



Development Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Sharon Larsala, Planner I
THROUGH: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planning Manager
FOR: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Development Services Director
SUBJECT: Docket RZ26-06 (Sunsites Unit #1 – Emery Street)
DATE: October 14th, 2026

Docket RZ26-06 (Sunsites #1 – Emery Street)

The County received a rezoning application from Chaquitta Smith to rezone approximately 2.14 acres (APN 206-21-307A) from SR-43 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 43,000 square feet) to RU-2 (Rural District, one dwelling per 2 acres). The property is located south of Emery Street, approximately 2.8 miles west of Highway 191 in Sunsites #1.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicants: Chaquitta Smith
Location: 816 West Emery Street
APN: 206-21-307A
Parcel Size: 2.14 acres
Current Zoning: SR-43
Proposed Zoning: RU-2
Growth Area: D
Plan Designation: Agriculture and/or Green Space
Area Plan: Mid-Sulphur Springs Valley
Existing Use: Residential (Tiny Home)
Proposed Use: Residential (Manufactured Home)

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	SR-43	Undeveloped
South	SR-43	Undeveloped
East	SR-43	Undeveloped
West	SR-43	Undeveloped

II. PARCEL HISTORY

- 1961 – Arizona Sunsites Unit #1 platted in 1961
- 2026 –Septic System, Building Permit for Single Family Residential
- No active code compliance actions

III. NATURE OF REQUEST

The applicant requests rezoning of the property from SR-43 to RU-2 to facilitate residential development. The requested RU-2 zoning would allow placement of a manufactured home, which is not permitted in the SR-43 zoning district, and would provide additional flexibility for single-family residential development. Compared with the SR-43 district, which has more limited permitted uses, the RU-2 district allows a broader range of residential uses and development options.

Mandatory Compliance

Section 2.63.080 of the zoning regulations require zoning district boundaries be in accordance with Comprehensive Plan designations. In this case, the proposed rezone from SR-43 to RU-2 is consistent with rural Plan designations. The area plan designation is Agriculture/Green Space (Mid-Sulphur Springs Valley).

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:
Complies**

The applicant has provided an adequate land-use concept plan depicting the proposed manufactured home and driveway, as well as the existing residence, septic system, and storage container.

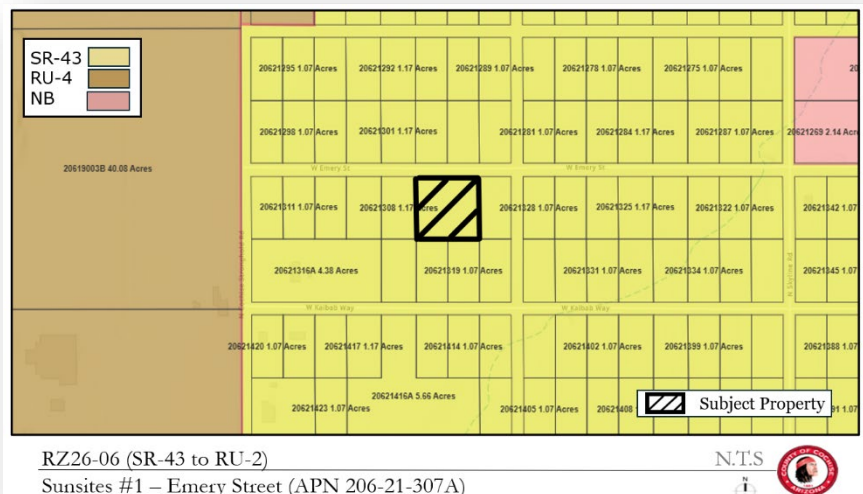
**2. Compliance with Applicable Site Development Standards:
Complies**

The 2.14-acre property will be required to comply with all applicable RU-2 site development standards if the requested rezoning is approved, including the requirements of Sections 2.15 and 2.51 of the Zoning Regulations. These standards address, among other provisions, building setbacks, maximum height, separation between structures, lot coverage, and requirements applicable to any future development or permitted uses.

If the rezoning is approved, the existing 600-square-foot tiny home will be required to obtain approval as an accessory dwelling unit. This will allow the proposed residence to serve as the primary dwelling, consistent with the RU-2 district's density standard of one dwelling unit per two acres.

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 and RU zoning classifications.

4. Limiting Creation of Nonconforming Uses: Complies

Rezoning the property does not result in the creation of nonconforming uses as the site is currently residentially developed and has gone through the permitting process to attain septic and residential permits.

5. Compatibility with Existing Development: Complies

The surrounding area is characterized by predominantly undeveloped land, scattered single-family residences, locally maintained and County-maintained roadways, and limited infrastructure. The County has approved similar rezonings from SR to RU within Sunsites and elsewhere in the County to accommodate residential development. The applicant's proposed residential use is therefore compatible with the existing development pattern and surrounding land uses.

6. Rezoning to More Intense Districts: Not Applicable

No rezoning to a more intensive zoning district is proposed. The applicant is requesting to downzone the subject property from SR-43, which allows one dwelling unit per 43,000 square feet of land, to RU-2, which allows one dwelling unit per two acres. The requested rezoning would reduce the allowable residential density on the property.

7. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The applicant received approval for an on-site septic system on July 6, 2026, to serve the residence. A building permit for the existing residence was issued on July 30, 2026, and construction was subject to all applicable building inspections. The permit is scheduled to expire on January 30, 2027, unless an extension is requested and approved.

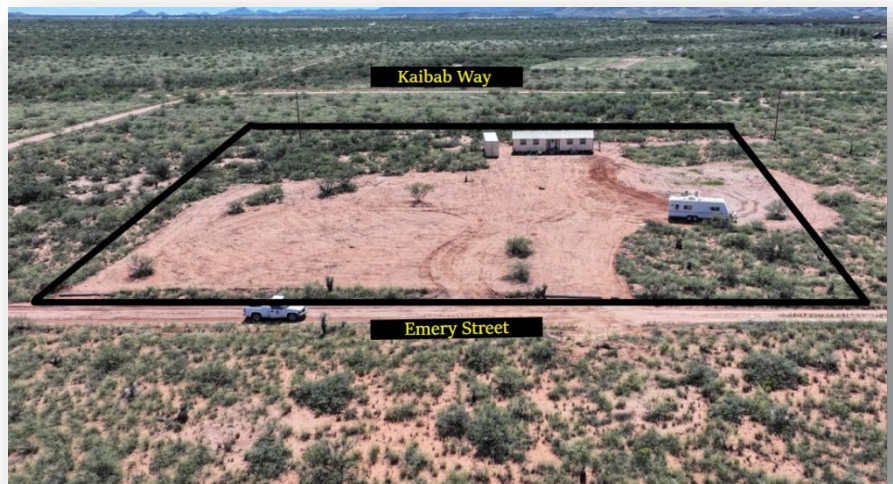
Fire protection services will be provided by the Sunsites–Pearce

Fire District No. 12. Water service will be provided through a private hauled-water system with on-site storage tanks, and electrical service will be provided by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative. All structures and improvements will be required to be completed in accordance with applicable permit requirements and regulations.

8. Traffic Circulation: Complies

Emery Street is locally owned and maintained and provides access to Cochise Stronghold Road, a County-maintained Minor Access Local Road. The subject property takes access from Emery Street, which has no assigned County Road classification and is not maintained by the County. Therefore, a County right-of-way permit is not required for access to the property.

9. Development Along Major Streets: Not Applicable



Property access is from Emery Street, which is unimproved and functions as a local road.

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 under Section 2.51.170 of the Zoning Regulations apply to nonresidential uses and properties. The proposed rezoning would reduce the allowable number of principal dwelling units on the subject property, the request is anticipated to result in a corresponding reduction in potential residential water demand.

The subject property is located within the Willcox Active Management Area and will be subject to all applicable Arizona Department of Water Resources requirements governing groundwater withdrawal, use, and conservation. Active Management Areas are regulated under Arizona's Groundwater Code and may include groundwater-use reporting, conservation, and other management requirements, as applicable.

13. Public Input: Complies

Applications requesting a downzoning are not subject to the Citizen Review requirements of the Zoning Regulations. Staff mailed 15 notices to property owners within 300 feet, published the legal notice, and posted the property from September 9th to September 25th, 2026. Two responses supporting the request were received from nearby property owners.

14. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

The use of hazardous materials is not proposed.

15. Planning Policies: Complies

A rezone to RU-2 is consistent with Comprehensive Plan designations. The county typically supports downzones to less intense zoning districts that reduce impacts on limited infrastructure or services or reduce residential densities.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicant requests a rezoning of the 2.14-acre property from SR-44 to RU-2 to allow for residential land uses. The County has continued to receive requests in the Sunsites area to rezone properties from SR zoning districts—including SR-43 and SR-174—to RU zoning districts, often to allow property owners to opt out of subdivision restrictions and develop under rural zoning standards. Staff generally supports these requests in areas where adequate public infrastructure is not available.

The applicant has received approval for a septic system permit and a permit for a site-built single-family dwelling. The property is currently residentially developed, and the rezoning request is not associated with a code-compliance case.

Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Complies with eight of the applicable factors used to evaluate rezoning requests.
2. Proposed use is compatible with developing rural residential growth pattern.
3. Downzone reduces the number of principal dwellings allowed.
4. Two responses from nearby property owners were received.

Factors Against Approval

None Identified.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors supporting approval, Staff recommend forwarding the rezoning request for Tax Parcel 206-21-307A from SR-43 (Single-Household Residential, one dwelling unit per 43,000-square feet) to RU-2 (Rural, one delink unit per 2 acres) with a recommendation of approval without special conditions.

