

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 14, 2010

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Wayne Dalton, Building and Development Services Supervisor

**VIA:** Jack Kolkmeier, Land Use Administrator  
Shelley Cobau, Building and Development Services Manager

**FILE REF.:** CDRC CASE # Z/DP 09-3132 PNM Caja Del Rio Substation Master Plan/  
Development Plan

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### **ISSUE:**

Public Service Company of New Mexico “PNM” (Jeanette Yardman), Applicant, requests Master Plan Zoning/Preliminary and Final Development Plan approval for the Caja Del Rio Substation on 2.4 acres. The substation is needed to serve the City of Santa Fe/Santa Fe County Buckman Direct Diversion water pumping and treatment facilities, and future growth in the area. The project will consist of the substation, installation of two tap structures approximately 70’ feet in height, and one T-frame termination structure approximately 45’ feet in height, and an interconnection with PNM’s existing 115kV transmission line.

The property is located at 11 W. Caja Del Oro Grant Rd., within Section 22, Township 17 North, Range 8 East, (Commission District 2).

### **SUMMARY:**

On November 9, 2010, this case was tabled in order for the Applicant to explore other alternative locations for the placement of the substation. The Applicant has recently met with the BLM in regards to discussing alternative locations to place the substation. The BLM is on record stating again that they will not entertain any other alternative locations until the current application has received a final decision from the Board of County Commissioners. The BLM stated that the Record of Decision is the written decision regarding the approved location of the substation.

The Applicant has also made changes to the substation design. These changes include reducing the substation by approximately 30%. The substation footprint originally submitted was 138' feet by 138' feet. The amended substation footprint has been reduced to 100' feet by 100' feet. The two termination structures that were to connect with the 70' foot poles have been eliminated. They will be replaced with one T-frame structure, which will be 45' feet in height. The original design called for two transformers to be installed, the new design calls for one transformer. The chain link fence has been eliminated and the Applicant will construct a graffiti resistant fluted block wall and entry gates which will be approximately 12' feet in height. The wall will be screened with native pinon and juniper trees, which are consistent with existing vegetation on site.

On September 14, 2010, the BCC met and acted on this case. The decision of the BCC was to table this case in order for the County Attorney to review legal documentation.

On August 10, 2010, the BCC met and acted on this case. The decision was to table this case in order for the BCC to conduct a field visit at the proposed substation site.

On May 27, 2010, the CDRC met and acted on this case. The decision of the CDRC was to recommend denial of the Application in order for the applicant to revisit the original location of the substation to the Buckman Direct Diversion water pumping and treatment facility. (Refer to Meeting Minutes Attached as Exhibit "N" and see map page 66). The Applicant has stated that relocation from the proposed site is not possible due to costs and delays associated with the E.I.S. and other constraints.

The Applicant requests Master Plan Zoning/Preliminary and Final Development Plan approval to allow the construction of a substation on 2.4-acres. The project will consist of a new electric substation along County Road 62 approximately three miles north of N.M. 599. Two transmission tap poles will be installed adjacent to the substation within the existing transmission right-of-way. The poles are needed to tap both of the transmission lines and connect with the substation. The poles will be Corten steel and approximately 70' feet in height. The existing transmission structures are approximately 90' feet in height. One T-frame line termination structure will be located inside the substation and will be galvanized steel, approximately 45' feet in height that will connect with PNM's existing 115kV transmission line.

Ordinance No. 2007-5 Subsection 2.3.9b (1) states electric utility lines that transmit electricity at a voltage greater than or equal to 46 kilovolts may be placed above ground unless public health and safety requires such lines to be placed underground. Subsection 2.3.9b (3) states above ground electric utility lines that are placed on other development described in Ordinance No. 1998-5 Subsection 8.2 and 8.3.2 of the Land Development Code are not subject to height restrictions, but shall be constructed at a minimum height necessary for the proposed structure to function properly for public health, safety and welfare.

For public safety, the project will be designed and constructed to meet all applicable requirements of the National Electric Safety Code (NESC), as required by the New Mexico Public Regulations Commission (NMPRC). The substation electrical equipment and control unit will be surrounded by a graffiti resistant, fluted block wall and entry gates, which are approximately 12' in height. The substation footprint has been reduced to 100' feet by 100' feet

**Zoning:**

The Applicant's request would change the zoning designation on the 2.4 acres from Municipal Recreation Complex lands to Other Development. Ordinance No. 1998-15 which amended Article III, Section 8.1 (Other Development) specifies all uses otherwise not regulated by the Code are permitted to locate anywhere in the County provided a request for zoning approval is granted per Article III. Such uses specifically include, but are not limited to utilities, parking facilities, and cemeteries provided the development standards, criteria and submittal requirements set forth in Subsection 4.4 and 4.5 are met.

**Project Need:**

The Caja Del Rio substation is needed to provide electric service to the City of Santa Fe/Santa Fe County Water Treatment Plant associated with the Buckman Direct Diversion Project and future growth in the area.

**Land Ownership:**

The substation is proposed to be located on a parcel of land 2.4 acres in size which is owned by the City of Santa Fe. PNM has an exclusive easement to locate the substation at this site. An easement is also in place for the two tap structures to be located adjacent to the proposed substation.

**Existing Development:**

The subject property is currently vacant; the proposed substation is located adjacent to an existing electric transmission corridor.

**Adjacent Property:**

Archers de Santa Fe archery range is located directly northwest of the proposed substation site. Directly to the south is the Marty Sanchez Golf Course and the Caja Del Rio Landfill is located west of the substation site. Residential uses are located to the east and northeast of the site and undeveloped land exists to the west and east.

**Water:**

No water usage is proposed.

**Access/Parking:**

The property will be accessed from West Caja Del Oro Grant Road (County Road 62) which is an unpaved driving surface. The access drive will be 30' feet in width and will consist of a crushed base-course driving surface. Parking is limited and will only be necessary for PNM personal for maintenance of the facility. An access permit must be obtained from the Public Works Department by the Applicant prior to Development permit issuance. Staff has determined that the access/parking element of the Application complies with Article III, Section 9 (Parking Requirements).

**Fire Protection:**

Fire protection will be provided by the Agua Fria Fire Department. The Fire Prevention Division/Code Enforcement Bureau of the Santa Fe County Fire Department has reviewed the Application and recommends Final approval of the Application subject to applicable Santa Fe County Fire and life safety Codes, Ordinances and resolutions. (Refer to Fire Memo Attached as Exhibit "C").

**Signage:**

Proposed signage is minimal; one PNM substation identification sign and eight warning signs are proposed to be located at the site. All proposed signage will be located on the chain link fence. Staff has determined that the signage element of the Application complies with Article VIII (Sign Regulations).

**Terrain Management/Landscaping:**

The proposed project does not impact any major slopes and or arroyo/drainage. The property is presently covered with a mixture of native trees, shrubs, and grasses. The terrain slopes generally down from southeast to the northwest on a slope of approximately 2%. A 14,587 cubic foot retention pond is proposed to capture water run-off from the site. A portion of the upstream runoff will be intercepted and directed to the roadside swale. Runoff normally carried by the swale will be conveyed beneath the driveway through 24" culvert. All disturbed areas will be re-vegetated with a seed mix compatible with the area to re-establish native vegetation and prevent soil loss. The proposed substation wall will also be screened using approximately 21 juniper trees with a 10' foot diameter and approximately 8 pinon trees with a 15' foot diameter. Staff has determined that the Terrain Management element of the Application complies with Article VII, Section III (Terrain Management).

**Lighting:**

No outdoor lighting is proposed.

**Threatened & Endangered Species:**

A survey for federally listed threatened or endangered plant and animal species, federal state and local listed species, as well as agency-sensitive species was conducted for the substation site. No threatened and endangered species were identified.

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

The BCC should review the attached material and consider the recommendation of staff; take action to approve, deny, approve with conditions or table for further analysis of this request.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff has reviewed this Application and has found the following facts to support this submittal: uses permitted under Ordinance No. 1998-15 which amended Article III, Section 8.1 (Other Development) specifies all uses otherwise not regulated by the Code are permitted to locate anywhere in the County provided a request for zoning approval is granted per Article III. Such uses specifically include, but are not limited to utilities, parking facilities, and cemeteries provided the development standards, criteria and submittal requirements set forth in Subsection 4.4 and 4.5 are met. A development permit is required.

This Application is in compliance with Article V, Section 5 (Master Plan Procedures), Article III, Section 4.4 (Development Plan Procedures) of the Land Development Code. Staff recommends Master Plan Zoning and Preliminary Development Plan **approval** with Final Development Plan to be approved administratively for the Caja Del Rio Substation on 2.4-acres.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Exhibit "A"- Applicant's Report
- Exhibit "B"- Applicant's Plans
- Exhibit "C"- Review Agency Comments
- Exhibit "D"- Termination/Tap Structure Detail
- Exhibit "E"- Photo Simulations
- Exhibit "F"- Ordinance No. 2007-5
- Exhibit "G"- Ordinance N. 1998-15
- Exhibit "H"- Letters of Opposition
- Exhibit "I"- Letter from State Rep. Ben Ray Lujan
- Exhibit "J"- Vicinity map
- Exhibit "K"- Record of Decision for the Buckman Water Diversion Project
- Exhibit "L"- Caja Del Rio feeder Design and Cost Estimate
- Exhibit "M"- PNM Power Point Presentation
- Exhibit "N"- May 27<sup>th</sup> CDRC Minutes
- Exhibit "O"- Letters from the City of Santa Fe and BLM
- Exhibit "P"- Letters from Rick Carpenter and Norman Gaume, P.E.





