



LAND USE SERVICES DEPARTMENT PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

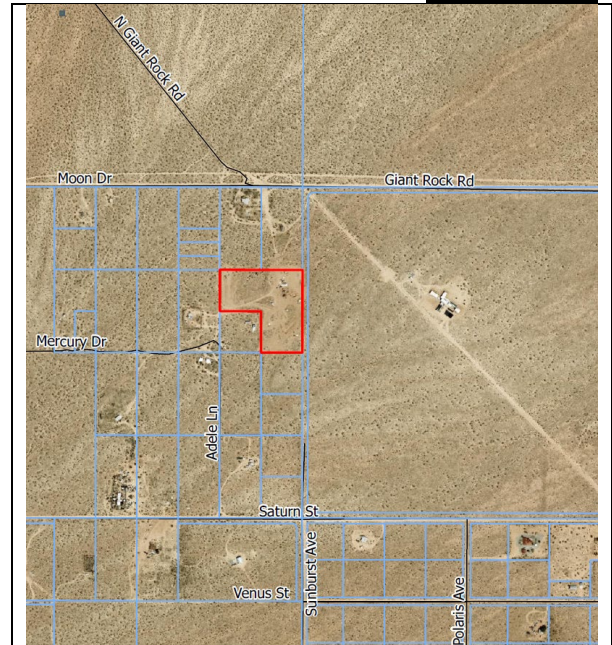
HEARING DATE: April 9, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 2

Project Description

Project No: PROJ-2023-00023
APN: 0631-201-68
Applicant: David Lee and Joseph Milburn
Community: Homestead Valley
Location: 62076 Mercury Drive
County:
Supervisor: Dawn Rowe, 3rd District
Staff: Luis Rodriguez, Contract Planner
Rep: Joseph Milburn and David Lee
Proposal: A Conditional Use Permit to establish a 12-site dry campground facility on a 7.5-acre parcel.

Vicinity Map



40 Hearing Notices were sent on: March 25, 2026

SITE INFORMATION:

Project Size: 7.5 Acres
Terrain: Flat
Vegetation: Existing desert landscape with 2 Joshua Trees

TABLE 1 – SITE AND SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING:

ARE A	EXISTING LAND USE	LAND USE CATEGORY	ZONING DISTRICT
SITE	Accessory Structures (2)	Rural Living (RL)	Homestead-Rural Living (HV/RL)
North	Single-Family Residential	Rural Living (RL)	Homestead-Rural Living (HV/RL)
South	Single-Family Residential and Vacant Land	Rural Living (RL)	Homestead-Rural Living (HV/RL)
East	Single-Family Residential	Rural Living (RL)	Homestead-Rural Living (HV/RL)
West	Single-Family Residential	Rural Living (RL)	Homestead-Rural Living (HV/RL)

	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Comment</u>
City Sphere of Influence:	N/A	None received
Water Service:	N/A	None received
Sewer Service:	N/A (Portable bathrooms)	None received

STAFF RECOMMENDS: The Planning Commission **ADOPT** the Mitigated Negative Declaration, **ADOPT** the Findings for approval of the Conditional Use Permit, **APPROVE** the Conditional Use Permit to establish a 12-site dry campground facility, subject to the Conditions of Approval, and **DIRECT** the Land Use Services Department to file a Notice of Determination in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

¹ In accordance with Section 86.08.010 of the Development Code, the Planning Commission action may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors.

Figure 1 - Regional Vicinity Map

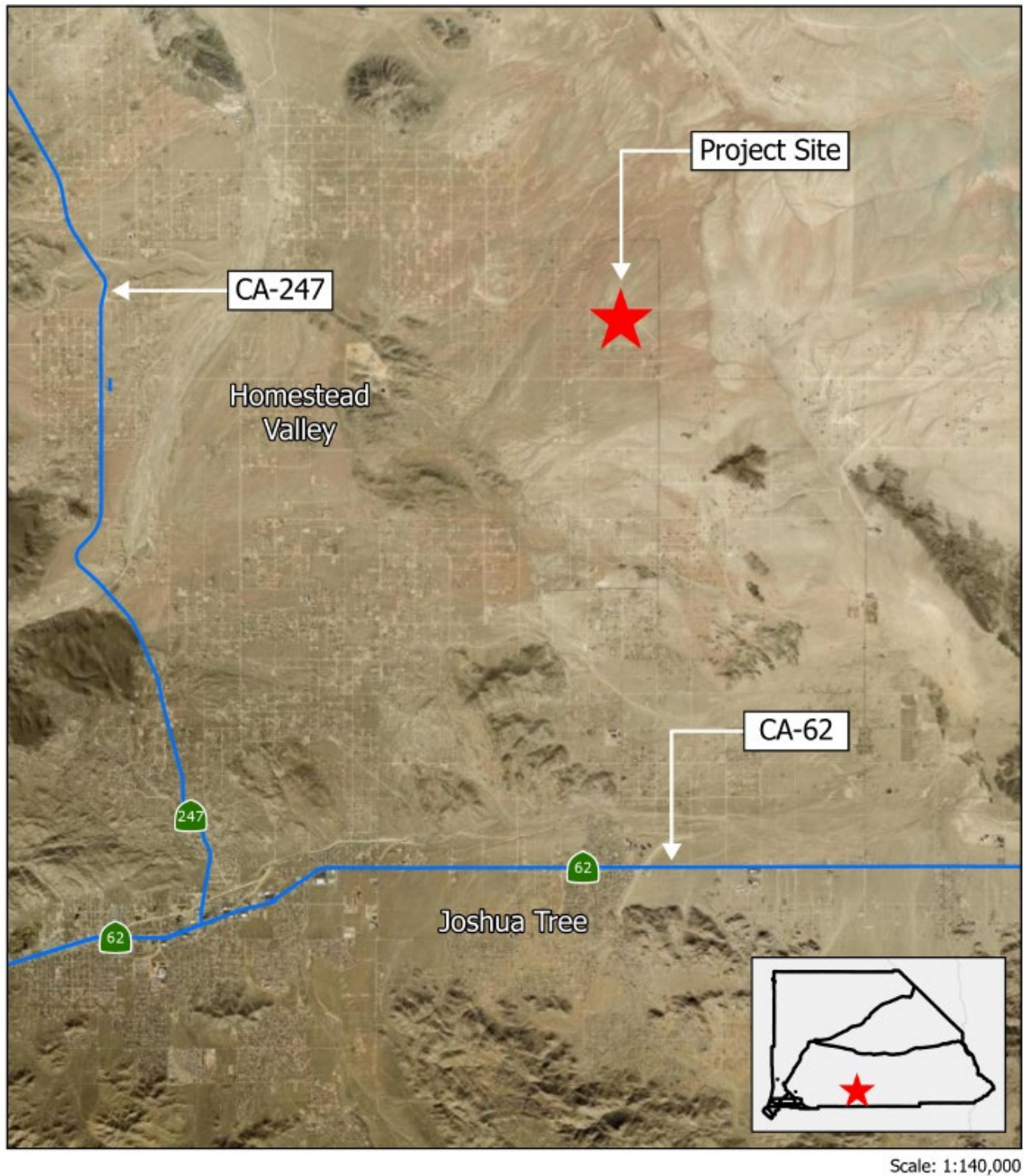


Figure 2 – Vicinity Aerial Map

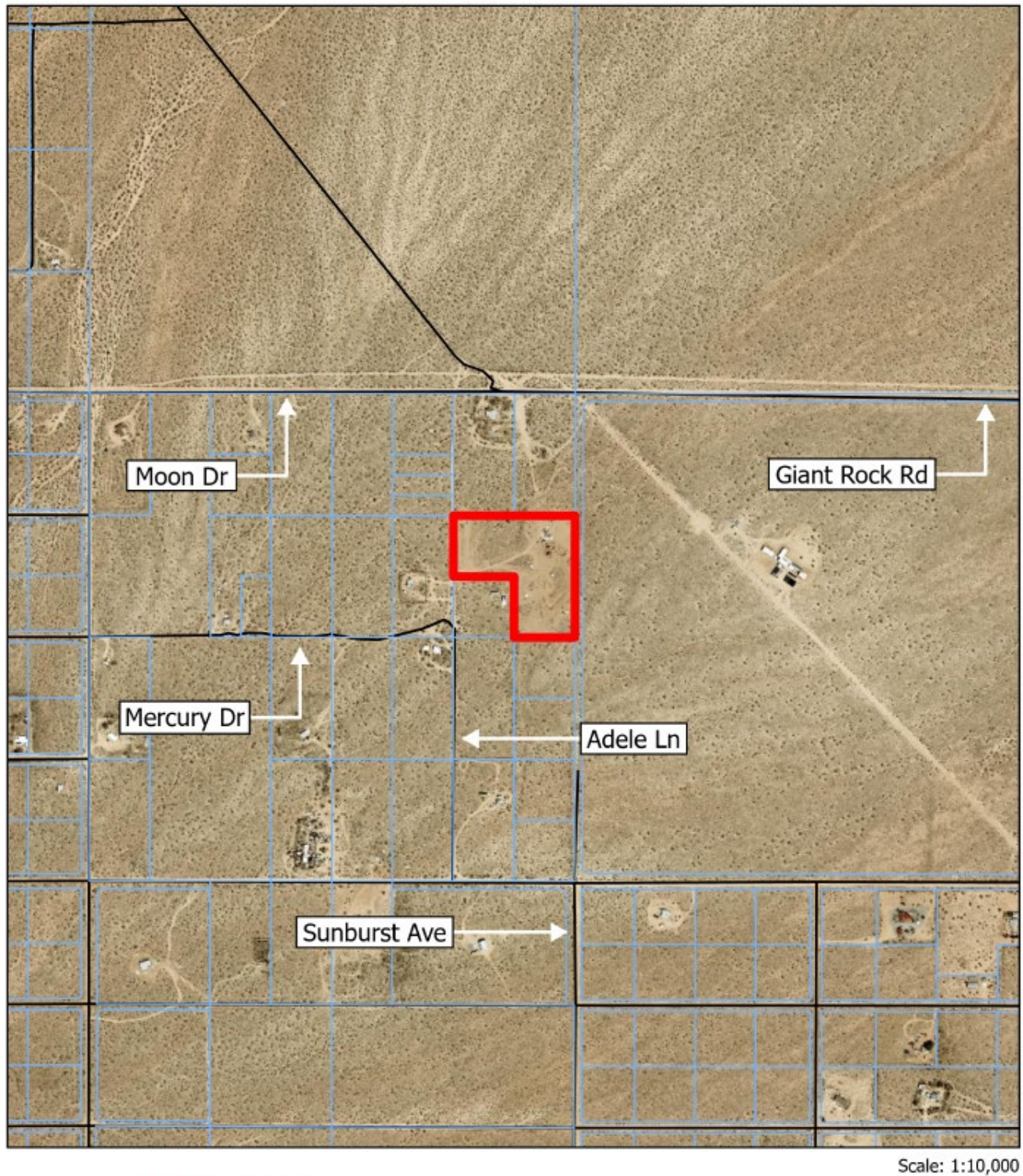
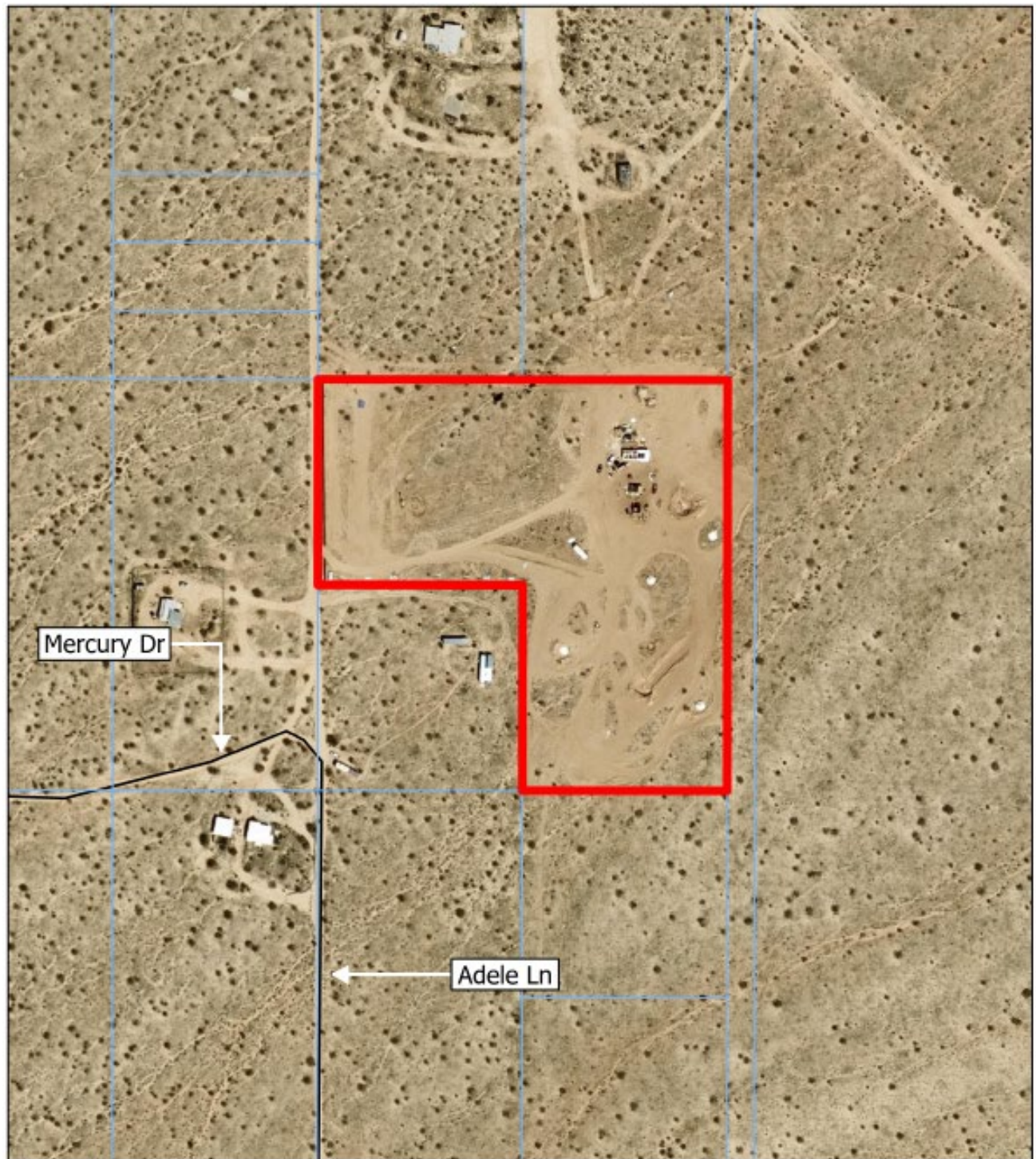


Figure 3 - Aerial Map

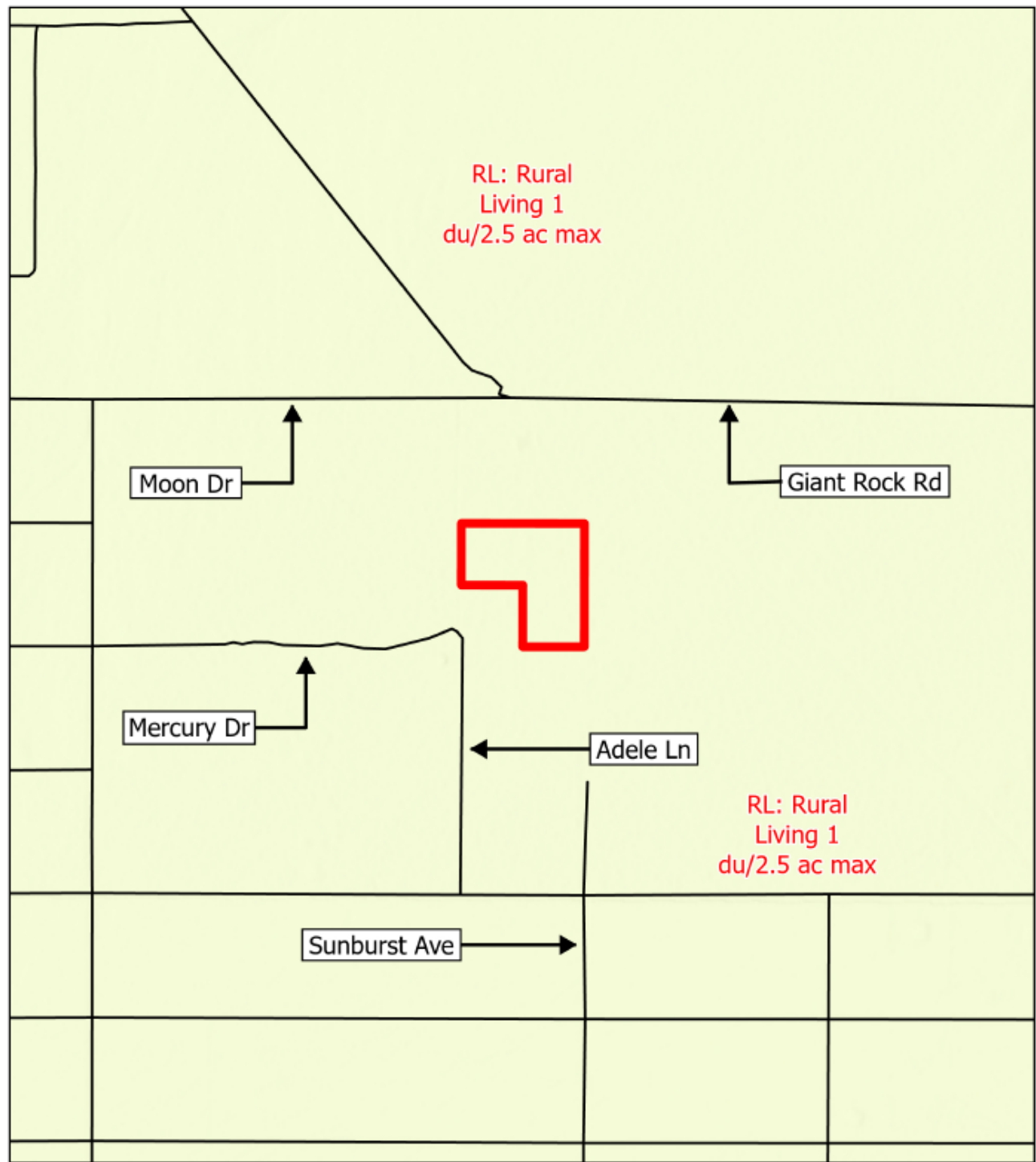


Scale: 1:3,000



-  PROJ-2023-00023
-  Parcels
-  Local

Figure 4 - Land Use Category Map



Scale: 1:10,000

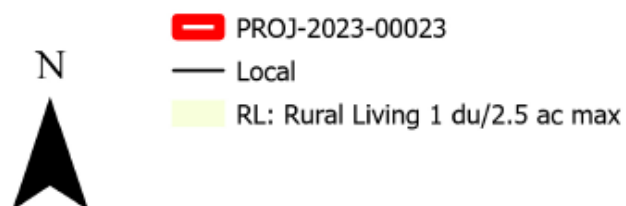
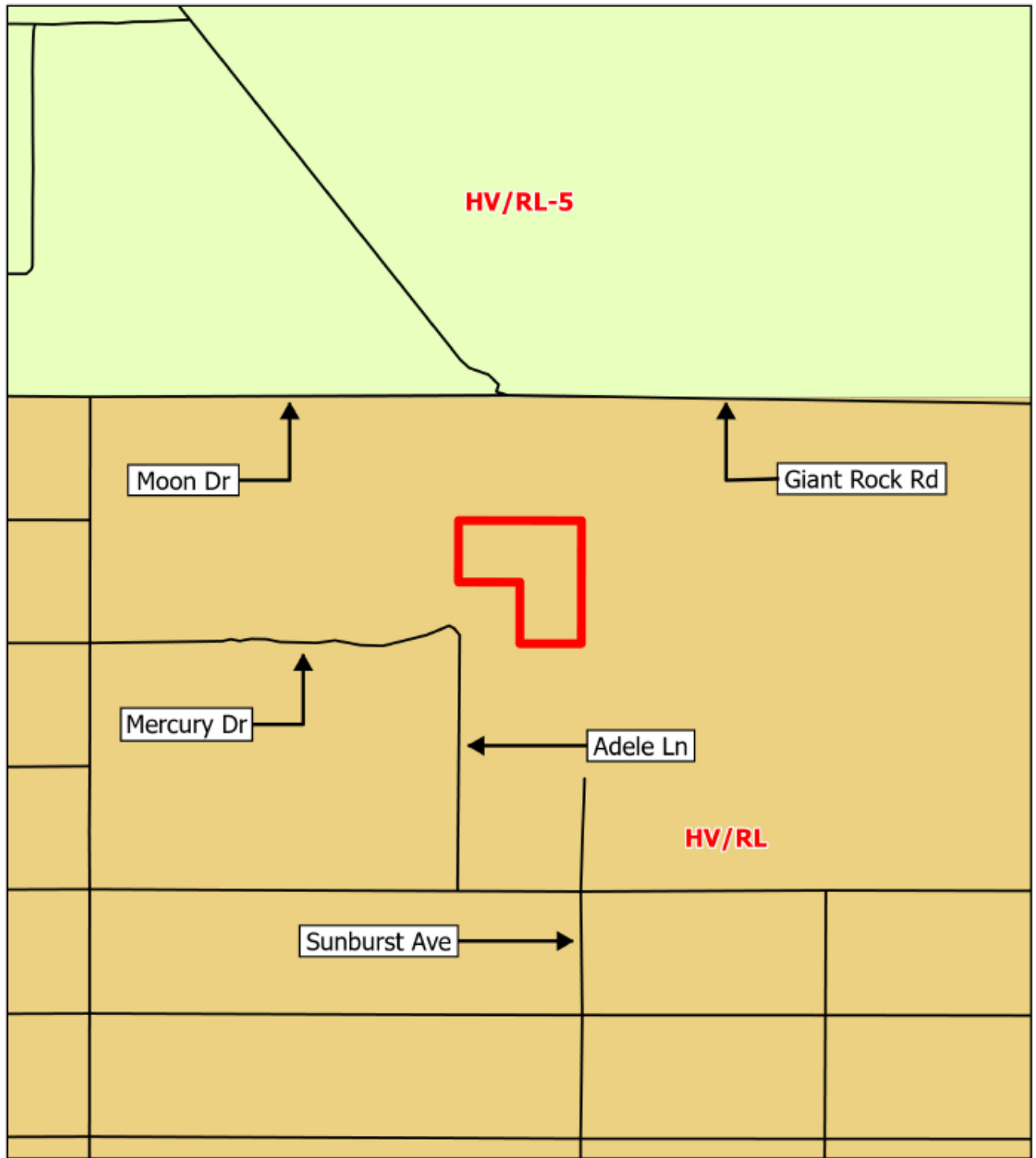


Figure 5 - Official Zoning District Maps



Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 6 - Site Plan

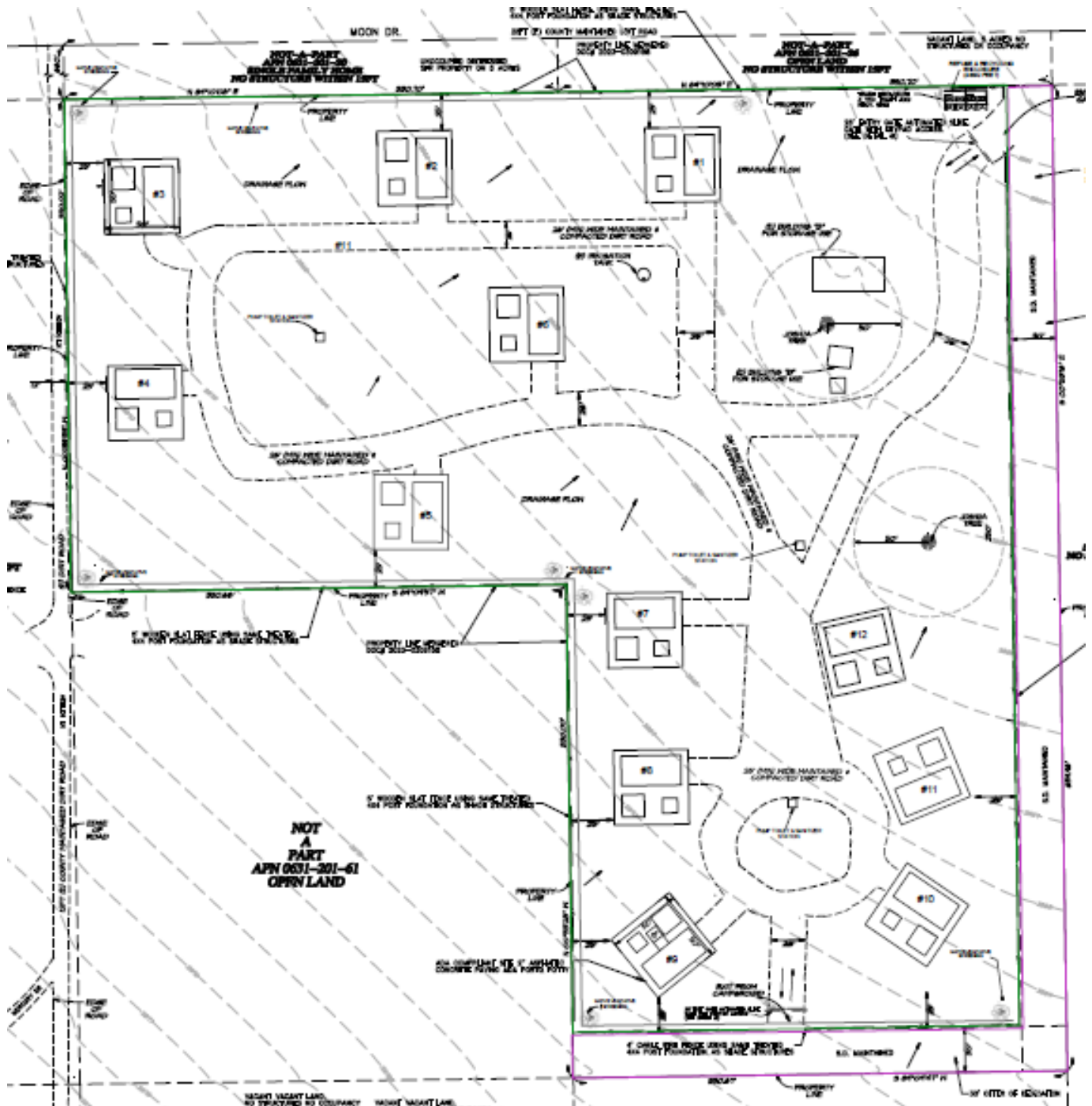


Figure 7 – Standard Camp Site

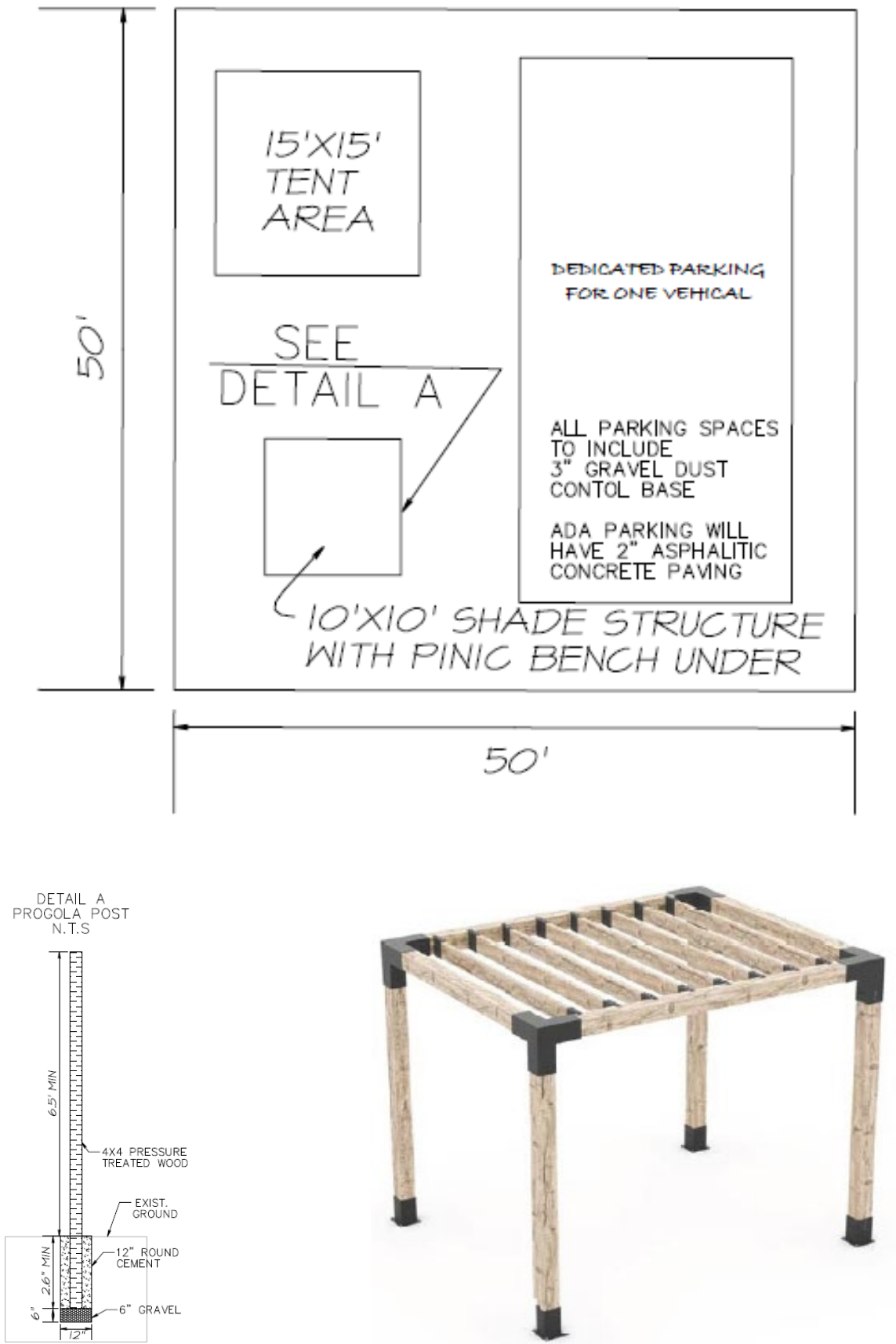
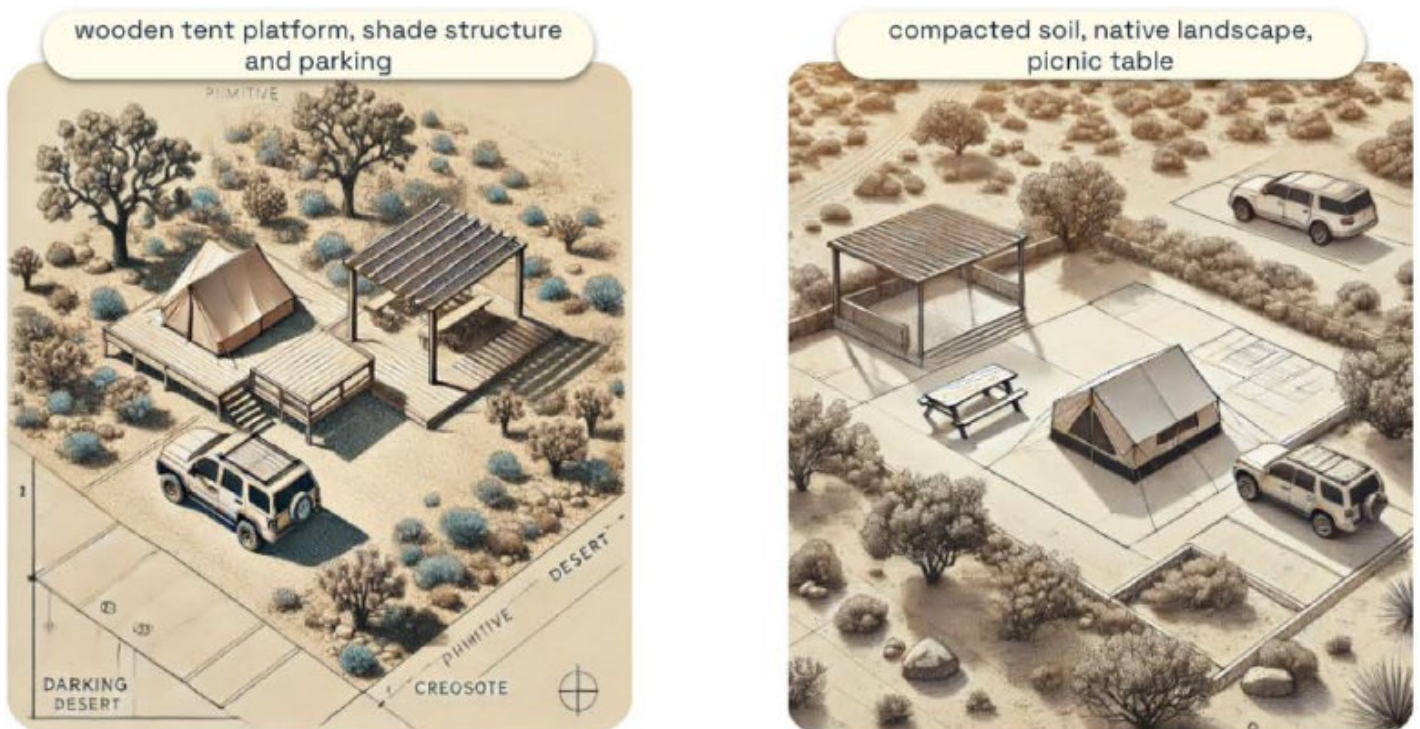


Figure 8 – Primitive Campsite Design Renderings



Primitive, dry campsite design featuring flat compacted native soil, dedicated tent pad/deck, shade structure and picnic table as well as space for parking.

Figures 9 - Photos of Existing Site Conditions



Photo 1: Looking northeast from the southeast corner of site.



Photo 2 : View from southeast corner looking northwest.



Photo 3: View of “yurt” style tents on site.



Photo 4: View of existing structures near the northeast corner of the site.



Photo 5: View of the existing structures near the northeast corner of the site.



Photo 6: View of Creosote brush present on the northwest portion of the site.



Photo 7: Exterior improvements of existing accessory structure.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed application is for the development of campground consisting of twelve (12) dry, primitive campsites for tent camping (Project). The “dry” designation indicates that the campground will not be providing water for public or sanitation use and will require guests bring their own drinking water. The proposed Project is on a 7.5-acre project site located at 62076 Mercury Drive, within the Homestead Community planning area (Project Site). The Project Site has a Rural Living (RL) land use designation and is zoned Rural Living (RL-2.5 ac. minimum lot size).

The applicants, Joseph Milburn and David Lee, have submitted a detailed Project description in a Letter of Intent along with the Rules and Regulation submitted and dated, October 2024 (Exhibit E).

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Subsection 82.01.020(c)(2)(A) of the San Bernardino County Development Code (Development Code), the purpose of the RL Land Use Zoning District is to “provide sites for rural residential uses, incidental agricultural uses, and similar and compatible uses.” “Campgrounds” are an allowed use in the RL Land Use Zoning District with a Conditional Use Permit. Subsection 810.01.050(e) of the Development Code defines campground as “[a] site used or intended for use for temporary occupancy by campers traveling by automobiles or otherwise, which may include individual campsites, but where utility hookups for recreational vehicles are typically not provided.”

The primary land use compatibility issues between campgrounds and residential uses are noise, light/glare, and traffic. Traffic impacts are related to the number of campsites allowed on a site, or density. Light and glare issues are primarily managed through the County’s Light Trespass Ordinance and dark skies development standards and requirements. Other than performance standards contained in the Development Code, campground-related noise impacts require specific requirements to effectively address mitigation measures.

The construction and operation of campgrounds are subject to California Code Regulations, Title 25, Special Occupancy Parks. State authority functions within the boundaries of the campground wherein the State permits and regulates campground and RV park operations according to the Special Occupancy Parks Act. Moreover, the State defines campground types and management practices that local jurisdictions must enforce such as stay limits and noise restrictions. In contrast, the County’s authority lies outside of a campground project. The County responsibilities include but are not limited to regulating land use restrictions, access roads, zoning compatibility, setback requirements, density and upholding state classifications. Once approvals for all County and State requirements are met, the State issues a “Permit to Operate” to allow the campground to open.

PROJECT SETTING

The Project site is located in the eastern portion of the Homestead Valley Community, as shown in Figure 1. The parcel abuts Sunburst Avenue (a partial dirt road) to the east and will serve as the access point for the main entrance. Adjacent to the east is a single-family residence about 1,000 feet from Project entrance. Adele Lane abuts the site on the west, and vacant residential structures are situated about 400 and 500 feet from the nearest campsites, respectively. A vacant single-family residential dilapidated structure and a vacant recreational cabin are situated about

580 feet and 350 feet respectively to the north. The property abutting the west side of the southern portion of the Project site has only metal storage containers on site. The containers are about 125 feet from the nearest campsite.

The site is currently developed with two accessory storage buildings. Building "A" totals 400 sq. ft. of floor area used mainly for storage of equipment and materials, and Building "B" is a 120 sq. ft. shed used as an onsite office when a manager is present. There is also an existing 2,500-gallon irrigation water tank. The Project site has disturbed vegetation with sparse ornamental and native vegetation and creosote bush scrub on the northern portion of the site. The areas of disturbed land are primarily the result of internal circulation of vehicles on established paths, and there are other areas of existing undisturbed native vegetation, which includes two (2) Joshua Trees near the proposed entrance to the campground shown on the site plan, Exhibit A.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The Project is a new campground development that does not propose construction of any new buildings. Construction is limited to installation of perimeter fencing and minor grading to improve the internal driveways to provide access to each of the campsites and to create level tent pads.

Each campsite includes an area of approximately 250 sq ft, with a graded dirt parking area designated for no more than two (2) vehicles and adequate area to accommodate a tent structure, either provided by the guest or as a rental option provided during booking. Each site will also include a single 10x10' wooden shade structure and picnic table. Dedicated trash receptacles will be placed throughout the property and regularly serviced by Burrtec Waste (waste management company).

The configuration of the camp sites is compatible in scale to the surrounding area and designed to minimize impacts to the natural features of the site. Screening and buffering from adjacent properties are accomplished by using wood fencing and native vegetation, which will lessen noise travel while providing privacy to the subject site as well as the neighboring properties.

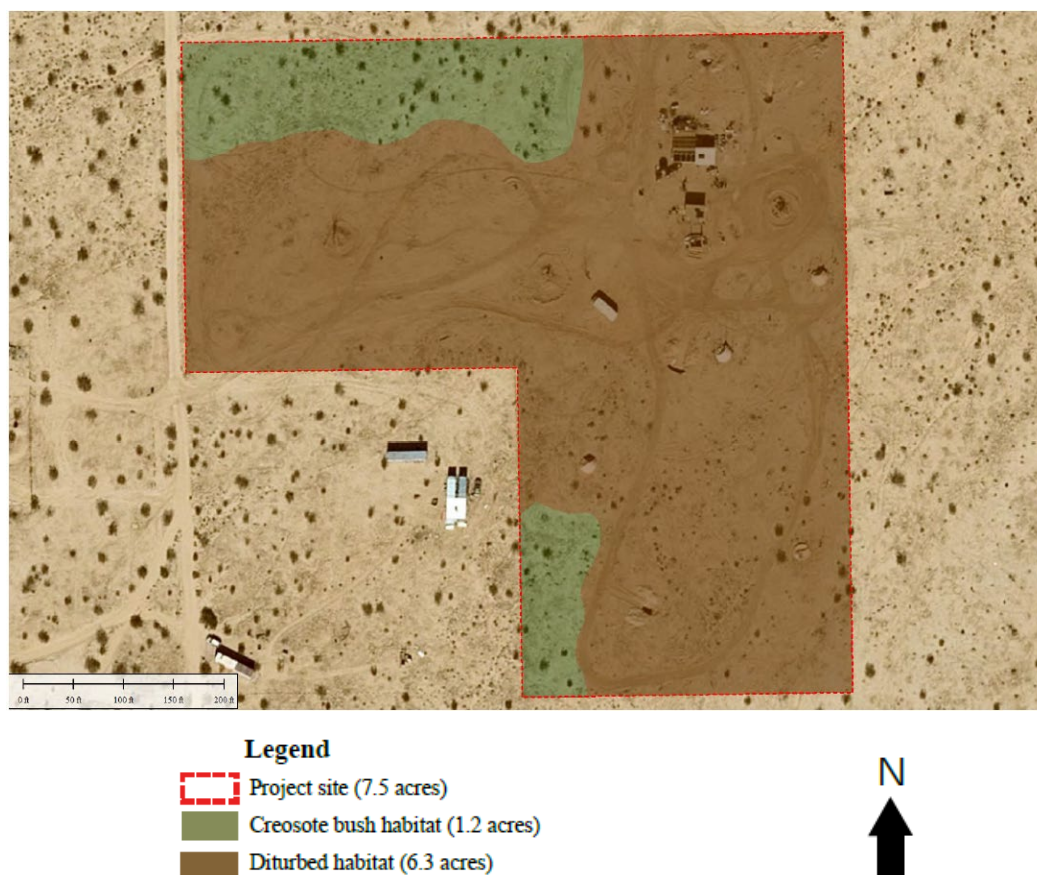
Access: The Project has been reviewed by the County's Land Use Services and Public Works departments and conditioned to provide adequate access to the abutting local street and to the nearest County maintained road. On-site circulation drive aisles meet San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (Fire Department) standards. A Condition of Approval (COA) requires that fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus. Road surface is approved to be native soil and shall be designed to 85% compaction and/or paving and hold the weight of fire apparatus at a minimum of 80,000 pounds. (See Exhibit C). The regular maintenance of the access road will be accomplished through annexation into Special Districts to extend road district maintenance service to the Project site as required in the COA document (Exhibit C).

Operations: The Campground Rules and Regulations, as described in Exhibit E established by the applicants, require that all camping guests are to bring drinking water and water for sanitary purposes (washing hands & dishes, brushing teeth, etc.). Additional regulations include rules for quiet hours, waste disposal, and wildlife interaction. Guests are provided with a list of prohibited items and activities during booking intended to minimize noise and disruption, especially during quiet nighttime hours, all intended to preserve the rural lifestyle characteristics of the neighborhood. Additionally, individual fire rings at each site are not provided and the rules clearly

state that no individual fires will be permitted at the sites, however fire extinguishers and first aid kits will be provided in case of emergency. All guests are required to read and acknowledge the Campground Rules and Regulations by signing the agreement document. While the applicant enforces the Campground Rules and Regulations, the California Department Housing and Community Development (HCD) enforces the operational provisions in Title 25 regulations.

The campsite is a 24/7 operation with reservations processed in advance through an on-line reservation system. Quiet hours will be strictly enforced from 9:00 PM to 7:00 AM to minimize disruption to wildlife, neighbors, and fellow campers.

Landscaping: The landscaping throughout the Project site is provided through a combination of the existing native vegetation that will be maintained and preserved and new native vegetation at each campsite. The landscape design incorporates new and existing vegetation to create a natural boundary at each campsite that provides additional privacy and noise buffering, as shown in Figure 7 – Primitive Design Camp Renderings. The proposed landscape plan's consistency with the required coverage percentage is described in Table 2-Project Code Compliance. The table describes existing and additional native vegetation being used because of the nature of the operation as a dry-camp site. The Project preserves the existing vegetation that includes two (2) Joshua Trees, Creosote Bush, American Century Plant, Saguaro, and Senita Cactus. The predominant plant species on site is the Creosote Bush which encompasses about 1.6 acres of the site per the aerial diagram below, which accounts for about 16% of the lot. With the preservation of the rest of the vegetation and the Joshua Trees, and added native vegetation around the 12 campsites, 80% landscape coverage of the Project site can be achieved.



Fencing: The property will be fenced along the perimeter of the Project and adhere to the 5-foot fence height limit in the front setback per the Development Code and 6 feet on the interior side yards. The proposed wood fence sections with the proposed native vegetation will provide privacy and noise buffering. The fencing along the front of the property along Sunburst Avenue will be designed and constructed as a 4-foot cable fence with native vegetation on both sides for a visual transition into the campground. The purpose of the cable fencing at the front of the Project site is to allow guests and visitors to see the campsite facility from and near the front entrance. Below is an example of the proposed wood and cable fencing options similarly offered by the applicant:

Fence & Screening Designs



General Plan Consistency and Code Compliance: The Project has been evaluated and determined by the Land Use Services Department to be consistent with the Countywide Policy Plan (General Plan), as identified in the Findings, Exhibit B. The Project satisfies all applicable standards of the Development Code for development within the Homestead Valley/Rural Living (HV/RL) Land Use Zoning District, as illustrated in Table 2:

TABLE 2: PROJECT CODE COMPLIANCE

Project Component	HV/RL Development Code		Project Plans
Parking	N/A		Project Specific Parking: 1 vehicle parking space per camp site. (2 additional for maintenance staff)
Landscaping	Minimum Landscaping	20%	80% (Native Plants to remain, additional native vegetation to be installed at each campsite to match desertscape.)
Building Setbacks	Front	25'	25'
	Street Side	25'	25'
	Interior Side	15'	25'
	Rear	15'	25'
Building Height	35 feet maximum		16' est. (For existing accessory buildings and proposed Yurts)
Maximum Lot Coverage	20%		10% (12 camp sites and 2 accessory buildings)
Drive Aisles	26'		26'

California Environmental Quality Act Compliance:

An Initial Study (IS) has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Exhibit D-1). The IS concludes that the Project will have a less than significant adverse impact on the environment with the implementation of recommended mitigation measures contained in the IS, which have been incorporated in the Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program (MMRP) (Exhibit D-2). A Notice of Availability/Notice of Intent (NOA/NOI) to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was advertised and distributed to initiate a 30-day public comment period, which concluded on March 14, 2025. One comment letter to the NOA/NOI was received for the 30-day public review period from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), dated March 12, 2025, expressing concerns of additional concerns of the existing Joshua Trees, and potential impacts on the habitat of the Desert Kit Fox, Crotch's Bumble Bee, and Nesting Birds. A response to comment letter was prepared to CDFW (See Exhibit D-4) and an Errata to the MND has been prepared. The Errata updates the Project description correcting the number of campsites from 15 to 12 and incorporating edits to Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-1 (related to Joshua trees) and addition of MM BIO-3 (related to Desert Kit Fox), BIO-4 (related to Crotch's Bumble Bee Habitat Assessment) and BIO-5 (related to nesting birds).

New mitigation measures may be adopted without triggering recirculation of the MND if they are added in response to comments on environmental impacts already identified in the negative declaration. Section IV of the MND previously determined that the Project would have a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated on species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species and conflicting with local policies on protecting biological resources. A lead agency may also change or substitute a mitigation measure without recirculating the negative declaration when it concludes as a result of the public review process that a proposed mitigation measure is infeasible or otherwise undesirable and finds that the revised mitigation

measure is equivalent or more effective in mitigating environmental impacts than the original measure.

The modification of MM BIO-1 and addition of BIO-3 through BIO-5 recommended by CDFW are on environmental impacts previously identified as potentially significant and/or are equivalent or more effective in mitigating environmental impacts than previously identified, and therefore incorporating the mitigation into the final MND does not trigger recirculation.

Tribal Cultural Resources: On July 2, 2024, the County sent project notification letters to California Native American tribes per AB 52 which requires a lead agency to make its best efforts to avoid, preserve, and protect tribal cultural resources. As a result of consultation, MM CR-1 through CR-8 have been incorporated into the MND.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

On October 24, 2023, a Project Notice was sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the Project site, as required by Development Code Section 85.03.080. In response to the project notice, staff received two (2) emails from nearby residents expressing noise and trespassing concerns about the Project and five (5) emails from nearby residents and business owners have been submitted to demonstrate support for the Project. The Applicants have responded with adding and incorporating a set of Rules and Regulations (Exhibit E) for guests of the “dry camp” to acknowledge and sign at time of booking. The rules are intended to be adhered and “respect: quiet hours from 9:00PM to 7:AM to mitigate noise.” The proposed fencing will diminish trespass concerns and occurrences as there are no visible boundaries currently at the Project site.

On March 25, 2026, the Notice of Hearing (NOH) was delivered to all property owners within a 300-foot radius of the Project site, listed interested parties, and relevant agencies announcing the public hearing with the Planning Commission for April 9, 2026. As of this staff report preparation, no further comments were received. Staff will alert the Planning Commission if comments are received between the NOH send-out date and the public hearing.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That Planning Commission:

- 1) **ADOPT** the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Program (Exhibits D-1 thru D-4).
- 2) **ADOPT** the Findings for approval of the Conditional Use Permit (Exhibit B).
- 3) **APPROVE** the Conditional Use Permit to establish a 12-site dry campground facility on a 7.5-acre parcel, subject to Conditions of Approval (Exhibit C).
- 4) **DIRECT** the Land Use Services Department to file a Notice of Determination in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

ATTACHMENTS:

EXHIBIT A: Site Plan
EXHIBIT B Findings
EXHIBIT C: Conditions of approval
EXHIBIT D-1: Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
EXHIBIT D-2: Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program (MMRP)
EXHIBIT D-3: Errata to Initial Study
EXHIBIT D-4: CEQA 30-Day Public Review Comment Letters and Response to Comments
EXHIBIT E: Letter of Intent and Rules & Regulations
EXHIBIT F: General Public Comments