



DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION TEAM

Planning - Case Comments

HEARING DATE: 02/12/2025 -- **AGENDA ITEM:** #2

Project Number: PR-2024-011242

Application Number: SI-2025-00079

Project Name: 1401 Innovation Parkway SE- PNM (ESS)

Request: Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) requests administrative approval of a Site Plan –for the Sandia Energy Storage System (ESS).

**These are preliminary Planning comments. Additional reviews and/or revised comments may be needed for any modifications and/or supplemental submittals.*

BACKGROUND

- This is a Site Plan review request for 1401 Innovation Parkway SE located in the Sandia Science and Technology Park, zoned NR-BP.
- Sandia Science and Technology Park has a Master Plan, where the master plan is silent on an issue, The IDO and DPM standards apply.
- The site is also within the Employment Center of Sandia/ Kirtland.
- PNM is proposing an Energy Storage System (ESS) with infrastructure and landscape improvements.
- The application is being reviewed according to the IDO Effective Date August 2024.
- The site will be surrounded by a 12' tall ballistic rated wall.
- The Sandia ESS will consist of 72, 20' long battery containers with each housing 530AH of rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. The site will also house various transformers, inverters, communication enclosures and other utility scale electrical equipment which will not extend above the elevation of the wall and cannot be seen from street level. The site is designed to be unmanned and controlled remotely.

**(See additional comments on next page)*

- A recorded Infrastructure Improvements Agreement (IIA) based on the Infrastructure List must be submitted prior to final sign-off of the Site Plan by DFT staff should the Site Plan be approved. Drainage Pond needs to be added to the Infrastructure List.

▪ **PNM RESPONSE:** See attached infrastructure list, drainage pond has been added. This has also been signed by Jim Roeder Committee Chair of development services. (See "FG amount letter 031825.pdf" and "Sandia ESS FG estimate 3.18.25.doc")

- Singing Arrow Bike (path) lane is existing on Gibson and Innovation Parkway.
- Innovation Parkway and Gibson are both local roads and require 5 ft sidewalks per the DPM. The Landscape buffer is per Use-Specific Standards and is 10 ft. Planning defers to Transportation for verification of compliance.

▪ **PNM RESPONSE:** The sidewalk on Gibson is 5' wide, the sidewalk on Innovation is 10' wide, for convenience, this has been notated on the Site Plan

- The subject site is in an Area of Change abutting properties to the West that are in an Area of Consistency.

COMMENTS

Pay special **attention** to comments in **orange color**. Comments in **green** are in compliance.

Use Specific Standards

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 4-3(E)(9) | Energy Storage System (ESS) |
| 4-3(E)(9)(a) | This use shall be surrounded by an opaque perimeter wall at least 8 feet and not more than 12 feet high set back to allow a landscaped buffer area as specified in 4-3(E)(9)(b) below. The perimeter wall shall be a combination of split face and smooth face blocks or cast-in-place walls with a discernable pattern and/or shall provide pilasters at least every 20 feet along the length of the wall. |
| 4-3(E)(9)(b) | <p>Except where abutting industrial development, a landscaped buffer area shall be provided outside of the perimeter wall that meets all of the following requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The required landscaped buffer shall contain at least 1 tree for every 25 feet along the lot line. 2. The landscaped buffer shall comply with the safety and maintenance |

requirements for an ESS, in addition to all applicable standards in Section 14-16-5-6 (Landscaping, Buffering, and Screening), including but not limited to Subsection 14-16-5-6(C)(10) (Planting near Utilities).

~~3. In Residential zone districts, the landscaped buffer shall be at least 20 feet wide or the width of the setback if the required wall follows contextual standards for front setbacks pursuant to Subsection 14-16-5-1(C)(2)(c), whichever is less.~~

4.

5. In Non-residential and Mixed-use zone districts, **the landscaped buffer shall be at least 10 feet wide.**

- 4-3(E)(9)(c) All onsite utility lines and associated equipment shall be placed underground or pad mounted, unless soil conditions, shape, or topography of the site as verified by the City Engineer dictate above-ground installation, with the exception of the main service connection at the utility right-of-way and any new interconnection equipment, including without limitation any poles, as allowed by the electric utility.
- 4-3(E)(9)(d) All existing ESS facilities that undergo expansion beyond the perimeter wall shall meet the design standards for new ESS facilities.
- 4-3(E)(9)(e) All ESS facilities that are not in use for a period of 1 year shall be removed by the owner within the following 6 months. Upon removal, the site shall be revegetated to blend with the existing surrounding vegetation. The owner shall notify the City when removal of the ESS occurs.
- 4-3(E)(9)(f) If this use is located on the same premises as an electric utility use, the premises must meet all use-specific standards in this Subsection 14-16-4-3(E)(9) and in Subsection 14-16-4-3(E)(8) (Electric Utility). The uses may be located inside the same perimeter wall.

5.2 Site Design and Sensitive Lands

- A Sensitive Lands Analysis was submitted with the application. No arroyos or drainage facilities are located on the site.
- **A note needs to be added to the plan: “Pond stabilization per Standard Specification 1013.”** [Drainage Ponds Slope Stabilization and Seeding Requirements.pdf \(cabq.gov\)](#)
Confirm compliance with Section 1013.

▪ **PNM RESPONSE: The will be pond is designed to meet the Standard Specification 1013.** This notation can be found in #3 Grading and Drainage.pdf file pg3 DWG: C5 Stormwater Control Plan under “Typical Basin Section”.

- Drainage Pond must be added to the Infrastructure List with related cost included.

- **PNM RESPONSE: See attached infrastructure list**

- Please also add a note: in regard to seed/native plant to be used in the slope stabilization of the drainage pond.

- **PNM RESPONSE: This notation can be found in #3 Grading and Drainage.pdf file pg3 DWG: C5 Stormwater Control Plan under "Typical Basin Section".**

5-6 Landscaping and Irrigation

- Per 5-6(C)(4)(g), all vegetation shall comply with Article 9-12 and Parts 6-1-1 and 6- 6-2 of ROA 1994 (Pollen Control, Water Conservation Landscaping and Water Waste, and Street Trees) and Section 4 of the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority (ABCWUA) Legislation and Ordinances (Water Waste Reduction Ordinance) as applicable.
- Per 5-6(C)(4)(h), all required plant materials shall be free of disease and insects and shall conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock (ASNA) of the American Nursery and Landscape Association.
 - Planting 59 Modesto Ash per Landscape Sheet 101 is not recommended. Ash trees are prone to borers and Anthracnose(fungus). Planting the same cultivar creates a monoculture. If one tree gets infected the entire stand would potentially follow shortly after. A variety in cultivars of trees would reduce the risk of loss. *(Recommendation: not from the DPM or IDO)*
 - **PNM RESPONSE: PNM has removed the Modesto Ash, eliminated the monoculture and has included a variety of tree of varying shapes and sizes to provide ornamentation and increase aesthetics. Please refer to the updated landscape plans. (#2 Landscape Plan.pdf)**
- Per 5-6(C)(5)(a), all vegetated material required by this Section 14-16-5-6 shall be planted in uncompacted soil.
- Per 5-6(C)(5)(b), if used, weed barriers shall be permeable to optimize stormwater infiltration and prevent runoff.
- Per 5-6(C)(5)(d), a minimum of 2 inches of organic mulch is required in all planting areas, with 3-4 inches recommended.

5-6(C)(9) Planting in or over the Public Right-of-way

- 5-6(C)(9)(a) All planting of vegetated material or installation of any landscaping,

buffering, or screening material in the public right-of way shall require the prior approval of the City. The property owner shall be responsible for the maintenance, repairs, or liability for all the landscaping placed in or over the public right-of way.

- 5-6(C)(9)(b) Any trees that overhang a public sidewalk or Major Public Open Space shall be trimmed to maintain an 8-foot clearance over the sidewalk. Any trees that overhang a public street shall be trimmed to maintain a 9-foot clearance over the street surface.
- Per 5-6(C)(9)(c), where landscaping is installed in the public right-of-way, the applicant shall install an adequate irrigation system that meets the minimum technical requirements in Article 6-6 of ROA 1994 (Trees, Vegetation and Landscaping) and the DPM, with a separate meter for the landscape area in the public right-of-way, or a separate valve(s) at the property line allowing isolation of the irrigation to the landscape within the public right-of-way. Drip irrigation systems and artificial turf shall not be allowed within the public right-of-way.

5-6(C)(14) Irrigation Systems

- Per 5-6(C)(14)(a), irrigation systems shall comply with Section 8 of the ABCWUA Legislation and Ordinances (Cross Connection Prevention and Control Ordinance).
- Per 5-6(C)(14)(b), all irrigation systems shall be designed to minimize the use of water.
- 5-6(C)(14)(c), all non-residential landscape irrigation shall have automatic timers and/or programmable settings to avoid overwatering. Confirm compliance as this site will also be 'unmanned'.

▪ **PNM RESPONSE: Confirmed, all irrigation is on programable schedules/timers. This detail can be reviewed on the updated 2 Landscaping plan.pdf pages 3 and 4.**

- Per 5-6(C)(14)(d), the irrigation system shall not spray or irrigate impervious surfaces, including sidewalks, driveways, drive aisles, streets, and parking and loading areas.

5-6(C)(15) Installation

- 5-6(C)(15)(c) Any damage to utility lines resulting from the negligence of the abutting property owner or the property owner's agents or employees in the installation and maintenance of any landscaping, screening, or buffering in a public right-of-way, private way, or easement shall be the responsibility of such property owner. Any damage to utility lines resulting from the growth of plant materials that have been approved by the applicable public utility as part of a plan for landscaping, screening, or buffering on the public right of way shall be the responsibility of such public utility. If a public utility disturbs landscaping, screening, or buffering in a public right-of-way, private way, or easement, it shall make every reasonable effort to preserve the landscaping materials

and return them to their prior locations after the utility work. If the plant materials die despite those efforts, it is the obligation of the abutting property owner to replace the plant materials.

- 5-6(C)(15)(d) Property owners acknowledge that approved landscaping and trees installed and maintained in a public right-of-way, private way, or easement abutting private properties are the property of the City, and that the City reserves the right to remove them if necessary for a transportation project without compensation, but at no cost to the property owner. Landscaping installed in an abutting public right-of-way, private way, or easement by property owners and later removed by the City shall not impact previously approved net lot area calculations for required landscaping.

5-13(B)(7) Landscaping, Buffering, and Screening

- 5-13(B)(7)(a) Landscaping, screening and buffering areas shall be maintained in compliance with Articles 6-6 and 9-8 of ROA 1994 (Trees, Vegetation, and Landscaping and Weeds, Litter, and Snow) and Section 4 of the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority (ABCWUA) Legislation and Ordinances (Water Waste Reduction Ordinance).
- 5-13(B)(7)(b) All landscaped areas shall be maintained with a neat and orderly appearance, which includes pruning, removal and replacement of dead or diseased plants and trees, disposal of litter, repair of damaged walls and hard surface areas, and upkeep of irrigation systems.
- 5-13(B)(7)(d) Where landscaping was installed pursuant to a Site Plan or development approval, the landscaping shall be replaced according to any landscaping and maintenance plan under that approval.
- 5-13(B)(7)(e) Trees or plants that die shall be replaced by the owner as expeditiously as possible, but in no case longer than 60 calendar days after notice from the City. The replacement of dead vegetation is the responsibility of the property owner.
- 5-13(B)(7)(f) Street trees shall be maintained alive and healthy. Maintaining and replacing street trees or other trees planted in the public right-of-way are the responsibility of abutting property owners.

5-7 Walls and Fences

5-7(B)(1) The Standards in this Section 14-16-5-7 apply to new walls and replacement or repair of existing walls, unless modified elsewhere in this IDO.

5-7(B)(2) A wall shall be erected only after obtaining a permit, pursuant to the provisions in Subsections 14-16-6-5(F) (Permit – Wall or Fence – Minor) or 14-16-6-6(H) (Permit – Wall or Fence – Major), as applicable. **A permit will need to be obtained for the wall.**

PNM RESPONSE: The EPC Contractor is aware of and will obtain a wall permit.

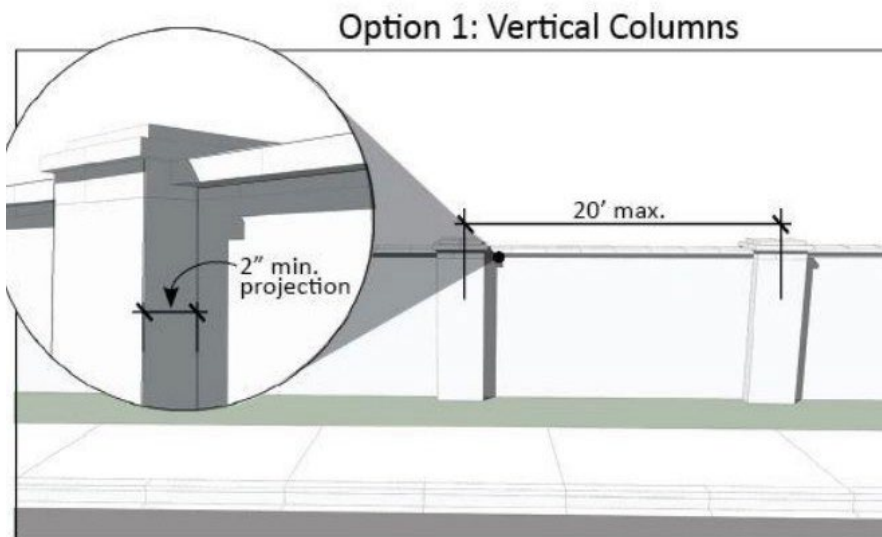
5-7(B)(3) Where wall requirements for buffering and screening purposes in Section 14-16- 5-5 (Parking and Loading), Subsection 14-16-5-6(E) (Edge Buffer Landscaping), Subsection 14-16-5-6(F) (Parking Lot Landscaping), Subsection 14-16-5-6(G) (Screening of Mechanical Equipment and Support Areas), or Section 14-16-5-9 (Neighborhood Edges) are higher than allowed by maximum wall heights in Subsection 14-16-5-7(D), the taller screening wall requirement shall prevail, but the wall shall be subject to any other applicable standards in this Section 14-16-5-7.

5-7(E)(2) Articulation and Alignment

Portions of walls that obtain approval for a wall that exceeds the maximum height limits in Subsection 14-16-5-7(D) (Maximum Wall Height) **or are required to exceed those limits and that face any public street**, City park or trail, Major Public Open Space, or major arroyo, shall incorporate at least 1 of the following features to break up the massing of the wall. (See figure below for illustrations of each option).

5-7(E)(2)(a) Option 1

Vertical pilasters with a minimum projection of 2 inches from the public side of the wall surface at intervals of no more than 20 feet in length. **This Site Plan is compliant with Option 1. As shown below.**



5-8 Outdoor and Site Lighting

- All lighting is designed to be Night Sky compliant and consistent with Section 14-16-5-8. Please confirm compliance with 5-8 Outdoor and Site Lighting.
 - **PNM RESPONSE: PNM has reviewed section 14-16-5-8 and modified our**

lighting plans to ensure we are compliant with the lighting requirements. The light poles have been reduced to 25' and glare shields are now included. Additionally, the light output, light schedules, etc. is programable and controllable. The lights are tied into the security system and will be in a wide cast low-lumen glow at night. This output is similar to lighting of a parking garage at night. However, if motion, heat signature, or radar detects movement the light output will significantly increase in the vicinity to aid in signature capture. It should be noted that the light is designed to be captured within the perimeter of the Wall. To get a visual of this see the models on page 3 of the updated "Light Fixtures and Lighting Plan."

Per IDO Table 5-8-2 Lighting Designations by Zone District the subject property is NR-BP and is in Light Zone 1. Light Zone 1 requires a Light Trespass limit per Table 5-8-3

Table 5-8-3: Light Trespass Limits by Lighting Designation					
	NDZ	Lz0	Lz1	Lz2	Lz3
Foot Candles (fc)	0.02	0.05	0.1	0.3	0.8
Lux (lx)	0.2	0.5	1.0	3.0	8
Luminance (cd/m ²)	0	1	20	40	80

5-8(F)(4) Light Trespass

- 5-8(F)(4)(a) Unless specified elsewhere in this IDO, all outdoor luminaires shall be located or optically shielded such that the point light source is not visible from adjacent property or public right-of-way.
- 5-8(F)(4)(b) The total illumination from outdoor light sources and interior light escaping from windows shall not exceed light trespass limits in Table 5-8-3, as measured at any location along the property line in both of the following ways:
1. Horizontally at finished grade with the light meter facing upward.
 2. Vertically at 5 feet (1.5 meters) above finished grade with the light meter aiming toward the subject property.

5-8(G) TOTAL LUMEN ALLOWANCE

All sources of light visible from the exterior of a property shall meet the requirements of this Subsection 14-16-5-8(G). Only 20 percent of the total allowable site lumens in Table 5-8-4 or Table 5-8-5 is allowed to be uplight (i.e., light emitted above 90 degrees from nadir).

5-8(G)(2) Non-residential Development

Table 5-8-5 specifies the total lumens allowed from all outdoor light sources on properties with an allowable non-residential use.

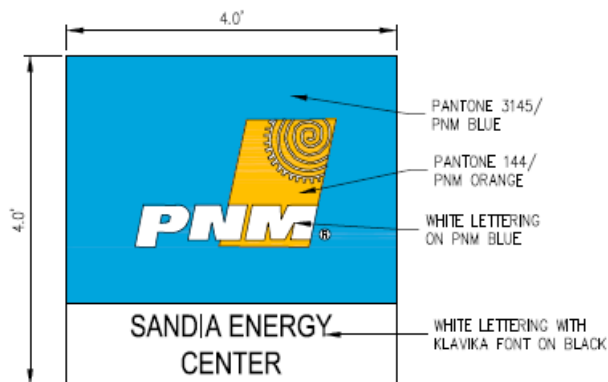
Table 5-8-5: Total Site Lumens Allowed – Non-residential Development					
lm = lumen s.f. = square feet N/A = Not Applicable					
Lighting Requirement	Unit	Lz0	Lz1	Lz2	Lz3
Tree, Landscape, and Sculpture Beds	lm / s.f.	0.5	1	2	4
Walkways/Stairs/Parking Lot		1.00	1.25	1.50	2.50
Outdoor Dining		N/A	2	2.5	3

SIGN

A permit will need to be obtained for the sign. Verify compliance with Sandia Science and Technology Park sign requirements per 6-5(G)(3)(c). Located on page 48 of the SSTP Master Plan. Link provided below:

https://www.cabq.gov/planning/documents/copy3_of_SSTMasterPlanReducedSize.pdf

PNM RESPONSE: PNM is aware of the necessary sign permit and will specifically reach out to SSA for approval on the sign. PNM does not wish to advertise the site, our overall goal it to have the site disappear behind the foliage and wall. Therefore and we do not intend on placing a large sign at the intersection of Gibson and Innovation defined the SSA master plan. There will be a smaller sign, mounted on the wall adjacent to the entrance gate only. This sign, as well as a the warning signs, are pictured on page 1 of the updated site plan.



Per IDO 6-4(I) REFERRALS TO COMMENTING AGENCIES

Following a determination that the application is complete, the Planning Director, ZEO, or any City staff designated to review applications in Table 6-1-1 shall refer applications for comment to the following departments or agencies, as noted below. For administrative decisions in Table 6-1-1, any comments received after such a referral and prior to the decision shall be considered

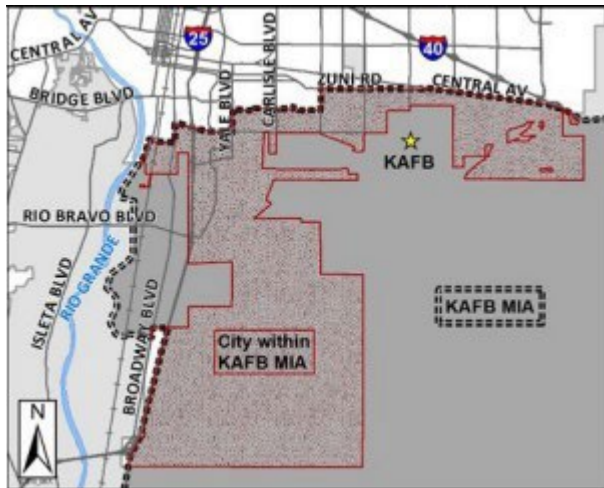
with the application materials in any further review and decision-making procedures. For decisions that require a public hearing and policy decisions in Table 6-1-1, any comments received within 15 calendar days after such a referral shall be considered with the application materials in any further review and decision-making procedures.

- **The subject property is located within the KAFB Military influence area per the map below and requires comments from the staff to be submitted.**
 - **PNM RESPONSE: PNM contacted the two known KAFB Community Planners and provided those communications to Planning staff.**

6-4(I)(7) Development in the Kirtland Air Force Base Military Influence Area

6-4(I)(7)(a) Kirtland Air Force Base staff.

6-4(I)(7)(b) City Aviation Department staff.



- A posted sign agreement was submitted in the application. Planning is waiting for photos of the signs (requested via email on 2.10.25)

▪ **PNM RESPONSE: SEE ATTACHED Picts DFT Sign1 and DFT Sing 2**

- Provide a detailed letter in response to all comments to planning.

***** Once approved, before a Site Plan or Infrastructure List will be distributed for signatures, the following must be met:**

1. The Site Plan and Infrastructure List to be distributed for signatures must depict any revisions required per the conditions and/or findings featured in the Notice of Decision for the application.
2. All Site Plan and Infrastructure List sheets must be included in the submittal to be distributed for signatures; no additional documents/sheets should be included in this submittal (for example, submit a comment response letter separately).

3. The Site Plan and Infrastructure List submittal to be distributed for signatures must be featured in a single PDF.
 4. The Site Plan and Infrastructure List must feature/depict the project and application numbers.
 5. All Site Plan sheets must be stamped and signed by a design professional licensed in the State of New Mexico, with the Landscape Plan sheet(s) stamped and signed by a Landscape Architect licensed in the State of New Mexico.
 7. The title of the Site Plan and Infrastructure must follow the following naming scheme:
 - a. Site Plan: project_number_application_number_Site_Plan_Approved_date of approval
 - b. Infrastructure List: project_number_application_number_IL_Approved_date of approval
- Once/if approved, the Site Plan needs to be distributed to Jay Rodenbeck at jrodenbeck@cabq.gov and Jacob Boylan at jboylan@cabq.gov for distribution for DFT signatures.

SIGNIFICANT IDO DEFINITIONS

Energy Storage System (ESS)

A utility-scale electric facility that stores energy from the electrical grid and then discharges it at a later time to provide power when needed. An ESS may include electrochemical batteries and/or solid-state batteries (Battery Energy Storage System), mechanical energy storage, and/or thermal energy storage. For the purposes of this IDO, this use does not include charging equipment for electric vehicles (EVs), batteries used in consumer products, or residential energy storage systems. See also Electric Utility and Utility-scale Electric Facility.



Disclaimer: The comments provided are based upon the information received from the applicant/agent. If new or revised information is submitted, additional comments may be provided by Planning.

FROM: Antoni Montoya/Jay Rodenbeck
Planning Department

DATE: 02/11/25
