

MEETING DATE: JULY 1, 2026

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CASE NO: **PZ-PA-028-25, PZ-039-25, PZ-PD-026-25 | VALLEY FARMS ENERGY CENTER**

CASE COORDINATOR: SAM AMAYA, PLANNER

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: #4, JEFFREY MCCLURE

Executive Summary:

Sean Lake, applicant, on behalf of property owner, Wuertz Gregory C & Lorelee Fam Trust, is requesting approval of a Non-Major Comprehensive Plan Amendment from Green Energy Production to General Public Facilities/Services, rezone from General Rural (GR) Zone to Industrial Zoning District (I-3) as well as a Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay on ±68.77 acres, situated in Section 31, Township 05 South, Range 09 East of the Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian, Pinal County, located at the northwest corner of E Bartlett Road and N Clemans Road east of the City of Coolidge in unincorporated Pinal County.

If this request is approved:

Approval of the non-major comprehensive plan amendment (PZ-PA-018-25), rezoning (PZ-039-25) from General Rural (GR) to Industrial (I-3) and Planned Area Development (PZ-PD-026-25) would establish the zoning entitlements necessary to develop the site as a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary equipment.

Location:

The subject parcel is located at the northwest corner of N Clemans Road and E Bartlett Road, east of the City of Coolidge in unincorporated Pinal County. The site has Assessor Parcel Number: 202-35-0040.

Items for Boards consideration:

- **Comprehensive Plan Consistency** – The property is currently designated Green Energy Production. The proposed development does not align with the current land use designation as Green Energy Production, which is for large scale photovoltaic solar panel power generation facilities. The proposed General Public Facilities/Services land use designation better aligns with the proposed development.
- **Land Use and Surrounding Development Context** – The surrounding area is developed with a mix of single-family residential and agriculture. The surrounding zoning designations include General Rural (GR) to the north and east. To the west, AG (City of Coolidge) and to the south, AG and RMU (City of Coolidge).
- **Project Purpose and Zoning Request** – The requested rezoning from General Rural (GR) to Industrial (I-3) and Planned Area Development provides an appropriate entitlement

framework to support the proposed use. While the current zoning of GR does permit utility facilities, the proposed I-3 zoning better aligns with the proposed development due to the size and intensity of the project.

- **Public Participation and Neighborhood Input** – Currently, 61 letters of support have been provided by the applicant, and 2 letters of opposition from the public have been submitted related to these applications.

Background and Findings:

History: A Rezone application and Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay for the subject property was submitted in 2024 under Case PZ-017-24 and Case PZ-PD-011-24. The applicant had previously received approval of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Green Energy Production. These cases encompassed approximately 160 acres and included a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and a utility scale solar facility. These cases were recommended for denial by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors denied the cases on a 3 to 2 vote on April 30, 2025. Since that time, the applicant has reduced the size and scope of the project. The solar field was eliminated, and the project site was reduced to 68.77 acres to accommodate the BESS.

Requested Action & Purpose: The applicant is requesting a Non-Major Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezone, and Planned Area Development overlay to develop a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary equipment. The non-major comprehensive plan amendment would change the land use designation from **Green Energy Production to General Public Facilities/Services**. The applicant is also requesting approval of the rezoning from **General Rural (GR) Zone to Industrial Zoning District (I-3)** to facilitate the proposed development. Lastly, the applicant is requesting approval of a **Planned Area Development Overlay** to amend the permitted uses and development standards.

Location and Accessibility: The subject parcel is located at the northwest corner of N Clemans Road and E Bartlett Road, east of the City of Coolidge. The proposed development will have 2 ingress and egress points along N Clemans Road as overhead power lines run on the southern border of the parcel.

Site Data: The subject parcel is currently zoned GR – General Rural and is currently undeveloped. This parcel has a total acreage of ±160.00 acres but the proposed development will only encompass ±68.77 acres of the parcel. To accommodate the proposed development on 68.77 acres, the applicant has submitted a Minor Land Division to provide separate legal descriptions for the two land uses and zoning designations. The subject parcel is identified as APN: 202-35-0040.

Comprehensive Plan Analysis:

The applicant is requesting a Non-Major Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan designation from **Green Energy Production to General Public Facilities/Services**. This request is intended to align the Comprehensive Plan land use map with the proposed development and the accompanying zoning actions (Rezone and PAD Overlay).

This land use designation is defined as large public and quasi-public facilities that require significant space such as power plants, landfills, solid waste transfer stations, wastewater facilities, water campuses, and concentrations of public buildings. BESS Systems fall under the umbrella of power plants.

The proposed designation also aligns with the surrounding area as to the south and west within 0.5 miles of the site is also designated General Public Facilities/Services. While the closest parcels to the subject site have not been developed, these parcels may accommodate compatible development in the future.

Zoning Analysis:

The applicant is requesting a rezone of **±68.77 acres** from **General Rural (GR)** to **Industrial (I-3)** to support large-scale energy infrastructure, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and auxiliary equipment. While the current zoning of GR does permit utility facilities, the proposed I-3 zoning better aligns with the proposed development due to the size and intensity of the project.

The proposed I-3 zoning is more intense than the immediate surrounding area. There are parcels zoned CI-2 approximately 1.1 miles to the northeast. There are also parcels zoned I-2 General Industrial within the city limits of Coolidge to the southwest. These parcels are currently being used for SRP's Coolidge Generating Station. Partnering with this energy production in the vicinity, the proposed BESS will allow for storage of energy that will be used by SRP during peak demand periods. There are also parcels within the City of Coolidge with industrial zoning designations approximately 1.24 miles to the southeast which are used in conjunction with the Coolidge Municipal Airport.

Planned Area Development Overlay Analysis:

The **Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay District** will apply to the 68.77 acres of the subject parcel. While **I-3 Industrial Zoning District** is the proposed underlying base zoning, the PAD allows flexibility in development standards that are consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan and the overall intent and purpose of the I-3 zoning district. The PAD will also amend the permitted land uses so that incompatible uses cannot locate on the property if the proposed use is discontinued in the future.

Commission Recommendation:

At the May 21st, 2026, Planning and Zoning meeting, the Commission recommended denial of the non-major comprehensive plan amendment case # PZ-PA-028-25, rezone case # PZ-039-25, and Planned Area Development Overlay case # PZ-PD-026-25 on a 6 to 3 vote for all 3 cases.

Should the Board of Supervisors approve the non-major comprehensive plan amendment case # PZ-PA-028-25, county staff recommend the following one (1) stipulation:

1. Approval of this Non-Major Comprehensive Plan Amendment (PZ-PA-028-25) is contingent to the parcel being split and recorded to the legal description submitted via a minor land division within 6 months of the date of approval by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

Should the Board of Supervisors approve rezone case # PZ-039-25, county staff recommend the following three (3) stipulations:

1. Approval of this Rezone (PZ-039-25) is contingent upon the Board of Supervisors land use change approval as set forth in Planning Case PZ-PA-028-25; and,
2. Approval of this Rezone (PZ-039-25) will require, at the time of application for development, that the applicant/owner submit and secure from the applicable and appropriate Federal, State, County and Local regulatory agencies, all required applications, plans, permits, supporting documentation and approvals; and,
3. Approval of this Rezone (PZ-039-25) is contingent to the parcel being split and recorded to the legal description submitted via minor land division within 6 months of the date approval by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

Should the Board of Supervisors approve Planned Area Development Overlay case # PZ-PD-026-25, County staff recommend the following twenty (20) stipulations:

1. Approval of this Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay District (PZ-PD-026-25) is contingent upon the Board of Supervisors zone change approval as set forth in Planning Case PZ-039-25; and,
2. Approval of this PAD (PZ-PD-026-25) will require, at the time of application for development, that the applicant/owner submit and secure from the applicable and appropriate Federal, State, County and Local regulatory agencies, all required applications, plans, permits, supporting documentation and approvals;
3. N. Clemans Road is situated on a section line. According to the Subdivision & Infrastructure Design Manual (S&IDM), minor arterial half-street right-of-way widths, such as those found on section lines, must be a minimum of 55 feet wide. Additional ROW is required at this location to comply with the S&IDM. Pinal County is requesting 55' dedication free and unencumbered through conveyance of a Warranty Deed; and,
4. A drainage report will be required to be submitted to the County Engineer at the time of Site Plan submittal for review and approval. The drainage report shall include a drainage plan that complies with the current Pinal County Drainage Manual and shall be approved prior to the Site Plan approval. The approved Drainage Report and drainage plan shall include provisions to accommodate offsite runoff and shall provide retention for storm waters in an onsite retention/common retention area or as approved by the County Engineer;
5. A Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) will be required to be submitted to the County Engineer at the time of Tentative Plat or Site Plan submittal for review and approval. The TIS shall be in

accordance with the current Pinal County TIA/TIS Guidelines and Procedures and shall be approved prior to the Tentative Plat approval; and,

6. All-weather, 28' wide public access shall be provided to and from the development. A minimum of two permanent access points will need to be provided for ingress and egress from the development to existing public roads; and,
7. Any additional right-of-way dedications needed for any required infrastructure improvements (as identified in the approved Traffic Impact Analysis) for any roadways shall be the responsibility of the applicant. All roadway and infrastructure improvements shall be in accordance with the current Pinal County Subdivision Standards or as approved by the County Engineer; and,
8. All right-of-way dedication shall be free and unencumbered;
9. Any roadway sections, alignments, access locations, and access movements shown in the rezoning application are conceptual only and have not been approved by the Pinal County Engineer;
10. Active drainage/irrigation canals/ditches in project-dedicated Right of Way, will be required to be under grounded prior to dedication;
11. If offsite improvements are required to be completed by the project per the Traffic or Drainage report, an offsite plan for the improvement is required with the first submittal of the site plans; and,
12. The Operation and/or Maintenance Building or any other buildings on site will trigger full commercial standards that will include an asphalt paved parking lot; and,
13. Landscape and irrigation plans will be required at Site Plan submittal and shall be in substantial compliance with the submitted PAD document; and,
14. Prior to approval of the required Site Plan and issuance of any construction permits, the applicant shall submit a Decommissioning Plan to the County when the facilities become obsolete or inoperable addressing the following components:
 - a. Physical removal of the battery storage modules;
 - b. Removal of the cables, structures, and other facilities supporting the battery storage system;
 - c. Removal of the cables, structures, and other facilities supporting the switchboard;
 - d. Removal of the cables, structures, and other facilities supporting the substation;
 - e. Restoration of the land;
 - f. A cost estimate for the removal of the facilities; and,
 - g. The financial assurance for removal of facilities and land restoration after the cessation of the use of the battery storage facilities; and,

15. The following uses are prohibited across the PAD area unless expressly authorized by a future PAD amendment: adult-oriented businesses, junk/salvage yards, impound/tow yards, landfills/transfer stations, and detention/prison facilities; and,
16. Future developments on the subject parcel not included within the PAD shall require site plan review and to meet the development standards of the I-3 zoning designation.
17. Within I-3 zoning uses listed under PCDSC 2.340.020 (C), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), and (R), will require applicants to apply for an Industrial Use Permit (IUP) per Pinal County requirements for industrial use.
18. A 50-foot industrial buffer shall be maintained adjacent to zoned rural or residential or arterial or collector streets. The 50-foot buffer shall also apply for adjacent parcels within the jurisdictional limits of a municipality.
19. If the subject property becomes subject to the City of Coolidge or other municipality permitting and development review authority, then, upon the effective date of such jurisdictional change, any new subsequent development activity, permits, approvals, plan submittals, inspections, and construction authorizations for the project shall be obtained through, and shall comply with, the applicable municipality codes, standards, policies, and procedures, as administered by applicable departments.
20. Approval of this Planned Area Development (PZ-PD-026-25) is contingent to the parcel being split and recorded to the legal description submitted via minor land division within 6 months of the date approval by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

Date Prepared 6/16/2026 SA