforming Uses: Complies**

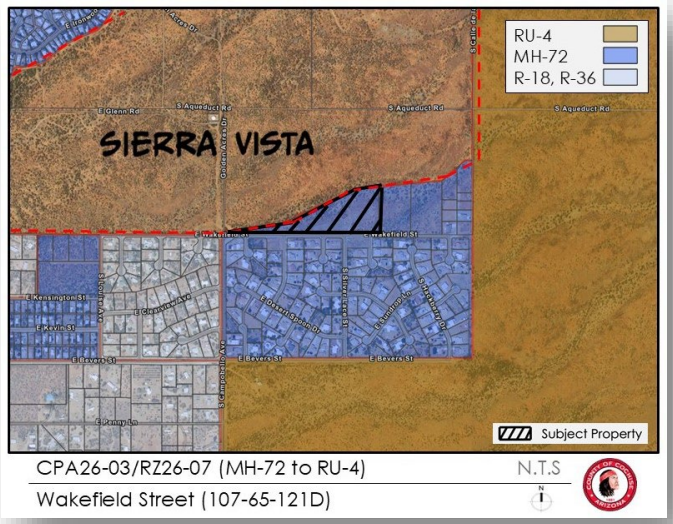
   Rezoning the property to RU-4 will not result in the creation of nonconforming uses since the property is undeveloped.

5. **Compatibility with Existing Development: Complies**

   Per the rezoning application, the applicant intends to build a residence using the County's owner-builder program which is compatible with the existing residential development pattern of the area. The County continues to receive requests to downzone properties consisting of four or more acres from residential to rural zoning districts. Rural zoning allows some nonresidential uses but most uses that could create obvious incompatibility and significant off-site impacts would require special use approval.

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 R-36 to RU-4, which would significantly reduce allowed residential density. Current zoning would allow one principal residence per 7,200 square feet using gross acreage calculations, including single and multi-household dwellings (apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and multiplexes). Downzoning the property reduces the number of allowable principal residences to one with up to three accessory dwelling units. Properties to the east and are zoned MH-72 while properties to the north and west are located within the City of Sierra Vista's adopted Ventana de Flores Specific Plan (2007) which encompasses about 335 acres of land designated for integrated residential, open space preservation, and recreational amenity development.



7. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The property will take access from Wakefield Street, an improved and County-maintained Minor Collector. The applicant proposes a single family residences utilizing the County's Owner Builder Amendment, and the property is located within Southland Utilities-Golden Acres, SSVEC, and Fry Fire District service areas.

8. Traffic Circulation: Complies

The property will take access from Wakefield Street, a hard-surfaced, County-maintained road with a Local Road classification. A County right-of-way (ROW) permit is required to establish a driveway. There are approximately 129 parcels that take access from Wakefield Street to the east of Campobello Avenue, including the applicants. Most of these parcels are developed with single family homes and located within the Sierra Reserve subdivision platted in 2003.

9. Development Along Major Streets: Not Applicable

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 applicant proposes a new driveway along Wakefield Street (Major Access Local Road) which intersects with Campobello Avenue (Collector Road). Both of these roads are 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. A significant portion of this property is located within a designation floodplain which will require minimum setbacks for new structures and could also reduce available buildable area.

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 property is located within Southwestern Utility Management service area (Southwestern Utilities well #2 is located about ¼ north of the subject property and the applicant proposed to tie into existing water infrastructure).

13. Public Input: Complies

The applicant mailed notices to property owners within 1000' on August 14, 2026, as required for the concurrent Plan amendment. Staff mailed notices to nearby property owners, posted the property, and published legal notice September 21-25, 2026.

14. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

The applicant proposes to continue single family residential development of the property. Non-residential uses involving hazardous materials are not proposed.

15. Planning Policies: Does not Comply

The property is designated *Developing* by the Comprehensive Plan and RU-4 zoning is not consistent with this land use designation, requiring a plan amendment. The applicant has filed a concurrent Plan amendment application to change both land use and growth area designations of the property. The county typically supports downzones to less intense land uses that reduce residential densities in rural areas and stress limited infrastructure.



V. Summary and Conclusion

The applicant proposes downzoning the subject parcel to RU-4 to participate in the County's owner-builder program. The owner-builder program requires parcels have a minimum site area of four acres and a zoning classification with a minimum site area requirement of four acres. The County adopted the owner-builder amendment to encourage ingenuity by individual home owners in the interest of personal preference, allowing the use of alternate building materials and methods. Non-residential uses such as churches, communications towers, grocery stores, and veterinary clinics are allowed by right in Rural zoning districts but are not proposed by the applicant. Given the property's location along a local access roadway and in an area with significant residential development, non-residential uses would not be appropriate.

Rezoning – Factors in Favor

- Complies with eight (8) of nine (9) applicable factors.
- Significantly reduces the number of allowed principal dwellings.

- RU-4 zoning located about 1000' to the east.
- Support from nearby property owners.

Rezoning – Factors Not in Favor

- Rural zoning allows land uses that may not be appropriate given the property's location (along a local road and near existing lower density residential subdivisions).
- Opposition from nearby property owners.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the factors in favor, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of Dockets CPA26-03 and RZ26-07 (9-0) during its meeting on October 14, 2026, with the following special condition:

1. Manufactured and rehabilitated mobile homes are prohibited.

Staff also recommends approval of Dockets CPA26-03 and RZ26-07 with the following special condition:

1. Manufactured and rehabilitated mobile homes are prohibited.