

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION

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Hearing Date:	January 7,	2021

To: Humboldt County Planning Commission

From: John Ford, Director of Community Development

Subject: Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit

Case Number PLN-10145 - CUP

Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 522-345-012 and 018

39088 and 39090 St. Hwy. 299, Willow Creek

Table of Contents	Page
Agenda Item Transmittal Recommended Action and Executive Summary Resolution and Findings	
Maps Topo Map Zoning Map Aerial Map Site Plans	11 12 13 14
Attachment 1: Recommended Conditions of Approval Attachment 2: Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings a Operations Plan	17 18
Attachment 3: Referral Agency Comments and Recommendation	19

Please contact Tricia Shortridge, Planner, at 707-268-3704 or by email at tshortridge@co.humboldt.ca.us, if you have any questions about the scheduled public hearing item.

AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL

Hearing Date	Subject	Contact
January 7, 2021	Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit	Tricia Shortridge, Planner

Project Description: An after the fact Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the continuance of outdoor storage related to a commercial operation involving the rental and sales of shipping containers. The operations plan states that transport of shipping containers onto the site or offsite is conducted using a slide bed truck and occurs on an appointment-only basis. The shipping containers are 20 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 8.5 feet in height. The cargo container storage area encompasses approximately 15,450 square feet on two adjacent parcels. Development on both properties includes two vacant commercial buildings, parking for both buildings, and a shared septic system.

Project Location: The project is located in Humboldt County, in the Willow Creek area, on the south side of State Highway 299, approximately 532 feet east from the intersection of State Highway 96 and State Highway 299, on the properties known as 39088 and 39090 State Highway 299

Present Plan Land Use Designation: Mixed Use (MU). 2017 Humboldt County General Plan (HCGP) and Willow Creek Community Plan (WCCP) Density: The maximum residential density is 16 dwelling units per acre and the maximum allowable FAR (Floor to Area Ratio) is 3. Slope Stability: Moderate Instability (2)

Present Zoning: Community Commercial (C-2).

Assessor Parcel Numbers: 522-345-012-000, 522-345-018-000

Case Numbers: CUP16-004 Application Number: 10145

Applicant Owners Agent

Rick Mock Trinity Valley Consulting Engineers

PO Box 1024 PO Box 1024 ATTN: Josh McKnight

Willow Creek, CA 95573 Willow Creek, CA 95573 PO BOX 1567

Willow Creek, CA 95573

Environmental Review: Project is exempt from environmental review under Class 1 Section 15301, Existing Facilities and Class 4 Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land and Class 5 Section 15305, Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations of the CEQA Guidelines.

Major Issues: Potential impacts to on-site wastewater treatment system.

State Appeal Status: Project is not appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit Record Number: PLN-10145-CUP Assessor's Parcel Number: 522-345-012 and 018

Recommended Commission Action

- 1. Describe the application as part of the Consent Agenda;
- 2. Call for public testimony regarding the agenda item;
- 3. If no one requests discussion, take the following action:

Make all of the required findings, based on evidence in the staff report, and approve the Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit on the Consent Agenda, subject to the recommended conditions.

4. Close the consent item.

Executive Summary:

The applicant is requesting after-the-fact approval for outdoor storage of shipping containers for rent or sale. The rental and sales of shipping containers for off-site storage is a secondary business from uses that would operate within the vacant commercial buildings in the future. Currently, there are no principal or conditionally permitted use proposed to occupy the empty spaces.

History

The applicant submitted Conditional Use Permit fees and application materials in 2016, but this is a use that has occupied the site since 2013. The applicant learned of the need for a Use Permit when a Building Inspector came to the project parcels for another reason. Upon learning this, the applicant promptly submitted his application. There are no code enforcement cases on file, and there were no complaints from neighbors.

Existing Conditions

The outdoor storage is located to the rear of the existing buildings and would consist of twenty-one (21) shipping containers that are 20 feet in length by 8 feet width and 8-1/2 feet in height and stored within 15,450 square feet of holding area. The shipping containers are fork-lift loaded onto a flat-bed truck and delivered to an off-site location for use. After a cargo container is rented or sold, it is transported off-site and replaced with the same container model to keep rental/sales inventory intact. The applicant states this business model supplies a convenient service to the Willow Creek Area.

Both parcels are located in downtown Willow Creek and developed with commercial storefront buildings. Both buildings are currently vacant. The on-site parking on both properties is underutilized and consists of 26 shared spaces. The area where shipping containers are stored does not take up available parking spaces or inhibit the parking lot's internal circulation for vehicular maneuvering and ingress/egress (see figures 1 and 2). Property ingress and egress is a driveway off of State Highway 299. The proposal does not involve commercial activity within the State Highway right of way. Both parcels share a septic system, and the Willow Creek Community Services District supplies water. In Spring 2021, the WCCSD will connect both project parcels to the new wastewater system and the OWTS will be decommissioned. Properties adjacent to the north, east, and west are also zoned Community Commercial (C-2). The adjoining lot to the south is zoned General Agriculture (AG.) and undeveloped. The ground area utilized for storage of the cargo is flat.





Potential Issues

In March 2016, the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) and the Building Department recommended project approval without specific comments. In 2017, staff reached out to DEH and the Building Department for conditions of approval to address two potential issues. DEH has

applied a condition of approval to address the risk of placing the cargo containers within the leach field and reserve septic area. While the concern raised by DEH in 2017 is legitimate, there have been no issues with the system in the intervening period and, as previously noted, the system will be decommissioned once connected to the WCCSD wastewater system in Spring, 2021. The building department provided a specific comment to confirm that the shipping containers' temporary location did not necessitate the need for anchors or a foundation system to secure the boxes in place. However, a condition of approval requires the applicant include language on a sales or rental contract to inform the party purchasing or renting a container of the need for anchoring or a foundation system once the containers are placed in the permanent off-site location. Refer to Conditions of Approval #2 and #3 for specific condition language.

General Plan and Zoning Consistency

The project is consistent with the 2017 Humboldt County General Plan, the Willow Creek Community Plan, and the Humboldt County Zoning Code for the following reasons:

- 1. the project is for a commercial use on lands planned for Mixed Use (commercial, office residential) development, and zoned Commercial. Specifically, retail rental and sales are a compatible use on lands designated Mixed Use (see General Plan Ch. 4, Table 4-D), and when conducted outside of a building is a conditionally permitted use within the Community Commercial (C-2) zone;
- 2. the proposed development complies with all development standards of the zone; and
- 3. the proposed use, as conditioned, will not have any adverse impacts on public health, safety, welfare, or the environment. The Department believes the proposed project may be found Categorically Exempt from environmental review pursuant to Sections 15301, Existing Facilities, and 15311 Accessory Structures, of the State CEQA Guidelines because it involves temporary outdoor storage of shipping containers for rent or sale prior to transport to an off-site location.

RECCOMENDATION: Based on a review of Planning Division reference sources and comments from all involved referral agencies, Planning staff believes that the applicant has submitted evidence in support of making all of the required findings for approval of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

ALTERNATIVES: The Planning Commission could elect not to approve the project, or to require the applicant to submit further evidence, or modify the project. If modifications may cause potentially significant impacts, additional CEQA analysis and findings may be required. These alternatives could be implemented if the Commission is unable to make all of the required findings. Planning staff has stated that the required findings in support of the proposal have been made. Consequently, Planning staff does not recommend further consideration of any alternative.

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Resolution Number 21-Record Number PLN-10145 Assessor's Parcel Number: 522-345-012

Resolution by the Planning Commission of the County of Humboldt to approve the Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit.

WHEREAS, Rick Mock, submitted an application and evidence in support of approving an after the fact Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the continuance of outdoor storage related to a commercial operation involving the rental and sales of shipping containers

WHEREAS, the County Planning Division has reviewed the submitted application and evidence and has referred the application and evidence to involved reviewing agencies for site inspections, comments and recommendations.

WHEREAS, the proposed project is statutorily exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15301 Existing Facilities, Section 15304 Minor Alterations to Land, and Section 15305 Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations of the CEQA Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on January 7, 2021, and reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for a Conditional Use Permit and reviewed and considered all evidence and testimony presented at the hearing.

Now, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission makes all the following findings:

1. FINDING:

Project Description: An after the fact Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the continuance of outdoor storage related to a commercial operation involving the rental and sales of shipping containers. The operations plan states that transport of shipping containers onto the site or off-site is conducted using a slide bed truck and occurs on appointment only basis. The shipping containers are 20 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 8.5 feet in height. The storage containers are placed within a holding area comprising approximately 15,450 square feet split between two adjacent parcels. Both parcels are developed with a commercial building (vacant), parking, and a shared septic system.

EVIDENCE: a) Project File no. 10145, Case no. CUP-16-004

2. FINDING:

CEQA. The requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been complied with. The Humboldt County Planning Commission has determined the project is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 Existing Facilities, Section 15304 Minor Alterations to Land, and Section 15305 Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations of the CEQA Guidelines.

EVIDENCE: a) the operation involves negligible or no expansion of existing commercial uses on a parcel zoned for commercial uses, and;

- b) the temporary placement of shipping containers for rent or sales is a minor use of the land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment, and:
- c) outdoor storage in support of a commercial use is considered a permitted use accessory to the principal use which is retail sales and rental of goods and services. The outdoor storage does not result in any changes in land use or density.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

3. FINDING The proposed development is in conformance with the County General Plan, Open Space Plan, and the Open Space Action Program.

- EVIDENCE: a) General Plan Ch. 4: The Mixed Use (MU) land use designation is intended for lands in central areas of urban communities where the presence of public utilities and a sufficient population base allows the development of pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use (commercial, office, and residential) development. The sales and rental of shipping containers at this location provide a service to private property owners, public property owners and businesses that need an affordable and convenient way to store equipment and supplies. The Retail Services use type is a compatible use in the MU land use designation per General Plan Chapter 4 Land Use Element Table 4.D.
 - b) General Plan Ch. 10: The Open Space (OS) land use designation provides for land which is essentially unimproved and devoted to opens space uses, conservation of natural resources and habitat, managed production of resources, outdoor recreational uses, and for protection of public safety in areas subject to flooding or unstable slopes. The two project parcels are planned and zoned for mixed use development, are located within downtown Willow Creek and within the boundaries of the Willow Creek Community Service District. Development and uses on the project parcels will not have any impact on lands planned for preservation and conservation of Open Space.
 - c) General Plan Ch. 10: Scenic Resources (Section 10.7) and California State Highways Code (SHC) §263.8 identifies Route 299 from Arcata to Route 96 in Willow Creek as a scenic highway. The project parcels are located approximately 400 feet east of Route 96, outside the boundary. There will be no visual impact to the designated scenic portion of Route 299.
 - d) General Plan Ch. 5: Infrastructure and Services policy IS-P3, Requirements for Discretionary Development. The requirements have been satisfied because: 1) existing services are adequate. The parcels receive public water service from the Willow Creek Community Services District, structure fire protection and emergency medical response services from the Willow Creek Fire Protection District, and telephone and electrical service from public utility providers; and 2) the project will not impact health, safety or welfare or plans to provide infrastructure or services to the community. Conditions of the

project impose the development requirements recommended by DEH on future uses of the property to address any negative effects from the temporary stationing of shipping containers over portions of the site containing the existing on-site waste treatment systems (OWTS). Operational restrictions direct that no vehicles enter upon the holding area and a lift is used to move the shipping container onto the truck for delivery. Additionally, these parcels are located within the area planned to receive community sewer service from the Willow Creek CSD in 2021, and the project is conditioned to require hookup to the public system and decommissioning of the existing OWTS.

- e) Willow Creek Community Plan, WCCP-P3 Flood Hazards: The project parcels are located well outside of the 500-year flood plan for the Trinity River. Land Use Policies WCCP-P1 Commercial Recreation and WCCP-P2 Public Lands do not apply to the proposed project.
- **4.** FINDING The proposed development is consistent with the purposes of the existing zone in which the site is located.
 - EVIDENCE: a) The purpose of the Community Commercial (C-2) zone is to provide complete community facilities necessary for community convenience. The Mock commercial operation is a facility which makes available for rent or purchase containers for supplemental onsite personal storage at the party's property and provides a commercial service responsive to a community need.
 - b) The Community Commercial (C-2) zone permits commercial operations to be conducted outside of buildings with a Use Permit.
 The project is a CUP to permit the storage of shipping containers to be rented or sold and transported off-site to a delivery location
- **5.** FINDING The proposed development conforms with all applicable standards and requirements of these regulations.
 - EVIDENCE: a) §314-2.2 Development Standards: The outdoor storage area does not encroach into the front, sides or rear minimum required yard setbacks. The C-2 zoning does not specify maximum ground coverage is not specified, and the 8.5 ft. tall shipping containers are compliant with the allowed maximum building height which is seventy-five feet (75'). The containers will not be stacked.
 - b) §314-109.1 Off-Street Parking: The location where the shipping containers are placed does not conflict with any portion of the parking lot. Twenty-six (26) spaces are available and internal circulation is two-way. The proposed use does not generate customer traffic because rental or sales transactions are conducted on an appointment between the customer and owner, there are no employees, there is only one type of product and service that is for a single specific need off-site storage facilities. This business model draws in very little traffic.

6. FINDING The proposed development and conditions under which it may be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; or materially injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity.

EVIDENCE:

- a) All reviewing referral agencies have approved the proposed project. The Department of Environmental Heath has identified specific risks and have concluded that notification of such risks shall suffice and future development on subject parcels will encumbrance the existing leach field and the need for a relocation area. Such notifications of such risks have been identified within the Conditions of Approval.
- b) The Operations Plan will include the following measures intended to reduce the impact of the use on the neighborhood: 1) All loading/unloading and shipping of containers shall be conducted from the paved parking areas; 2) No equipment shall be used in the location of the existing onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS); 3) All business activities shall be conducted during daylight hours; 4) An improvement plan approved by the Planning Director shall be required for any separate installation of lighting, fencing and/or landscaping on the property; and 5) No new signage is authorized by this permit. These measures have been made a condition of approval.
- 7. FINDING The

The proposed development does not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law unless the following written findings are made supported by substantial evidence: 1) the reduction is consistent with the adopted general plan including the housing element; and 2) the remaining sites identified in the housing element are adequate to accommodate the County share of the regional housing need; and 3) the property contains insurmountable physical or environmental limitations and clustering of residential units on the developable portions of the site has been maximized.

EVIDENCE:

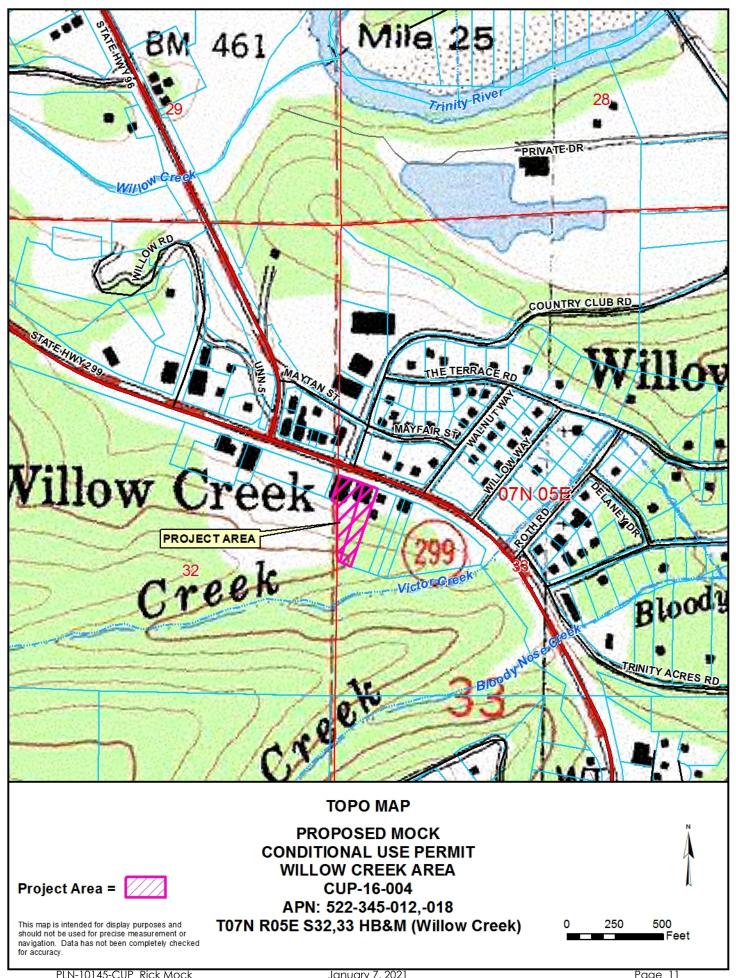
- a) The parcel is currently planned for Mixed Uses and zoned for Community Commercial purposes. The proposed project is for an after the fact Conditional Use Permit for a commercial/light industrial use, which is engaged in the sale and renting of shipping containers from subject parcels. The project will not affect the communities' density as no dwelling units are proposed.
- b) The parcel was not included in the housing inventory of Humboldt County's 2019 Housing Element but does have the potential to support apartments on the upper floors of multistory structures. The approval of the outdoor storage of movable freight boxes for sales or rent on this parcel will not reduce density or conflict with the ability for mixed-use (commercial, office, and residential) development to be constructed on this parcel.

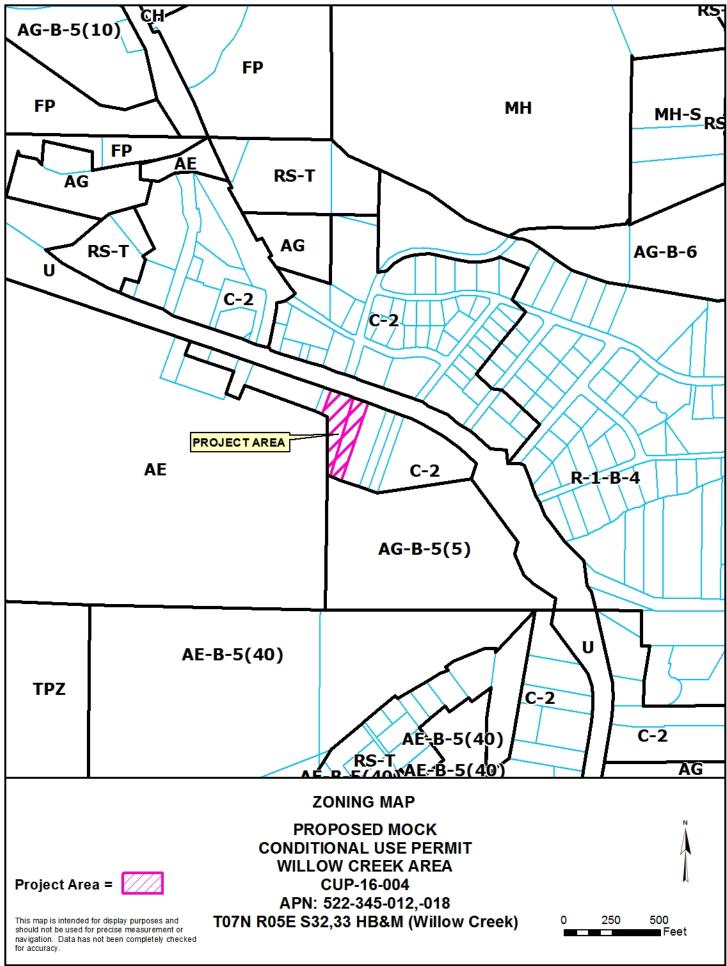
DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the above findings and evidence, the Humboldt County Planning Commission does hereby:

- Adopt the findings set forth in this resolution; and
- Approve the Rick Mock Conditional Use Permit, Case No. CUP16-004 (Application Number PLN-10145-CUP) subject to the conditions in Attachment 1.

Adopted	after review and c	onsideration of all the ϵ	evidence on January 7, 2021.
The motio	•	OMMISSIONER wing ROLL CALL vote:	and second by COMMISSIONER
AYES:	COMMISSIONERS		
NOES: ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS COMMISSIONERS		
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS		
DECISION	:		
the forego	oing to be a true a	0	of the County of Humboldt, do hereby certify e action taken on the above entitled matter noted above.
		John Ford, Director	
		Planning and Building	Department







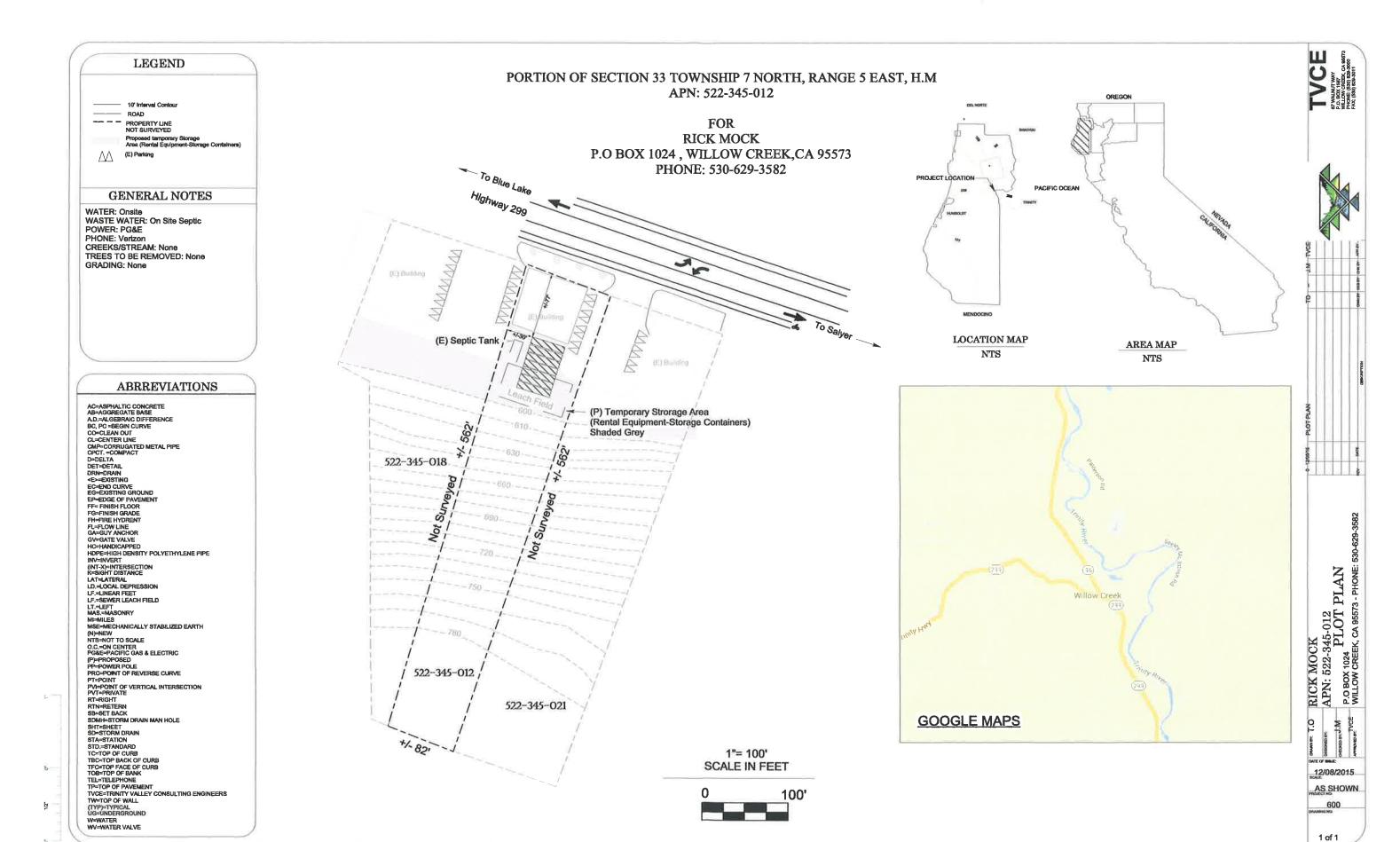
AERIAL MAP

Project Area =

PROPOSED MOCK
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
WILLOW CREEK AREA
CUP-16-004
APN: 522-345-012,-018
T07N R05E S32,33 HB&M (Willow Creek)

0 100 200 Feet

This map is intended for display purposes and should not be used for precise measurement or navigation. Data has not been completely checked for accuracy.



TRINITY VALLEY CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC

ATTACHMENT 1

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Approval of the Conditional Use Permit is conditioned upon the following terms and requirements which must be fulfilled before work is initiated or during project implementation.

A. General Conditions

- 1. The holding area for the shipping containers has been identified as covering the existing onsite leach field as well as the majority of the open space behind the existing building. The current location and placement of the containers has left no reserve septic area for replacement in the event of a failure. DEH has advised the applicant in response to the project referral, that covering existing leach field with shipping containers can compact the soils reducing aeration of leach field which can lead to septic failure. DEH will impose the following development restrictions:
 - (a) In the event of septic failure continued occupancy of the onsite structures will not be permitted until a connection to a municipal sewer system (if available) is confirmed or permitted replacement system is installed.
 - (b) In the case of future development on specific project parcels, necessary permits cannot be obtained until the encumbrance of an existing leach field is addressed with proper mitigation measures and a designated replacement area.
 - (c) DEH recommends pumping the septic tank regularly (1x/5 years) to extend the life of the system and reduce the risk of malfunction.
- 2. When community sewer service becomes available to the property, the existing lots shall be connected to the public system and the existing on-site waste treatment system(s) shall be decommissioned. At that time, the aforementioned Condition of Approval number 1 shall no longer apply.
- 3. Applicant shall inform customers of County regulations by providing notice on sales invoices and rental agreements that "Shipping storage containers are required to be anchored down or on a foundation system and are subject to a building permit except when the storage container is associated with a project that has an active building permit on file"
- 4. The applicant shall secure a Business License for the shipping container rental and sale operation.

B. On-Going Requirements/Development Restrictions Which Must be Satisfied for the Life of the Project:

- 5. The use shall be conducted in conformance with the approved Site Plan, Plan of Operations and Project Description. Other than minor deviations to the plot plan as permitted per Section 312-11.1, all changes shall require modification of this Conditional Use Permit.
- 6. Until verification is provided that the project parcels are connected to the public wastewater system and the existing septic system has been abandoned, all

loading/unloading and shipping of containers shall be conducted from the paved parking areas. No equipment shall be used in the location of the existing onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS).

- 7. All business activities shall be conducted during daylight hours.
- 8. An improvement plan approved by the Planning Director shall be required for any separate installation of lighting, fencing and/or landscaping on the property.
- 9. No new signage is authorized by this permit.
- 10. If cultural resources are encountered during construction or business activities, the contractor on site shall cease all work in the immediate area and within a 50-foot buffer of the discovery location. A qualified archaeologist as well as the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer(s) are to be contacted to evaluate the discovery and, in consultation with the applicant and lead agency, develop a treatment plan in any instance where significant impacts cannot be avoided.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) can provide information regarding the appropriate Tribal point(s) of contact for a specific area; the NAHC can be reached at 916-653-4082. Prehistoric materials may include obsidian or chert flakes, tools, locally darkened midden soils, groundstone artifacts, shellfish or faunal remains, and human burials. If human remains are found, California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 requires that the County Coroner be contacted immediately at 707-445-7242. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the NAHC will then be contacted by the Coroner to determine appropriate treatment of the remains pursuant to PRC 5097.98. Violators shall be prosecuted in accordance with PRC Section 5097.99

The applicant is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with this condition.

C. Informational Notes:

- 1. The applicant is responsible for receiving all necessary permits and/or approvals from other state and local agencies.
- 2. This permit shall expire and become null and void at the expiration of one (1) year after all appeal periods have lapsed (see "Effective Date"); except where construction under a valid building permit or use in reliance on the permit has commenced prior to such anniversary date. The period within which construction or use must be commenced may be extended as provided by Section 312-11.3 of the Humboldt County Code.
- 3. The applicant is required to pay for permit processing on a time and material basis as set forth in the schedule of fees and charges as adopted by ordinance of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. The Department will provide a bill to the applicant after the decision. Any and all outstanding Planning fees to cover the processing of the application to decision by the Hearing Officer shall be paid to the Humboldt County Planning Division, 3015 "H" Street, Eureka.

ATTACHMENT 2

Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings

Attachment 2 includes a listing of all written evidence which has been submitted by the applicant in support of making the required findings. The following materials are on file with the Planning Division:

- Application Form (in file)
- Plot Plan (attached)
- Operations Plan (attached)
- Current Deed (in file)

Rick Mock

39088 Highway 299, Willow Creek CA 95573 | 530.629.3582 | rmock3582@gmail.com

BUSINESS PLAN

Objective: Purchase of shipping containers for off-site rental or sale of storage

containers.

Location: 39088 Highway 299

Willow Creek CA 95573

Time of Operation: By appointment

Property Usage: Temporary storage site for shipping containers.

Attachment 3

Referral Agency Comments and Recommendation

Referral Agency	Response	Recommendation	On File
County Building Inspection Division	✓	Approval	✓
County P/W, Land Use Division	✓	Approval	✓
Division of Environmental Health	✓	Conditional Approval	✓
Northwest Information Center	✓	Contact local tribes	✓
Hoopa Tribe	✓	No comment	✓
County Counsel	✓	No comment	✓
CalFire	✓	Approval	✓