



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 24, 2026
For April 9, 2026 Hearing

TO: Linus Kafka
Zoning Examiner

FROM: Koren Manning, Director
Planning & Development Services

SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXCEPTION LAND USE –
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
TP-ENT-0126-00001 Ponderosa Dispensary – E Blacklidge Dr, C-2 (Ward 3)

Issue – This is a request by Gammage & Burnham on behalf of Pitchfork Partners, LLC for approval of a Mayor & Council Special Exception Land Use to allow the expansion of an existing marijuana dispensary. The project site is 0.83 acres located at the northeast corner of N Stone Ave and E Blacklidge Dr, more specifically at 25 E Blacklidge Dr. Pitchfork Partners, LLC has owned and operated a dispensary on the Property since December 2024 and is seeking to add a drive-thru and increase the marijuana dispensary use to incorporate the entire 6,050 square foot building. The subject parcel is zoned Commercial C-2.

Planning & Development Services Recommendation – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of the special exception request, subject to the attached preliminary conditions.

Public Outreach – The project team held a virtual neighborhood meeting on January 6, 2026, which was noticed using labels provided by PDSD. The applicant gave a presentation regarding the details of the proposed development and the process for the Special Exception. A City of Tucson, Ward 3 Council Aide was present at the virtual meeting for observational purposes. No members of the public attended the virtual meeting.

Background Information

Existing Land Use:

The marijuana dispensary currently operates in a single commercial building and proposes to expand by adding a drive-thru and increase the marijuana dispensary use to incorporate the entire 6,050 square foot building to facilitate drive-thru staging and storage. No other land use uses are present on the commercial site.

Current Zoning:

C-2: This zone provides for general commercial uses that serve the community and region.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:

Land surrounding the site is zoned C-2 Commercial to the north, south, and west. Land to the east is zoned R-2 Urban Residence.

There is an auto sales dealership to the north, a landscape nursery to the south, single family dwellings to the east, and retail stores including equipment rental business to the west.

Previous Cases on the Property: The existing dispensary business is currently a nonconforming land use previously developed under TD-DEV-0123-00112 in 2023, and was opened in December 2024, as a Dispensary with additional Administrative and Professional office uses.

Related Cases: None

Applicant's Request – The applicant's project is an expansion of an existing marijuana dispensary to add a drive-thru window and interior storage area through a Mayor and Council Special Exception Procedure in accordance with UDC Section 3.4.4.

Planning Considerations – Land use policy direction for this area is provided by *Plan Tucson 2025*.

Plan Tucson (PT): The proposed use lies within the Mixed-Use Corridor Building Block of the Future Growth Scenario Map. These areas combine a variety of retail and services options in close proximity to each other, providing access to a variety of goods and services.

Plan Tucson 2025 Chapter 4 - Growth and Development provides Building Block or Special Planning Area designations with a corresponding set of Guidelines to consider. These Guidelines will provide primary guidance for those seeking a Special Exception and staff who review the proposed development. Special Exceptions must be evaluated based on all Plan policies and recommendations. Plan policy review determines whether new developments are compatible, appropriate, and designed in harmony with existing land uses and neighborhoods.

Cragin-Keeling Area Plan (CKAP) - CKAP designates the subject property as Mixed Uses (Broader Range of Commercial Uses Allowed).

Goal: Encourage new non-residential development and redevelopment that is cohesive and integrated with adjacent non-residential uses while preserving and enhancing the existing residential character of the area.

Policies:

1. Encourage coordination between City agencies, property owners and business owners when redevelopment is called for to retain or enhance residentially or commercially viable areas.
2. Encourage a mix of non-residential and higher density residential uses along arterial streets as shown on the Land Use Map when proposed development is compatibly designed with adjacent less intense uses (see General Design Guidelines).

Project Background

The special exception site located at 25 E Blacklidge Dr proposes to expand within the current building which is a 6,050 sq/ft for marijuana dispensary use, using 804 sq/ft for the drive-thru service and staging area. Additionally, the remaining 1,440 sq/ft located in the northeast portion of the building will be used for additional storage.

The building sits on the eastern half of the Property with main parking lot located to the west of the building and a small employee parking area located to the east of the building. There are three entry points to the Property, using existing curb cuts. Two entries are located on E Blacklidge Dr, and the third entry on N Stone Ave bordering the western property line.

Design Considerations

Land Use Compatibility – The Preliminary Development Plan shows that the project includes an existing 3,044 square-foot commercial building with 3,006 square foot addition and drive-thru lane proposed for the expansion. The Project site is surrounded by existing C-2 zoning to the north, south, and west, and is immediately adjacent to R-2 zone to the east. There is an auto sales dealership to the north, a landscape nursery to the south, single family dwellings to the east, and retail stores including equipment rental business to the west. The surrounding zones and land uses will be buffered by proposed site improvements such as with perimeter block walls and landscaping. The proposed use is compatible with established commercial land uses along N Stone Ave, an existing arterial road.

Additionally, a Right Turn Only sign with driveway design will be placed so that traffic exiting the site from the drive-thru (west to east) along E Blacklidge Dr encourages traffic toward the arterial street (N Stone Ave), therefore promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety through removal of radiused turns, away from residential homes to the east.

Design Compatibility – The proposed building design with exterior enhancements include facade treatments along the front of the building facing N Stone Ave, and low decorative block wall along the proposed drive-thru lane facing E Blacklidge Dr, which will blend with the existing commercial environment. Furthermore, existing building setbacks and ample landscape improvements will further enhance design compatibility with the existing neighborhood.

Additionally, with an approved Special Exception, the applicant will file a security plan with the State of Arizona to ensure compliance with A.R.S §36-2804(B)(1)(C). The security plan will include:

- Surveillance cameras covering all exterior and interior areas of the property, and all portions of the building used for storage and dispensary uses with a minimum backup storage of thirty (30) days;
- A 24-hour independently monitored security alarm system (with backup cellular communication capability, audible alarms, motion detectors, panic buttons, yard signs and window stickers);
- Controlled access to loading areas;

- Trackable and controlled keycard access to the building and all portions used for dispensary and secure storage purposes (with employees only given keycard access to areas where they work); and
- Secure and controlled access to all areas where marijuana products are stored or displayed.

In addition to the security plan filed by applicant, A.R.S. § 36-2806(H) requires AZDHS to carry out a minimum of one unannounced inspection of the Project per year.

Drainage/Grading/Landscape

The site is an existing development that will be improved as part of the proposed project; as such, there will be no elevation changes due to grading. Site landscaping improvements are proposed along the site's southerly and westerly boundaries as well as within interior portions of the existing parking lot as depicted with the Preliminary Development Plan dated January 30, 2026.

Traffic/Circulation

The site will retain the existing traffic circulation and curb cut locations with three-existing driveways. DTM Traffic Engineering has conditioned the Project to provide a concrete apron style driveway (removing radial style) and adding delineators to prevent drive-thru entries from E Blacklidge Dr. DTM Traffic Engineering has also required a Right Turn Only sign be placed so that traffic exiting the site goes toward the arterial street (N Stone Ave).

Parking will be provided per UDC parking requirements. The Project provides 36-parking spaces exceeding a minimum of 22-spaces required based on 1/300 square foot of gross floor area. ADA compliant parking and bicycle parking will be required with a future development package to demonstrate compliance with applicable requirements per the UDC.

Use-Specific Standards

The following Use-Specific Standards under Section 4.9.9.E.1 of the UDC are applicable to the proposed Special Exception:

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.a – The total maximum floor area of a marijuana dispensary shall not exceed 10,000 square feet.

The proposed expanded dispensary is proposed to occupy the entire existing building totaling approximately 6,050 square feet/floor area, less than 10,000 square feet, therefore in compliance with the UDC.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.b – A medical marijuana dispensary shall be located in a permanent building and shall not be located in a trailer, cargo container, mobile or modular unit, mobile home, recreational vehicle, or other motor vehicle.

The proposed dispensary will occupy a permanent building made of concrete with existing concrete foundation and utility connections.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.c – The permitted hours of operation of a marijuana dispensary are from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm.

The proposed dispensary will adhere to the required hours of operation.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.d – A marijuana dispensary shall have an interior customer waiting area equal to a minimum of 25% of the sales floor area.

The applicant has stated that the proposed dispensary will have a sales floor that meets the minimum required area.

The area requirement in this portion of the UDC only refers to the minimum size of the customer waiting area, and not the sales floor area. It will be required to delineate these two spaces and demonstrate compliance with this requirement at the time building permit applications are submitted.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.e – A marijuana dispensary shall not have outdoor seating areas.

The existing commercial building has no outdoor seating areas, and none will be provided for the proposed dispensary expansion.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.f – A marijuana dispensary may deliver marijuana, once rules permitting and regulating delivery are approved by the AZDHS and become effective, and shall comply with state law and all lawful, applicable health regulations, including those promulgated by the Arizona Department of Health Services and any other authorized regulatory agency.

The proposed dispensary will comply with all state laws and applicable regulations regarding delivery.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.g – A marijuana dispensary shall be setback a minimum of 2,000 feet from any other marijuana dispensaries, measured in a straight and direct horizontal line between the two closest exterior or applicable interior suite walls of marijuana dispensaries.

No marijuana dispensaries are located within 2,000 feet of the subject building. The nearest dispensary is approximately 6,000 feet from the project site currently located at 3906 N Oracle Rd., Ste. 110.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.h – a marijuana dispensary shall be setback a minimum of 500-feet from a K-12 public, private, or charter school or a licensed childcare center, measured in a straight and direct horizontal line from the closest exterior or applicable interior suite wall of the marijuana dispensary to the closest property line of a school or childcare center.

The proposed dispensary meets this setback requirement, and the closest school or child-care center is approximately 1,900 feet away from the project site.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.i – a marijuana dispensary shall be setback a minimum of 500-feet from a public park listed in Section 6 of the Technical Standards Manual or library, and a minimum of 500-feet from a licensed residential substance abuse diagnostic and treatment facility or other licensed residential drug or alcohol rehabilitation facility, measured in a straight and direct horizontal line from the closest exterior or applicable interior suite wall of the marijuana dispensary, to the closes property line of a library, public park, licensed residential substance abuse diagnostic and treatment facility, or other licensed drug or alcohol rehabilitee facility. –

The proposed dispensary meets this setback requirement; there are no parks or treatment facilities within 1,500 feet of the subject building.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.j – The expansion of an existing marijuana dispensary shall be setback a minimum of 500 feet from a K-12 public, private, or charter school, measured in a straight and direct horizontal line from the closest exterior or applicable interior suite wall of the marijuana dispensary to the closest property line of a school.

There are no schools within 500 feet of the project site.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.k – A marijuana dispensary shall comply with all lawful, applicable health regulations, including those promulgated by the Arizona Department of Health Services and any other authorized regulatory agency. –

The proposed dispensary will comply with all applicable health regulations from the Arizona Department of Health Services and other authorized regulatory agencies.

- UDC 4.9.9.E.1.l – Odor Mitigation
 - (1) Odor mitigation devices and techniques shall be incorporated in all marijuana facilities to ensure that odors are mitigated.
 - (2) An odor mitigation plan shall be submitted demonstrating compliance with odor control requirements.

An approved odor mitigation plan will ensure compliance with all odor mitigation regulations.

Special Exception Findings

Section 3.4.5.A of the UDC requires that Mayor and Council grant a special exception only after finding that the requested special exception:

1. Meets the standard expressly applied by all adopted codes and regulations for that type of land use, or for the land use class applicable to the proposed use. – The application

materials demonstrate that the Project meets all applicable standards and regulations governing marijuana dispensaries.

2. Does not adversely affect adjacent land uses or the surrounding neighborhood; or that such adverse effects can be substantially mitigated through the use of additional conditions. - Use as a marijuana dispensary conforms to and complements adjacent land uses and the surrounding neighborhood because:
 - The Project represents an investment and improvement on a parcel and building that are currently underutilized;
 - The security plan required by the State of Arizona will ensure the Project is safe for its patients, employees, and neighbors, as well as increase the safety of the surrounding properties;
 - The applicant is familiar with odor mitigation requirements as they currently operate a dispensary, and an odor mitigation plan will be included at the time of development package or building permit submittal; and
 - The Project expands a vacant portion of an existing commercial space and provides a drive-thru along the southern portion of the site along an existing road.
3. Provides for adequate and efficient vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation and vehicular parking. - The Property will utilize existing on-site parking and access from E Blacklidge Dr and N Stone Ave. The proposed use is subject to the standard parking requirements of 1 space per 300 square feet, which is already provided by existing parking spaces. According to City of Tucson Traffic Engineering review, no street improvements are needed.
4. Can be adequately and efficiently served by public facilities and services, such as water, storm water drainage, fire and police protection, and solid and liquid waste disposal and/or collection as may be required by the various public and private agencies. – This project requires no additional public facilities or services as compared to the property’s previous uses. The project is in Tucson Police Department’s Operations Division West as well as by Tucson Fire. Solid waste facilities will be designed according to City of Tucson code.
5. Complies with the General Plan and any applicable sub-regional, area, or neighborhood plan. - The Project will be a retail establishment, and the property is already zoned C-2 Commercial. Further, the project lies within the Mixed-Use Corridor Building Block of the Future Growth Scenario Map. Policies within these areas encourage the reactivation of underused commercial space.

Conclusion – The proposed special exception is consistent with *Plan Tucson*, and in compliance with performance criteria of UDC Sections 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 4.8.6 and 4.9.9 subject to compliance with the attached preliminary conditions, approval of the special exception land use in the C-2 zone is appropriate.

PROCEDURAL

1. A development package in substantial compliance with the revised preliminary development plan, and required reports, dated January 30, 2026, is to be submitted and approved in accordance with the *Administrative Manual*, Section 2-06.
2. The property owner shall execute a waiver of potential claims under A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 for this zoning amendment as permitted by A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 (I) in the form approved by the City Attorney and titled “Agreement to Waive Any Claims Against the City for Zoning Amendment”. The fully executed Waiver must be received by the Planning & Development Services Department (PDS) before the item is scheduled for Mayor and Council action.
3. Eighteen months are allowed from the date of approval of the Special Exception by Mayor and Council until the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy by PDS. The PDS Director may grant one (1) six-month extension following written request from the property owner. The request must be received by PDS a minimum of 60 days prior to the end of the 18-month timeframe and include the reason(s) for the extension request.
4. Historic or prehistoric features or artifacts discovered during future ground disturbing activities should be reported to the City of Tucson Historic Preservation Officer. Pursuant to A.R.S. 41-865 the discovery of human remains, and associated objects found on private lands in Arizona must be reported to the Director of Arizona State Museum.
5. Any relocation, modification, etc., of existing utilities and/or public improvements necessitated by the proposed development shall be at no expense to the public.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

6. An interior customer waiting area of at least 25 percent of the sales floor area shall be provided.
7. Graffiti on walls or on any other location on site shall be removed within seventy-two (72) hours of discovery.
8. The Property site shall utilize reasonable passive rainwater harvesting techniques, such as water harvesting basins and desert-adapted vegetation, to enhance the proposed landscape and preserve water resources.

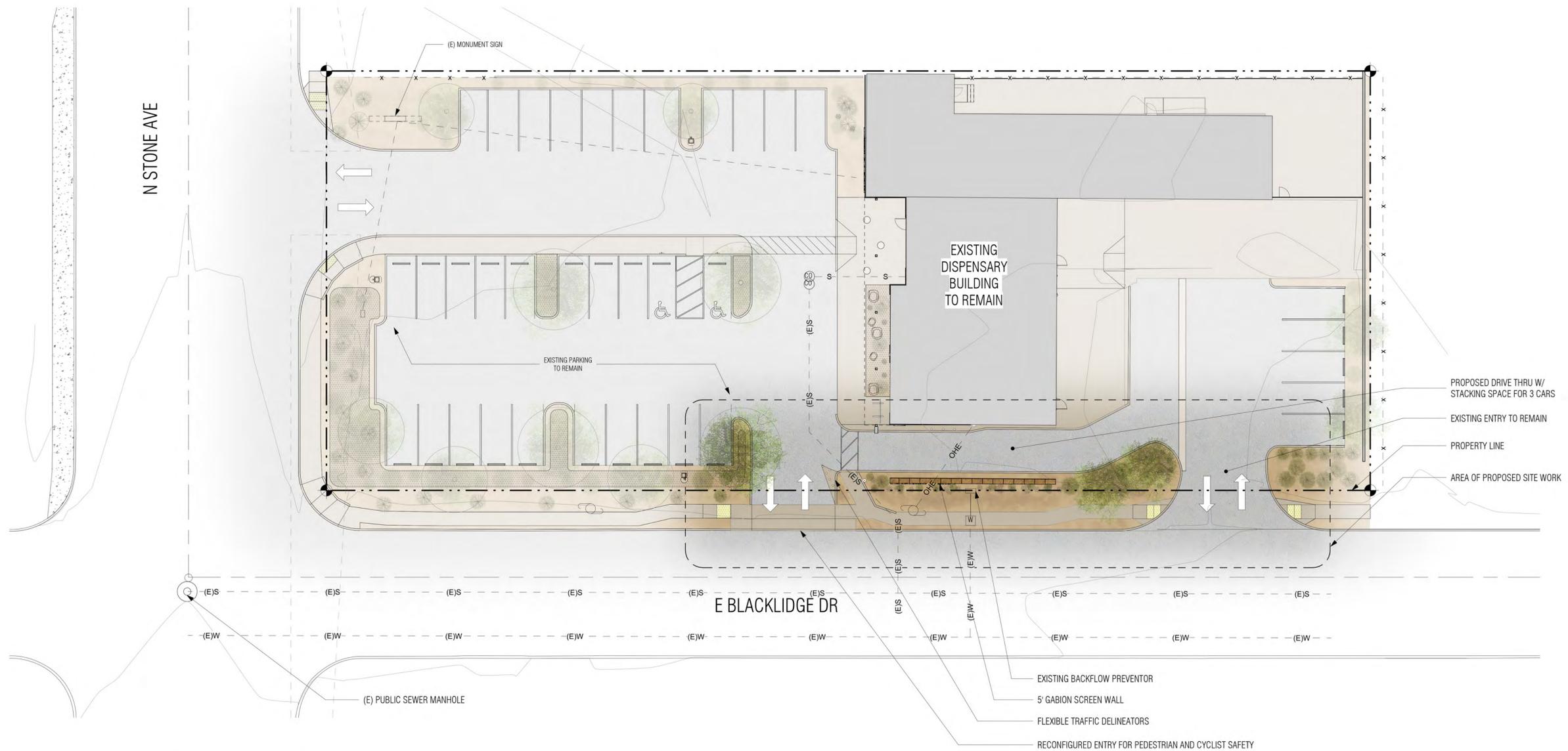
ROAD IMPROVEMENTS/VEHICULAR ACCESS/CIRCULATION

9. All offsite improvements required with the development, such as street improvements, curb, sidewalk, and ADA ramps shall be coordinated with the City of Tucson’s Department of Transportation & Mobility (DTM).

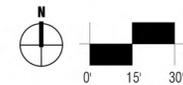
10. DTM Traffic Engineering requires Project to provide a concrete apron style driveway (removing radial style) and adding delineators to prevent drive-thru entries from E Blacklidge Dr. A Right Turn Only sign be placed so that traffic exiting the site goes toward the arterial street (N Stone Ave).

RECLAMATION DISTRICT

11. Pima County Wastewater Reclamation provides the condition that the owner/developer shall obtain written documentation from the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation District (PCRWRD) that treatment and conveyance capacity is available for any new development within the special exception area, no more than 90 days before submitting any tentative plat, development plan, sewer improvement plan or request for building permit for review. Should treatment and/or conveyance capacity not be available at that time, the owner/developer shall have the option of funding, designing, and constructing the necessary improvements to Pima County's public sewerage system at his or her sole expense or cooperatively with other affected parties. All such improvements shall be designed and constructed as directed by the PCRWRD. "



1 ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN - DRIVE THRU
1/16" = 1'-0"



PONDEROSA | DRIVE - THRU

SPECIAL EXCEPTION
 Preliminary Development Plan
 TP-ENT-0126-00001 Date 1-30-2026
 Planning & Development Services



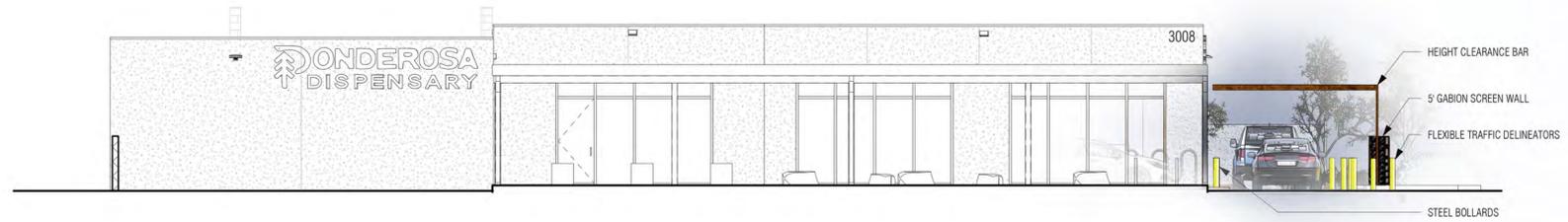


SPECIAL EXCEPTION
 Preliminary Development Plan
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 Planning & Development Services

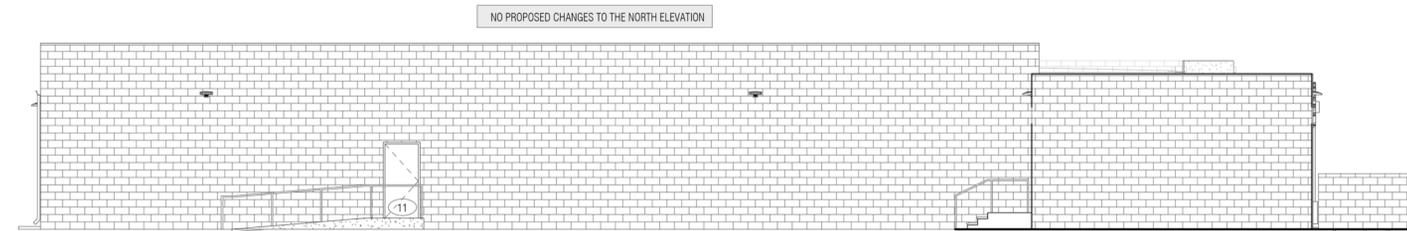
1 FLOOR PLAN
 1/8" = 1'-0"

PONDEROSA | DRIVE - THRU





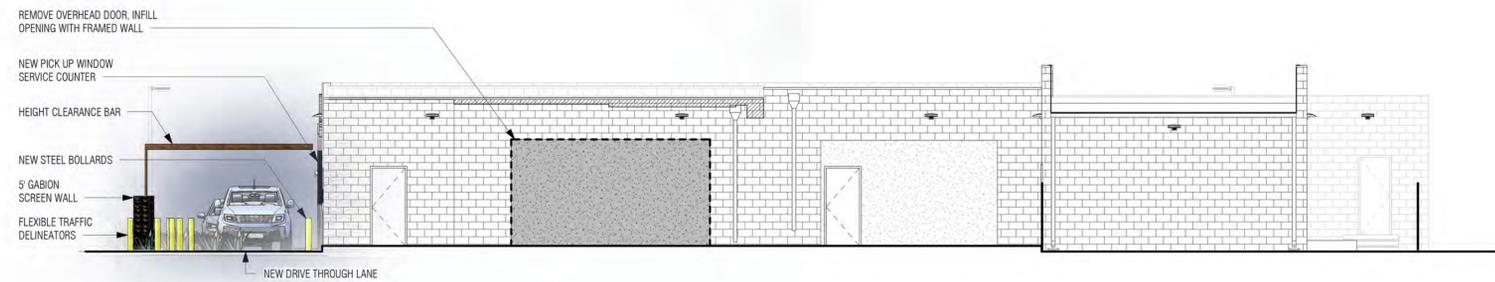
1 WEST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



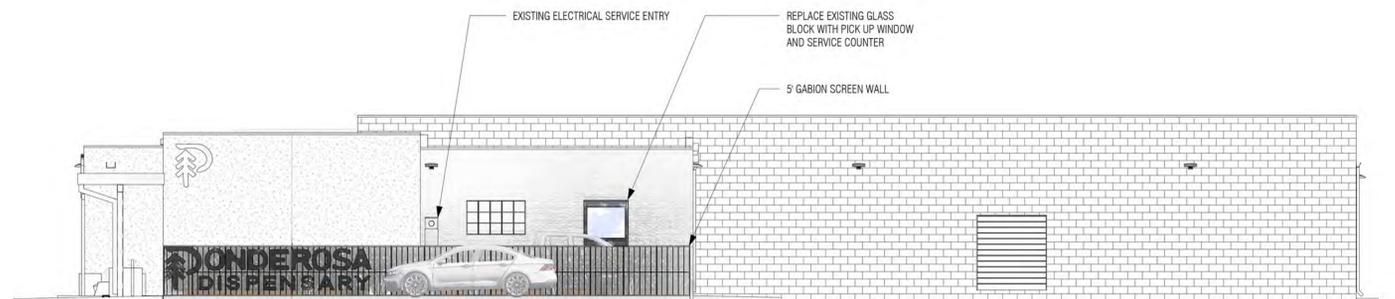
2 NORTH ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"

SPECIAL EXCEPTION
 Preliminary Development Plan
 TP-ENT-0126-00001 Date 1-30-2026
 Planning & Development Services

PONDEROSA | DRIVE - THRU



3 EAST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



4 SOUTH ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"

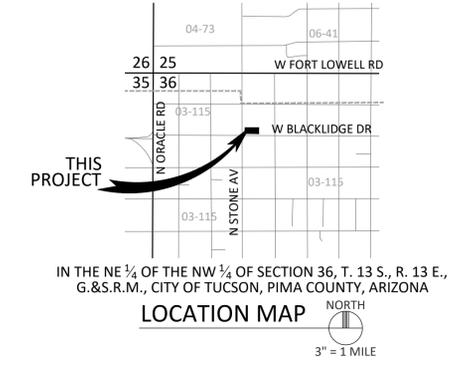
PONDEROSA | DRIVE - THRU

SPECIAL EXCEPTION
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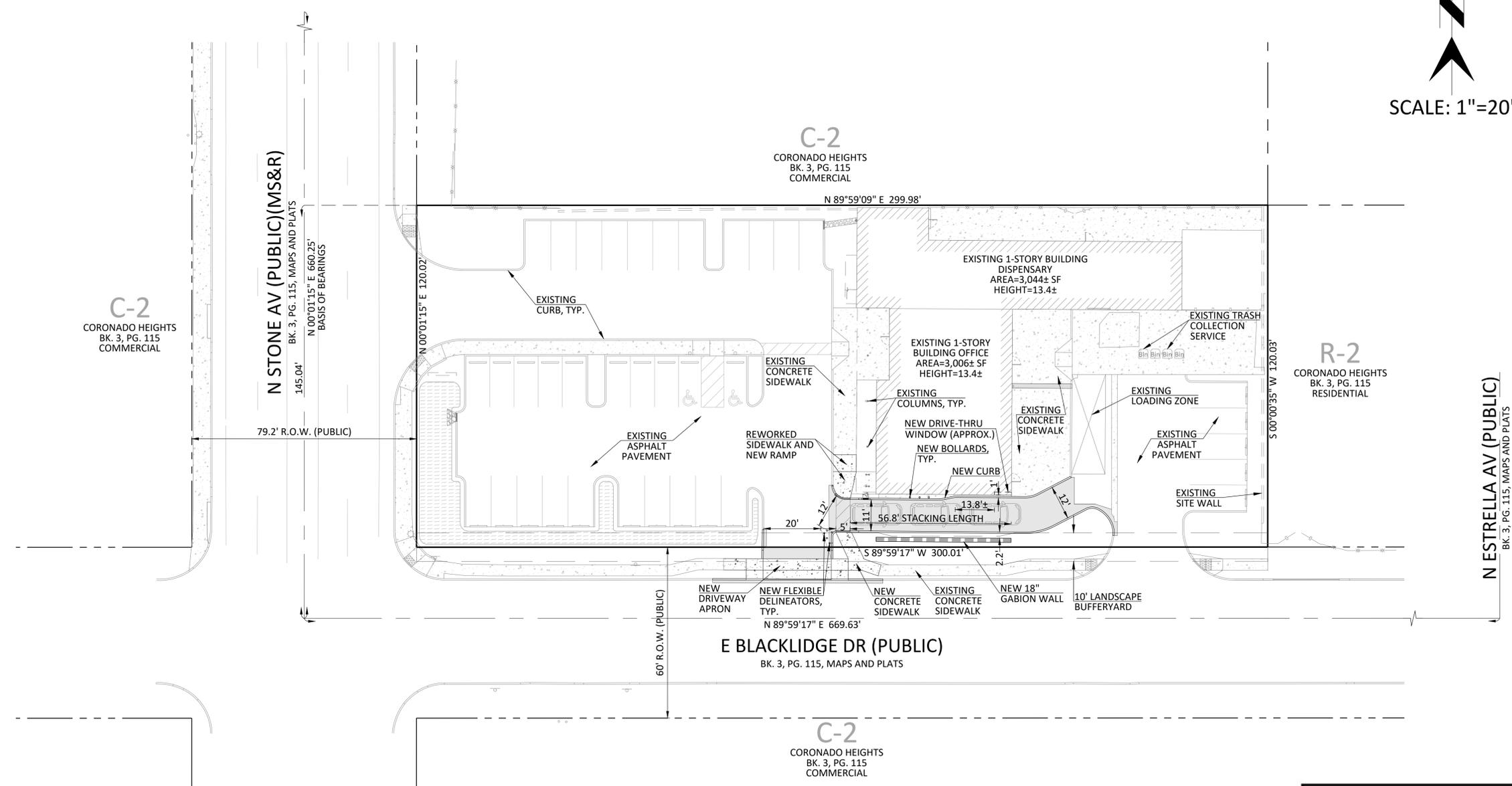
PONDEROSA | DRIVE - THRU



SCALE: 1"=20'

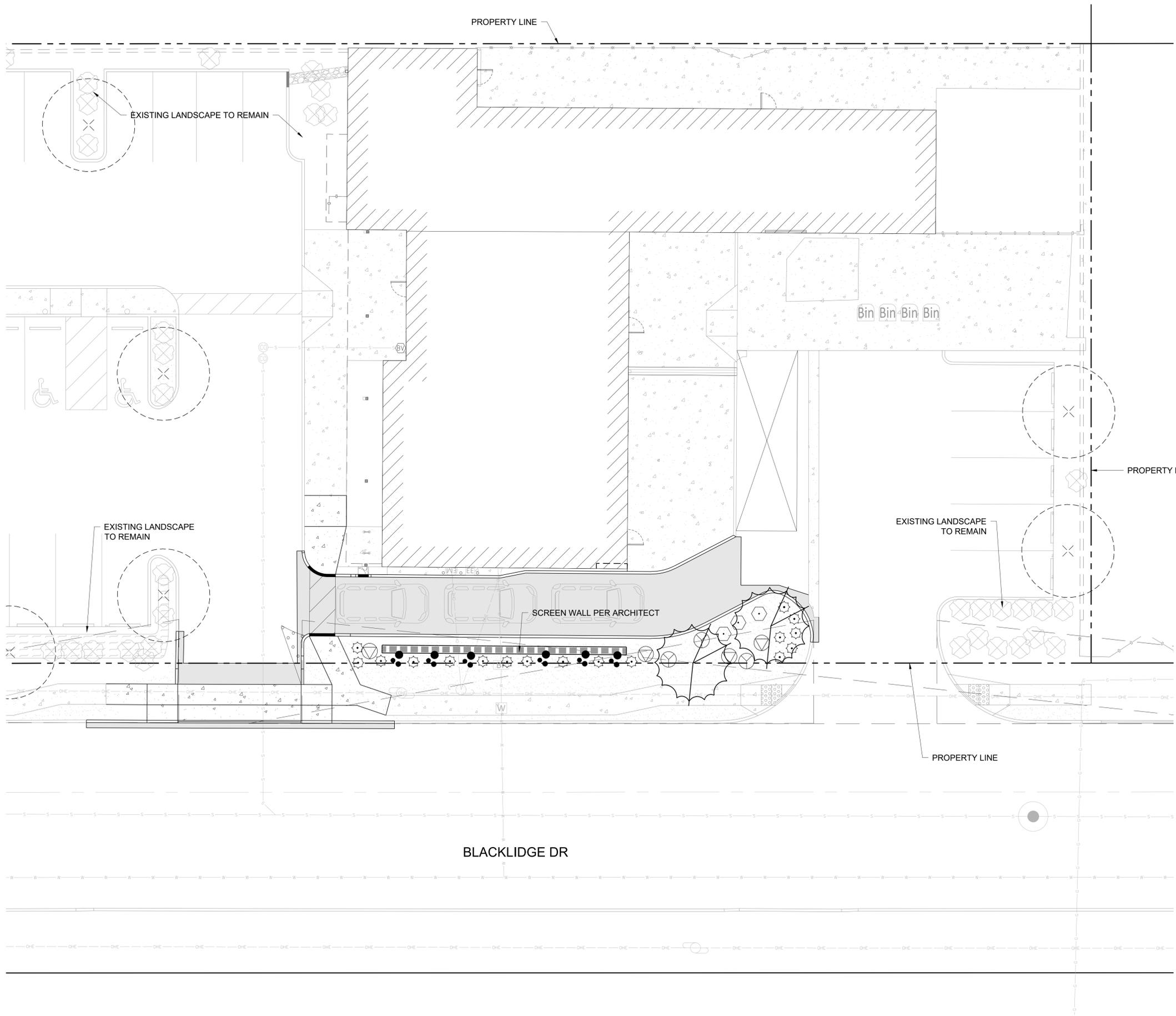
GENERAL NOTES

1. THE EXISTING USE IS DISPENSARY (RETAIL) AND ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL OFFICE.
2. THE GROSS SITE AREA IS 36,007 SQUARE FEET, OR 0.83 ACRES.
3. THE EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE:
TOTAL GFA = 6,050± SF
4. EXISTING ZONING IS C-2.
5. THE EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHT = 13.4'±.
6. TOTAL PARKING PROVIDED ON-SITE IS 36 SPACES.
7. LOCATION OF NEAREST MAJOR INTERSECTION:
- STONE AV & FORT LOWELL RD (1,287 FT TO NORTH)
8. LOCATION OF NEARBY BUS STOPS:
- #13735 (STONE/BLACKLIDGE) NORTH ROUTE
- #13749 (STONE/BLACKLIDGE) SOUTH ROUTE
9. THERE ARE NO NEARBY PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS THAT WILL AFFECT THIS PROJECT.
10. TRAFFIC COUNTS FOR NEARBY MAJOR STREETS ARE AS FOLLOWS PER PAG DATA (2024):
- STONE AV (S. OF FT LOWELL) = 16,609 VPD
11. THE TOTAL PAVED AREA IS 1,202 SF ±.



SPECIAL EXCEPTION
Preliminary Development Plan
TP-ENT-0126-00001 Date 1-30-2026
Planning & Development Services

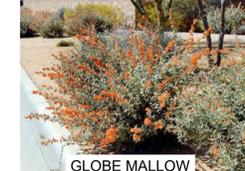
<p>520-795-1000 rickengineering.com PROJECT NO: T5695</p> <p>SAN DIEGO ORANGE RIVERSIDE SACRAMENTO SAN LUIS OBISPO SANTA CLARITA PHOENIX TUCSON LAS VEGAS DENVER</p>	<p>3945 E FORT LOWELL RD #111 TUCSON, AZ 85712</p>	<p>OWNER MARKS METAL INVESTMENTS LLC 1718 EAST SPEEDWAY BOULEVARD, TUCSON, ARIZONA 85719</p>
	<p>25 EAST BLACKLIDGE DRIVE, TUCSON, ARIZONA 85705 A.P.N. 107-11-2090</p>	<p>SITE ADDRESS</p>
<p>LOT 10, BLOCK 12 OF "CORONADO HEIGHTS", A SUBDIVISION ACCORDING TO THE PLAT RECORDED IN BOOK 3 OF MAPS AND PLATS AT PAGE 115, BEING A PORTION OF THE NE 1/4 OF THE NW 1/4 OF SECTION 36, T.13S., R.13E., G.&S.R.M., CITY OF TUCSON, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA</p>		<p>PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN for PONDEROSA DRIVE-THRU</p>
		<p>1 OF 1</p>



PALO BLANCO



PINK FAIRY DUSTER



GLOBE MALLOW



DESERT MILKWEED



STOPLIGHTS HESPERALOE



TOTEM POLE CACTUS

LANDSCAPE LEGEND
Furnish and install landscape material per plans, details and specifications. All plant material to meet ANA specifications and be of sound health and appearance.

	Trees	Size	Qty
	Acacia willardiana	24" box	2
	palo blanco		
	Existing tree to remain in place, typical (typ.)		
	Shrubs / Ground Covers	Size	Qty
	Calliandra eriophylla	5 gallon	4
	pink fairy duster		
	Sphaeralcea ambigua	5 gallon	3
	globe mallow		
	Cacti / Succulents	Size	Qty
	Existing accent to remain		
	Asclepias subulata	5 gallon	3
	desert milkweed		
	Hesperaloe parviflora 'stoplights'	5 gallon	17
	stoplights dwarf hesperaloe		
	Lophocereus schottii f. monstrosus	5 gallon	6
	totem pole cactus		

***IMPORTANT-** Much of the plant material specified on these plans will not be available in the market at the time of installation unless it is contract grown and/or brokered. Contractor must initiate necessary contract growing and brokerage of required plant material immediately following contract commencement. Contractor must confirm ability to provide specified material or request alternates in writing within 90 days of commencement of contract. Failure to do so may result in delays in final approval of landscape.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION
 Preliminary Development Plan
 TP-ENT-0126-00001 Date 1-30-2026
 Planning & Development Services



TP-ENT-0126-00001 - 25 E BLACKLIDGE DR



STONE AV

BLACKLIDGE DR

 Area of Special Exception

Address: 25 E BLACKLIDGE DR
Base Maps: Twp. 13S R. 13E Sec. 36
Ward: 3

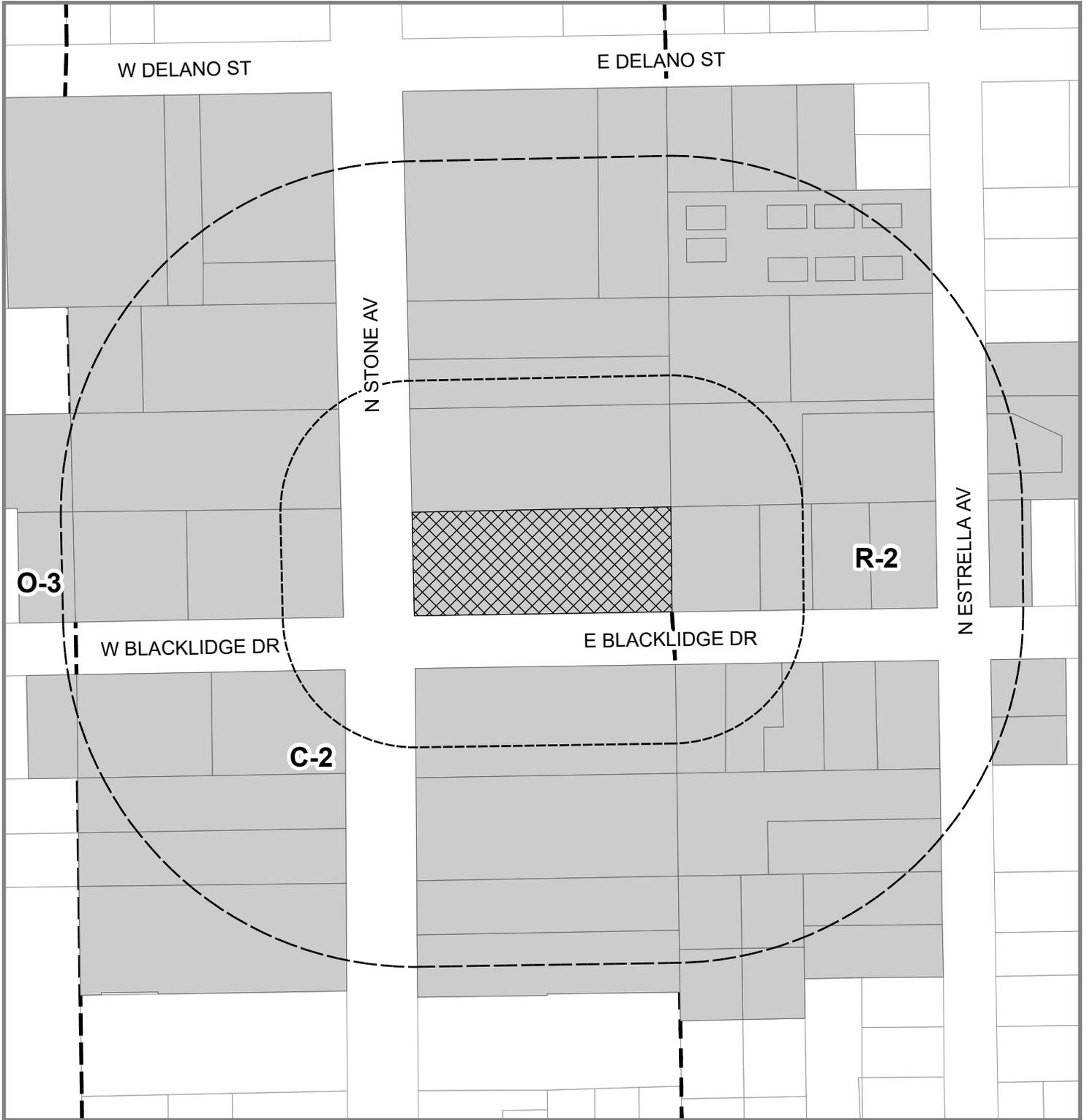


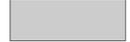
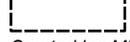
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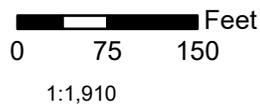


TP-ENT-0126-00001 - 25 E BLACKLIDGE DR



-  Zone Boundaries
-  Subject Property
-  Properties Notified
-  Notification Area (400 ft. Radius)
-  Protest Area (150 ft. Radius)

Address: 25 E BLACKLIDGE DR
Base Maps: Twp. 13S R. 13E Sec. 36
Ward: 3



Place
Stamp
Here

City of Tucson
Planning and Development Services Department
Entitlements Section
201 N. Stone
P.O. Box 27210
Tucson, Arizona 85726-7210

TP-ENT-0126-00001 JO

Expose this flap - Affix stamp and return



City of Tucson
Planning and Development Services
Department - Entitlements Section
201 N. Stone Avenue
P.O. BOX 27210
Tucson, Arizona 85726-7210

TP-ENT-0126-00001 JO
IMPORTANT SPECIAL EXCEPTION NOTICE ENCLOSED