

HEARING EXAMINER
FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSION OF LAW AND ORDER

In the matter of the application of:
Woods – CU2026-0007

The Canyon County Hearing Examiner considers the following:

The applicants, Justin and Sarah Woods, are requesting a Conditional Use Permit for a special events facility to host weddings on approximately 10.99 acres in an “A” (Agricultural) zone. The request is to operate from April to October, with the hours of operation being 8 am – 11 pm, Thursday through Sunday, with a maximum of 150 guests. The proposal includes a bridal and groom suite, each with a restroom, and a reception tent.

Summary of the Record

1. The record is comprised of the following:
 - A. The record includes all testimony, the staff report, exhibits, and documents in Case File CU2026-0007.
 1. All exhibits are located in the case staff report dated September 24, 2026.

Applicable Law

1. The following laws and ordinances apply to this decision: Canyon County Code of Ordinances (CCCO) §01-17 (Land Use/Land Division Hearing Procedures), CCCO §07-05 (Notice, Hearing and Appeal Procedures), CCCO §07-07 (Conditional Use Permits), CCCO §07-02-03 (Definitions), CCCO §07-10-27 (Land Use Regulations (Matrix)), CCCO §07-14 (Use Standards), and Idaho Code §67-6512 (Special Use Permits, Conditions, and Procedures).
 - a. Notice of the public hearing was provided pursuant to CCCO §07-05-01, Idaho Code §67-6509 and 67-6512.
 - b. A special use permit may be granted to an applicant if the proposed use is conditionally permitted by the terms of the ordinance, subject to conditions pursuant to specific provisions of the ordinance, subject to the ability of political subdivisions, including school districts, to provide services for the proposed use, and when it is not in conflict with the plan. Idaho Code §67-6512.
 - c. Every use which requires the granting of a conditional use permit is declared to possess characteristics which require review and appraisal by the commission to determine whether or not the use would cause any damage, hazard, nuisance or other detriment to persons or property in the vicinity. *See* CCCO §07-07-01.
 - d. Upon the granting of a special use permit, conditions may be attached to a special use permit including, but not limited to, those: (1) Minimizing adverse impact on other development; (2) Controlling the sequence and timing of development; (3) Controlling the duration of development; (4) Assuring that development is maintained properly; (5) Designating the exact location and nature of development; (6) Requiring the provision for on-site or off-site public facilities or services; (7) Requiring more restrictive standards than those generally required in an ordinance; (8) Requiring mitigation of effects of the proposed development upon service delivery by any political subdivision, including school districts, providing services within the planning jurisdiction. *See* Idaho Code §67-6512, CCCO §07-07-17, and 07-07-19.
2. Any hearing examiner appointed by the board shall perform such duties as assigned by the board pursuant to Idaho Code section 67-6520. *See* CCCO §07-03-07.

3. There are no mandates in the Local Planning Act as to when conditional permits may or may not be granted, aside from non-compliance with the community master plan. I.C. § 67-6512. Chambers v. Kootenai Cnty. Bd. of Comm'rs, 125 Idaho 115, 117, 867 P.2d 989, 991 (1994).
4. The burden of persuasion is upon the applicant to prove that all criteria are satisfied. CCCO §07-05-03.
5. Idaho Code §67-6535(2) requires the following: The approval or denial of any application required or authorized pursuant to this chapter shall be in writing and accompanied by a reasoned statement that explains the criteria and standards considered relevant, states the relevant contested facts relied upon, and explains the rationale for the decision based on the applicable provisions of the comprehensive plan, relevant ordinance and statutory provisions, pertinent constitutional principles and factual information contained in the record.
6. The County's hearing procedures adopted per Idaho Code §67-6534 require that final decisions be in the form of written findings, conclusions, and orders. CCCO 07-05-03(1)(I).

The application, CU2026-0007, was presented at a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner on September 24, 2026 and October 1, 2026. Having considered all the written and documentary evidence, the record, the staff report, oral testimony, and other evidence provided, including the conditions of approval and project plans, the Hearing Examiner decides as follows:

Table 1. Conditional Use Permit Standards of Evaluation Analysis

Standards of Evaluation – CCCO §07-07-05: The presiding party shall consider each conditional use permit application by finding adequate evidence to answer the following questions in its FCOs:		
County Ordinance and Review		
Criteria Met?	Code Section	Criteria
Yes	1	Is the proposed use permitted in the zone by conditional use permit?
Analysis		The proposed use for a special events facility is permitted in the "A" (Agricultural) zone by conditional use permit, pursuant to Canyon County Code of Ordinance (CCCO) §07-10-27. The applicant submitted a conditional use permit for a special events facility on March 6, 2026. <i>See Staff Report Exhibit B for the application and submitted materials.</i> CCCO §07-02-03 defines Special Events as follows: "Any temporary event including, but not limited to, weddings, picnics, barbecues, holiday events and parties, dances, concerts, footraces and walks, bazaars, and harvest festivals." See project description analysis contained in Section 07-07-05(2) detailing the nature of the request.
Criteria Met?	2	What is the nature of the request?
Yes		
Analysis		The property owners, Justin and Sarah Woods, request a conditional use permit to establish a special events facility on an approximately 10.99-acre parcel located in the "A" (Agricultural) zone, identified as parcel R37642013. <u>Use</u>: The nature of the request consists of using the subject property to host seasonal weddings from April through October (Staff Report Exhibit B2). <u>Guests</u>: According to the letter of intent, the maximum number of guests will be 150 (Staff Report Exhibit B2). <u>Number of Employees</u>: The applicant proposes to have one (1) employee. (Staff Report Exhibit B2). <u>Hours of Operation</u>: The proposed hours of operation are Thursday through Sunday, 8 am to 10 pm, with cleanup from 10 pm to 11 pm (Staff Report Exhibit B2). <u>Lighting</u>: According to email correspondence, all event lighting will be shut off by 10:30 pm (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1). <u>Music</u>: The applicant is proposing to turn the music off by 9 pm (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1).

	• <u>Parking</u>: According to email correspondence, the applicant will have a main parking lot with 85 parking spaces and an overflow parking lot with 35 parking spaces (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1). The applicant provided a parking circulation plan in Staff Report Exhibit B5. • <u>Loading Area</u>: The proposed event center will include a loading and unloading area located behind the reception tent (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1). • <u>Restrooms</u>: The applicant proposes three (3) restrooms on-site. Two (2) will be located in the bridal and groom suite and the other will be located in an 8x8 foot wood building (Staff Report Exhibit B2). • <u>Signage</u>: The land use worksheet indicates there will be a non-lighted freestanding sign two (2) feet in height with a four (4)-foot width located four (4) feet above ground (Staff Report Exhibit B4). • <u>Buildings/Structures</u>: The applicant is proposing to have a 3-pole tent that is 40 feet by 80 feet in size with a concrete pad underneath, a bridal and groom suite that are each 20 feet by 10 feet in size, and a restroom located in an 8-foot by 8-foot wood building (Staff Report Exhibit B2). • <u>Food and Alcohol</u>: There will be outside catering and bartending that will be responsible for their own insurance and licensing (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1).	
Criteria Met?	3	Is the proposed use consistent with the comprehensive plan?
Yes		
Analysis	The proposed use is generally consistent with the 2030 Canyon County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan designates the subject parcel as Agricultural (Staff Report Exhibit C1). This area in the County is significantly used for agricultural uses, and the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance contemplate and allow for special event centers with a conditional use permit in the agricultural zone. The request aligns with the following goals and policies of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan: <u>Property Rights Goals and Policies:</u> • G1.01.00: <i>"Protect the integrity of individual property rights while safeguarding public health, safety, and welfare."</i> • P1.01.01: <i>"No person should be deprived of private property without due process of law."</i> • P1.01.03: <i>"Ordinances and land-use decisions should avoid imposing unnecessary conditions or procedures in development approvals."</i> • G1.02.00: <i>"Acknowledge the responsibilities of each property owner as a steward of the land, use their property wisely, maintain it in good condition and preserve it for future generations without becoming a public nuisance."</i> Canyon County values the property owners' and surrounding property owners' private property rights and may support the property owners' project and surrounding property owners' rights by adding mitigating conditions to the proposed conditional use permit. <u>Population Component Goal and Policy:</u> • G2.02.00: <i>"Promote housing, business, and service types needed to meet the demand of the future and existing population."</i> Canyon County promotes business and service types that the community can support. However, the Hearing Examiner must decide if conditions can be added to this application to mitigate negative impacts on surrounding properties and if this is the best-suited location for this proposed special events facility. <u>Economic Development Goals and Policies:</u> • G3.01.00: <i>"Promote a healthy and sustainable regional economy by retaining, expanding, and recruiting businesses to favorable locations."</i> • P3.01.02: <i>"Support suitable sites for economic growth and expansion compatible with the surrounding area."</i>	

	Canyon County supports retaining, expanding, and recruiting businesses and economic growth and expansion but states that this must be done in a way that is compatible with the surrounding area, which may include adding mitigation conditions to this conditional use permit. <u>Land Use and Community Design Goals and Policies:</u> • P4.02.01: “Consider site capability and characteristics when determining the appropriate locations and intensities of various land uses. • P4.03.03: “Recognize that each land use application is unique and that agricultural and non-agricultural uses may be compatible and co-exist in the same area and in some instances may require conditions of approval to promote compatibility.” Canyon County supports growth and development as long as it is compatible with the surrounding area and appropriate conditions are added to mitigate adverse impacts that affect other land uses and the surrounding community.																						
Criteria Met?	4	Will the proposed use be injurious to other property in the immediate vicinity and/or negatively change the essential character of the area?																					
Yes																							
Analysis	The proposed use will not be injurious to other property in the immediate vicinity and will not negatively change the essential character of the area. Summary: The surrounding land uses, as reviewed within a one-mile radius located in Canyon County, indicate that the land use in the area is agricultural (Staff Report Exhibits B2.5 - B2.8). Gem County is located north of Oasis Road; the current zone in the area located in Gem County is Rural Agricultural (Staff Report Exhibit C4). Staff does not have the land uses located in Gem County within a one-mile radius. There are some residential properties in the Canyon County area; the majority have agricultural operations. A special events facility is allowed in an agricultural zone with a conditional use permit. The proposed use is seasonal; therefore, there will not be a year-round impact on the surrounding area. The proposed use is not anticipated to be injurious to other property within the immediate vicinity, nor negatively change the essential character of the area. Adjacent Existing Conditions: <table><tr><th>Direction</th><th>Existing Use</th><th>Primary Zone</th><th>Other Zone</th></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>Gem County</td><td>Rural Agricultural</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>Agricultural Operation</td><td>A</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>Agricultural with Primary Residence</td><td>A</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>Agricultural with Primary Residence</td><td>A</td><td></td></tr></table> “A” (Agricultural), “R-R” (Rural Residential), “R-1” (Single-Family Residential), “C-1” (Neighborhood Commercial), “C-2” (Service Commercial), “M-1” (Light Industrial), “CR” (Conditional Rezone) Surrounding Land Use Cases: There have been four (4) subdivisions approved within a 1-mile radius from the subject property, all subdivided prior to 2008 (Staff Report Exhibit C2.7). Character of the Area: The area is characterized as agricultural. There are large agricultural operations within a one-mile radius, primarily to the south of the subject property. Several properties on the Canyon County side of Oasis Road contain residential uses on large lots that have retained agricultural zoning. Potential Impacts The special events facility may impact the surrounding area due to the increase in noise, dust, increased traffic, and lighting as related to the use. The applicant is proposing hours of operation to be seasonal for the months of April to October, Thursday through Sunday, 8 am to 11 pm, with the last hour for cleanup.			Direction	Existing Use	Primary Zone	Other Zone	N	Gem County	Rural Agricultural		S	Agricultural Operation	A		E	Agricultural with Primary Residence	A		W	Agricultural with Primary Residence	A	
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	The proposed use may increase the dust levels in the immediate vicinity. The applicant is proposing that the parking be covered with road mix (Staff Report Exhibit B2.1). Pursuant to CCCO §07-13-01(8), “Every open off street parking area having more than four (4) parking spaces shall be hard surfaced. See 07-07-05(7) for discussion on traffic and parking.	
Criteria Met?	5	Will adequate water, sewer, irrigation, drainage and stormwater drainage facilities, and utility systems be provided to accommodate the use?
Yes		
Analysis	The project will have adequate water, sewer, irrigation, drainage, and stormwater drainage facilities, and utility systems to accommodate the proposed use based on the analysis contained herein. Water: According to Southwest District Health’s pre-development meeting in Staff Report Exhibit E1.1, there is potential for the project to be classified as a Public Water System, which would require additional review and approvals from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Sewer: The existing septic system currently serves a three-bedroom residence on the property and it is proposed to be expanded to include an additional three (3) restrooms. According to the pre-development meeting notes with Southwest District Health, if the conditional use permit were to be approved the applicant will be required to apply for a site evaluation and coordinate test hole excavations with Southwest District Health (Staff Report Exhibit E1.1). Irrigation: Submitted with the Master Application was a comment from Black Canyon Irrigation District from January 26, 2026, advising that a facility is located on the subject property. The lateral has a 60-foot overall easement with 30 feet from the center of the ditch (Staff Report Exhibit B7.2). Agency notice was sent out to Black Canyon Irrigation District on March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026. No additional comments were received. Stormwater drainage facilities: According to the land use matrix, stormwater will be retained onsite (Staff Report Exhibit B4). Utility Systems: Utility agencies, including Idaho Power, Intermountain Gas, CenturyLink, and Ziply, were notified of the application on March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026. No agency comments were provided by those services at the time the staff report was written. It is anticipated that the applicant will be able to work with utility providers to gain any additional utilities needed.	
Criteria Met?	6	Does legal access to the subject property for the development exist or will it exist at the time of development?
Yes		
Analysis	The subject property does have legal access for the development and will exist at the time of the development. The subject property takes access off Oasis Road. The portion of Oasis Road where the subject property takes access is a private road. Approximately 70 ft west of the subject property, the public road improvements for Oasis Road end. The private road outlined in Staff Report Exhibit C3 must be built to meet the minimum construction standards of CCCO §07-10-03. The property owners have an access easement to the west over parcel R37642015, along the private section of Oasis Road (Staff Report Exhibits B8 and E3). Highway District No. 4 provided comment on April 2, 2026. The comment advised that the existing access is suitable for serving the proposed use subject to the following conditions (Staff Report Exhibit E3): 1. An access permit from HD4 documenting commercial use is required. 2. Dedicate public right-of-way consisting of the northerly 10 feet of the subject property for future Oasis Rd improvements. 3. The existing access location may be relocated or combined with other access points in the future as extension of Oasis Road is performed.	

Criteria Met?	7	Will there be undue interference with existing or future traffic patterns?
No		
Analysis		The Hearing Examiner found that the proposed use would create undue interference with existing and future traffic patterns. Highway District No. 4 provided comment on April 2, 2026, advising that the proposed use will increase traffic demand on the transportation system operated and maintained by Highway District No. 4 within the Mid-Star service area. Highway District No. 4 is requiring a Traffic Impact Study estimated to be approximately \$39,919 to be paid at the time of the new commercial approach (Staff Report Exhibit E3). According to Highway District No. 4, the public road portion of Oasis Road to El Paso Rd is maintained by Gem County Road & Bridge under a maintenance agreement. Submitted with the master application Gem County Road & Bridge provided a comment stating they have no concerns for the proposed Conditional Use Permit on Oasis Road (Staff Report Exhibit B7.1). Idaho Transportation Department commented on March 18, 2026, advising that the application does not meet the thresholds for a Traffic Impact Study, nor does it pose any safety concerns (Staff Report Exhibit E2). During the September 24, 2026, hearing, public testimony raised concerns regarding the width and condition of the public and private portions of Oasis Road serving the subject property. Concerns were also raised regarding the dead-end configuration of Oasis Road and the subdivision beyond the subject property. Testimony indicated that, if the road were blocked, property owners in the subdivision would be unable to access or leave their properties. The Hearing Examiner continued the case to October 8, 2026, to receive additional information regarding the width and condition of the public and private roads and access for emergency vehicles. Oasis Road is paved to approximately 55 feet before the subject property's access, where it transitions to a gravel road that is currently privately maintained. Oasis Road is approximately 20 feet wide. On October 1, 2026, Staff spoke with Highway District No. 4, which advised that road improvements may be required as conditions of the access permit during access permit review. Highway District No. 4 also advised that, with right-of-way dedication from the applicant, Oasis Road could be extended and become a public road. On October 1, 2026, the applicant, Sarah Woods, testified that she agreed with all conditions of approval except the road improvement requirements. The Hearing Examiner found that the proposed Special Events Facility, with up to 150 guests accessing the property via a dead-end road with the existing width and road conditions, would create undue interference with existing and future traffic patterns.
Criteria Met?	8	Will essential services be provided to accommodate the use including, but not limited to, school facilities, police and fire protection, emergency medical services, irrigation facilities, and will the services be negatively impacted by such use or require additional public funding in order to meet the needs created by the requested use?
No		
Analysis		Essential services will be provided to accommodate the use including, but not limited to, school facilities, police and fire protection, emergency medical services, and irrigation facilities. However, the proposed use may negatively impact fire protection and emergency medical services due to the existing road conditions and limited emergency access. School Facilities: The subject property is served by the Middleton School District. Agency comments were sent out on March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026; no comments were received. The proposed use is not anticipated to negatively impact school facilities. Police and Fire Protection: The subject property is under the jurisdiction of the Canyon County Sheriff's Office. Canyon County Sheriff's Office is required to provide services to the property. Overall, the use is not anticipated to cause a negative impact or require additional public funding. Agency notice was sent March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026; no comments were received by the Sheriff's Office.

The subject property is under the jurisdiction of Middleton Fire District. Agency notice was sent on March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026; no comments were received by the materials deadline.

During the September 24, 2026, hearing, public testimony raised concerns regarding the safety of property owners who live beyond the subject property along the dead-end road in the event of an emergency. Testimony also raised concerns that the area presents a fire hazard.

The Hearing Examiner continued the case to October 8, 2026, to receive additional information regarding the width and condition of the public and private roads and access for emergency vehicles

On October 1, 2026, Staff spoke with the Middleton Fire District, which advised that Oasis Road is technically considered a two-lane road and would likely need to be widened to 26 feet. The Fire District also indicated that emergency access may require a turnaround, separate entrances and exits, and a parking and traffic circulation plan for the Fire District's review and approval.

Currently, if Oasis Road were blocked or otherwise unavailable during an emergency, property owners within Hill Ridge Estates would not have an alternative route to exit their properties.

On October 1, 2026, the applicant, Sarah Woods, testified that she agreed with all conditions of approval except the road improvement requirements.

The Hearing Examiner found that the proposed Special Events Facility, given the current condition of the road, would negatively impact the Middleton Fire District in responding to an emergency or fire.

Emergency Medical Services:

Emergency Medical Services are provided to the property. Canyon County Paramedics/EMT and Canyon County's Emergency Management Coordinator were notified of the application; no comments were received.

As discussed above, during the September 24, 2026, hearing, public testimony raised concerns regarding emergency access and the ability of property owners within Hill Ridge Estates to exit their properties if Oasis Road were blocked or otherwise unavailable. Staff subsequently spoke with the Middleton Fire District regarding road width and emergency access requirements.

The Hearing Examiner found that the proposed Special Events Facility, given the current condition of the road, would negatively impact emergency medical services in the event of an emergency or fire.

Irrigation Facilities:

Submitted with the Master Application was a comment from Black Canyon Irrigation District from January 26, 2026, advising that a facility is located on the subject property. The lateral has a 60-foot overall easement with 30 feet from the center of the ditch (**Staff Report Exhibit B7.2**).

Agency notice was sent out to Black Canyon Irrigation District on March 13, 2026, and August 20, 2026. No additional comments were received.

Order

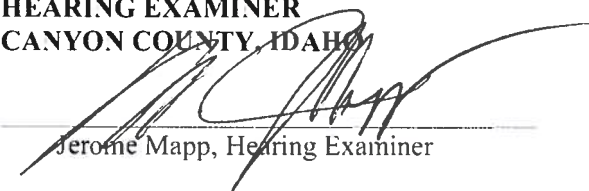
Based upon the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order contained herein, the Hearing Examiner **denies** Case # CU2026-0007, an application for a Conditional Use Permit for a Special Events Facility.

Under Idaho Code Section 67-6519, the following action may be taken to obtain approval:

1. The applicant may reapply for a conditional use permit for the Special Events Facility once a complete plan has been developed that addresses the road improvements and emergency access concerns identified by the Highway District, Fire District, and emergency medical services.

DATED this 22 day of October, 2026.

HEARING EXAMINER
CANYON COUNTY, IDAHO


Jerome Mapp, Hearing Examiner

State of Idaho)

SS

County of Canyon County)

On this 22nd day of October, in the year 2026, before me Pamela Dilbeck, a notary public, personally appeared Jerome Mapp, personally known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged to me that he (she) executed the same.

Notary: Pamela Dilbeck

My Commission Expires: 10/14/2028

