

City of Cle Elum
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CITY OF CLE ELUM
FINDINGS of FACT, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATION
for
REQUEST FOR PLANNED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

File Numbers: SEPA-2024-003, PMU-2024-002, CA-2024-001, SDR-2024-002

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|--------------------------------|--|
| APPLICANT: | Kittitas County Public Works |
| APPLICANT ADDRESS: | 411 N. Ruby St., Suite 1, Ellensburg, WA 98926 |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | Airport Road, Cle Elum, WA |
| PARCEL NUMBER(S): | 962113 |
| DATE OF REQUEST: | April 26, 2024 |
| DATE OF RECOMMENDATION: | August 7, 2024 |
| STAFF CONTACT: | Colleda Monick, Planning Consultant |

I. DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

Proposal to construct a regional facility for search and rescue (SAR) along with an emergency operations center (EOC) in the City of Cle Elum in the Planned Mixed Use zoning district. Typical daily operations will have 1-2 employees on-site. During active search and rescue activities and/or trainings there may be up to 40 people on-site for a short time. The project will be constructed over two phases with the first phase being clearing and grading, the installation of storm drainage systems, septic system, and well installation. The second phase will include construction of buildings and parking lots.

II. SUMMARY OF RECCOMENDATION:

The Administrative Official recommends approval, subject to conditions.

III. FACTS:

A. Processing

1. The applications for a Site Design and Review, a Planned Mixed-Use review, and a SEPA checklist was received on April 26, 2024. On June 5, 2024, a Critical Areas application was submitted.
2. The applications were deemed complete for processing on June 7, 2024.
3. The applications are being processed under CEMC Ch. 17.45 for Planned Mixed Use, CEMC Ch.18.01 for Critical Areas, CEMC Ch. 14.40 for SEPA, and CEMC 14.30.140 for Site Design Review.
4. Pursuant to CEMC 2.60.060, the Hearing Examiner has the authority to make a decision on matters prescribed in the CEMC.

5. **Public Notice:** In accordance with CEMC 14.30.110, notice was provided for these applications as follows:
 - a. The subject property was posted with a land use action sign on June 11, 2024.
 - b. A Notice of Application and Environmental Review as sent to the applicant, SEPA agencies, and adjoining property owners within 300 feet of the subject property on June 11, 2024.
 - c. A Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS) was sent to the applicant, SEPA agencies, and adjoining property owners within 300 feet of the subject property on July 8, 2024,
6. **Environmental Review:** This application was required to undergo State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review. Notice was mailed on June 11, 2024. The public comment period ended on July 3, 2024. Four comments were received from SEPA Agencies which are outlined in Section III.C.2. An MDNS was issued on July 8, 2024, which was not appealed.

B. Current Zoning and Land Use:

1. The subject property is approximately 5 acres, is zoned Planned Mixed Use, and is currently vacant.
2. CEMC 17.45.010(A), states, The PMU district is established to apply to larger parcels of land with significant development potential and to achieve the following purposes:
 1. To assure that large new development creates a complete and interdependent Cle Elum community that contains a mix of land uses that provides for most of the daily needs of its residents and visitors including recreation, employment, housing affordable to all residents and education;
 2. To obtain development within the city with imaginative site planning in a compatible mixture of land uses that will encourage pedestrian rather than automotive access to employment opportunities and goods and services;
 3. To encourage building design that is in keeping with the climate and the traditional rural, small town, mountain character of the Cle Elum area;
 4. To ensure sensitivity in land use and design to adjacent land uses within the PMU district, and to avoid creating incompatible land uses;
 5. To ensure that all development gives adequate consideration to and provides mitigation for the impacts it creates with respect to transportation, public utilities, open space, recreation and public facilities, and that circulation, solid waste disposal and recycling, water, sewer and stormwater systems are designed to the extent

feasible to be adequate to serve future adjacent development that can reasonably be expected; and

6. To ensure that development protects and preserves the natural environment to the maximum extent possible, including but not limited to protecting the water quality of the Cle Elum and Yakima Rivers, contributing to the long-term solution of flooding problems, protecting wetlands and sensitive areas, protecting views and providing a wooded background and ridge adjacent to the community.

(B) Each proposal for development within the PMU district shall conform to the Cle Elum comprehensive plan, any applicable subarea plan and applicable annexation and/or development agreements, and will advance the achievement of the foregoing purposes of the PMU district as well as the following objectives:

1. To preserve or create open space for the enjoyment of the residents of the city, employees of businesses located within the city and the general public;
2. To create attractive, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a range of housing types, densities, costs and ownership patterns;
3. To provide access to employment opportunities and goods and services in close proximity to residential uses;
4. To provide a balanced mix and range of land uses within and adjacent to the development that minimize the necessity for the use of automobiles on a daily basis;
5. To use the highest quality architectural design and a harmonious use of building materials;
6. To provide a variety of street sizes and designs, including narrow streets designed principally for the convenience of pedestrians as well as streets of greater width designed primarily for vehicular traffic;
7. To provide commons, greens, parks or civic buildings or spaces as places for social activity and assembly for the neighborhood and community;
8. To provide clustered development to preserve open space within the corporate limits of the city while still achieving an appropriate overall density for the city; and
9. To maintain Old Town as the principal retail center for the City of Cle Elum.

3. The surrounding properties contain uses and zoning as follows:

| <u>Direction</u> | <u>Zoning</u> | <u>Land Use</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| North | Planned Mixed Use | Municipal Airport |
| South | Rural 5 (county) | Residential Dwellings |
| East | Planned Mixed Use | Municipal Airport (vacant) |
| West | Rural 5 (county) | Residential Dwellings |

C. Development Review:

1. Engineering:

a. Stormwater: All stormwater must be retained onsite consistent with the City's Construction Standards and 2019 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. A stormwater drainage plan and report, prepared by a licensed engineer and registered in the state of Washington, shall be submitted for City review and approval consideration. Design calculations for peak flow and peak volume storage requirements shall be based on a design storm frequency of ten-year, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event. Design calculations for treatment shall be based on sixty-four percent of the two-year recurrence interval, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event.

b. Utilities: Per CEMC 13.08.090: The type, capacities, location and layout of a private sewage disposal system shall comply with all regulations of the Washington State Health Department and the Kittitas County sanitarian. No permit shall be issued for any private sewage disposal system employing subsurface soil absorption facilities where the area of the lot is less than five thousand square feet. No septic tank or cesspool is permitted to discharge to any public sewer or natural outlet.

Per CEMC 15.24.140, 1. All new and replacement water supply systems shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of floodwaters into the systems; 2. New and replacement sanitary sewage systems shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of floodwaters into the systems and discharge from the systems into floodwaters; 3. On-site waste disposal systems shall be located to avoid impairment to them or contamination from them during flooding; and 4. Water wells shall be located on high ground that is not in the floodway.

c. Access: Proposed access is through the existing Airport Access Road. The applicant is also proposing secondary access directly from Airport Road. Improvements to airport access road to meet minimum fire code standards shall be required.

2. Agency Comments:

During the public comment period, the following comments were submitted which have been summarized below. (Full comments can found within the record.)

- i. On June 24, 2024, the **Washington State Department of Ecology** provided written comments, summarized below:
 - a. Your project is located within the boundaries of WAC 175-539A so it may be subject to the rule. If you are planning on withdrawing groundwater for a new use within the boundaries of WAC 173-539A, your project must be water budget neutral. Before withdrawing or using any water please submit a *Request of Determination of Water Budget Neutrality* or an *Application for a new Water Right Permit*, depending on the size of your project either form may be required.

- ii. On June 25, 2024, the **Certified Tribes of the Colville Reservation** provided written comments, summarized below:
 - a. Recommendation for the project to continue under an Inadvertent Discovery Plan and should new cultural resources be uncovered a data recovery and mitigation plan should be implemented. (*Staff Note: SEPA Mitigation Measure #2*).
- iii. On June 25, 2024, the **Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife** provided written comments, summarized below:
 - a. Recommend the additional mitigation measures, 1) Donating large conifers with rootwads to stream/wetland/river restoration projects within Upper Yakima Watershed; 2) Minimizing the impervious surfaces associated with the project to reduce likelihood of changes to hydrology for the wetland, and/or; 3) Additional native plantings in the riparian management zone for the watercourse at the eastern parcel boundary.
- iv. On July 9, 2024, **Washington State Department of Health** provided written comments, summarized below:
 - a. A water system application to the respective regulatory agency shall be submitted.
 - b. For any well water use, DOH ODW requires confirmation that the groundwater extractions meet Kittitas County requirements and proposed additional extractions show mitigation.

D. Applicable Law – Planned Mixed Use Review

Per CEMC 17.45.090, Approval of the PMU district shall require the following findings:

A. The development proposal substantially complies with the Cle Elum Comprehensive Plan, the policies of any applicable subarea plan, the requirements of any applicable annexation implementation agreement and the purposes and objectives of this chapter, and including but not limited to the following:

- 1. The purposes and objectives of CEMC 17.45.010 and 17.45.020 specifically advanced by the proposal;
- 2. Adequacy of the provisions for each of the following, where applicable:
 - a. Water supply;
 - b. Wastewater treatment facilities;
 - c. Stormwater management;
 - d. Power supply;
 - e. Schools;
 - f. Affordable housing;
 - g. Open space, natural areas, parks, recreation areas, or greens, commons or public assembly areas;
 - h. Municipal services and facilities;

- i. Fiscal impact guarantees; and
 - j. Transportation systems management.
3. Environmental impacts and mitigation, including but not limited to the following, where applicable:
- a. Wetlands protection;
 - b. Sensitive areas protection;
 - c. Habitat protection;
 - d. Quiet and dark night sky;
 - e. Water quality protection; and
 - f. Air quality protection.

Per CEMC 17.45.060 (B) The development standards in this section shall apply to all development proposals within the PMU district unless an adopted subarea plan or annexation implementation agreement specifies different standards, in which case the standards specified in the subarea plan or development agreement shall apply.

1. All property in one ownership shall be included in a PMU application;
2. The minimum acreage for a mixed use final plan shall be of such size that the applicant can demonstrate the ability to incorporate the intent of this chapter;
3. At least thirty-five percent of the total acreage within the proposed final plan must be dedicated to open space, natural areas, parks, recreation areas, or village greens, commons or public assembly areas, excluding streets and parking areas;
4. The tract or tracts of land included in a proposed mixed use final plan in a PMU district must be in one ownership or control, or be the subject of a joint application by the owners of all the property included;
5. Proposed circulation, solid waste disposal and recycling, water, sewer and stormwater management systems shall be designed in such a manner to allow adequate and efficient future expansion to accommodate development which can reasonably be anticipated on adjacent or nearby lands within the City of Cle Elum or the UGA;
6. The siting of compatible land uses shall be encouraged to the greatest extent possible through the use of sensitive site planning, use of landscaping, buffering and open space;
7. A lighting plan that provides sufficient illumination without significantly diminishing the ambient darkness of the rural setting. Outdoor lighting shall be designed so as not to direct light and/or glare on public roadways and/or neighboring properties. All outdoor lighting shall be fully cut off with the light fully shielded to reduce unnecessary light and glare. No lighting shall exceed a level of thirty footcandles;
8. Average density for single family to be four dwelling units per acre; minimum density for multi-family to be eight units per acre; maximum density for multiple family to be twelve to fifteen dwelling units per acre. Submittal of the final plan shall include sufficient information to determine that all proposed lots have adequate buildable area for the proposed use;
9. Maximum building height: three stories or thirty-five feet, whichever is lower;

10. Include provisions for a floor area ratio for business park; maximum amounts of impervious surface and building coverage for the various uses; refer to the city's zoning code; and
11. All other requirements of the Cle Elum Municipal Code such as parking, landscaping street standards, etc., unless specifically modified by a subarea plan or development agreement.

E. Applicable Law – Critical Areas

1. Per CEMC 18.01.020, “Wetland or wetlands” means an area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and other similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas created to mitigate the conversion of wetlands.
2. Per CEMC 18.01.030(C) C. *Wetlands Designation*. Wetlands are those areas, designated in accordance with the procedures outlined in WAC [173-22-035](#). All areas within the city meeting the wetland designation criteria as outlined in WAC [173-22-035](#) are hereby designated critical areas and are subject to the provisions of this chapter. Wetlands shall be rated according to the Ecology wetland rating system found in the Washington State Wetland Rating System documents (Eastern Washington, Ecology Publication No. 04-06-030) or as revised by Ecology. Wetland delineations are valid for five years; after such date the city shall determine whether a revision or additional assessment is necessary.
3. Per CEMC 18.01.050, All applications for permits to conduct activities having a possible significant impact on critical areas that are located on or near a project site must identify the areas affected and make an estimate of the probable impact. The city of Cle Elum shall deny all requests for permits which would result in activities degrading a wetland or fish and/or wildlife habitat conservation area, which would put people or property in a position of unacceptable risk with respect to floods or geologic hazards, which would tend to aggravate geologic hazards, or which would harm critical recharging areas for aquifers not otherwise in accordance with this chapter. The city of Cle Elum may, however, grant permits which include mitigation measures if the mitigation measures adequately protect the critical area and people involved. In granting a permit that includes mitigation measures, best available science, which shall be determined utilizing the criteria set

out in WAC [365-195-900](#) through [365-195-925](#), shall be used to develop and approve the mitigation measures. Applicable permit fees, as set forth by resolution of the city council, are due at the time of application. The applicant shall be responsible for the initiation, preparation, submission, and expense of all required reports, assessment(s), studies, plans, reconnaissance(s), peer review(s) by qualified consultants, and other work prepared in support of or necessary to review the application.

4. Per CEMC Table 18.01-1, Developments that produce the listed disturbances and are requesting a buffer reduction are required to address the disturbance through the use of applicable minimization measures.

F. Cle Elum Comprehensive Plan 2037

The following goals and policies apply to this proposal:

- Goal LU-1: Management and Implementation
- Policy LU-1.3 Ensure that new development does not outpace the City's ability to provide and maintain adequate public facilities and services by allowing new development to occur only when and where adequate facilities exist or can be provided.
- Goal LU-3: Preserve Cle Elum's natural environment while allowing for growth and development.
- Policy LU-3.4 All planning area waterways and wetlands shall be preserved to the maximum extent practical through the use of the Cle Elum Critical Areas Ordinance, SEPA, Shorelines Regulations, the Kittitas County Shorelines Master Program and applicable local, state and federal, and tribal laws.
- Policy LU 3.5 All new development shall comply with the provisions of the most recent edition of the Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington as adopted by the City and the Washington State Department of Ecology Best Management Practices.
- Policy LU3.11 Protect and preserve water quality, natural drainage, fish and wildlife habitats and the functions of streams and wetlands.
- Goal LU-5: Create Order and Energy in Commercial Areas
- Policy LU 5.1 Assure that a broad and diverse range of products and services are available to the residents of the City of Cle Elum.
- Policy LU 5.8 Continue the mandatory use of "Site and Design Review" to maintain a consistent range of aesthetic and practical development standards such as pedestrian connectivity, landscape buffers and, landscaping, for all new development and redevelopment in commercial areas.
- Goal LU-12: Water Quality and Quantity
- Policy LU 12.1 Maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems through the protection of unique, fragile, and valuable elements of the environment, including ground and surface waters, wetlands, and fish and wildlife and their habitats, to conserve the biodiversity of plant and animal species.

- LU 12.2 Prevent cumulative adverse environmental impacts to water quality, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat, and the overall net loss of wetlands, frequently flooded areas, and habitat conservation areas.
- Policy LU 12.3 The City shall consider the impacts of new development on water quality as part of its review process and will require any appropriate mitigating measures.
- Policy LU 12.5 Direct activities not dependent on critical areas resources to less ecologically sensitive sites and mitigate unavoidable impacts to critical areas by regulating alterations in and adjacent to critical areas
- Policy 12.6 Adequate on-site disposal of surface water runoff shall be provided by all types of development.
- Goal LU-13: Drainage, flooding, and stormwater runoff
- Policy LU 13.2 Development shall take adequate measures to minimize significant erosion and flash flooding conditions by: Limiting the total amount of impervious surface to be created; Planting sufficient vegetation to offset the effects of the impervious surfaces created; and/or providing sufficient drainage facilities to control storm runoff.
- Policy 16.8 Require Best Management Practices (BMPs) contained in the Department of Ecology's Stormwater Manual for Eastern Washington be implemented for all new development and redevelopment.
- Goal LU-21: Maintain Local Control of Planning and Land Use Decisions.
- Policy LU 21.1 In partnership with the County and WSDOT, review and update the regulations and zoning controls to protect the Cle Elum Municipal Airport and to promote compatible land uses.

IV. Findings:

A. Planned Mixed Use Approval Criteria

Per CEMC 17.45.090(A), the development proposal substantially complies with the Cle Elum comprehensive plan (see section III.F.); and the purposes and objectives of this chapter and including but not limited to the following:

1. The purposes and objectives of CEMC 17.45.010 and 17.45.020 are specifically advanced by the proposal;

CEMC 17.45.010(B) Each proposal for development within the PMU district shall conform to the Cle Elum comprehensive plan, any applicable subarea plan and applicable annexation and/or development agreements, and will advance the achievement of the foregoing purposes of the PMU district as well as the following objectives:

- a. To preserve or create open space for the enjoyment of the residents of the city, employees of businesses located within the city and the general public;

Staff Response: The search and rescue facility will be strategically positioned to preserve significant open space for public enjoyment and maintain the aesthetic quality of the area around the airport.

- b. To create attractive, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a range of housing types, densities, costs and ownership patterns;

Staff Response: The facility's integration into the community plan supports connectivity, ensuring that emergency services are readily accessible to nearby neighborhoods and Upper County Residents.

- c. To provide access to employment opportunities and goods and services in close proximity to residential uses;

Staff Response: The facility will create jobs and contribute to the local economy, providing employment opportunities close to residential areas and enhancing the community's economic diversity.

- d. To provide a balanced mix and range of land uses within and adjacent to the development that minimize the necessity for the use of automobiles on a daily basis;

Staff Response: Its proximity to the airport and other mixed-use developments reduces the need for long-distance travel and allows for alternative modes of transportation including aircraft.

- e. To use the highest quality architectural design and a harmonious use of building materials;

Staff Response: The architectural design will be of high quality, using materials and styles that are consistent with the rural, small-town, mountain character of Cle Elum, ensuring visual harmony and community acceptance.

- f. To provide a variety of street sizes and designs, including narrow streets designed principally for the convenience of pedestrians as well as streets of greater width designed primarily for vehicular traffic;

Staff Response: The development will include appropriate access routes designed for vehicles, enhancing connectivity while maintaining safety standards.

- g. To provide commons, greens, parks or civic buildings or spaces as places for social activity and assembly for the neighborhood and community;

Staff Response: The facility provides services in closer proximity to residents that was previously located farther away providing shorter response times.

- h. To provide clustered development to preserve open space within the corporate limits of the city while still achieving an appropriate overall density for the city; and

Staff Response: The placement of the facility supports clustered development principles, preserving surrounding open spaces while achieving necessary density and functionality.

- i. To maintain Old Town as the principal retail center for the City of Cle Elum.

Staff Response: The facility's operations will not compete with retail functions but will support the overall economic health of Cle Elum by enhancing safety and services, indirectly benefiting all local businesses.

- 2. Adequacy of the provisions for each of the following, where applicable;

- a. Water supply;

Staff Response: Domestic well is proposed

- b. Wastewater treatment facilities;

Staff Response: Septic is proposed

- c. Stormwater management;

Staff Response: Eastern Washington Stormwater Manual is being used to sheet flow stormwater runoff for dispersal and infiltration into roadside areas. There will be no discharge of untreated stormwater to surface waters.

- d. Power supply;

Staff Response: Puget Sound Energy

- e. Schools;

Staff Response: N/A

- f. Affordable housing;

Staff Response: N/A

- g. Open space, natural areas, parks, recreation areas, or greens, commons, or public assembly areas;

Staff Response: N/A

h. Municipal services and facilities;
Staff Response: Search and Rescue Facility

i. Fiscal impact guarantees;
Staff Response: N/A

j. Transportation systems management.
Staff Response: N/A

3. Environmental impacts and mitigation, including but not limited to the following, where applicable;
 - a. Wetlands protection;
 - b. Sensitive areas protection;
 - c. Habitat protection;
 - d. Quiet and dark night sky;
 - e. Water quality protection;
 - f. Air quality protection;

Staff Response: As mitigated, this proposal will have no adverse environmental impacts.

B. Critical Areas

1. A wetland delineation was conducted by Jacobs on August 20 and 27, 2023. Wetlands were delineated using methods described in the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0)*. The wetland delineation identifies a Category III wetland on-site, requiring a 60-foot buffer. The initial site plans submitted on April 26, 2024 show encroachment into the required wetland buffer and do not meet the standards of CEMC 18.01.070. On May 29, 2024 an updated mitigation plan was submitted showing a proposed new planting area around the retention pond. The proposal includes 6,618 square-feet of new planting area which is a net increase of 1,871 square-feet over the area proposed to encroach into the wetland buffer. The applicant shall submit an update to the wetland delineation demonstrating how the proposed new planting area meets the applicable standards for buffer averaging and/or compensatory mitigation (MDNS Mitigation Measure #3).

C. Site Design Findings

Per CEMC 14.30.140 (C)The city may approve a proposed site plan or building design in whole or in part, with or without conditions, based on a finding that:

1. The project is consistent with the Cle Elum comprehensive plan and meets the requirements and intent of the Cle Elum Municipal Code, including the type of land use and the intensity/density of the proposed development.

Staff Response: This proposal complies with the goals and objectives of the Cle Elum Comprehensive Plan, the provisions of the Cle Elum Municipal Code, and the intent and purpose of the Planned Mixed Use zoning district.

2. The physical location, size, and placement of the development on the site and the location of the proposed uses within the project avoid or minimize impacts to any critical resource or floodplain area to the greatest extent possible or are compatible with the character and intended development pattern of the surrounding properties.

Staff Response: As mitigated, this proposal will have no adverse environmental impacts. The physical location, size, and placement of the development on the site, along with the proposed uses within the project, have been carefully designed to avoid or minimize impacts to the wetland to the greatest extent possible. Additionally, the project is compatible with the character and intended development pattern of the surrounding properties.

3. The project makes adequate provisions for water supply, storm drainage, sanitary sewage disposal, emergency services, and environmental protection to ensure that the proposed project would not be detrimental to public health, welfare, and safety.

Staff Response: The project makes adequate provisions for water supply, storm drainage, sanitary sewage disposal, emergency services, and environmental protection to ensure that the proposed project would not be detrimental to public health, welfare, and safety.

The applicant is proposing the following measures to address these essential services:

- a. Water Supply and Sanitary Sewage Disposal: The applicant is proposing the use of domestic wells and septic systems, as there is no existing water or sewer infrastructure in the vicinity of the project. These systems will be designed and installed in compliance with all relevant health and safety regulations.*
- b. Storm Drainage: The applicant will comply with all Stormwater requirements, ensuring that stormwater is effectively managed on-site. This includes the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to control runoff, prevent erosion, and protect water quality.*
- c. Environmental Protection: The applicant is proposing mitigation measures to offset any impacts to the wetland, ensuring that environmental resources are preserved and protected. This includes creating buffer zones, implementing erosion control measures, and conducting ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance with environmental standards.*
- d. Emergency Services: Provisions have been made to ensure that emergency services can adequately serve the project. Including updates to road grade and width at the access point.*

4. Public access and circulation including nonmotorized access and emergency vehicle access, as appropriate, are adequate to and on the site.

Staff Response: The facility will not be open to the public and is meant to be used by 1-2 employees daily. Adequate access will be provided for emergency vehicles.

5. Adequate setbacks and buffering have been provided. Any reduction to setbacks or buffer widths is the minimum necessary to allow for reasonable economic use of the lot and does not adversely impact the functional value of the critical resource area or adjoining land uses.

Staff Response: Adequate setbacks and buffering have been provided. The project design includes the following measures to ensure that setbacks and buffer widths are sufficient and effective:

- a. Setbacks and Buffering: The project incorporates appropriate setbacks and buffers to protect critical resource areas and maintain compatibility with adjoining land uses. These setbacks and buffers are designed to minimize visual and noise impacts, preserve natural habitats, and protect water quality.*
- b. Minimal Reductions: Any reduction to the standard setbacks or buffer widths has been carefully evaluated and implemented only when necessary to allow for reasonable economic use of the lot. These reductions are the minimum necessary and have been designed to ensure that they do not adversely impact the functional value of the critical resource area or adjoining land uses.*
- c. Protection of Critical Resources: The project includes specific measures to protect critical resource areas, such as wetlands, by maintaining sufficient buffer zones and implementing additional mitigation measures where necessary. These efforts ensure that the functional value of these areas is preserved.*
- d. Compatibility with Adjoining Land Uses: The design of the project ensures that any adjustments to setbacks or buffers do not negatively impact neighboring properties.*

6. The physical location, size, and placement of proposed structures on the site and the location of proposed uses within the project are compatible with and relate harmoniously to the surrounding area.

Staff Response: The physical location, size, and placement of proposed structures on the site and the location of proposed uses within the project are compatible with and relate harmoniously to the surrounding area.

7. The project adequately mitigates impacts identified through the SEPA review process, if required.

Staff Response: The project adequately mitigates impacts identified through the SEPA review process, ensuring that any potential environmental concerns are addressed and resolved effectively.

8. The project would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, or general welfare.

Staff Response: The project would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, or general welfare, as it incorporates necessary measures to safeguard these aspects and provides for increased safety to serve the Upper Kittitas County.

V. CONCLUSIONS:

- A. The Hearing Examiner has jurisdiction to issue a recommendation to City Council on this matter.
- B. The project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the PMU zoning district and the Cle Elum Comprehensive Plan 2037.
- C. During project review it has been found that the site plan, as conditioned, meets applicable code requirements of CEMC 17.45, 18.01, 14.40, and 14.30.140.
- D. The Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS) issued on July 8, 2024 was not appealed.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Consultant, on behalf of the City of Cle Elum, recommends that approval of the Search and Rescue Facility (PMU-2024-002, CA-2024-001, and SDR-2024-002) be approved based upon the above findings and conclusions and subject to the conditions of approval as follows;

- 1. The Mitigation Measures of the July 8, 2024 MDNS shall be complied with.
- 2. All stormwater must be retained onsite consistent with the City's Construction Standards and 2019 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. A stormwater drainage plan and report, prepared by a licensed engineer and registered in the state of Washington, shall be submitted for City review and approval consideration.
- 3. The type, capacities, location and layout of a private sewage disposal system shall comply with all regulations of the Washington State Health Department and the Kittitas County sanitarian.
- 4. Improvements to the airport access road to meet minimum fire code standards shall be required.

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit I: Applicant Submittals

- Application, SDR
- Narrative
- SEPA Checklist
- Critical Areas
- Aquatic Resources Summary and Maps
- Site Plans
- Site Plan _Wetland Exhibit

Exhibit II: Notices

- Notice of Application and Environmental Review
- MDNS
- Notice of Public Hearing
- Newspaper Post
- Posting of site
- Mailing Notices

Exhibit III: Comments

- Department of Ecology, 6-24-24
- Colville Tribes, 6-25-24
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, 6-25-24
- Washington State Department of Health, 7-09-24