



COUNTY OF LAKE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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Item 6c
9:35 AM
February 13, 2025

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mireya G. Turner, Community Development Director
Pablo Guerrero, Assistant Planner

DATE: February 13, 2025

SUBJECT: Consideration of General Plan Conformity Determination (GPC 24-01) and CEQA Categorical Exemption (CE 24-41) to remodel the National Guard Armory to the Sheriff Administration Facility; located at 1431 Hoyt Ave., Lakeport (APN 003-046-75)

ATTACHMENTS: 1. 100% Construction Documents (REMOVED)
2. Agency Comments
3. Site Visit Photos

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lake County Public Services Department proposes a remodel/ expansion of the National Guard Armory to the Lake County Sheriff Administration Facility at 1431 Hoyt Avenue in Lakeport. The project is funded by the Community Project Funding secured by Representative Mike Thompson. The project aims to enhance public safety by converting the underutilized military facility into a community-oriented center with office space, a law enforcement training center, and public assistance services.

The remodel/ expansion involves upgrading the 20,323 square foot building with a 578-square-foot expansion, totaling 20,901 square feet. Planned improvements include a new second floor, elevator access, seismic and fire safety upgrades, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)- infrastructure, and expanded parking with 166 spaces, including 8 ADA-compliant spots and 4 EV charging stations.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project qualifies for a categorical exemption under the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301 "Existing Facilities", Class 1 (e)(1), as the additions to the existing facility do not exceed 2,500 square feet. The project aligns with the Lake County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, with no significant environmental impacts expected.

Staff requests the Lake County Planning Commission assess the project's conformity with the General Plan, required under Government Code Section 65402, before proceeding

with permits and construction, which aims to enhance public safety infrastructure and improve law enforcement services for the community.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

<u>Project Title:</u>	Lake County Sheriff Administration Facility
<u>Permit Numbers:</u>	GPC 24-01; CE 24-41
<u>Lead Agency:</u>	County of Lake
<u>Applicant:</u>	Lars Ewing (Lake County Public Services, Facilities Maintenance Division)
<u>Property Owner:</u>	County of Lake
<u>Property Location:</u>	1431 Hoyt Avenue, Lakeport, CA 95453
<u>Parcel Number(s) APN(s):</u>	003-046-75
<u>Parcel Size:</u>	~ 7.08 acres
<u>General Plan Designation:</u>	Public Facilities
<u>Zoning Districts:</u>	"O" Open Space District - "SC" Scenic Combining District
<u>Supervisory District:</u>	4
<u>Flood Zone:</u>	"D" - Areas in which flood hazards are undetermined, but possible.
<u>Hazards:</u>	High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
<u>Topography:</u>	~ 21% Avg. Cross Slope
<u>Fire Protection:</u>	Lakeport Fire Department; CAL FIRE
<u>Vegetation:</u>	Oak trees, grasses, and riparian habit
<u>Water Courses:</u>	None
<u>Submittal Date:</u>	September 26, 2024

Background

On July 22, 2024, Lake County received one million dollars in Community Project Funding (CPF) for public facilities. This funding was secured by Representative Mike Thompson and is included in the Fiscal Year 2025 Appropriations Act for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. The allocation represents a significant step forward in enhancing public safety infrastructure in the region.

The National Guard Armory, underutilized, presents a unique opportunity for a repurpose to better serve the community. Originally designed for military use, the facility is no longer needed for its intended purpose and would be transformed into the Lake County Sheriff Administration. This renovation would include office space for administrative functions, a modern training center for law enforcement employees, and provide public assistance. It aligns with the goal to maximize the use of this public space for community benefit.

Project Overview

The project site is located at 1431 Hoyt Avenue, Lakeport, CA 95453 (Figure 1). Existing development on site includes the 20,323 square foot National Guard Armory. Upon obtaining the necessary building permits, the County of Lake would proceed with renovations to the building, increasing by 578 square feet, totaling 20,901 square feet.

As proposed, the planned remodel/ expansion would feature the addition of an elevator and a supporting equipment room. A second floor would be added, which would increase the roof height to 26 feet and 8 inches from the original height of 23 feet and 8 inches, resulting in a total area of 3,496 square feet. The access to the second floor would be through an elevator, mentioned above, and two sets of stairs would be added. Other additions include seismic upgrade, fully automatic fire sprinkler system, new roof top mechanical equipment, and remodeling the walls and restrooms. The project has a life safety plan for both floors.

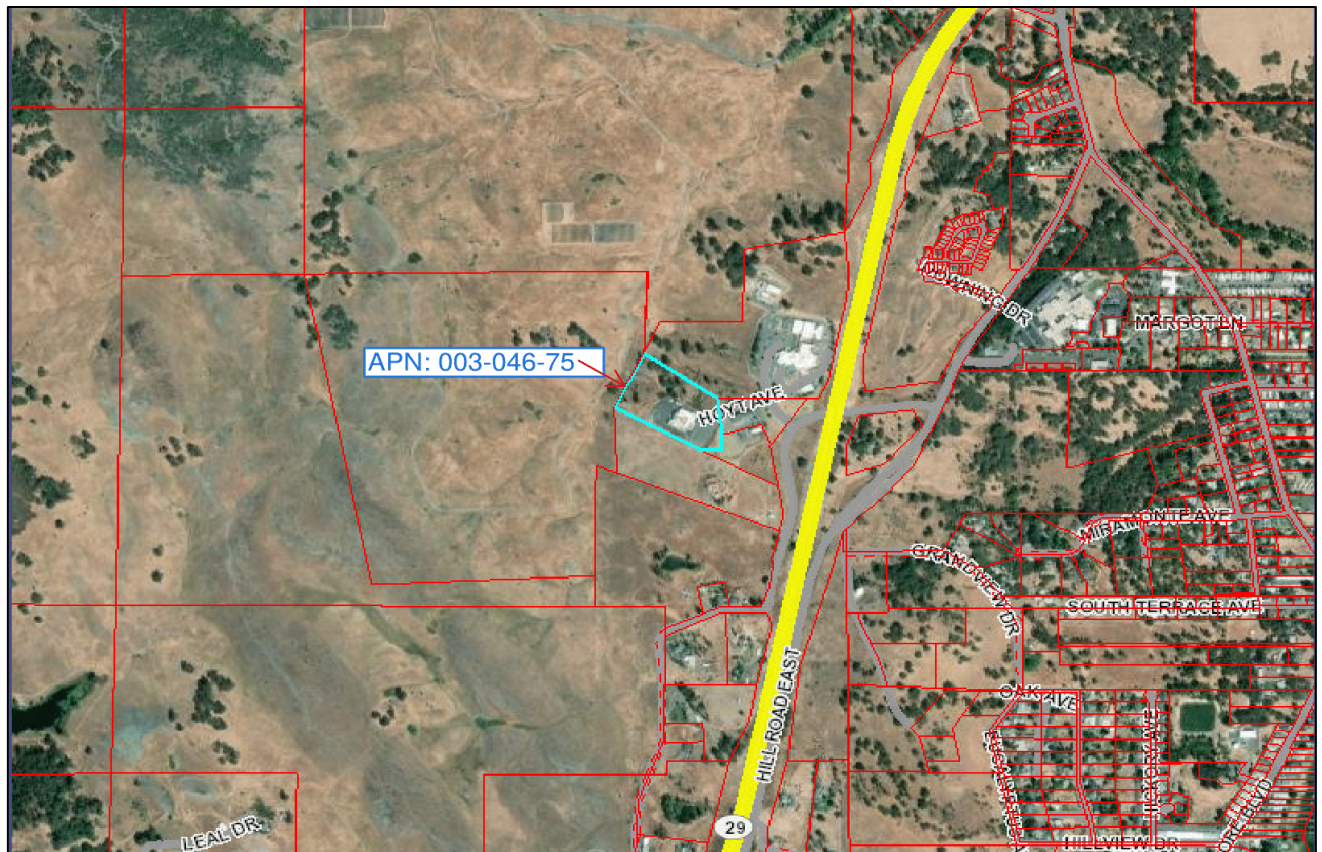
The project aims to increase the total number of parking spaces from 111 to 166. Additionally, the plan encompasses the installation of 4 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and the allocation of 11 extra parking spaces designated as EV capable.

Construction of the facility would adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that it meets the functional needs and accessibility requirements of the population it serves. The minimum width for doors would be 32 inches, while stairways and corridors would have a minimum width of 44 inches. Among the parking spaces, 8 would be ADA-compliant, in accordance with the Lake County Code of Ordinance Article 46.10 (e), which stipulates the requirement of 1 ADA space for every 40 parking spaces.

As outlined in the general conditions in the agreement between the County and the licensed contractor, the best management practices (BMPs) would include:

- “The Contractor shall prepare, maintain, and adhere to a Storm Water Prevention Plan. This Plan shall incorporate the Contractor's Best Management Practices (BMP) to control sediment, erosion, and other pollutants.”
- “The Contractor shall maintain the BMP Program at the job site.”
- The grading would be less than 50 cubic yards.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map



Source: Lake County GIS Mapping, 2024.

PROJECT SETTING

The project site is located at 1431 Hoyt Avenue in Lakeport and encompasses approximately 7.08 acres. Access to the site is from County maintained Hill Road which is accessed from either Hill Road East or State Highway 29 that is approximately 675 feet east of the project site. Surrounding adjacent land uses include County-owned public facilities to the east and northeast, and a rural residential property to the south. Topography of the site is flat to hilly with slopes of 0% to greater than 30%. Vegetation consists primarily of oak trees, grasses, and riparian habitat. Surface water drains from the project site and is tributary to other offsite unnamed waterways (Attachment 3).

General Plan and Zoning Designations with Surrounding Uses

General plan designations around the project site include (Figure 2):

- North: Public Facilities
- South: Rural Residential
- East: Public Facilities
- West: Public Facilities

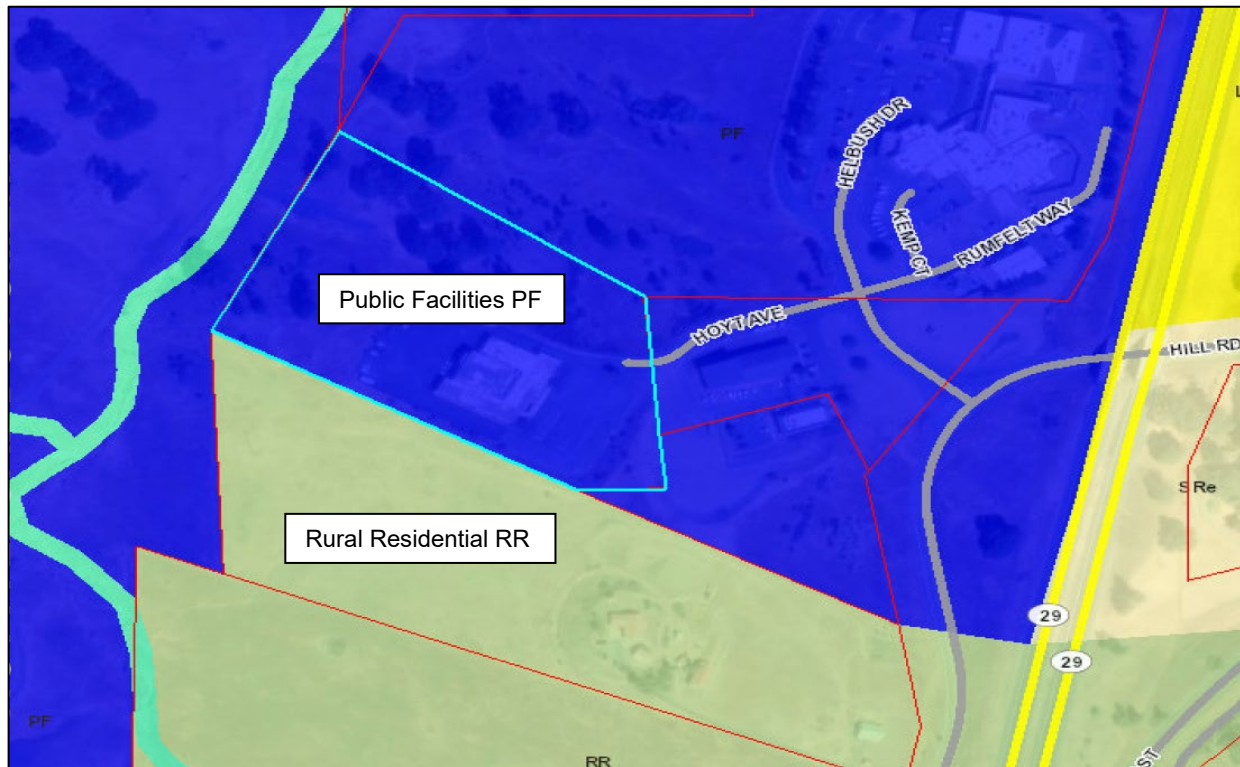
Zoning designations and uses around the project site include (Figure 3):

- North: "O" Open Space, developed with a Lake County building, approximately 27.43 acres.
- South: "RR" Rural Residential, single-family dwelling, approximately 11.61 acres.
- East: "O" Open Space, 2 parcels developed with Lake County buildings, approximately 6.30 acres.
- West: "O" Open Space, County owned property, approximately 114.08 acres.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

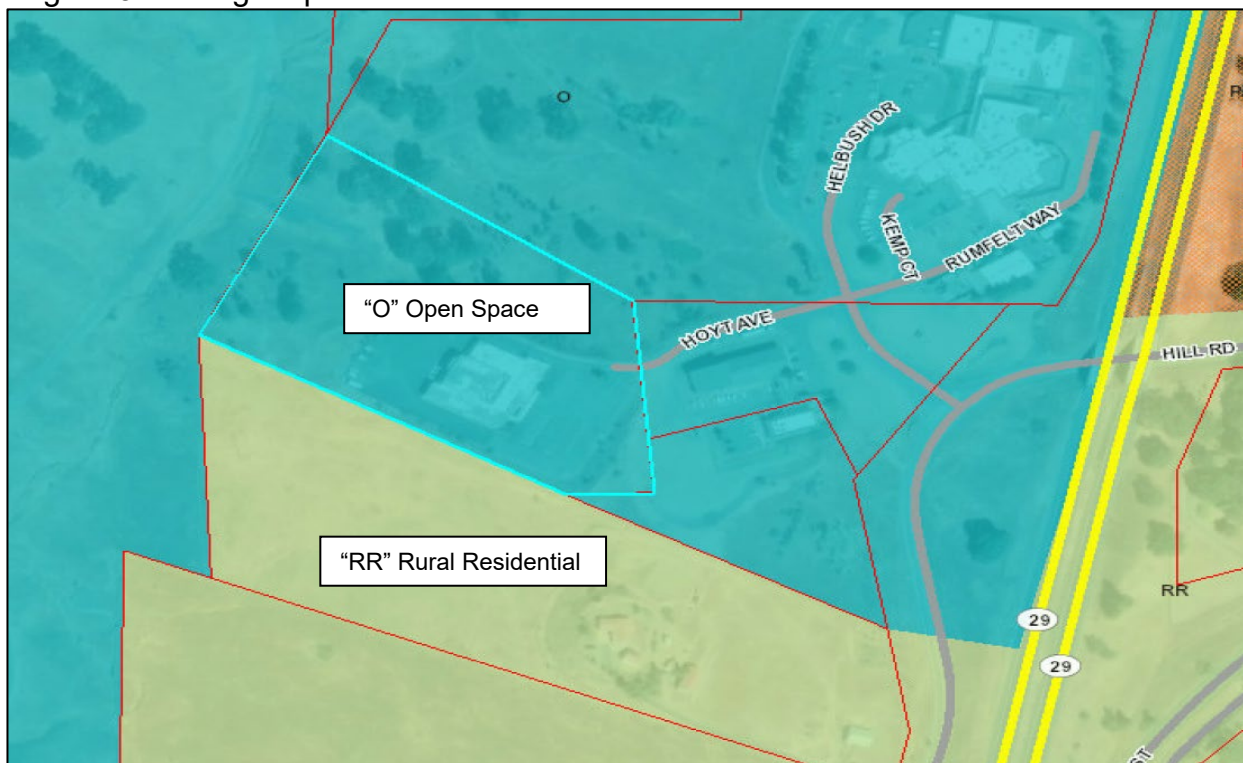
As part of the County's procedures for processing applications, a Request for Review was sent out to the various agencies and other interested parties on October 25, 2024. No adverse comments were received. As of February 13, 2025, no comments were received from the affiliated tribe.

Figure 2: General Plan Map



Source: Lake County GIS Mapping, 2024.

Figure 3: Zoning Map



Source: Lake County GIS Mapping, 2024.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Regulation

Government Code Section 65402 (Planning and Zoning Laws) states the following:

(a) If a general plan or part thereof has been adopted, no real property shall be acquired by dedication or otherwise for street, square, park or other public purposes, and no real property shall be disposed of, no street shall be vacated or abandoned, and no public building or structure shall be constructed or authorized, if the adopted general plan or part thereof applies thereto, until the location, purpose and extent of such acquisition or disposition, such street vacation or abandonment, or such public building or structure have been submitted to and reported upon by the planning agency as to conformity with said adopted general plan or part thereof.

The required conformity determination is provided below.

General Plan Conformity

In compliance with State regulations, the Community Development Department, Planning Division, has identified goals and policies from the Lake County General Plan that support conformity of the proposed project.

General Plan, Chapter 5 – Public Facilities & Services

Goal PFS-1: To establish and maintain sustainable and safe levels of service, minimize costs, and provide criteria for determining the location, capacity and timing of future public facilities and services.

- Policy PFS-1.2 Locational Criteria for Public Facilities: The County shall locate public facilities designed for direct public use (libraries, schools, etc.) along major thoroughfares.

Response: The project focuses on transforming the National Guard Armory into a facility where the Sheriff Administration would serve dual roles, supporting law enforcement operations while providing employee training and public services. Although the property is located on Hoyt Avenue, which is not a major thoroughfare, it is within approximately 985 feet of State Highway 29, and near the County Jail.

The facility would accommodate 34 employees and an average of 15 public visitors daily and is projected to have a minimal traffic impact based on the 110 per day trips threshold from the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA¹. The road would remain easily accessible to the public.

¹ California State Governor's Office of Planning and Research. Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA. April 2018. Accessed 24 December 2024 at <https://lci.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743_Technical_Advisory_4.16.18.pdf>.

- Policy PFS-1.3 Maintain Existing Levels of Services: The County shall ensure that proposed developments do not create significant adverse impacts on existing natural or man-made infrastructure of the County and that the necessary man-made infrastructure to support the project will be in place, bonded for, or other guarantee acceptable to the Approval Authority prior to the filing of final maps or granting of other entitlements.

Response: Existing water and sewer services are provided by Lake County Special Districts. The project was routed to Special Districts for comments and the proposed modifications (increasing square footage, adding office spaces, and introducing a second floor) do not necessitate additional capacity fees currently. The bi-monthly billing rate may be subject to change in the future, potentially due to variations in the overall usage of water and sewer services stemming from factors such as increased occupancy, staff, and facility utilization (Attachment 2).

Zoning Ordinance Conformance

Article 2 – General Provisions

According to the Lake County, Zoning Ordinance Article 2, Section 2.4 (b) Exemptions, development undertaken by the County of Lake is exempted (Ord. 1749, 7/7/1988). Thus, any proposed development must adhere to the Lake County General Plan and is not subject to the Lake County's Zoning Ordinance. However, The County of Lake must continue to ensure full compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations. For the reasons described above, the proposed project would therefore conform to the Lake County Municipal Code, Zoning Ordinance, Article 2.

Lakeport Area Plan

5.0 Community Development – Services 5.4

Objective 5.41: Upgrade fire protection and law enforcement in the planning area.

- Policy 5.4.1c: Maintain Sheriff patrol levels that correspond to population growth in the Lakeport Planning Area.

Response: The Lake County Sheriff Administration functions as a central hub for law enforcement within the Lakeport area. The County is investing in the remodel/ expansion and modernization of this facility to enhance its law enforcement infrastructure. The additional square footage, which includes new offices and a second floor, would provide accommodation for more deputies, administrative staff, and training personnel, thereby improving the County's ability to address increasing public safety demands. The proposed project would therefore conform to the Lakeport Area Plan.

AGENCY COMMENTS

Staff received comments from the agencies listed below (Attachment 2). All requirements from comments have been included in the project design:

- Lake County Department of Public Works – Roads and Surveyor Divisions
- Pacific Gas and Electric
- Sheriff's Office
- Lake County Special Districts
- Lake County Public Services - Facilities Maintenance Division

None of these agency comments indicate that the project is out of compliance with their respective department.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301 "Existing Facilities", Class 1 (e)(1) exemption would be applied to the proposed project for the remodel of the National Guard Armory into a Sheriff Administration Facility. Under the section above, additions to existing structures are exempted if the addition would not result in an increase of more than 2,500 square feet, which the project is proposed to increase the existing structure by 578 square feet. Also, pursuant to the CCR, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15002.5, the parcel contains no historical buildings listed on the California Register of Historical Resources or on the County's list of historical properties (verified with OHP). The affiliate tribe received notice about the project and no comments were received. The parcel is also not listed in the California Department of Toxic Substances Control "EnviroStor" database, and there are no toxic waste sites or facilities within 1,000 feet of the site. In addition, no officially designated state scenic highway lies adjacent to the site, according to the California Department of Transportation's list. Lastly, no new disturbance is proposed outside of the existing disturbed footprint. There would be no cumulative effect from successive projects of the same type, in the same place, over time.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission find that the remodel/ expansion of the National Guard Armory to Sheriff Administration Facility, located at 1431 Hoyt Ave., Lakeport, is in conformance with the County of Lake General Plan pursuant to California Government Code Section 65402, and is exempt from CEQA under the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301 "Existing Facilities", Class 1 (e)(1).

SAMPLE MOTIONS

Environmental Review

- A. I move that the Planning Commission determine the proposed remodel/ expansion of the National Guard Armory into the Sheriff Administration Facility is exempt from CEQA under the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article

19, Section 15301 “Existing Facilities”, Class 1 (e)(1) with the findings in the staff report dated February 13, 2025.

General Plan Conformity Report

- B. I move that the Planning Commission finds that the remodel/ expansion of the National Guard Armory to the Sheriff Administration Facility, as proposed by the Lake County Public Services, Facilities Maintenance Division is in conformity with the Lake County General Plan as required under the California Code of Regulations Section 65402 with the findings in the staff report dated February 13, 2025.

NOTE: The applicant or any interested person is reminded that the Zoning Ordinance provides for a seven-calendar day appeal period. If there is a disagreement with the Planning Commission’s recommendation, an appeal to the Board of Supervisors may be filed. The appropriate forms and applicable fee must be submitted prior to 5:00 p.m. on or before the seventh calendar day following the Commission’s final determination.