

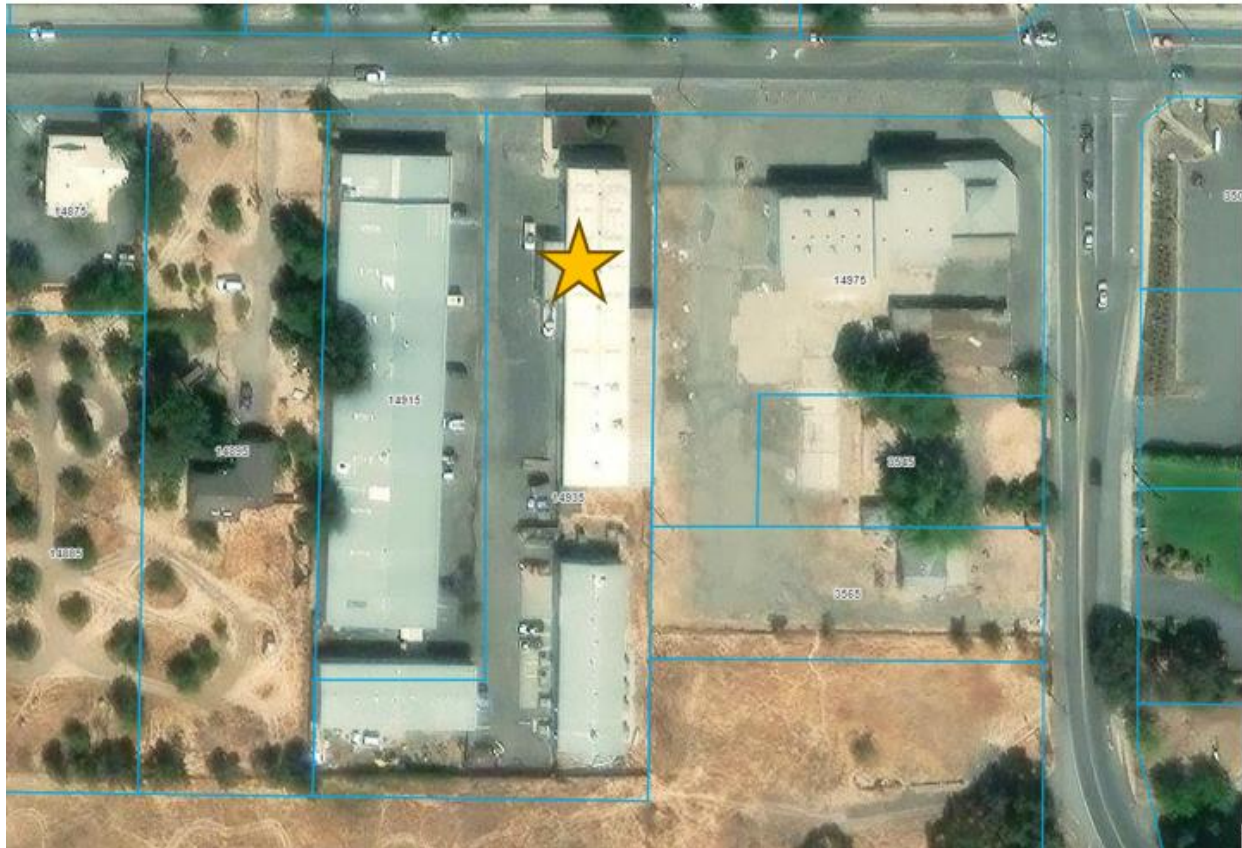


City of Clearlake Conditional Use Permit Planning Commission

STAFF REPORT	
SUBJECT: Conditional Use Permit, CUP 2026-07 Categorical Exemption, CE 2026-08	MEETING DATE: 9/29/2026 6:00 p.m.
SUBMITTED BY: Associate Planner, Michael Taylor	
REPORT PURPOSE: ☒ Action Item ☐ Discussion ☐ Information Only	
LOCATION: 14935 Olympic Dr., Unit A Clearlake, CA 95422	APPLICANT: Thomas Wilkerson
APN: 039-550-46	PROPERTY OWNER: Howard Levin and Laurie Levin

WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

The Planning Commission is being asked to consider Conditional Use Permit, CUP 2026-07, and corresponding environmental filing Categorical Exemption, CE 2026-08, to allow an automobile maintenance and minor repair business located at 14935 Olympic Drive, Unit A, Clearlake, CA 95422, further described as Assessor Parcel Number 039-550-46.



PROJECT SUMMARY:

The applicant proposes to operate an automobile maintenance and minor repair business within an existing commercial tenant space, that is approximately 2,800 square feet in size. The applicant will operate as a sole proprietor with one employee. The proposed business hours are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, with Friday and Saturday service by appointment only. The proposed operation will provide maintenance and minor repairs, including:

- Brakes, shocks and struts, wheel bearings.
- Water pumps, radiators, hoses, and belts.
- Air-conditioning service and repair.
- 30/60/90K services.
- Tire repair and wheel balancing.
- OBD-II diagnostics, including sensor and switch replacement.
- Electrical repairs, including window regulators, windshield wiper motors, alternators, and starters.
- Lighting system repair, including headlamps, taillamps, turn signals, and interior lamps.
- Antilock brake system diagnostics and repair.
- Supplemental restraint system diagnostics and repair.

The applicant also proposes to work on classic muscle cars and motorcycles, including carburetor rebuilding, early ignition systems, clutch work, posi-traction, rear-end overhaul and setup, driveshafts, universal-joint replacements/balancing, and center-support bearing replacement on two-piece driveshafts.

Equipment:

The applicant would install two automobile lifts located side-by-side in the shop area. The lifts will be mounted to the floor and anchored appropriately. A tire-changing machine and an air-operated wheel-bearing press will also be used. The applicant proposes a small 175 PSI compressor with a 30-gallon tank on wheels for use with the tire machine and air-operated wheel-bearing press. The applicant states that most tools will be electric power tools rather than pneumatic tools.

Materials and Hazardous Waste Compliance:

The applicant identifies WD-40, spray carburetor cleaner, brake cleaner in spray cans, brake fluid, starting fluid, and a five-gallon bucket of carburetor cleaner for carburetor overhauls. These materials will be stored in an OSHA-approved metal storage cabinet. Several gallons of coolant and several cases of engine oil and transmission fluid will be kept on a storage shelf in the parts room.

The applicant states that oil changes will not be performed and that waste oil will not be stored on-site. Waste oil or coolant generated during repairs will be collected in a five-gallon bucket and removed for proper disposal. The applicant also proposes two five-gallon OSHA-approved covered metal containers for soiled grease rags. Small oil or coolant spills would be collected and disposed of properly. Refrigerant recovered during air-conditioning service would be placed in a certified refrigerant storage container for disposal.

Vehicle Activity and Deliveries:

The applicant states that incoming and outgoing vehicles will consist of customer vehicles and deliveries from parts suppliers and online vendors through common carriers such as FedEx, UPS, and the United States Postal Service. The applicant states that deliveries may be left in the foyer next to the ADA parking space, including after-hours deliveries.

Signs, Fencing, Lighting, and Fire Protection:

The applicant proposes a 2-foot by 3-foot sign identifying “Honest Mechanic” and a telephone number, fixed to the exterior wall facing Olympic Drive. The applicant also proposes adding the business name to an existing sign near the sidewalk.

Existing site fencing includes a wrought-iron fence, gates, and pedestrian gate near Olympic Drive, together with fencing and a small gate behind the tenant space.

The proposed lighting includes one light in front of the building facing Olympic Drive, one light outside the rear entrance near the ADA parking space, and motion-activated lights outside the roll-up doors. The applicant proposes fire extinguishers in the shop every 75 feet or less, mounted to the wall according to fire marshal standards.

AGENCY REVIEW:

A Request for Review (RFR) was distributed via email to applicable City departments, County agencies, utility providers, and other reviewing agencies. The RFR requested comments by Wednesday, September 9, 2026, regarding the proposed automobile repair business. The Request for Review was distributed to the following City departments and agencies:

- Clearlake Engineering & Building
- Clearlake Code Enforcement Department
- Clearlake Police Department
- Lake County Fire Protection District
- Lake County Air Quality Management District
- Lake County Assessor/Recorder
- Lake County Environmental Health Department
- Lake County Special Districts
- Highlands Water District

During the review period, the city received responses from the following agencies:

- Lake County Environmental Health Department: Environmental Health advised that automotive repair businesses are often subject to the County's Hazardous Waste Generator and Hazardous Materials Business Plan programs. The department noted that hazardous waste, including used oil, saturated absorbent materials, aerosol cans, spent solvents, refrigerant, and similar materials, must be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable State hazardous waste requirements. If hazardous materials are handled on site in reportable quantities, the business may be required to establish and maintain a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) through the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS). The applicant will be required to submit hazardous materials handling information in CERS to establish the scope of hazardous materials handling conducted at the business and facilitate Unified Program inspection requirements.
- Lake County Special Districts: Lake County Special Districts advised that the property is an actively billed sewer account within the Lake County Sanitation District (LACOSAN) for collection and treatment of public sewer service and is currently established as a commercial account. Special Districts further advised that the proposed use will result in a change from the existing low-strength commercial sewer base rate to the Medium Strength Commercial rate. The agency also noted that, pursuant to Sewer Use Ordinance No. 871, Section 602, oil, grease, chemicals, and similar prohibited materials may not be discharged into the sanitary sewer system and must be properly disposed of off-site. The agency requested clarification regarding the proposed disposal plan for these materials.

As for the preparation of this staff report, no additional project-specific comments or concerns have been received from the review departments and agencies identified above, other than the comments summarized in this section. Conditions of Approval have been incorporated to ensure compliance.

ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

Zoning Regulations:

The property is located within the General Commercial (GC) Zoning District. Pursuant to Chapter 18, Section 18-18.030 (Commercial, Recreation and Amusement Uses) Table 5, Automobile Repairs is a permitted use upon securing a Conditional Use Permit.

General Plan:

The existing operation is consistent with the City of Clearlake 2040 General Plan, as it supports key economic development goals by prioritizing the development and operation of public services and infrastructure within existing commercial development along Olympic Drive, which is identified in the General Plan as one of the City's key growth areas. Based on the location within an established commercial area, the use of an existing commercial tenant space and infrastructure, the operation is consistent with applicable land use and economic development policies in the City of Clearlake 2040 General Plan.

PARKING AND VEHICLE STORAGE:

The project is located within an existing commercial complex containing approximately 41,200 square feet of gross floor area and approximately 35,700 square feet of existing paved parking area. There are approximately 65 to 70 existing parking spaces within the complex. The applicant has identified six standard parking spaces and one accessible (ADA) parking space near the tenant space.

Pursuant to Chapter 18-20.090, the parking requirement for Light Automobile Service is four spaces plus one space per service bay. The proposed business will have two service bays, consisting of two automobile lifts. Therefore, six parking spaces are required. The six standard parking spaces identified by the applicant satisfy the required parking for the proposed use.

Because the site has a limited amount of existing parking to serve the commercial complex, the parking spaces associated with the business shall remain available for parking related to the active operation of the business and shall not be used for vehicle storage. Customer vehicles awaiting service or completion of repairs shall not be stored on-site for an extended period or in a manner that prevents the required parking spaces from remaining available for their intended use. Dismantled vehicles shall be stored inside the building or in an area screened so that they are not visible from off the premises, consistent with Section 18-19.050(C)(5).

Vehicles associated with the business shall not obstruct required parking spaces, the accessible parking space or access aisle, pedestrian access, fire access, or drive aisles.

AUTOMOBILE REPAIR USE STANDARDS:

Clearlake Municipal Code Section 18-19.050 establishes standards for gas stations and automobile repair uses in commercial zones. The Code recognizes that automobile repair uses may have objectionable characteristics, including noise, idling vehicles, and traffic conflicts, and requires these uses to be subject to special regulatory review. Section 18-19.050(c) requires automobile repair uses to meet applicable City criteria and standards. The section provides the following specific standards:

- Screening: Premises adjoining residential zones are required to be screened from automobile repair uses by a six-foot-high landscaped visual barrier. The project site does not adjoin a residential zone.
- Street Frontage: Street frontage between driveways is required to have a low wall or other landscape barrier to prevent vehicles from being driven or parked on the sidewalk.
- Sound Signals: Bells or other sound signals are required to be turned off between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. when an automobile repair use is located next to a residential zone or residence. The proposed business hours are primarily between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- Pump Islands: The requirement for pump islands does not apply to the proposed automobile repair use.
- Repair Work and Vehicle Storage: Repair work must be conducted inside a building, and dismantled vehicles must be stored inside a building or in an area screened so that they are not visible from off the premises. The proposed repair activities will be conducted within the existing approximately 2,800-square-foot tenant space.

Based on the proposed use and the existing site conditions, the project can operate in accordance with the applicable standards of Section 18-19.050. Conditions of Approval are included to address applicable operational; parking, vehicle storage, hazardous materials, waste disposal, and other requirements associated with the proposed use.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires agencies to evaluate the environmental impacts of land use actions. After a thorough review of the application, agency comments, existing operations, and the project's location within an urbanized area, staff determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities. This exemption is appropriate as the project involves the leasing of an existing private structure involving negligible or no expansion of existing use.

LEGAL NOTICE & PUBLIC COMMENT:

The public hearing was noticed at least ten (10) days in advance through an electronic publication of the Lake County Record-Bee on Saturday, September 19, 2026, posted in the City Bulletin Board and notices were mailed via USPS to all property owners within a 300-foot radius of the subject parcel in accordance with the Clearlake Municipal Code (mailing addresses were obtained from the Lake County Assessor's Office electronic database).

MOTION/OPTIONS:

1. Move to Adopt Resolution PC 2026-10, A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Clearlake approving Conditional Use Permit, CUP 2026-07, and corresponding environmental filing Categorical Exemption, CE 2026-08, to allow an automobile maintenance and minor repair business located at 14935 Olympic Drive, Unit A, Clearlake, CA 95422, further described as Assessor Parcel Number 039-550-46.
2. Move to continue the item and provide alternate directions to staff.
3. Move to deny Resolution PC 2026-10 and direct staff to prepare appropriate findings.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Resolution PC 2026-10
- 2) Conditions of Approval
- 3) CUP Applicant Submittal
- 4) Agency/Department Comments