



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 9/4/2025

File #: 25-1049

To: Zoning Administrator

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Valley Tops, LLC, Special Permit
Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 210-044-008-000
Record No.: PLN-12297-SP
Larabee Valley area

A Special Permit application for 10,000 square feet of existing outdoor cannabis cultivation recommended for denial. Water for irrigation is sourced from an unnamed spring onsite and rainwater catchment. Water storage consists of a total 111,400-gallons in hard tanks and a bladder. Drying and processing is proposed onsite, and power is supplied by a generator.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Zoning Administrator:

1. Adopt the resolution (Attachment 1), which does the following:
 - a. Finds the Valley Tops, LLC project statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per section 15270 (Projects Which Are Disapproved) of the State CEQA Guidelines; and
 - b. Finds the proposed project does not comply with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and
 - c. Denies the Special Permit application (PLN-12297-SP).

DISCUSSION:

Project Location: The project is in the Larabee Valley area, on the south side of State Highway 36, approximately 0.3 miles west from the intersection of Larabee Buttes Road and State Highway 36, then southwest on a private road for approximately 0.70 miles, on the property known to be in the southwest quarter of Section 14, the southeast quarter of Section 15, the northeast quarter of

Section 22 and the northwest quarter of Section 23, Township 01 North, Range 04 East.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: Residential Agriculture (RA); 2017 General Plan; Density: 40 acres per unit; Slope Stability: High Instability (3)

Present Zoning: Forestry Recreation (FR), Special Building Site B-5(40)

Environmental Review: The proposed project is statutorily exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per section 15270 (Projects Which Are Disapproved) of the CEQA Guidelines.

State Appeal: The project is NOT appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Major Concerns: Inconsistency with Humboldt County Code, lack of adequate information to support making required findings for approval, and a generally unresponsive applicant.

Monitoring Required:

None.

Executive Summary: For Zoning Administrator consideration is an application under the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance (CMMLUO); application PLN-12297-SP, a Special Permit application for 10,000 square feet of existing outdoor cannabis cultivation. Water for irrigation is sourced from an unnamed spring onsite and rainwater catchment. Water storage consists of twenty (20) 5,000-gallon, two (2) 1,550-gallon, and one (1) 2,500-gallon hard tanks for a total hard tank storage capacity of 105,600-gallons with an additional 5,800-gallons of water storage in a bladder bringing total storage to 111,400-gallons. Processing activities including drying, trimming, and packaging will occur within a proposed 1,800-square foot commercial facility onsite. The applicant anticipates hiring up to four individuals to handle operations as proposed. Power is provided by a Honda 6,500 watt generator.

The application was filed on December 22, 2016. In January of 2020 referral responses indicated an Archaeological Survey was warranted. To date a copy of a completed survey has not been submitted for review. On June 13, 2018 a Deficiency Letter was sent to the applicant indicating updated information was required regarding items such as generator noise attenuation, annual water use, and generator use. On April 20, 2023 an Incomplete Letter was sent to the applicant requesting updated information regarding generator use and noise attenuation plans, annual water use, propagation activities, light control, and Site Plan revisions. A copy of the 2018 Deficiency letter was included for reference. Subsequent communications on February 29, 2024, and again on April 22, 2024 indicated the requested Archaeological Survey had not been received. No response to these communications were received. On June 25, 2025, a letter was sent to the applicant informing them that the requested information must be submitted for continued processing, or if the applicant was no longer

interested in pursuing a cannabis permit, the application could be withdrawn, and the site would need to be remediated. The letter noted if in 30 days neither of these options had been exercised, the project would move forward to hearing with a recommendation of denial. The letter included previous correspondence for reference. No response to the letter was received within the prescribed deadline, and the applicant has not contacted the Planning Department to date.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either responded with no comment, recommended approval or conditional approval, or requested additional information. (Attachment 4)

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Zoning Administrator could elect to direct staff to continue to work with the applicant to resolve the outstanding issues and continue processing the application in accordance with HCC Section 312-4.1 et seq. However, due to the extended amount of time that deficiencies have remained unresolved and the lack of responsiveness from the applicant, staff does not recommend this alternative.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Plot Plan
3. Planning Department Correspondence

Applicant:

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Bridgeville CA, 95526

Owner:

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Please contact Michael Holtermann, Planner, at mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us or 707-268-3737 if you have questions about this item.