



COUNTY OF LAKE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
255 N. Forbes Street – 3rd Floor
Lakeport, California 95453
Planning • Building • Code Enforcement
Phone: (707) 263-2221 • Fax: (707) 263-2225

Item #6b
9:20 a.m.
February 12, 2026

STAFF REPORT

TO: County of Lake Planning Commission

FROM: Mireya G. Turner, Community Development Director
Trish Turner, Associate Planner

DATE: February 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Consideration of Major Use Permit (PL-25-51/UP 24-17) for Conversion of Temporary Staff RVs to Short-Term Guest Rental Units (Creekside Caravans) at Harbin Hot Springs; located at 18424 Harbin Springs Rd., Middletown 95461 (APN 013-009-24); Applicant: Lia Findley Jennings

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Site Plan
2. Draft Conditions of Approval
3. Agency Comments
4. Tribal Comments
5. Evacuation Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Applicant, Harbin Hot Springs, is seeking discretionary approval from Lake County for a Major Use Permit to change the use of 15 existing recreational vehicles (RVs) from temporary staff housing to permanent commercial guest short-term rentals (Creekside Caravans Project). The RVs are situated on a previously disturbed site that already possess essential utility infrastructure, including septic, sewer, water, and electricity. The RV area was initially approved for temporary staff dwellings following the Valley Fire rebuild efforts under Zoning Permit (ZP 18-17). The proposed use is classified as an 'RV Park' in the Lake County Zoning Ordinance and require a Major Use Permit in accordance with the County's Zoning Ordinance. While the local jurisdiction is responsible for the land use approval, the completed project, once authorized, would operate under the regulatory oversight of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Creekside Caravans at Harbin Hot Springs

Permit Numbers: Major Use Permit and Categorical Exemption
(PL-25-51/ UP 24-17)

Applicant Name & Address: Heart Consciousness Church
DBA Harbin Hot Springs
18424 Harbin Springs Road
Middletown, CA 95461

Property Owner: Same as Applicant

Project Location: Same as above

Assessor's Parcel Number(s) (APNs): 013-009-24

Parcel Size: ±522.01

General Plan Designation: "Cr-RC" Resort Commercial – Resource Conservation

Zoning District(s): "PDC-DR-WW" Planned Development
Commercial – Design Review – Waterway
Combining District

Flood Zone: Not within a mapped flood zone

Hazards: High Fire Severity Zone

Project Description and Background

The Creekside Caravans project involves a formal conversion of use of 15 RV units situated on the Harbin Hot Springs property from temporary to permanent. The site is served by existing utility infrastructure (septic, water, electricity) and was most recently authorized under Zoning Permit (ZP 18-17) for temporary staff housing following the Valley Fire rebuild efforts. The Applicant now seeks a Major Use Permit (UP) to transition the existing RVs (also referred to as "caravans") into permanent, short-term rentals, enhancing the resort's ability to serve its membership.

Rentals are available exclusively to members, with daily rates set at \$185 per adult on weekdays and \$207 per adult during weekends, holidays, and special events. Regulatory oversight for the project is bifurcated: while the local jurisdiction maintains authority over land-use approvals and building permits for any permanent structures, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) oversees the daily operations and safety of the RV park portion of the resort. Because HCD jurisdiction is limited to mobile units—such as RVs or cabins on sled-type foundations—any structures built on permanent foundations remain under local jurisdiction and are subject to the standard local permitting process.

Previous Approved Land Use Applications

The current project shall incorporate and adhere to the Conditions of Approval (COAs) established in the previous entitlements listed below, as applicable. These prior approvals form the foundational regulatory framework for the Harbin Hot Springs site:

- General Plan of Development, (PD 82-6):
 - Approved Resort Expansion.
- Major Use Permit, UP 82-48 (Specific Plan of Development, PD 82-6):
 - Approved the remodeling of existing structures and construction/placement of two new structures for staff housing.
- Major Use Permit, UP 84-58 (Specific Plan of Development, PD 82-6):
 - Approved the remodeling of existing structures and construction of new resort related structures.
- Major Use Permit, UP 85-54 (Use Permit for Specific Plan of Development:
 - Approved cottage industry involving the manufacture of furniture for sale, construction of a 900 square foot storage building and a vault toilet, and installation of a 2000 square foot tent.
- Major Use Permit, UP 87-29 (Amendments to Specific Plan of Development, PD 82-6):
 - Approved an amendment to Specific Plan of Development, PD 82-06 and Use Permit, UP 87-29 to allow multi-family dwellings as well as single-family dwellings with no increase in the total number of dwelling units.
- Major Use Permit, UP 93-13 (Specific Plan of Development, PDC 93-1):
 - Approved the expansion of an existing resort center included construction of a Watsu Center (Water Shiatsu, aquatic bodywork) , access road and the replacement of a cabin in the village area.
- Major Use Permit, UP 96-15 to allow Minor Modification of Existing Specific Plan:
 - Allowed the construction of a temple, four (4) dwellings, twelve (12) sleeping cabins, two (2) kitchens, several pools and an addition to the conference center.
- Minor Modification, MMU 11-05 to existing General Plan of Development and Use Permit, UP 11-04 for Specific Plan of Development:
 - Allowed the demolition of eighteen (18) RV units used for employee housing and replacement with fifteen (15) cabins for guest accommodations and the establishment of a private cemetery with twenty-seven (27) burial sites.
- General Plan Amendment (GPAP 16-08); Rezone (RZ 16-05); General Plan of Development (GPD 16-01) and a Major Use Permit (UP 16-11) for a Specific Plan of Development:
 - Allow a Mixed-Use Commercial Resort with Overnight Accommodations, including but not limited to spa facilities, educational seminars, special events and restaurants.

History of Harbin Hot Springs

The Harbin Hot Springs Resort is located on Harbin Road, which is off of Big Canyon Road. The resort was founded in 1856 and gradually increased in size until it became one

of Lake County's largest resorts. The original hotel was constructed in 1870. This hotel burned to the ground, as did two replacement hotels with the last replacement hotel being destroyed in 1960. Uses at the hot springs have ranged from a resort, a hunting lodge, a boxing camp and a free form university. Prior to the 2015 Valley Fire, most of the previous buildings that were on the site were built in the early 1900s. Currently, the resort is being rebuilt after the Valley Fire for use as a non-profit retreat and workshop center.

Currently, Harbin Hot Springs Resort is developed with the following:

- Harbin Domes
- Solar Canopy
- Changing Rooms
- Water Treatment Plant
- The Mainside – Hot Pool, Cold Plunge Pool, Warm Pool, Heart Pool, Mainside Sun Deck, Sauna & Steam Room
- The Village – Market, café, Harbin Temple, and Guest Services
- Hotel (under construction)
- Restaurant (under construction)
- Spa Services and Serenity Chapel
- Grove Cottages

Figure 1 - Map of Harbin Hot Springs



Source: Harbin Hot Springs Website, 2026

Road Access

The site is accessed via an already developed internal road system. Specifically, the Creekside Caravans site is accessed via Harbin Springs Annex Road, which connects directly to Harbin Springs Road (a County-maintained road). The road at the Creekside Caravans is 15 feet, 6 inches wide at the entrance and 18 feet wide at the top of the road, near the driveway of the upper caravans. The upper caravan driveway is 13 feet wide. The lower caravan driveway is 11 feet wide. There are 15 parking spaces available adjacent to the Creekside Caravans. There is overflow parking located approximately 1/10 of a mile from the Creekside Caravan location. The access roads serving the Creekside Caravans are fully compliant with CA PRC 4290 (State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations), ensuring adequate width, surface, and grade for emergency vehicle access.

Water Supply

The water to various buildings and facilities, both for operational use and fire suppression, is supplied by Harbin's Public Water System # 170051. The water system is under the regulatory authority of DDW (Division of Drinking Water) – State Water Resources Control Board. The primary source of water supply is from Boggs Spring which was determined to be under the influence of surface water by California Department of Public Health and subject to the Surface Water Treatment Rule. The water from these sources is piped to the holding tank through separate pipes. The raw water is processed through the surface water treatment plant and then chlorinated. The filtered and treated water is then pumped into a 100,000-gallon water tank and is gravity fed through various service connections to the facilities.

Wastewater

In 2000, Harbin Hot Springs converted from onsite septic systems to a sewer line which transports wastewater to Middletown Treatment Plant.

An 8" main runs through the Mainside, the Village, the Campground and the Meadow areas (please see Figure 1). A 6" lateral services the Domes Area. A hybrid system is in place at the Caravans area, combining a septic holding tank that flows, gravity based, to the lift station at the Harbin Gate.

The collection system within Harbin, from various sites, is gravity based and transports the wastewater to a lift station by Harbin Gate. The wastewater from this lift station is transported to the Middletown Treatment Plant through a 4" forced main. The collection system within Harbin Hot Springs is Harbin's responsibility.

Solid Waste Disposal

All solid waste, including recyclable aluminum cans, glass, plastic, and cardboard, is collected daily by the retreat center's staff and brought to the salvage yard. Non –

recyclable and recyclable waste are placed in large commercial containers which are regularly removed by an approved waste management company. Waste oil and other automotive fluids are removed by commercial waste oil recyclers. Used restaurant grease is removed by a commercial company.

Power/ Electricity

Electricity to the retreat center is supplied by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), whose electricity poles exist throughout the retreat center's building sites.

Public Safety

The Lake County Sheriff's Department provides police protection for Harbin Hot Springs. Additionally, Harbin Hot Springs has its own trained security staff on duty 24 hours a day.

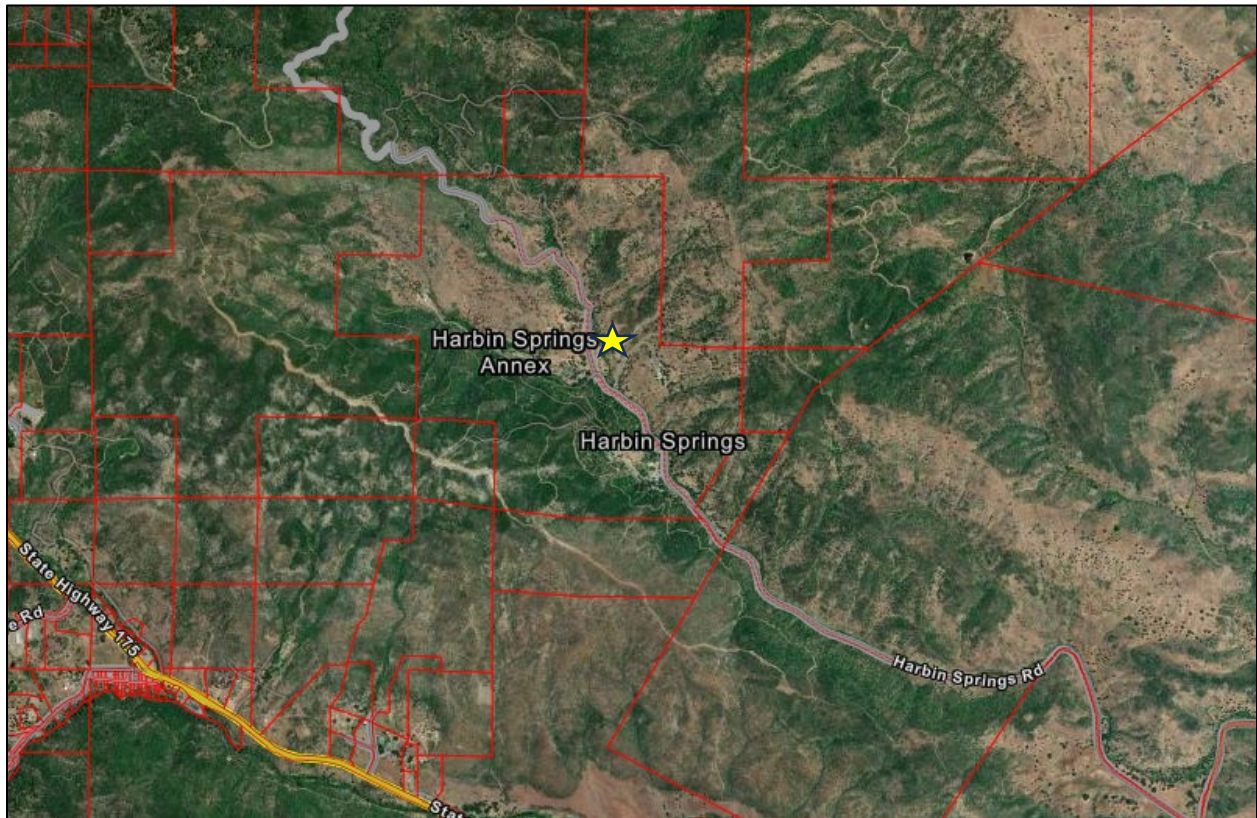
Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by South Lake County Fire Protection District. Harbin Hot Springs' staff are connected with the Middletown fire department to clarify fire suppression requirements. Four staff members have completed Fire Academy. Harbin Hot Springs meets all fire department's fire suppression requirements related to signs for the buildings, water main sizing, fire-hydrant sizing and water storage requirements.

Harbin Hot Springs maintains defensible spaces around all buildings and structures and conducts annual staff training and drills on fire equipment.

To ensure adherence to Lake County Community Development standards, all building permit applications are subject to Fire Department verification during the intake process and must receive final fire safety clearance before the structure may be occupied. Harbin Hot Springs Resort has an implemented evacuation plan (Attachment 5).

Figure 2: Aerial Map



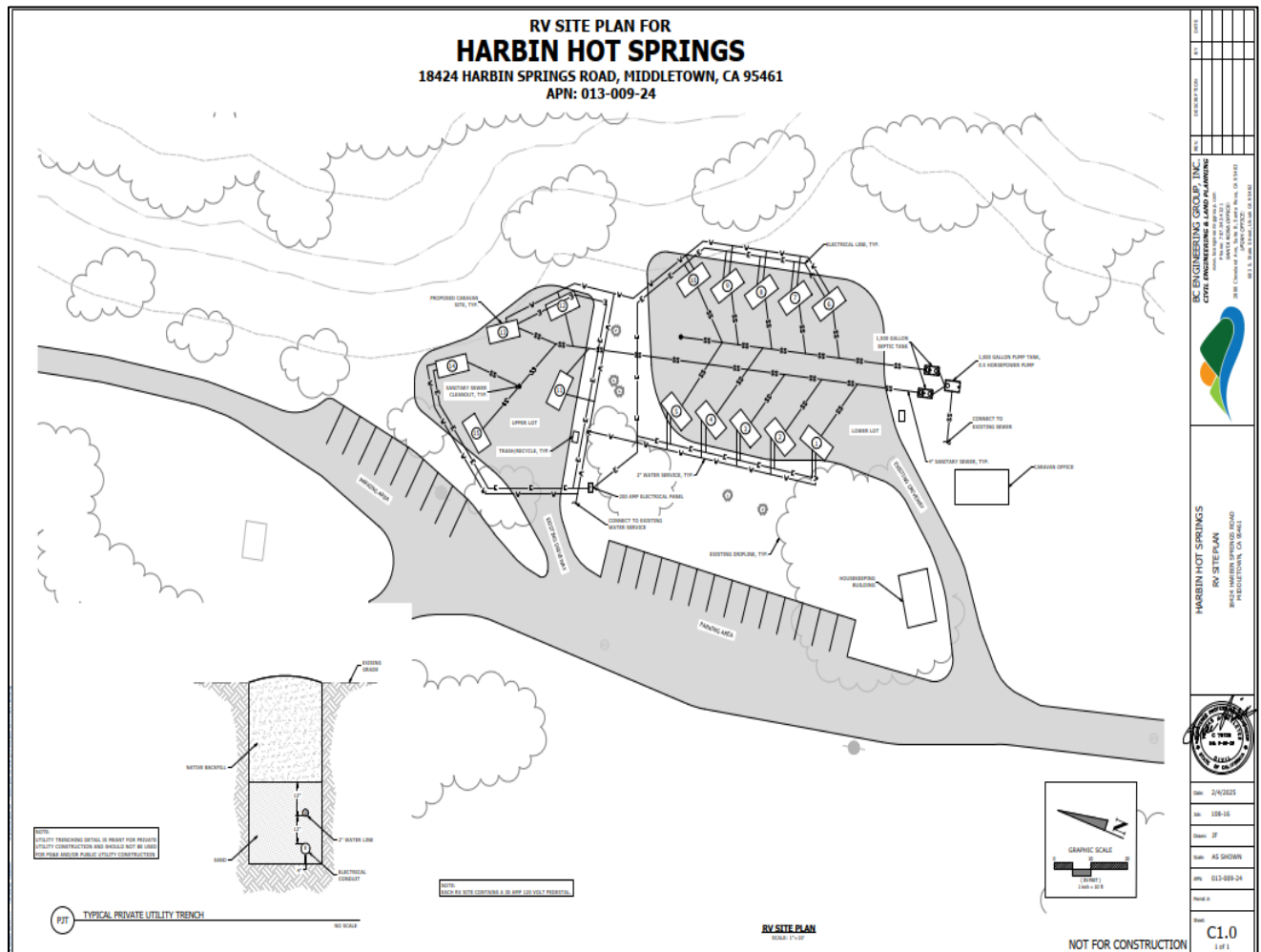
Source: Lake County ArcGIS Website 2026

Figure 3: Creekside Caravans Site Area



Source: Lake County ArcGIS Website, 2025

Figure 4: Creekside Caravans Site Plan



Source: BC Engineering Group, Inc., 2025

PROJECT SETTING

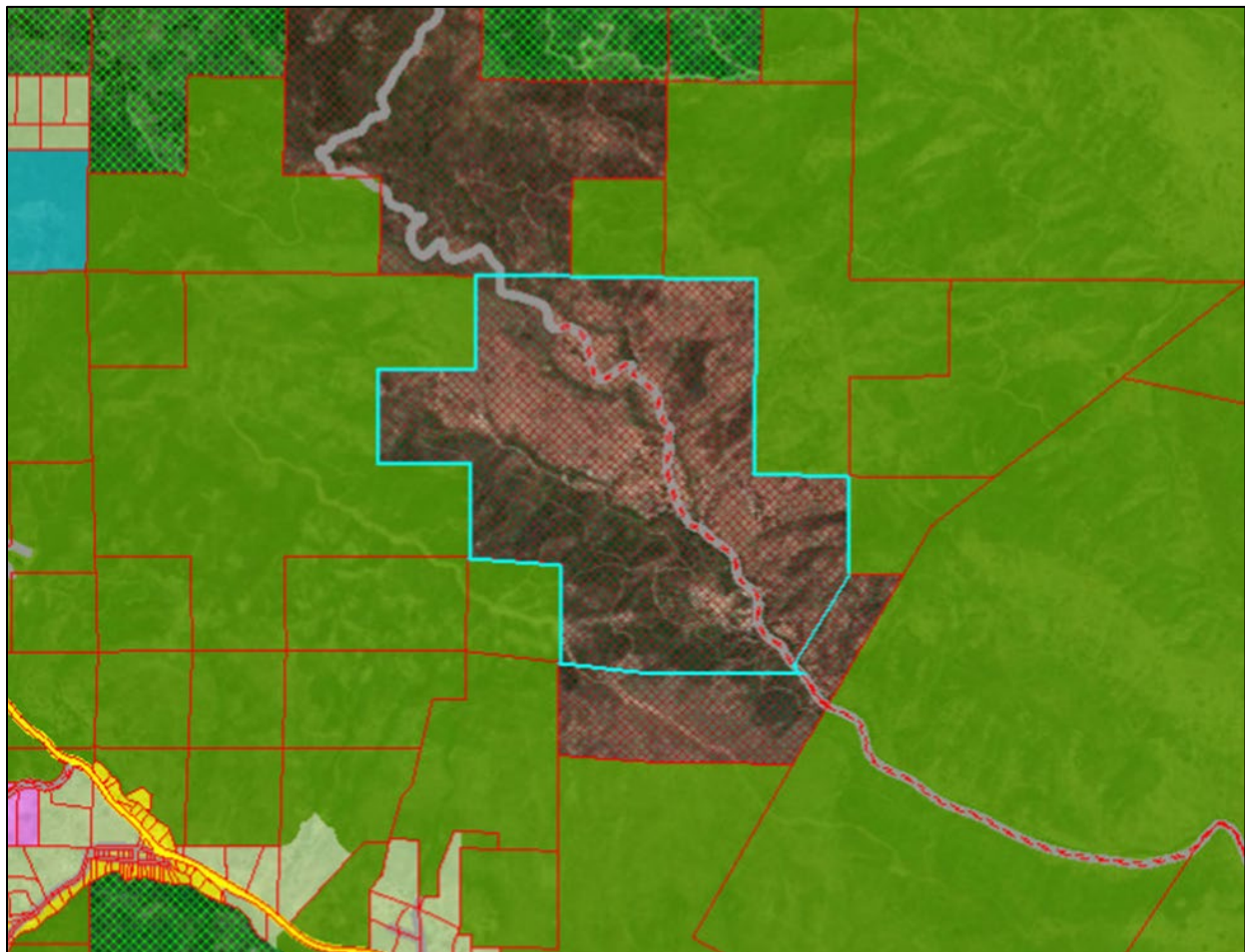
The parcels are located in southwestern Lake County in the unincorporated community of Middletown. Access to the site is from county-maintained Harbin Springs Road. The surrounding lands are predominantly undeveloped. Harbin Creek runs north to south along Harbin Springs Road and then runs along the Big Canyon Road in northeasterly direction. Storm water discharge takes place through culverts located along these roads. Vegetation includes native and non-native scrubs, grasses, and trees.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Uses (Figure 3):

- North: "RL" Rural Lands, "RL" Rural Lands – "WW" Waterway. "PDC" Planned Development Commercial – "DR" Design Review: Land undeveloped.
- South: "PDC" Planned Development Commercial – "DR" Design Review: Land undeveloped.
- East: "RL" Rural Lands, "PDC" Planned Development Commercial – "DR" Design Review – "WW" Waterway: Land historically used for single-family residential.

- West: “RL” Rural Lands – “WW” Waterway: Land undeveloped.

Figure 5: Zoning Map of Site and Area



Source: Lake County ArcGIS Website, 2025.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

General Plan Conformity

The project site's general plan land use designation is Resort Commercial Cr - Resource Conservation RC. As proposed, the project supports the following goals and policies of the Lake County 2008 General Plan.

Chapter 3 - Land Use

County of Lake General Plan (2008) - Chapter 3.9 Economic Development

Goal LU-6: To maintain a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, and service needs of Lake County residents.

- Policy LU-6.1 Diverse Economic Base. The County shall actively promote the development of a diversified economic base by continuing to promote agriculture, recreation services, and commerce, and by expanding its efforts to encourage industrial and non- industrial corporate development, and the development of geothermal resources.

Response: The Harbin Hot Springs Resort directly supports Goal LU-6 and aligns strongly with Policy LU-6.1, serving as an essential contributor to the County's diversified economic base. As a unique, local, nationally, and internationally recognized destination, Harbin provides a critical, year-round component of the County's recreation services economy, drawing broad tourism revenue and fulfilling the policy's directive to promote this sector. Furthermore, the operation functions as a stable employer, offering diverse job opportunities that meet local employment and service needs.

- Policy LU-6.3 Resort Uses: "The County shall consider private and non-profit, quasi-public, and private developments, which have similar use characteristics, in resort areas".
- Policy LU-6.5 Pursue Upscale Development: "The County shall pursue businesses such as upscale resorts and lodging, wineries and tasting rooms, visitor-oriented retail businesses, and other businesses that would attract high income and multi-day visitors to the County".

Response: Harbin Hot Springs has played a vital role in in the development of Lake County since it was founded in 1856 and gradually increased in size until it became one of the County's largest resorts. By repurposing the existing Creekside Caravans for guest use, the resort will increase its capacity to attract and serve visitors. This project strengthens the economic base of Harbin Hot Springs and provides a new variety of resort amenities that serve the wider community.

Middletown Area Plan Conformity

The project is subject to the following objectives and policies for the Middletown Area Plan.

Objective 4.3.1: Minimize loss of life, bodily injury and property damage from structural fires, wildland fires, medical emergencies and public emergencies.

- Policy 4.3.1a Coordinate land use planning with needed services, personnel and facilities for fire departments, law enforcement, medical emergencies and public emergencies.
- Policy 4.3.1b Continue to support and assist in the implementation of adopted emergency preparedness plans and regulations.
- Policy 4.3.1c Maintain an aggressive fire prevention program.

Response: Fire protection is provided by South Lake County Fire Protection District. Following the Valley Fire, Harbin Hot Springs' staff met several times with the Middletown fire department to clarify fire suppression requirements. Harbin Hot Springs meets all fire department's fire suppression requirements, including requirements related to signs for the buildings, water main sizing, fire-hydrant sizing and water storage requirements. The access roads serving the Creekside Caravans are fully compliant with CA PRC 4290 (State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations), ensuring adequate width, surface, and grade for emergency vehicle access. Harbin Hot Springs has an implemented Evacuation Plan (Attachment 5), in the event of an emergency.

Objective 5.1.4 Encourage commercial development and community enhancement projects aimed at drawing tourists and special events to the Planning Area.

- Policy 5.1.4a Support the creation and expansion of commercial facilities and events that provide services to and attract tourists to the area, where appropriate.

Response: Harbin Springs offers a broad range of retreat facilities that include hot springs pools, cold swimming pool, cold plunges, day use, camping, hiking, classes in a wide variety of subjects, massage, an organic food restaurant, a market that offers organic health food, a reading room and lounge, a video theater and a coffee shop.

Additionally, Harbin Hot Springs already offers overnight accommodation including guestrooms and cabins. Existing conference / workshop facilities offer teaching programs to its participants. Harbin Hot Springs continues its events program offering daily yoga classes and classes on a wide variety of subjects.

Objective 5.1.5: Encourage comprehensive economic development efforts for the long-term benefit of the Planning Area aimed at increasing local employment opportunities.

- Policy 5.1.5c Increase local employment opportunities in order to provide an adequate number of jobs to support the local population.

Response: Harbin Hot Springs has already been developed since the 1850's. The existing resort is estimated to employ 108 local employees. 100% of these estimated employees currently reside in Lake County. This demonstrates a direct and substantial benefit to the local population by providing an adequate number of jobs for county residents, thereby strengthening the local economy and reducing the need for out-of-county commuting. This achievement provides strong evidence of encouraging economic development efforts that increase local employment opportunities for the long-term benefit of the Planning Area.

Zoning Ordinance Conformity

The project site's zoning designation is "PDC" Planned Development Commercial. As proposed, the project conforms with the following requirements of the Lake County Code Zoning Ordinance.

Article 15, Planned Development Commercial (PDC) - The intent and purposes of the "PDC" district are:

The purpose of this development framework is to encourage creative commercial and industrial projects that prioritize both environmental quality and innovative design beyond what standard zoning allows. By aligning with the Lake County General Plan, the goal is to ensure that new growth is orderly, protects natural landscapes, and fits harmoniously with the existing neighborhood. To ensure these projects are sustainable, the County utilizes market and cost-benefit analyses to measure the impact on local services. This process also invites developers to contribute to the community's infrastructure—such as improving streets, fire protection, and parks—so that new developments support themselves rather than overcrowding the facilities currently used by long-time residents.

Response: The applicant has already been approved for several "Specific Plan of Development" projects as discussed earlier in this Staff Report in the permitting history. The proposed Creekside Caravans are aligned with the resort standards of allowing a mixed-use commercial resort with overnight accommodations, including but not limited to spa facilities, educational seminars, special events and restaurants. The proposed use permit would allow the expansion of overnight accommodation to include existing RV's to be used for guest and member accommodations. The project property is already developed with existing roads, fire suppression, and existing infrastructure for sewer and water.

Article 41, Performance Standards - To establish performance standards to promote compatibility among various uses of land; protect and enhance the rural-resort character of the County; protect the health, safety, or welfare of the community; and control noise, dust, odor, smoke, vibration, danger to life and property, or similar causes likely to create a public nuisance.

Response: Because the RVs are existing, there are no construction-related impacts that would typically necessitate performance standard review for new development, such as dust, erosion, or temporary noise. All current operations are conducted in a manner that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community, strictly controlling potential nuisances like noise, odor, smoke, and vibration. The property's existing infrastructure, including roads, septic, water, and fire suppression systems, is fully established and operational, mitigating any new public safety or environmental concerns. Furthermore, the established evacuation plan (Attachment 5) addresses potential dangers to life and property, demonstrating proactive adherence to safety measures. The current, established condition of the property confirms that the use is not likely to create a public nuisance and aligns with the ordinance's intent to promote compatibility and protection within the County.

Article 43, Mobile Home Park, Recreation Vehicle (RV) Park, and Campground Standards Regulations for Establishment of Mobile Home Parks, Recreational Vehicle Parks and Campgrounds and Conversion, Closure or Cessation of Use of Mobile Home Parks

Section 43.22 Recreational vehicle parks must adhere to the standards outlined in these requirements include a maximum density of 18 spaces per acre and a limit on lot occupancy to 75% of each space. Regarding layout, vehicles must maintain a three-foot setback from side and rear space lines. Additionally, parks must provide specific main and internal access points and maintain buffer strips—typically ten feet along adjoining roadways and three feet along interior property lines.

Response: The Creekside Caravans project is classified as an RV Park under Article 43, Section 43.22 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance, which gives the County authority to decide if the location and size of the park are appropriate. The County ensures that the park meets the necessary requirements stated above. Once the County approves this use permit, the technical safety oversight shifts to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Under state law, HCD is responsible for the detailed engineering—checking that water, sewer, and electrical hookups are safe, inspecting any new restrooms or buildings, and issuing the final Permit to Operate. Essentially, Lake County decides where the park can be built and how it looks from the road, while the State ensures it is constructed and managed safely for the people staying there.

Article 53, Design Review Combining District - To ensure aesthetic compatibility between uses, protect and enhance property values, protect scenic qualities, and promote community character through use of the community design manuals.

Response: The applicability of the Design Review Combining District per Article 53.2 should be applied in community shopping areas, along selected scenic routes, and in other areas where increased or coordinated aesthetic design standards are desirable. Per Article 53.4 exceptions can be made by the Planning Director, in the form of a waiver. The Community Development Director waived the requirement of requiring a Design Review due to the project involving minor alterations not materially changing the character of the use of the property.

Agency Comments

The following agencies provided comments:

- Lake County Community Development Department, Building Division
- California Department of Housing and Community Development

Although the Lake County Planning Commission is the designated body for the initial approval, the project will remain under the regulatory oversight of the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was previously completed for the Specific Plan of Development to establish Harbin Hot Springs facilities and subsequent land use actions noted in the background section of this staff report. Mitigation measures and Conditions of Approval related to previous entitlements have been carried over into the proposed project's Conditions (Attachment 2), as applicable, for continued operation and further development of the overall resort.

An independent CEQA analysis has been completed for the proposed Creekside Caravans. Pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15301 Class 1 Existing Facilities consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The types of "existing facilities" itemized within this section of the CEQA regulations include rehabilitation and restoration of existing facilities; certain demolition activities; small additions and conversions of use to existing structures, etc. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use.

Response: The Creekside Caravans are existing structures that were installed and fully operational as temporary staff housing beginning in 2018 to support necessary rebuilding following the Valley Fire. The current proposal is to permit and license the continued operation of these existing structures for use as overnight accommodations for members and guests, in lieu of their removal. Because the Project site is developed and issuance of the Use Permit to permit permanent use of the existing RVs would not result in an expansion of existing or former use, the project qualifies for the Class 1 Existing Facilities exemption (CCR Title 14, §15301). Additionally, none of the exceptions listed in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines (related to hazardous waste sites, damage of scenic and historic resources, cumulative impacts, and unusual circumstances) are met for this Project.

The AB 52 process was not required for this project because it qualifies for exemption from further CEQA review. However, courtesy notification of this project was sent out to the Middletown Rancheria. The Tribe responded on November 26, 2024, that they had no concerns with the RV project.

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

The Planning Commission may only approve or conditionally approve a major use permit if all of the following findings are made:

1. That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use applied for will not under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use or be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the County.

Response: This operation of the Creekside Caravans would not negatively affect the health, safety, comfort, or general welfare of the public or property in the area. The RV Park use is an allowable activity under the Planned Development Commercial zone through a Major Use Permit. There are no neighbors located within approximately one mile of the caravan's site and the Project meets all health and safety regulations. The operation poses no risk of detriment to the surrounding property values or the quality of life for anyone nearby, satisfying all community impact requirements.

2. That the site for the project is adequate in size, shape, location, and physical characteristics to accommodate the type of use and level of development proposed.

Response: The Harbin Hot Springs Resort site is large, covering approximately 522 acres, which is adequate in size for its operations and the proposed project. The proposed project involves no new construction or expansion, as it would convert existing RV units to short-term rental accommodations. The site contains existing utility infrastructure (septic, water, electricity) and established road access. The 15 caravans are situated on previously disturbed land with adequate spacing, parking (15 spaces), and access. As such, the site is suitable for the project.

3. That the streets, highways and pedestrian facilities are reasonably adequate to safely accommodate the specific proposed use. (Ord. No. 2128, 1/14/1993)

Response: The site is accessed via Harbin Springs Road, a County-maintained paved road, that connects to Big Canyon Road/Barnes Road. This provides access to State Highway 175. The conversion from temporary staff housing to short-term rental accommodations does not significantly increase traffic generation. The access roads serving the Creekside Caravans are fully compliant with CA PRC 4290 (State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations), ensuring adequate width, surface, and grade for emergency vehicle access. Harbin Hot Springs also has an implemented evacuation plan (Attachment 5).

4. That there are adequate public or private services, including but not limited to fire protection, water supply, sewage disposal, and police protection to serve the project. (Ord. No. 1749, 7/7/1988)

Response: Electricity is supplied by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), and the water system is operated by Harbin Hot Springs' Public Water System #170051, which is regulated by the CA State Water Resources Control Board to ensure both clean drinking water and a reliable supply for firefighting. Wastewater is managed through a hybrid system in the Caravans area, combining a septic holding tank that flows via gravity to the lift station at Harbin Gate. Police protection would continue to be provided by the Lake County Sheriff's Department. Fire protection is provided by the South Lake County Fire Protection District, and the facility meets all mandated requirements for fire suppression, including water sprinklers, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, and adequate water storage.

5. That the project is in conformance with the applicable provisions and policies of this Code, the General Plan and any approved zoning or land use plan.

Response: The project was evaluated for compliance with the General Plan, the Middletown Area Plan, and the zoning ordinance. The project meets all required development standards in Article 15, 41, and 43. While the local jurisdiction is responsible for the land use approval, the completed project, once authorized, would operate under the regulatory oversight of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Compliance with the conditions of approval would ensure all conformity with the aforementioned plans and zoning ordinance.

6. That no violation of Chapters 5, 17, 21, 23 or 26 of the Lake County Code currently exists on the property, unless the purpose of the permit is to correct the violation, or the permit relates to a portion of the property which is sufficiently separate and apart from the portion of the property in violation so as not to be affected by the violation from a public health, safety or general welfare basis. (Ord. No. 2128, 1/14/1993)

Response: A query of the County's permitting database OpenGov, showed no documented code violations on the project site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions.

- A. Find that the Major Use Permit (UP 24-17/ PL-25-51) for Creekside Caravans is categorically exempt from CEQA under the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities with the following findings:
 1. Operation of Existing Facilities: The project consists of the continued operation of existing RV units currently located on-site. As these units are already in place, the request represents a standard permitting of an existing land use rather than the introduction of a new environmental stressor.
 2. No Expansion of Use: The proposal involves no expansion of the existing use beyond that which currently exists. There are no additional units, increased floor area, or physical extension of the project boundaries proposed that would result in new environmental footprints.
 3. Existing Infrastructure: All necessary supporting infrastructure, including utilities and access ways, is already installed and currently serving the site. No new construction of significant ground-disturbing activities are required to maintain the current level of service.
 4. No Significant Impacts: Based on the current site conditions and the "as-is" nature of the application, there is no reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment. The project does not involve any of the "exceptions" to categorical exemptions (such as cumulative impacts or sensitive locations) defined in CEQA Section 15300.2.

B. Approve Major Use Permit UP PL-25-51, Harbin Hot Springs with the following findings:

1. That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use applied for would not under the circumstances, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use or be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the County.
2. The site is adequate in size, shape, location, and physical characteristics to accommodate the type of use and level of development proposed.
3. The streets, highways and pedestrian facilities are reasonably adequate to safely accommodate the proposed use.
4. There are adequate services to serve the project.
5. This project is consistent with the Lake County General Plan, Middletown Area Plan, and Lake County Zoning Ordinance.
6. No violation of Chapter 5, 17, 21, 23 or 26 of the Lake County Code currently exists on this property, with a condition of approval implemented.

SAMPLE MOTIONS

Environmental Review

- A. I move that the Planning Commission find the Major Use Permit (UP 24-17/ PL-25-51) located at 18424 Harbin Springs Road, Middletown (APN 013-009-24) is categorically exempt from CEQA under the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities with the findings in the staff report dated February 12, 2026.

Major Use Permit (UP 24-17/ PL-25-51)

- B. I move that the Planning Commission find that the Major Use Permit (UP 24-17/ PL-25-51) by Harbin Hot Springs for property located at 18424 Harbin Springs Road, Middletown (APN 013-009-24) does meet the requirements of Section 51.4 and Articles 15, 41, 43, and 53 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance and that the Major Use Permit be granted based on the findings and subject to the conditions included in the Staff Report dated February 12, 2026.

NOTE: *The applicant or any interested person is reminded that the Zoning Ordinance provides for a seven (7) calendar day appeal period. If there is disagreement with the Planning Commission's decision, 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 Planning Commission's final determination.