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## Recommended Findings

**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING – DECEMBER 17, 2025  
RECOMMENDED FINDINGS**

**NAPA VALLEY MUSEUM/MARKETPLACE-UNDERSTUDY SEATING  
USE PERMIT VERY MINOR MODIFICATION P25-00278-VMM  
607 ST. HELENA HIGHWAY, ST. HELENA 94574  
(APN #027-150-001-000)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL:**

The Planning Commission (Commission) finds that:

1. The proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15061(b)(3) (State CEQA Guidelines) in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.
2. The Secretary of the Commission is the custodian of the records of the proceedings on which this decision is based. The records are located at the Napa County Planning, Building & Environmental Services Department, 1195 Third Street, Second Floor, Napa, California.

**USE PERMIT:**

The Commission has reviewed the use permit modification request in accordance with the requirements of Napa County Code § 18.124.070 makes the following findings:

3. The Planning Commission has the power to issue a use permit modification under the zoning regulations in effect as applied to the property;

**Analysis:** With approval of the modification to address Conditions of Approval No. 4.12 (c) and Environmental Health Division Conditions in Conditions of Approval No. 4.10 (c) regarding the project's existing wastewater system and proposed seating, the project is consistent with the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) zoning district regulations. The proposed change to allow modest accessory seating at the Marketplace/Under-Story is consistent with NCC § 18.32.030(A)(1) & (2). All required findings can be made, and the project complies with the remainder of the Napa County Zoning Ordinance (Title 18, Napa County Code), as applicable.

4. The procedural requirements for a use permit modification set forth in Chapter 18.124 of Napa County Code have been met;

**Analysis:** Under NCC § 18.124.010, the use permit modification may be granted by the planning commission is not required by the board of supervisors. The appropriate applications, fees, and public hearing requirements have been met. The hearing notice and the finding that the proposed project is exempt from CEQA was posted and published in the Napa Valley Register on December 4, 2025, and copies of the notice were forwarded to property owners within 1,000 feet of all project parcel and interested parties, and posted on the County's Current Project

Explorer website.

The project application and subsequent resubmittal of project documents have allowed staff to determine that under NCC § 18.124.060, specifically subsection (C) through conditions set forth by the Environmental Health, Building and Fire that adverse effects on the existing wastewater system and public accessibility to the Marketplace/Under-Study or other effects have been mitigated or determined not to exist; (E) sufficient utilities and their location and availability exist on the property or can be met through the existing wastewater system required operational and maintenance plan set forth through the Environmental Health Division's conditions and (K) the time period for which the permit shall be subject to standards set forth in NCC § 18.124.080.

5. The grant of the Use Permit modification, as conditioned, will not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare of the County;

**Analysis:** Granting the Use Permit Modification for the project as proposed and condition will not adversely affect health, safety, or welfare of the County. Affected County divisions and departments have reviewed the project and commented regarding the proposed indoor and outdoor seating and existing wastewater system. Conditions are recommended which will incorporate these comments into the project to assure the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare.

6. The proposed use complies with the applicable provisions of Napa County Code and is consistent with the following policies and standards of the Napa County General Plan together with the General Plan Consistency Analysis incorporated here by reference.

**Analysis:** Compliance with the Zoning Ordinance with approval of indoor and outdoor seating, the project remains consistent with the CN zoning district regulations. The Marketplace/Under-Study with proposed indoor and outdoor seating are permissible within the zoning district upon grant of a use permit modification, as described in NCC § 18.32 and NCC § 18.120.

**Analysis:** Compliance with the General Plan is demonstrated through the applicability of the following General Plan Goals and Policies:

Goal AG/LU-5: With municipalities, other governmental units, and the private sector, plan for commercial, industrial, residential, recreational, and public land uses in locations that are compatible with adjacent uses and agriculture.

Staff Response: Through continued use of the parcel within the CN zoning district under a use permit modification that is consistent with allowable uses and minimizing the need for construction and redevelopment that can lead to further environmental impacts and degradation, the approval of the use permit modification will support General Plan AG/LU-5.

Policy AG/LU-45: All existing commercial establishments that are currently located within a

commercial zoning district shall be allowed to continue to operate and use the existing buildings and/or facilities. Additional commercial uses and mixed residential-commercial uses which are permitted by the existing commercial zoning of the parcel shall be permitted on that portion of the parcel zoned commercial. With respect to Policies AG/LU-44 and 45, due to the small numbers of such parcels, their limited capacity for commercially-viable agriculture due to pre-existing uses and/or size, location and lot configuration, and the minimal impact such commercial operations and expansions will have on adjacent agriculture or open space activities or the agricultural and open space character of the surrounding area, such limited development will not be detrimental to Agriculture, Watershed or Open Space policies of the General Plan. Therefore, such development is consistent with all of the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Staff Response: As stated in the previous staff response, the property has been in commercial use since 1954, and despite its agricultural resource General Plan designation, it is unsuitable for conversion to agricultural use due to preexisting uses and size, and as such will not be detrimental to Agricultural Resources policies of the General Plan.

Policy AG/LU-50: The following standards shall apply to lands designated as Commercial on the Land Use Map of this General Plan (See Attachment A). Intent: 1) Provide areas where residents of the unincorporated area of the County may obtain commercial services for day-to-day needs in surrounding land uses. The area and location of such districts shall be determined largely by the urban nature and extent of the local trade area to be served. Other criteria which will figure significantly in the choice of parcels deemed suitable for classification include availability of public service, public utilities, traffic safety, character of the site and surrounding area. The central business district of each incorporated city shall be recognized as the dominant commercial and financial center for the surrounding unincorporated area of the County. 2) Provide areas consistent with the General Plan in which the principal use of land is devoted to general commercial uses in non-marine urban areas, limited commercial facilities essential to the needs of residents in residential neighborhood areas, limited commercial facilities oriented to the needs of recreational users in marine areas, and limited commercial facilities serving the needs of travelers in locations in proximity to primary transportation corridors which provide access to areas where tourist oriented uses predominate. General Uses: Neighborhood, tourist, and other limited commercial uses; subject to specified conditions. Minimum Parcel Size: 1 acre; 1/2 acre where public water and sewer are available. Maximum Building Density: 50% coverage.

Staff Response: The proposed modification to add limited indoor and outdoor seating is compatible with Policy AG/LU-50. The existing structures make up approximately 34.38 percent of the 1.4-acre parcel.

Policy CIR-5: The County supports a coordinated approach to land use and circulation planning that increases opportunities for physical activity and promotes public health by prioritizing implementation of improvements to active transportation modes and encouraging mixed-use developments that locate complementary uses within reasonable walking or bicycling distance of each other.

Staff Response: As implemented through the required previous condition of approval of Use Permit P24-00072-UP and Variance P24-00241-VAR, the applicant/permittee installed the required bicycle parking adjacent to visitor and employee entrances and will not be obstructed by the proposed outdoor seating.

Policy E-2: The County recognizes that tourism contributes to the economic viability of agriculture in Napa County and is an important part of the County's economy, generating jobs, local spending, and tax revenues.

Staff Response: The granting of the use permit modification for proposed indoor and outdoor seating for the Marketplace-Under-Study will contribute to making the business more economically viable by providing customers with a seating area to enjoy the grab and go food service being provided, ultimately enhancing the entire tourism industry by attracting visitors, generating jobs and encouraging local spending.

7. The proposed use would not require a new water system or improvement causing significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on an affected groundwater basin in Napa County, unless that use would satisfy any of the other criteria specified for approval or waiver of a groundwater permit under NCC § 13.15.070 or 13.15.080.

**Analysis:** The subject property is not located in a "groundwater deficient area" as identified in NCC § 13.15.010 and does not include any on-site facilities or improvements that would require new groundwater systems or significant use of groundwater. Existing public water service which is already being provided to the Napa Valley Museum, Marketplace-Under-Study and the Press Restaurant by the City of St. Helena for operational and maintenance purposes. The addition of proposed seating will result in a de minimis amount of water usage. Furthermore, the existing wastewater system will be limited to 800 gallons per day with implementation of an operation and maintenance program, and a contingency plan, and regular monitoring and inspection as required by the project's updated Conditions of Approval as well as the Environmental Health Division's updated Conditions of Approval Memorandum.