

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBAN DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
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ZONING HEARING EXAMINER NOTICE OF DECISION

Special Exception Number: CU-2026-00017

Project Number: PR-2024-010691

Hearing Date: 07-21-2026

Closing of Public Record: 07-21-2026

Date of Decision: 08-05-2026

Case Description: Tierra West LLC and Gregory Speer & Laura Helen, request a Conditional Use for Self-Storage for Lot 11-A, Block 2, Plat of Lots 10-A, 11-A, 19-A thru 22-A Block 2 Unit 14, Volcano Cliffs Subdivision, located at 7520 Rainbow Blvd NW, zoned MX-L [IDO § 14-16-4-3(D)(40)]

On July 21, 2026, Tierra West LLC, Agent for Gregory Speer & Laura Helen (“Applicant”) was scheduled to appear before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (the “ZHE”) requesting a Conditional Use for Self-Storage (“Application”) upon the real property located at 7520 Rainbow Boulevard NW (the “Subject Property”). Below are the ZHE’s findings of fact and decision.

FINDINGS, CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL:

1. This is a request for a Conditional Use for Self-Storage in the MX zone for Lot 11-A, Block 2, Plat of Lots 10-A, 11-A, 19-A thru 22-A Block 2 Unit 14 Volcano Cliffs Subdivision located at 7520 Rainbow Blvd NW and containing approximately 2.03 acres.
2. Applicant has authority to pursue this Application, pursuant to 14-16-6-4(D).
3. Applicant has duly authorized Agent to act on Applicant’s behalf regarding the Application.
4. The Subject Property is located at 7520 Rainbow Boulevard NW in the MX-L zone district.
5. The Planning Director’s delegee has determined that the Application is complete, pursuant to IDO §14-16-6-4(G).
6. The Application was referred to commenting agencies pursuant to IDO § 14-16-6-4(I).

7. The content of the public notice of the Application satisfies IDO § 14-16-6-4(J)(1).
8. Applicant has sent an electronic mail notice to the email addresses on file with the Office of Neighborhood Coordination for Neighborhood Associations within 660 feet as required by IDO § 14-16-6-4(J)(2).
9. A self-storage development on the Subject Property requires a Conditional Use Approval pursuant to IDO Subsection 14-16-6-6(A).
10. The applicant requests a Conditional Use for Self-storage operations pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-4-3(D)(30) located at 7520 Rainbow Boulevard NW.
12. IDO § 14-16-6-6(A)(3) (Review and Decision Criteria) reads: *“An application for a Conditional Use Approval shall be approved if it meets all of the following criteria.*
 - (a) *It is consistent with the ABC Comp. Plan, as amended;*
 - (b) *It complies with all applicable provisions of this IDO, including, but not limited to any Use-specific Standards applicable to the use in § 14-16-4-3; the DPM; other adopted City regulations; and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property in any prior permit or approval affecting the property, or there is a condition of approval that any Variances or Waivers needed to comply with any of these provisions must be approved or the Conditional Use Approval will be invalidated pursuant to Subsection (2)(c)2 above.*
 - (c) *It will not create significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the larger community;*
 - (d) *It will not create material adverse impacts on other land in the surrounding area, through increases in traffic congestion, parking congestion, noise, or vibration without sufficient mitigation or civic or environmental benefits that outweigh the expected impacts;*
 - (e) *On a project site with existing uses, it will not increase non-residential activity within 300 feet of a lot in any Residential zone district between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am;*
 - (f) *It will not negatively impact pedestrian or transit connectivity without appropriate mitigation.”*
11. Applicant bears the burden of providing a sound justification for the requested decision, based on substantial evidence, pursuant to IDO § 14-16-6-4(E)(3).
12. Applicant bears the burden of showing compliance with required standards through analysis, illustrations, or other exhibits as necessary, pursuant to IDO § 14-16-6-4(E)(4).
13. Applicant appeared at the July 21, 2026 ZHE hearing and gave evidence in support of the Application.
14. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that established that the requested Conditional Use Approval is consistent with the ABC Comp. Plan, as amended. The proposed use supports Comp. Plan policies including providing a variety of services in neighborhoods, job opportunities, and development of appropriate scale.
15. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use Approval complies with all applicable provisions of the IDO, including, but not limited to any Use-specific Standards applicable to the use in § 14-16-4-3; the

DPM; other adopted City regulations; and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property in any prior permit or approval affecting the property. Evidence in the record establishes that the site will be developed in accordance with IDO requirements.

16. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval will not create significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the larger community. Self-Storage is a relatively low impact use as compared with other uses allowed in this zone as of right. Although neighbors complained of height concerns, the height of any development is not before the ZHE. Rather this is merely a conditional use application. Any allowable use could be built on the Subject Property to the heights complained of by opponents.
17. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use Approval will not create material adverse impacts on other land in the surrounding area, through increases in traffic congestion, parking congestion noise, or vibration without sufficient mitigation or civic or environmental benefits that outweigh the expected impacts. Again, Self-Storage has minimal impacts in terms of parking, traffic and congestion, as established by evidence in the record.
18. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use Approval will not increase non-residential activity within 300 feet in any direction of a lot in any Residential zone district between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. Evidence in the record establishes that no prohibited increase will result.
19. Applicant has met their burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use Approval will not negatively impact pedestrian or transit connectivity without appropriate mitigation. The site will be developed in accordance with all traffic, pedestrian and transit requirements.
20. IDO § 14-16-4-3(D)(29) requires the following Use-Specific Standards for Self-Storage:
 - (a) *All storage shall be within fully enclosed portions of a building.*
 - (b) *Security fencing shall not include razor wire or barbed wire.*
 - (c) *Abutting any Residential zone district or lot containing a residential use in any Mixed-use zone district, an opaque wall or fence at least 6 feet and no more than 8 feet high or a landscape buffer at least 50 feet wide shall be provided along the abutting lot line.*
 - (d) *Within 100 feet in any direction of any Residential zone district or lot containing a residential use in any Mixed-use zone district, public access to any storage units is prohibited between 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M.*
 - (e) *Within 200 feet in any direction of any Residential zone district, internal lighting that is visible from the property line shall not exceed the maximum light trespass values listed in Table 5-8-3 for lighting designation Lz1 during the outdoor lighting curfew.*
 - (f) *In the MX-L, MX-M, MX-H, and MX-FB zone districts, and on lots in the NR-C zone district within a UC-AC-MS-PT area, access to individual storage units shall be through interior corridors; direct access to individual units from outdoor areas is not allowed.*
 - (g) *In the NR-C zone district outside of UC-AC-MS-PT areas, exterior doors to individual storage units shall not face any abutting street frontage, or, if the site is located on a corner lot, shall not face the primary street frontage.*

21. Applicant has demonstrated compliance with use-specific standards.
22. The City Traffic Engineer submitted a comment stating no objection to the Application.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of Conditional Use for Self-Storage for Lot 11-A, Block 2, Plat of Lots 10-A, 11-A, 19-A thru 22-A Block 2 Unit 14, Volcano Cliffs Subdivision, located at 7520 Rainbow Blvd NW.

APPEAL:

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by August 20, 2026. Pursuant to IDO § 14-16-6-4(U), you must demonstrate that you have legal standing to file an appeal.

PERIOD OF VALIDITY:

Approval of a Conditional Use is valid for two (2) years from date of approval.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

THIS NOTICE OF DECISION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE APPROVAL OF PLANS FOR A BUILDING PERMIT.

Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City must be complied with, even after approval of a special exception. If your Application is approved, submit this Notice of Decision when you apply for any related site plan, building permit, or occupation tax number.



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