



GUALALA MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

POST OFFICE BOX 67, GUALALA, CALIFORNIA 95445

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road, Room 1090
Ukiah, CA 95482

Subject: RCMS Heliport Permit Application

Board of Supervisors:

This letter is to express support for the Redwood Coast Medical Services (RCMS) application for a State operating permit for a heliport.

The Gualala Municipal Advisory Council (GMAC) requests the Board of Supervisors to forward the application for the heliport operating permit to the County Airport Land Use Commission for review and forwarding to the State of California.

We are not in agreement with the Mendocino County Planning Department's requirement for RCMS to file a Master Use Permit Application, a Master Plan, a specific Development Plan and application for a building permit "retroactive" for 60-foot diameter patch of asphalt constructed in 1984. Instead, we agree with RCMS's contention that the current site which includes the helicopter pad, clinic, and Coast Life Support District facilities are exempt from the Planning Department's requirements. A summary of RCMS's analysis of the permit process is attached.

The goal of RCMS is to get an operating permit for an existing facility, which has been operating an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) landing site at the Gualala clinic since 1984. They are wanting to re-classify the existing site as a State permitted heliport as part of their risk management strategy. This re-classification should not trigger an extensive, unnecessary requirement to the planning process.

This helicopter landing pad is essential to the health and welfare of the citizens of Gualala and the greater Sonoma/Mendocino County coastal areas and every effort should be made to assist RCMS in applying for an operating permit with the State.

We strongly urge the Board of Supervisors to forward the application to the County Airport Land Use Commission and not require RCMS to submit to an unnecessary Planning Department process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lloyd Chasey".

Gualala Municipal Advisory Council
Lloyd Chasey, Councilmember

Cc: Deborah Lane, RCMS Corporate Compliance & Safety Director



Redwood Coast Medical Services, Inc. (RCMS)

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RCMS Heliport Permit Application June 2018

On April 16, 2018, RCMS notified the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors its intent to apply for a State operating permit for a heliport. RCMS has been operating an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) landing site at the Gualala clinic since 1984 under a special classification that requires the certification of a Public Safety Officer in our district. No other jurisdiction or authority, including Mendocino County has ever been required. This is because the procedure is governed by State law and not local ordinance. RCMS wants to re-classify the EMS landing site as a State permitted heliport primarily as a risk management strategy. In a Board of Supervisors meeting dated March 27, 2018, the Board instructed the Planning Department to “streamline” the process to allow RCMS to submit their state application. Since that time, the Planning Department has insisted on RCMS agreeing to file a Master Use Permit Application, a Master Plan, a specific Development Plan and application for a building permit “retroactive” for the 60ft by 60ft patch of asphalt constructed in 1984, and located next to the upper parking area, also constructed in 1984. This would be in lieu of a “Coastal Development Permit” according to the Planning Department. In addition, they are also requiring complete rezoning of the RCMS site in five years. RCMS believes the current site which includes the helicopter pad, clinic, and Coast Life Support District facilities are exempt from these requirements for several reasons which are outlined below.

1) Definition of “development” and description of “activity” at RCMS:

- a) Public Resources Code, Division 20 California Coastal Act, Chapter 2, Section 30106

RCMS activity will be limited to placement of “markings” on the existing helipad site to include painting of Cal Trans required symbols on pre-existing asphalt.

There is no such description that appears under the definition of “development” in Section 30106 of the code. (See Tab 1 for supportive documentation)

- b) Mendocino County Code of Ordinances, Section 20.308.035 Definitions (D)

There is no such description, as appears above, of RCMS activity that resembles Mendocino County definition of development covered in subsection (D) of Section 20.308.035.

2) Under “Exemptions” in the Mendocino County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 20.532 – Coastal Development Regulations – General, Section 20.532.020 – Applicability

- a) Section 20.532.020 – Exemptions states: “The following developments shall be exempt from this chapter (A) Repair and maintenance activities which do not result in an addition to, or the enlargement or the expansion of the object of such activities...” and (B) “Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hookup Exclusion,



adopted by the Coastal Commission on September 5, 1978.” (See Tab 2 for supportive documentation)

3) Mendocino County Coastal Zoning Code under Section 20.304.015 – Applicability

“No land, building, structure or premises shall be used for any purpose or in any manner other than as is permitted in the zone in which such land, building, structure or premises is located except as provided in Chapter 20.480 and Chapter 20.484 or this Division.”

This Chapter addresses non-conforming structures legally constructed prior to the adoption of this division, which was in 1991. John J. Bower applied for, and was approved for, a building permit for a medical clinic in 1984. Bower constructed the upper parking lot and helipad at the same time. Building inspection was signed off on all asphalt on August 30, 1984. (See Tab 3 for supportive documentation)

4) California Public Utilities Code Section 21662 sets forth the required procedure for permit application and the Board of Supervisors legal responsibility to review and approve applications via the Mendocino County Airport Land Use Commission.

- a) Letter to the Mendocino Board of Supervisors from RCMS dated April 16, 2018 (See Tab 4 for supportive documentation)

SUMMARY

RCMS has exclusion at four levels:

- 1) Failure to meet the test of “Development” definition at both the state and the county levels.
- 2) Exemption under Repair, Maintenance, and Utility Hookup Exclusion adopted by the Coastal Commission on September 5, 1978.
 - a) Miscellaneous Alterations – regulatory warning and informational signs and symbols according to standards set by the State Department of Transportation.
- 3) Applicability of non-conforming structure completed prior to 1991, plus legally exempted as an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) by the State of California. The RCMS helipad was constructed in 1984-1985, prior to the adoption of the County Code in 1991.
- 4) State Law requirement to establish and utilize County Airport Land use Commission, plan and procedures. This needs to be the path of the RCMS application for the helipad permit to the State of California and NOT the Mendocino Planning Department. Mendocino County has an Airport Land Use Commission and established procedures which Mendocino County Planning Department needs to follow.