

**COLUMBIA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**STAFF REPORT**

March 24, 2025

Conditional Use Permit and Site Design Review for the new "Holce Trailhead" of the Crown Z  
Recreational Trail near the City of Vernonia

**HEARING DATE:** April 7, 2025

**FILE NUMBERS:** CU 25-01 and DR 25-01

**APPLICANTS:** Riley Baker, Columbia County General Services  
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**OWNER:** Holce Logging Co. Inc. P.O. Box 127, Vernonia, OR 97064

**PROPERTY LOCATION:** The subject property does not have a situs address, but is located at the end of E. Knott Street in Vernonia

**MAP ID NUMBER:** 16,000 sq ft portion of the ~106-acres associated with Tax Map 4403-00-00100

**ACCOUNT NUMBER:** 23870

**ZONING:** Primary Forest (PF-80)

**SIZE:** 16,000 sq ft (0.27-ares)

**REQUEST:** To establish a new trailhead that will provide trail users with the necessary amenities to improve their safety and comfort while using the Crown Z Recreational trail.

**APPLICATION COMPLETE:** 11/07/2024      **\*150 DAY DEADLINE:** Has been waived

\*Per ORS 215.427(1), and during the County Planning Commission's January 6, 2025 hearing for CU 25-01 and DR 25-01, the applicant and property owner signed a Waiver of the 150 -Day Rule for both proposals after the Planning Commission continued this hearing to April 7, 2025 to allow additional time for the applicant to address design related concerns.

**APPLICABLE REVIEW CRITERIA:**

**Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR)**

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**SUMMARY & BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The applicant, Columbia County General Services and Lower Columbia Engineering, represented respectively by Riley Baker and Brett Kahr, are proposing to establish a new trailhead for the Crown Z Recreational Trail at the end of E. Knott Street near the City of Vernonia with the submittal of a Conditional Use Permit (CU 25-01) and Site Design Review Permit (DR 25-01). The original applications were submitted in October 2024 but the regularly scheduled hearing date was continued from January 6, 2025 to April 7, 2025 due to design related concerns.

On February 18, 2025 the applicant submitted Revisions to the original Site Plan submitted October 8, 2024 which amended the Site Plan in the two following ways without compromising Knickerson Creek's 50' protected riparian corridor nor authorized uses of E. Knott Street's existing public right-of-way:

- Reduced the size of the Trailhead Project Site from 160' by 100' (16,000 sq ft) to 160' by 85' (13,600 sq ft) Public Easement and
- Relocated this Trailhead Project Site 30' south and outside of E. Knott Street's existing 60' wide public right-of-way.

The 13,600 sq ft Trailhead Project Site's public easement consists of a partially graveled parking area that is located at the northern edge of a 106-acre PF-80 zoned property owned by Holce Logging associated with Tax Map ID Number 4403-00-00100/Tax Account Number 23870.

Proposed improvements for the 13,600 square-foot *Holce Trailhead* include:

- Approximately 7,800 sq. ft. of paved area with 15 standard parking spaces and 1 van accessible ADA parking space
- 16' x 16' picnic shelter with fixed picnic table and benches
- 9' x 6' vault toilet

- Existing bollards and gate
- Trailhead and historical information signage
- 5 bicycle parking spaces
- Bicycle repair station
- Three fixed benches
- Three vegetated stormwater swales
- Landscaping along perimeter including native trees and shrubs

According to the FEMA FIRM No. 41009C0381D, there are no identified flood hazard areas on the subject property associated with Knickerson Creek located west and south of the Project Site. This is demonstrated with the attached Exhibit C's Wetlands Delineation Report that was reviewed and approved on April 1, 2022 by the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL). Specifically, Chris Stevenson's review of "Holce Trailhead Improvements" verifies the proposal will have no effect on these identified wetlands associated with Knickerson Creek which is fish-bearing according to the OR Department of Forestry Stream Classification Maps of Vernonia.

The BEAK Maps of the Upper Nehalem Valley shows that this property is located in an area designated as Big Game Habitat, but does not contain any threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife, plant, or animal species. The Holce Trailhead's 13,600 sq ft. portion of the 106-acre property is located in an existing cleared out area and does not contain any environmentally hazardous areas. The site visit on November 15, 2024 confirmed the accuracy of the information submitted in the application.

The establishment of a new Holce Trailhead for the CZ Recreational Trail is also consistent with the purpose of the PF-80 Zone which includes retaining forest land for forest management, watershed protection, soil protection, maintenance of clean air and water, wildlife and fisheries habitat, outdoor recreation activities, and open space in ways that will help protect these activities from the encroachment of conflicting non-forest uses and influences.

The remainder of this report will address the extent to which the Holce Trailhead submitted for CU 25-01 and DR 25-01 comply and are consistent with the applicable provisions of the Oregon Administrative Rules and of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance (CCZO).

**2022 Aerial and PF-80 Zoning maps of property showing Knickerson Creek**



**Project Site View southwest rom E Knott Street**







standards listed in Sections 506, 507, and 508 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other local, state, and federal laws pertaining to these uses.

**.14** Public Parks including only those uses specified under **OAR 660-034-0035** or OAR 660-034-0040, whichever is applicable, and subject to provisions in Sections 508 through 510, 1503 and 1550.

**OAR 660-034-0035**  
**Park Uses On Agricultural and Forest Land**

(1) All uses allowed under Statewide Planning Goal 3 are allowed on agricultural land within a state park, and all uses allowed under Statewide Planning Goal 4 are allowed on forest land within a state park, provided such uses are also allowed under OAR chapter 736, division 18 and all other applicable laws, goals, and rules. Local governments may allow state parks and park uses as provided in OAR chapter 660, division 33, and ORS 215.213 or 215.283 on agricultural lands, or as provided in OAR 660-006-0025(4) on forest lands, regardless of whether such uses are provided for in a state park master plan.

(2) The park uses listed in subsection (a) through (i) of this section are allowed in a state park subject to the requirements of this division, OAR chapter 736, division 18, and other applicable laws. Although some of the uses listed in these subsections are generally not allowed on agricultural lands or forest lands without exceptions to Statewide Planning Goals 3 or 4, a local government is not required to adopt such exceptions in order to allow these uses on agricultural or forest land within a state park provided the uses, alone or in combination, meet all other applicable requirements of statewide goals and are authorized in a state park master plan adopted by OPRD, including a state park master plan adopted by OPRD prior to July 15, 1998:

**(b) Day use areas: picnic shelters, barbecue areas, swimming areas (not swimming pools), open play fields, play structures;**

**(c) Recreational trails: walking, hiking, biking, horse, or motorized off-road vehicle trails; trail staging areas;**

**Finding 1:** This proposal and related site development presented for the new Holce Trailhead is an authorized use in the PF-80 zone and identified in CCZO Section 505.14 as well as in OAR 660-034-0035 (1) and (2). This use can be approved through Site Design Review and Conditional Use Permits which are quasi-judicial reviews that must be reviewed and approved by the County Planning Commission at a public hearing. The applicant submitted the CU 25-01 and DR 25-01 Applications in October 2024 and then revised them in February 2025 to establish a new trailhead for the CZ Recreational Trail near the City of Vernonia city limits. Staff find that the submitted proposals are authorized conditionally permitted uses on the subject property consistent with the provisions in Section 505.14 of the CCZO and in OAR 660-034-0035 (1) and (2).

Continuing with Section 508 of the Zoning Ordinance

508 General Review Standards The Planning Director or hearings body shall determine that a use authorized by Sections 504 and 505 meets all of the

following requirements:

- .1 The proposed use will not force significant change in, or significantly increase the cost of, accepted farming or forest practices on agriculture or forest lands;

**Existing paved trail for Crown Z Recreational Trail at intersection of Holce Trailhead**



**Finding 2:** The proposed 13,600 Holce Trailhead does not appear to force significant changes in, nor significantly increase the cost of, accepted farming or forest practices on nearby forest lands on the parent property nor adjoining resource-zoned properties. This existing paved trail for Crown Z. Recreational Trail meets up with E, Knott Street at this location as seen above and the proposed improvements will help to ensure minimum disturbance to adjacent forest and farm operations. The two requested proposals will authorize the intended improvements and amenities for Crown Z trail users and convenience. The county has not received any comments from any adjacent resource zoned property owners that also use this city street to access their properties. The application states that Holce Trailhead will allow for continued vehicle access to the adjacent privately-owned forest properties from E. Knott Street and will not significantly affect these ongoing forest practices activities and costs. Without any additional evidence, staff finds that the proposals as presented are consistent with Section 508.1 of the CCZO.

- .2 The proposed use will not significantly increase fire hazard or significantly increase fire suppression costs or significantly increase risks to fire suppression personnel;

**Finding 3:** This proposal will allow the applicant to install appropriate improvements that will help to ensure fire safety for trail users and adjacent resource zoned properties. The applicant also includes in Exhibit E comments from the Vernonia Rural Fire District (VRFD) stating they have reviewed the site plan for Holce Trailhead, conducted an on-site inspection, and concluded that it does meet the fire department access and water supply requirements referenced in the Oregon Fire Code. Although the VRFD has tentatively approved the new Holce Trailhead, since

the site is still unimproved one condition of approval will require the county to have written confirmation that VRFD has inspected and approved all of the Holce Trailhead's necessary improvements (parking and driveway surfaces, turnaround, etc.) identified in Exhibit J – Drawing C-2 “Holce Tailhead Improvements” for compliancy with the Oregon Fire Code.

In addition, the application states that the applicant will establish and maintain primary fuel-free fire breaks at least 30' surrounding the picnic shelters and vault toilet. All vegetation will consist of low ornamental shrubbery less than 2' tall, individual trees will be separated by the distance equal to the diameter of the crowns adjacent to each other. existing trees will be pruned from the base to at least 8', and all dead fuels shall be removed from the project area.

With the ongoing maintenance of this Primary Firebreak Buffer and the approval of Vernonia Fire District confirming adequate emergency access and fire suppression as conditions of approval, staff finds that this proposed use will not significantly increase fire hazards, fire suppression costs nor risks to fire suppression personnel.

- .3 A waiver of remonstrance shall be recorded with the County Clerk certifying that the owner will not remonstrate against or begin legal action or suit proceeding to cause or persuade the owner or operator of any farm or forest lands to modify the conduct of legal and accepted farm or forest operations; and

**Finding 4:** As stated in the application, County Planning Staff and the applicant discussed the fact that the users of the Holce Trailhead were whom the Waiver of Remonstrance should apply to rather than the owners of the Trailhead, the Holce Logging Company. Consequently, staff and the applicant agreed that trail signage will include an acknowledgement that since the Holce Trailhead and the Crown Z Recreational Trail are zoned for resource sources, trail users are prohibited from remonstrating or taking legal action against legal and accepted farm or forest operations occurring in the close proximity to the recreational trail. Under these site-specific circumstances, staff concurs with the applicant and agrees that the posted signage for Holce Trailhead depicted in Exhibit J – Drawing D-3, will notify trail users of resource related activities occurring in close proximity to the trail from which they are prohibited from remonstrating and/or taking legal action against these accepted resource-related uses. Planning staff will approve of the actual text as one condition of approval and prior to the installation of said signage. With this condition, staff finds this criterion will be met.

- .4 The proposed use is consistent with requirements contained in the Comprehensive Plan or implementing ordinances, including, but not limited to, regulations which apply to flood hazard areas, development within the Willamette River Greenway, development in forested areas or development in significant resource areas, such as riparian, wetlands or slide-prone areas.

**Finding 5:** As stated in the Summary, the Holce Trailhead Project Site does not contain any identified flood hazard areas according to the FEMA FIRM No. 41009C0381D. Although Knickerson Creek is a fish-bearing creek, it is located west and south of the Project Site and does not intersect with the Project Site. Exhibit C's “Wetlands Delineation Report” was reviewed and

approved on April 1, 2022 by the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) verifies that the proposal will have no effect on Knickerson Creek's identified wetlands and 50' Riparian Corridor.

The attached comments from the County Sanitarian will require the applicant to obtain a commercial septic system permit for the installation of the Vault Toilet that will also ensure no wastewater will contaminate Knickerson Creek's identified wetlands and 50' riparian corridor. Review and issuance of the septic permit will be required before any associated building permits for the project can be issued.

The BEAK Maps of the Upper Nehalem Valley shows that this property is located in an area designated as Big Game Habitat, but does not contain any threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife, plant, or animal species. The application also states that the Project Site's small size, location at the periphery of a forested area and abuts the City of Vernonia indicates it is not likely to impede the use of designated resource-related activities occurring on adjacent properties that surround the entire Crown Z Recreational Trail. Finally, the Holce Trailhead's 13,600 sq ft. portion of the 106-acre property is located in an existing cleared out area and does not contain any environmentally hazardous areas. With these site characteristics, staff finds that the proposals are consistent with the requirements contained in the Comprehensive Plan's implementing ordinances and will not detrimentally impact any environmentally sensitive areas.

#### Continuing with Section 509 – Standards of Development

##### 509 Standards of Development

- .1 The minimum average lot or parcel width and minimum average lot or parcel depth shall be 100 feet for all activities except farming or forestry.

**Finding 6:** These average width and depth requirements for newly created PF-80 zoned parcels does not apply to the submitted proposals since the 3,600 sq ft Holce Trailhead Project Site was created as a *Public Easement*, and is not a division of land.

- .2 Access to parcels in this zone shall meet Fire Safety Design Standards for Roads in the County Road Standards and access standards found in Section 510 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**Finding 7:** The applicant submitted Exhibit E from Brandon Carr, the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District stating “ *we have received and reviewed your site plan for the Holce Trailhead project in Vernonia, Oregon. After reviewing your site plan as well as doing an on-site inspection, VRFD has concluded that it does meet the fire department access and water supply requirements referenced in the Oregon Fire Code.* ”

As covered for Finding 3 however, since the site is still unimproved one condition of approval will require the county to have written confirmation that VRFD has inspected and approved all of the Holce Trailhead's necessary improvements (parking and driveway surfaces, turnaround, etc.) identified in Exhibit J Drawing C-2 “Holce Trailhead Improvements” for compliancy with the Oregon Fire Code.

Similarly, Exhibit I - the January 31, 2025 email from Josette Mitchell (City of Vernonia) stated that relocating the Holce Trailhead out of E. Knott Street's platted 60' right-of-way addressed the city's stated issues with the project. With the VRFD's inspection and approval of all new installed site improvements for compliance with Oregon Fire Safety Design Standards, staff finds this criterion will be met.

- .3 There shall be no height limitation for forest operation and management-related structures unless otherwise permitted in the Primary Forest Zone. The maximum building height for all non-farm, non-forest structures shall be 50 feet or 2 ½ stories, whichever is less.

**Finding 8:** The only new structures proposed for the Holce Trailhead will be the two new picnic shelters and the vault toilet, which will be 13.5 ' and 9' tall respectively, and will comply with this criterion for non -farm non-forest structures.

- .4 The standards and requirements described in Section 1300 of the Zoning Ordinance shall apply to all signs and name plates in the Primary Forest Zone.

#### CCZO Section 1302 General Provisions

##### .2 Setbacks:

A. All signs shall be situated in a manner so as not to adversely affect safety, corner vision, or other similar conditions and shall not overhang or encroach upon public rights of way.

C. No setbacks from property lines shall be required for signs in non- residential zoning districts except that in all zoning districts, setbacks shall be required at corners as may be necessary to provide adequate corner vision or in cases where a sign is placed adjacent to a street.

**Finding 9:** The applicant states that all signs identified in Exhibit J – Drawing D-3 “Signage Details” will comply with the standards and specifications in Section 1300 of the CCZO referenced above. Drawing D-3 shows the Holce Trailhead Signage Bulletin Board and an Interpretive Sign. This signage will also need to include the disclaimer notifying trail users of the ongoing resource related activities near the Crown Z Recreational Trail as covered for Finding 4. There will be no signage for advertisement purposes. With this condition of approval, staff finds that this criterion will be met.

- .5 The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife shall be notified and provided with the opportunity to comment on any development within major and peripheral Big Game Habitat.

**Finding 10:** As stated previously, the subject property is located within an area that is identified as Big Game Habitat according to the Upper Nehalem Valley CPAC BEAK Map. Notice was sent

to ODFW on November 25, 2024. As of the date of this report, LDS has not received any comments or objections from the ODFW. With this notice, staff finds that this criterion is met.

.6 Setbacks:

- A. There shall be a minimum setback of 50' for front, side, and rear yards for all development in the Primary Forest Zone.
- B. When this Ordinance or any other ordinance requires a greater or lesser setback than is required by this subsection, the greater setback shall apply.
- C. All structures are subject to any special setbacks when adjacent to arterial or collector streets designated in the County Transportation Systems Plan.
- D. No structure or use shall be established in a manner likely to cause contamination of a stream, lake or other body of water. Riparian and natural hazard setbacks set forth in Sections 1170 and 1182 of the Zoning Ordinance shall apply.
- E. When land divisions create parcels of less than 40 acres for uses listed in Subsection 511.2A., provided those uses have been approved pursuant to this Ordinance, required building setbacks for these parcels will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Director or the hearings body.
- F. The owner shall provide and maintain primary fuel-free fire break and secondary fire break areas on land surrounding the dwelling and primary fuel-free break areas surrounding accessory structures in the Primary Forest Zone pursuant to the provisions in Subsections 510.2 and .3.

**Finding 11:** The submitted site plans identified in Exhibit J – Drawing G-1 “Cover Sheet” and Drawing C-2 Holce Trailhead Improvements” show the 2 picnic shelters and 1 vault toilet will meet the required 50’ setback listed in Section 509.6(A). There are no other county or state ordinances that require other setbacks for structures in the PF-80 zone listed in Section 509.6(B). Criterion analysis of Section 509.6(C) reveal that E. Knott Street is classified as a Collector Street in the City of Vernonia’s TSP and the City’s Code does not specify any special setback for this street classification. Related to Section 509.6(D)’s criterion to protect Knickerson Creek’s 50 Riparian Corridor, Exhibit C – Wetlands Delineation Report approved by the Oregon DSL confirm that no structure or use will occur within this this protected corridor.

The land division criterion in Section 509.6(E) do not apply to the proposed Holce Trailhead since the establishment of the 13,600 sq ft public easement is not a land division. Exhibit J – Drawing L-1 “Landscaping Plan” delineates the 30’ primary firebreak on all sides of the Holce Trailhead which the County/property owner will establish and maintain to reduce fire hazards that will satisfy the criterion in Section 509.6(F). With these site specific siting criteria, staff finds the presented Holce Trailhead will comply with these criteria in Section 509.6 at the time of building

permit issuance and with the maintenance of the primary firebreak area for the life of the proposal.

- .7 Approval Period for Use Permits. For all uses approved under sections 504 and 505, the approval period shall be valid for four (4) years. At a minimum, a development construction permit must be issued by the Land Development Services within the approval period. If a construction permit is not issued within the approval period, the land use permit expires. An extension of two years on the approval period may be granted by the Director if a written request is received prior to its expiration and the reason for the delay is beyond the control of the owner.

**Finding 12:** Because this request is authorized via Section 505.14 of the Zoning Ordinance, the approval period for these proposals shall be four (4) years from the date of the final decision. A condition of approval shall state that the applicant apply for a building permit prior to four (4) years after the Planning Commission’s approval of CU 28-01 and DR 25-01. With this condition, staff finds that this criterion will be met.

Continuing with Columbia County Zoning Ordinance Section 11170:

**Section 1170 RIPARIAN CORRIDORS, WETLANDS, WATER QUALITY, AND FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT PROTECTION OVERLAY ZONE**

*l*  
1171 Purpose.

- A. The purpose of this Section is to protect and restore water bodies and their associated riparian corridors, thereby protecting and restoring the hydrological, ecological and land conservation function these areas provide. Specifically, this Section is intended to protect habitat for fish and other aquatic life, protect habitat for wildlife, protect water quality for human uses and for aquatic life, control erosion and limit sedimentation, prevent property damage during floods and storms, protect native plant species, and conserve the scenic and recreational values of riparian areas.
- B. This Section meets the above purpose by prohibiting structures and other development from riparian areas around fish-bearing lakes, rivers, streams and associated wetlands, and by prohibiting vegetation removal and/or other vegetative alterations in riparian corridors. In cases of hardship, the Section provides a procedure to reduce the riparian corridor boundary. Alteration of the riparian corridor boundary in such cases shall be offset by appropriate restoration or mitigation, as stipulated in this Section.

1172 Riparian Corridor Standards:

- A. The inventory of Columbia County streams contained in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Fish Habitat Distribution Data (published January 13, 2023), specifies which streams and lakes are

fish-bearing. Fish-bearing lakes are identified on the map entitled, "Lakes of Columbia County." A copy of the most current Stream Classification Maps is attached to the Comprehensive Plan, Technical Appendix Part XVI, Article X(B) for reference. The map, "Lakes of Columbia County" is attached to the Comprehensive Plan, Technical Appendix Part XVI, Article X(B), and is incorporated therein. Based upon the stream and lake inventories, the following riparian corridor boundaries shall be established:

2. Fish-Bearing Streams, Rivers and Sloughs (Less than 1,000 cfs). Along all fish-bearing streams, rivers, and sloughs with an average annual stream flow of less than 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), the riparian corridor boundary shall be 50-feet from the top-of-bank. Average annual stream flow information shall be provided by the Oregon Water Resources Department.

**Finding 13:** According to the OR Department of Forestry Stream Classification Maps of Vernonia, Knickerson Creek is fish-bearing with an annual stream flow of less than 1,000 cubic feet per second(cfs). This will require a 50' protected riparian corridor from the top-of-bank. This 50' corridor is labeled and identified in the majority of drawings in Exhibit J' Drawings as well as those in Exhibit C – Wetlands Determination Report and Exhibit D – Knickerson Creek Centerline Map. and also verify Oregon DSL's confirmation that the development presented for Holce Trailhead will not have any impact on this fish-bearing creek.

The applications also included an Engineered Stormwater Report Exhibit A and a Geotechnical Report Exhibit B prepared respectively by Lower Columbia Engineering (LCE) and Rapid Soil Solutions. Both of these engineered reports were prepared specifically for the improvements for the proposed Holce Trailhead described in DR 25-01 and CU 25-01.

The Stormwater Report confirms the proposed on-site stormwater management for the Holce Trailhead was designed to minimize the total amount of runoff produced from the increase in impervious area through the use of Low Impact Design methods. The construction of three detention swales were designed to collect stormwater and to have adequate capacity to treat water quality and to safely detain a 100-year event. This on-site drainage system has been designed to effectively meet Columbia County standards and responsibility for the proper implementation and maintenance of this facility belongs to Columbia County.

Likewise, *Section 6 – Geotechnical Design and Recommendations* of the submitted Geotechnical Report was prepared for the exclusive use of the addressee, and their architects and engineers for aiding in the design and construction of the proposed development of Holce Trailhead. These design specifications include the Holce Trailhead's Foundation, Seismic Criteria, Parking Lot, Excavation, and Groundwater Management.

With no additional evidence, staff finds the authorized site improvements described for DR 25-01 and CU 25-01 shall be constructed in accordance with the minimum specifications of the LCE's Stormwater Report and the Rapid Soil Solutions' Geotechnical Report and will not compromise Knickerson Creek's identified wetlands and riparian corridor consistent with the provisions in Section 1172 and 1173 of the CCZO.

**Section 1400 OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING**

1401 General Provisions: At the time of the erection of a new building, or an addition to an existing building, or any change in the use of an existing building, structure, or land which results in an intensified use by customers, occupants, employees, or other persons, off-street parking and loading shall be provided according to the requirements of this section.

1405 Plans Required: A plot plan shall be submitted in duplicate to the Director with each application for a building permit or for a change of classification to OP. The plot plan shall include the following information:

- .1 Dimensions of the parking lot.
- .2 Access to streets and location of curb cuts.
- .3 Location of individual parking spaces.
- .4 Circulation pattern.
- .5 Grade and drainage.
- .6 Abutting property.
- .7 A landscaping plan which shall include the location and names of all vegetation, and the location and size of fencing or other screening material. This plan shall be approved by the Director.

1410 Size:

- .1 The standard size of a parking space shall be 9 feet by 18 feet.
- .2 Handicapped parking spaces shall be 12 feet by 18 feet.

1411 Aisles: Aisles shall not be less than:

- .1 25'0" in width for 90 degree parking;
- .2 20'0" in width of 60 degree parking;
- .3 20'0" in width for 45 degree parking and
- .4 12'0" in width for parallel parking.

1412 Access: There shall be no more than one 45 foot wide curb cut driveway per 150 feet of street frontage, or fraction thereof, permitted per site.

1413 Surfacing and Marking:

- .1 The surfacing of each parking area shall meet minimum County standards to handle the weight of the vehicles which will use the parking area. All

areas used for parking and maneuvering of vehicles shall be marked in accordance with the approved plan and such marking shall be continuously maintained. Handicapped parking spaces shall be marked with a wheelchair symbol.

- .2 The parking and loading areas for commercial, industrial, or apartment uses shall be paved with concrete, asphaltic concrete, or another comparable surface.

1414 Drainage and Lighting: Adequate drainage shall be provided to dispose of the runoff generated by the impervious surface area to the parking area. The drainage system shall function so it will not adversely affect adjoining property. Artificial lighting shall be provided in such a manner as to ensure the safety of the parking area without interfering with adjoining properties or creating traffic hazards on adjoining streets.

1415 Parking Areas: All parking areas, excluding one and two-family dwellings, shall meet the following requirements:

1. All parking areas of less than 20 parking spaces shall have one handicapped parking space. Parking areas with more than 20 spaces shall provide one handicapped parking space for every 50 standard parking spaces.
2. All parking areas shall be divided into bays of not more than 20 parking spaces. Between, and at the end of each parking bay, there shall be planters which have a minimum width of 5 feet and be at least 17 feet in length
- .3 Parking areas shall be separated from the exterior wall of a structure, exclusive of paved pedestrian entranceways, by a 5 foot strip of landscaping.
- .6 Parking areas shall be set back from a lot or parcel line adjoining a street. The setback area shall be landscaped.
- .7 All parking area setbacks shall be landscaped with major trees, shrubs, and ground cover as approved by the Director.
- .8 A minimum of 10 percent of the parking area shall be landscaped and maintenance of the landscaping shall be the owner's responsibility.
- .9 Internal pedestrian connections shall be provided in parking lots with greater than ten (10) parking spaces. These connections shall be a minimum of five (5) feet wide and distinguished from vehicular areas through changes in elevation or contrasting paving materials (such as light-color concrete inlay between asphalt). Paint or thermo-plastic striping and similar types of non-permanent applications may be approved for crossings of parking lot areas that do not exceed 24 feet in crossing length.

**Finding 14:** The submitted "Proposed Site Plan" in Exhibit J Drawing C-2 identifies 15 of the proposed parking spaces will be 9 feet wide by 18 feet long. The remaining ADA space will meet ODOT standards for accessible spaces with a width of 9 feet and length of 18 feet, and an

adjacent aisle with a width of 8 feet and length of 18 feet to accommodate van parking. Although provisions in Section 1410 and 1411 differ from the Columbia County Zoning Code, the ODOT dimensions are utilized as directed by the County's Building Official. The new parking area does not include aisles, but the open circulation area is approximately 34 feet across, thus exceeding the aisle width requirement of 25 feet. Holce Trailhead's access to E, Knott Street will be one 24' wide curb driveway which is over 1,700' away from the closet curb driveway in compliance with Section 1412.

Exhibit J – Drawing C-2, C-4 and D 2 labeled “Proposed Site Plan” Grading and Drainage”, and “Stormwater Swale Cross Section” confirm the parking area will be surfaced with asphalt. The parking and maneuvering areas and the ADA parking space will be marked and continuously maintained in accordance with the provisions in Section 1413. Likewise the site will be graded to direct impervious area runoff into the three vegetated swales and no artificial lighting will be used compliant with these provisions in Section 1414.

Finally, pertaining to compliance with the parking space and landscaping provisions in Section 1415, the applicant included the following design and landscaping standards which also satisfy the landscaping/buffering requirements in Section 1562 of the CCZO for Type 2 Site Design Review:

1. The parking area has less than 20 spaces and will include one van accessible ADA parking space,
2. All parking bays are below the maximum 20 spaces and have planted areas at their ends,
3. The picnic shelters and vault toilet are separated from parking areas by at least 5 feet,
4. All parking areas are at least 5' from the front property line adjoining E. Knott Street and all setback areas will be landscaped,
5. The site proposes 4,215 sq ft of landscaping which exceed the minimum of 1,360 sq ft (10% of Project Site), and
6. The striped access aisle for the ADA parking space will also serve as a pedestrian access connection to the vault toilet.

Consequently and with these site specific design characteristics, staff finds that the proposals will comply with the Off Street Parking provisions in Section 1400 of the CCZO.

**1419 Minimum Required Bicycle Parking Spaces:**

- .1 All Public and Semi-Public buildings and uses, Retail uses, Apartment Dwelling uses and Commercial Recreation uses where required new vehicle parking areas exceed 10 motor vehicle spaces must include a designated area for bicycle parking within 50 feet of a public entrance.
- .2 The following are the required number of bicycle parking spaces:
  - A. Apartment Dwelling. Every residential use of four (4) or more dwelling units shall provide at least one (1) sheltered bicycle parking space for each unit. Sheltered bicycle parking spaces maybe located within a garage, storage shed, basement, utility room or similar area. In those instances in which the residential complex has no garage or other easily accessible storage

unit, the required bicycle parking spaces shall be sheltered under an eave, overhand, an independent structure, or similar cover.

- B. Parking Lots. All public and commercial parking lots and parking structures shall provide a minimum of one (1) bicycle parking space for every 10 motor vehicle parking spaces.

**Finding 15:** Exhibit J – Drawing C-2 “Proposed Site Plan” shows there will be 5 bicycle parking spaces with a total of 16 vehicle parking space which exceeds the minimum number (2) of bicycle parking spaces in Section 1419.

## **Section 1450 TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**1450** Transportation Impact Analysis: A Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) must be submitted with a land use application if the proposal is expected to involve one or more of the conditions in 1450.1 (below) in order to minimize impacts on and protect transportation facilities, consistent with Section 660-012-0045(2)(b) and (e) of the State Transportation Planning Rule.

- .1 Applicability – A TIA shall be required to be submitted to the County with a land use application if the proposal is expected to involve one (1) or more of the following:
  - A. Changes in land use designation, or zoning designation that will generate more vehicle trip ends.
  - B. Projected increase in trip generation of 25 or more trips during either the AM or PM peak hour, or more than 400 daily trips.
  - C. Potential impacts to intersection operations.
  - D. Potential impacts to residential areas or local roadways, including any non-residential development that will generate traffic through a residential zone.
  - E. Potential impacts to pedestrian and bicycle routes, including, but not limited to school routes and multimodal roadway improvements identified in the TSP.
  - F. The location of an existing or proposed access driveway does not meet minimum spacing or sight distance requirements, or is located where vehicles entering or leaving the property are restricted, or such vehicles are likely to queue or hesitate at an approach or access connection, thereby creating a safety hazard.
  - G. A change in internal traffic patterns may cause safety concerns.
  - H. A TIA is required by ODOT pursuant with OAR 734-051.

- I. Projected increase of five trips by vehicles exceeding 26,000-pound gross vehicle weight (13 tons) per day, or an increase in use of adjacent roadways by vehicles exceeding 26,000-pound gross vehicle weight (13 tons) by 10 percent.

**Finding 16:** Per the provisions in Section 1450.1 (B & D) of the CCZO, the applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) conducted by Lancaster Mobley identified as Exhibit G “Transportation Impact Study” dated September 12, 2024 because the requested Holce Trailhead project would potentially

- impact operations at E. Knott Street and Highway 47 or to residential areas within the city limits along E. Knott Street,
- Generate 25 or more trips during either the AM or PM peak hour or
- Generate more than 400 daily trips

This TIS evaluated 2 components of Holce Trailhead’s impact on the existing transportation system: Trip Generation and Transportation System Safety Analysis. Staff summary of the critical issues include:

#### *Trip Generation*

- No comparable land use code is available in the *Trip Generation Manual* for a trail or trailhead. The TIS used an alternative approach to estimate the potential number of trips scenarios based on the parking lot size, occupancy, and turnover rates.
- Table 1 shows that hourly trips range between 10 to 38 trips depending on how full the parking lot is and how long each visitor stays
- Table 2 presents reasonable assumptions for average activity on a typical weekday and weekend day.
- Reasonably assuming the average weekday visit will be in the 60-to-90-minutes and the parking lot will be no more than 75 percent occupied, Lancaster Mobley calculated the average potential peak hour trip generation is approximately 25 trips
- Assuming the daily trip generation is 8 times the peak hour yields a daily trip rate of approximately 200 trips.
- Because Trail trip duration is likely to be longer on weekends than weekdays, the average durations is assumed to be 90 minutes and the parking lot is assumed to be fully utilized.
- With these reasonable assumptions, the TIS final analysis determined the average potential weekend peak hour trip generation is also approximately 25 trips.
- Assuming the daily trip generation is 10 times, the peak hour yields a daily trip rate of approximately 370 trips assuming fairly consistent usage over 10 to 12 hours of the day)

#### **Transportation System Safety Analysis**

##### *Crash Data Analysis*

- Using data obtained from ODOT’s Crash Data System, a review of five years of the most recent available crash history (January 2018 through December 2022) was performed for the intersection of Nehalem Highway (OR 47) at E Knott Street.

- Three (3) crashes were reported near the intersection of Nehalem Highway (OR 47) at E Knott Street during the five-year analysis period. Two of the crashes were a fixed object or animal crash and One (1) crash was a rearend crash.
- According to ODOT's crash reports, none of these crashes were related to the study intersection.
- Based on the most recent five years of available crash data, no significant trends or crash patterns were identified at the study intersection that were indicative of safety concerns. Accordingly, no safety mitigation is recommended.

*Sight Distance Evaluation*

- Nehalem Highway (OR 47) has a posted speed 45 mph; therefore, a design speed 50 (5 mph over the posted speed, 45 mph) was used for the sight distance calculations for E Knott Street along Nehalem Highway (OR 47). At 50 mph, the minimum sight distance requirements are 500 feet looking to both north and south of E Knott Street.
- The available sight distance along Nehalem Highway (OR 47) was measured to be greater than 1,000 feet to the north of E Knott Street (i.e., looking right), which is greater than the County's minimum sight distance requirement (500 feet). The available sight distance along Nehalem Highway (OR 47) was measured to be 320 feet to the south of E Knott Street (i.e., looking left), which is less than the County's minimum sight distance requirement (500 feet), due to the existing trees on the south properties.
- The available stopping sight distance for traffic approaching from the south was measured to be 380 feet. This length is slightly greater than the required AASHTO stopping sight distance (360 feet) at 45 mph, which is the posted speed for the roadway.
- With some trimming of trees along the south properties, it may be possible to increase the sight lines for improved stopping sight distance but it may be difficult to achieve the 500-foot intersection sight distance in the Columbia County standards without tree removal.

With this TIS, staff concurs with Lancaster Mobley's Evaluations of *Trip Generation, Crash Data and Sight Distance* (underlined above) Conclusion that the trip generation for the proposed development will fall below the thresholds in Section 1450 and a TIA is not required.

The application also states that the traffic analysis does not take into account the Church along E. Knott Street and all of the other authorized city uses along this city street. Staff finds that this additional analysis is not identified in the required criteria in Section 1450.1 and would not be a reasonable demand for the improvements requested for CU 25-01 and DR 5-01.

Continuing with Columbia County Zoning Ordinance Section 1503:

**1503      CONDITIONAL USES:**

1503 .1    Status: Approval of a conditional use shall not constitute a change of zoning classification and shall be granted only for the specific use requested; subject to such reasonable modifications, conditions, and restrictions as may be deemed appropriate by the Commission, or as specifically provided herein.

**Finding 17:** The approval of this new 13,600 sq ft Holce Trailhead for the Crown Z Recreational Trail will not constitute a change in zoning classification. Recreational uses and parks are listed

as a Conditional Use in the Primary Forest Zone and in OAR 660-034-0035. With the conditions of approval listed throughout this report, staff finds that this use shall be granted specifically for the subject request.

[...]

1503.5 Granting a Permit: The Commission may grant a Conditional Use Permit after conducting a public hearing, provided the applicant provides evidence substantiating that all the requirements of this ordinance relative to the proposed use are satisfied and demonstrates the proposed use also satisfies the following criteria:

- A. The use is listed as a Conditional Use in the zone which is currently applied to the site;

**Finding 18:** As stated previously, the subject property is zoned Primary Forest (PF-80). The use proposed is to establish a new 13,600 sq ft Holce Trailhead for the existing Crown Z Recreational Trail near the City of Vernonia. This use is listed as conditionally approved via Section 505.14 of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance and in OAR 660-034-0035 satisfying the criterion for the proposals requested for DR 25-01 and CU 25-01.

- B. The use meets the specific criteria established in the underlying zone;

**Finding 19:** As stated in Findings 1-16, staff evaluated and made findings that these proposals are consistent with the applicable sections of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance relating to the PF-80 Zone. Staff finds that this proposal will be consistent with all required criteria subject to the conditions listed throughout this report.

- C. The characteristics of the site are suitable for the proposed use considering size, shape, location, topography, existence of improvements, and natural features;



**Finding 20:** The property is currently unimproved but still being unofficially used as a trail staging area with informal parking for a paved portion of the Crown Z Recreational Trail as shown on Page 21's photos. Electricity, city water and emergency access are currently available from E. Knott Street to support this new trailhead request that will authorize the necessary site improvements comply with the County Zoning Ordinance as well as the Oregon Building and Fire Codes. Trail users will be able to use a commercial Vault Toilet that will be permitted by the County Sanitarian.

Knickerson Creek's 50' riparian corridor will be protected with the 3 on-site detention swales and parking area's design standards identified in the Exhibit A "Stormwater Report and Exhibit B – "Geotechnical Report" covered for Finding 13. For these reasons and with conditions already covered, staff finds that the proposal requested for CU 25-01 and DR 25-10 will be able to comply with this criterion for conditionally permitted uses in the PF-80 zone.

- D. The site and proposed development is timely, considering the adequacy of transportation systems, public facilities, and services existing or planned for the area affected by the use;

**Finding 21:** Adequate facilities for power and firefighting services exist along E. Knott Street and will be available for users of the Holce Trailhead. The Vernonia Rural Fire District will need to submit documentation to the county that they have inspected all installed site improvements for compliance with the applicable provisions of the Oregon Fire Code for access and fire flow as one condition of approval. Likewise the County Building Official will ensure the vault toilet and picnic shelters comply with the applicable provisions of the Oregon Building Code. Finding 16 evaluated the TIS prepared by Lancaster Mobley and found that the projected impact of traffic along E, Knott Street will not require any additional improvements to protect the existing transportation system. With conditions of approval already covered throughout this report, staff finds that the proposal requested for CU 25-01 and DR 25-10 are timely and can be adequately served by the existing public services and facilities along E. Knott Street.

- E. The proposed use will not alter the character of the surrounding area in a manner which substantially limits, impairs, or precludes the use of surrounding properties for the primary uses listed in the underlying district;

**Finding 22:** The proposed Holce Trailhead will be constructed within a 13,600 sq ft public easement that will allow Columbia County to establish another trailhead for the Crown Z Recreational Trail near the City of Vernonia. There will not be any new services to the site except the 2 new picnic shelters, vault toilet, 16 new parking spaces and 5 bicycle parking spaces all of which will be landscaped to help enhance amenities for trail users. Also, the new signage will include appropriate notification to trail users that they are prohibited from taking legal action against normal resource-related activities occurring on adjacent properties surrounding the entire Crown Z Recreational Trail. The Project Planner has not received any comments or objections from residents along E. Knott Street to the submitted proposals. Without any additional evidence, Staff finds that this criterion will be met with conditions of approval.

- F. The proposal satisfies the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan which apply to the proposed use;

**Finding 23:** The proposed Holce Trailhead is consistent with Part IV- Forest Lands and Part XVII Recreational Needs of the County Comprehensive Plan, Specifically, Holce Trailhead is consistent with the Goal of Forest Land and Policy To conserve forest lands for forest uses including encouraging compatible recreational activities. Similarly, Holce Trailhead is consistent with the Goal of Recreational Needs to satisfy the recreational needs of county citizens and visitors as well as with its Policy of developing regional parks in conjunction with cities.

- G. The proposal will not create any hazardous conditions.

**Finding 24:** Any potentially hazardous conditions resulting from the construction of the Holce Trailhead will be minimized by the review and approval of all structures, access and stormwater facilities by the County Building Official, the County Sanitarian, and the Vernonia Rural Fire District as conditions of approval covered throughout this report. Similarly, the submitted TIS conducted by Lancaster Mobley demonstrates that the existing transportation system level of service will not be compromised by the expected increase in vehicular traffic along E. Knott Street, For these reasons and with conditions of approval, staff finds the proposals will not create any additional hazardous conditions on the subject site nor on adjacent properties.

Continuing with the applicable provisions of Columbia County Zoning Ordinance Section 1550:

**Section 1550 SITE DESIGN REVIEW**

*[Amended by Ordinance 98-9, eff. 11/25/98; amended by Ordinance No. 2003 - 5, effective December 15, 2003].*

The Site Design Review process shall apply to all new development, redevelopment, expansion, or improvement of all community, governmental, institutional, commercial, industrial and multi-family residential (4 or more units) uses in the County.

1551. Types of Site Design Review:

- A. Type 1: Projects, developments and building expansions which meet any of the following criteria:
  - 1. are less than 5,000 sq.ft., and are less than 10% of the square footage of an existing structure.
  - 2. Increase the number of dwelling units in a multi-family project.
  - 3. Increase the height of an existing building.
  
- B. Type 2: Projects, developments and building expansions which meet any of the following criteria:
  - 1. Have an area of 5,000 sq.ft. or more, or are 10% or more of the square footage of an existing structure.
  - 2. Change the category of use (e.g., commercial to industrial, etc.).
  - 3. New off-site advertising signs or billboards.
  - 4. Any project meeting any of the Type 2 criteria shall be deemed

a Type 2 Design Review application.

- 1552 Design Review Process: The Planning Director shall review and decide all Type 1 Site Design Review applications. The Planning Commission shall review all Type 2 Design Review applications. Applications shall be processed in accordance with Sections 1600 and 1700 of this ordinance.
- 1553 Pre-application Conference: A pre-application conference is required for all projects applying for a Site Design Review, unless the Director or his/her designate determines it is unnecessary. The submittal requirements for each application are as defined in this section and the standards of the applicable zone and will be determined and explained to the applicant at the pre-application conference.
- 1554 Pre-application Conference Committee: The committee shall be appointed by the Planning Director and shall consist of at least the following officials, or their designated staff members. Only affected officials need to be present at each preapplication conference.
- A. The County Planning Director.
  - B. The County Director of Public Works.
  - C. The Fire Marshal of the appropriate Rural Fire District.
  - D. The County Building Official.
  - E. The County Sanitarian.
  - F. A city representative, for projects inside Urban Growth Boundaries.
  - G. Other appointees by the Planning Director, such as an Architect, Landscape Architect, real estate agent, appropriate officials, etc.

**Finding 25:** The proposals presented meet Section 1551.B's definitions of a Type 2 Site Design Review since the Project Area exceeds 5,000 square feet. A pre-application conference was held virtually on March 27, 2024. At this conference representatives from affected County agencies explained permitting and regulatory requirements regarding the applicant's proposal. Staff finds the requirement for a pre-application conference has been met.

1555 **Submittal documents:** The following documents, when applicable, are required for a Site Design Review. The scope of the drawings and documents to be included will be determined at the pre-application conference by the Pre-application Conference Committee, and a Site Design Review Submittal Checklist will be given to the applicant, documenting which items are deemed not applicable or not necessary to determine compliance with County and State standards, with a short explanation given for each item so determined.

- A. History.
- B. Project narrative.
- C. Existing site plan.
- D. Proposed site plan.
- E. Grading plan.

- F. Drainage plan.
- G. Wetland mitigation plan.
- H. Landscaping plan.
- I. Architectural plans.
- J. Sign drawings.
- K. Access, parking and circulation plan.
- L. Impact assessment.
- M. Site Design Review Submittal Checklist.

1556 Site Plan Submittal and Analysis: The applicant shall submit an application and any necessary supplemental information as required by this ordinance to the Land Development Services Department. The Planning Director or designate shall review the application and check its completeness and conformance with this ordinance. Once a Type 2 application is deemed complete, it shall be scheduled for the earliest possible hearing before the Planning Commission. A staff report shall be prepared and sent to the applicant, the Planning Commission, and any interested party requesting a copy.

[...]

1558 Planning Commission Review: The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing for all Type 2 Design Review applications according to Sections 1603, 1604 and 1608 of this ordinance. If the Planning Commission determines that the proposed development meets the provisions of this ordinance, it may approve the project. The Planning Commission may attach any reasonable conditions to its approval of a site plan.

**Finding 26:** The applicant first submitted the applications for the CU 25-01 and DR 25-01 on October 10, 2024 that was deemed complete on November 7, 2024 in accordance with ORS 215.427. After the application was deemed complete, the proposal was scheduled for the next available Planning Commission hearing on January 6, 2025. Legal notices were sent to the county newspaper of record, adjacent property owners and all affected government agencies on November 7, 2024. However, due to the location of E, Knott Street’s 60’ wide public right-of-way in relation to the requested proposals, the public hearing was rescheduled to April 7, 2025.

On February 18, 2025, the applicant submitted the necessary Revisions to CU 25-01 and DR 25-02 and relocated the location of Holce Trailhead Project entirely outside of the public right-of-way and reduced its size as described in the Summary section. The February Revisions also included Exhibit I – City of Vernonia’s Approval E-mail dated 1/31/25 confirming that relocating the Holce Trailhead out of E. Knott Street’s 60’ platted public right -of-way addressed their stated issues with the project. These February Revisions were evaluated by the Project Planner in the preparation of this staff report. With the submittal and review of the February 18, 2025 Revisions, staff finds the proposals are consistent with these requirements.

1559 Compliance: Conditions placed upon the development of a site are also placed upon any building permits issued for the same site. These conditions shall be met by the developer prior to an occupancy permit being issued by the Building Official, or as an alternative, a bond shall be posted equal to 125% of the estimated cost of the unfinished work, to ensure completion within 1 year of occupancy. If all improvements are not completed within the 1-year bond period, the County may use the bond to complete the work.

**Finding 27:** Conditions of approval listed in this Staff Report and to any added by the Planning Commission at the public hearing must be satisfied prior to the authorization of any activity relating to the subject proposal and prior to the issuance of any building permits.

[...]

1561 Proposed Site Plan: A complete application for design review shall be submitted, including the following plans, which may be combined, as appropriate, onto one or more drawings, unless it is determined by the Planning Director that the information is not applicable or is not necessary to determine compliance with County and State standards, and a short explanation will be given for each item so determined:

- A. Site Plan: The site plan shall be drawn at a suitable scale (i.e. 1"=100', 1"=50', or 1"=20') and shall include the following:
1. The applicant's entire property and the surrounding area to a distance sufficient to determine the relationships between the applicant's property and proposed development and adjacent properties and developments.
  2. Boundary lines and dimensions of the property and all proposed property lines. Future buildings in phased development shall be indicated.
  3. Identification information, including names and addresses of project designers.
  4. Natural features which will be utilized in the site plan.
  5. Location, dimensions and names of all existing or platted roads or other public ways, easements, and railroad rights-of-way on or adjacent to the property, city limits, section lines and corners, and monuments.
  6. Location and dimensions of all existing structures, improvements, or utilities to remain, and structures to be removed, all drawn to scale.
  7. Historic structures, as designated in the Comprehensive Plan.
  8. Approximate location and size of storm water retention or detention facilities and storm drains.
  9. Location and exterior dimensions of all proposed structures and impervious surfaces.
  10. Location and dimension of parking and loading areas, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, and related access ways. Individual parking spaces shall be shown.
  11. Orientation of structures, showing entrances and exits.
  12. All exterior lighting, showing type, height, wattage, and hours of use.
  13. Drainage, Stormwater and Erosion Control, including possible adverse effects on adjacent lands.
  14. Service areas for waste disposal and recycling.
  15. Noise sources, with estimated hours of operation and decibel levels at the property boundaries.

16. Goal 5 Resource Protection Plans. Indicate how project will protect streams, wetlands, riparian areas, natural areas, and fish and wildlife habitat from negative impacts.
17. A landscaping plan which includes, if applicable:
  - a. Location and height of fences, buffers, and screening;
  - b. Location of terraces, decks, shelters, play areas, and common open spaces;
  - c. Location, type, size, and species of existing and proposed shrubs and trees; and
  - d. A narrative which addresses soil conditions and erosion control measures.

**Finding 28:** The scale of development proposed for the subject property requires a Type 2 Site Design Review for approval and implementation. The applicant's attached February 2025 Revisions includes a Land Use Narrative, Proposed Site Plan as well as Exhibits A – J all of which include the necessary documentation identified in Section 1561 of the CCZO.

[...]

1563 Standards for Approval:

The Planning Commission or Director shall make a finding with respect to each of the following criteria when approving, approving with conditions, or denying an application:

- A. Flood Hazard Areas: See CCZO §1100, Flood Hazard Overlay Zone. All development in Flood Hazard Areas must comply with State and Federal Guidelines.
- B. Wetlands and Riparian Areas: Alteration of wetlands and riparian areas shall be in compliance with State and Federal laws.
- C. Natural Areas and Features: To the greatest practical extent possible, natural areas and features of the site shall be preserved.
- D. Historic and Cultural sites and structures: All historic and culturally significant sites and structures identified in the 1984 Comprehensive Plan, or identified for inclusion in the County Periodic Review, shall be protected if they still exist.
- E. Lighting: All outdoor lights shall be shielded so as to not shine directly on adjacent properties and roads.
- F. Energy Conservation: Buildings should be oriented to take advantage of natural energy saving elements such as the sun, landscaping and land forms.
- G. Transportation Facilities: Off-site auto and pedestrian facilities may be required by the Planning Commission, Planning Director or Public Works

Director consistent with the Columbia County Road Standards and the Columbia County Transportation Systems Plan.

**Finding 30:** Findings 5,10 and 13 evaluated the extent to which Holce Trailhead would preserve and protect Knickerson Creek’s identified Wetlands/Riparian Corridors, and Natural Areas and Features in Section 1563 A, B & C by installing all improvements according to the Stormwater Report, Geotechnical Report and Wetlands Determination Report.

The County has no evidence that the site contains any historic or cultural sites designated by the Comprehensive Plan in Section 1563.D. The standards and specifications for Lighting and Energy Conservation in 1563.E & F do not apply to Holce Trailhead since there are no plans to install artificial lighting. If this changes, the County Building Official will ensure the future lighting will comply with the minimum Oregon Building Code requirement at time of building permit issuance.

Pertaining to Section 1563.G, Finding 6 covered the Lancaster Mobley’s Traffic Impact Study submitted as Exhibit G and found that no additional site improvements will be required to E. Knott Street in compliance with the Columbia County and City of Vernonia’s Transportation Systems Plan for this city street. For these reasons, staff finds these criteria have been met.

1564 Final Site Plan Approval: If the Planning Director or Planning Commission approves a preliminary site plan, the applicant shall finalize all the site drawings and submit them to the Director for review. If the Director finds the final site plan conforms with the preliminary site plan, as approved by the Director or Planning Commission, the Director shall give approval to the final site plan. Minor differences between the preliminary site plan and the final site plan may be approved by the Director. These plans shall be attached to the building permit application and shall become a part of that permit.

**Finding 31:** Pursuant to the above criteria, the applicant shall submit a **Final Building Plan** which satisfies all conditions of approval and conforms with the Overall Site Plan received *February 18, 2025 Revision*, as approved by the Planning Commission with conditions referenced in this staff report. Minor differences between the Preliminary Site Plan and the Final Site Plan may be approved by the Director. The Final Site Plans shall be attached to any building permit application and shall become a part of that permit.

**COMMENTS:**

**Vernonia Rural Fire District:** Comments from the VRFD were submitted as Exhibit E – Fire District Letter and have been incorporated into this staff report.

**West Oregon Electric:** No comments have been received as of the date of this report.

**County Assessor:** No comments have been received.

**City of Vernonia:** Comments related to the February 2025 Revisions to the relocation of Holce Trailhead are included as Exhibit I – City of Vernonia Approval and have been incorporated into this report.

**County Building Official:** Will require the applicant to obtain all building, electrical, plumbing, and site development permits including Stormwater and Erosion Control permits for the intended Holce Trailhead improvements.

**County Sanitarian:** The applicant will be required to obtain a commercial septic system permit for the installation of the Vault Toilet. Construction standards, site plan and all applicable requirements will be reviewed at that time. Review and issuance of the septic permit will be required before any associated building permits including those related to water quality, riparian setbacks and erosion control for the project can be issued.

**Upper Nehalem CPAC:** No comments have been received.

**OR Department of State Lands (DSL):** Comments from Chris Stevenson from DSL were submitted as Exhibit C – Wetlands Determination Report and have been incorporated into this staff report.

No other comments have been received from notified nearby property owners or governing agencies as of the date of this staff report.

### **CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION, & CONDITIONS:**

Based upon research about the property and findings of the Staff Report for **CU 25-01 and DR 25-01** Staff recommends the Planning Commission **APPROVE** this request to construct the Holce Trailhead at the end of E. Knott Street on the subject 13,600 sq ft public easement in the PF-80 zone subject to the following conditions:

### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:**

1. This Conditional Use and Design Review Permit shall remain valid for four (4) years from the date of the final decision. This permit shall become void, unless the proposal has commenced in conformance with all conditions and restrictions established herein within the four-year validity period. An extension may be granted by the Planning Director if requested in writing with the appropriate fee before the expiration date, given the applicant is not responsible for failure to develop.
2. The county will have written confirmation that the Vernonia Rural Fire District has inspected and approved all of the Holce Trailhead's new site improvements (parking and driveway surfaces, turnaround, etc.) identified in Exhibit J – Drawing C-2 “Holce Tailhead Improvements” for compliancy with the Oregon Fire Code.
3. The applicant will establish and provide regular maintenance of the 30' primary fuel-free fire break surrounding the picnic shelters and vault toilet for the life of the Holce Trailhead.

4. The posted signage for Holce Trailhead depicted in Exhibit J – Drawing D-3, shall notify trail users of resource related activities occurring in close proximity to the Crown Z Recreational Trail and they are prohibited from remonstrating and/or taking legal action against these accepted resource-related uses. Planning staff will approve of the actual text prior to the installation of said signage.
5. The applicant shall obtain a commercial septic system permit for the installation of the Vault Toilet. Review and issuance of the septic permit will be required prior to the issuance of any building permits.
6. The authorized site improvements described for DR 25-01 and CU 25-01 shall be constructed in accordance with the minimum specifications of the Lower Columbia Engineering LLC's Exhibit A- Stormwater Report and Rapid Soil Solutions Exhibit B- Geotechnical Report.
7. , The applicant shall submit a **Final Building Plan** which satisfies all conditions of approval and conforms with the Overall Site Plan received *February 18, 2025 Revision*, as approved by the Planning Commission.

**Attachments:**

CU 25-01 & DR 25-01 Applications

February 2025 Revisions and Land Use Narrative and Exhibits A - J

Planning Commission's January 6, 2025 continuance of DR 25-01 & CU 25-01 to April 7, 2025

Applicant's and Property Owner's signed a Waiver of the 150 -Day Rule

Comments received from County Sanitarian and County Building Official

cc: Josette Mitchell, City of Vernonia: [jmitchell@vernonia-or.gov](mailto:jmitchell@vernonia-or.gov)