

CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

To: Calistoga Planning Commission
From: Samantha Thomas, Associate Planner
Meeting Date: September 8, 2021
Subject: **Bonded Wine Barrel Storage Facility Use Permit (UP 2021-07)
at 865 Silverado Trail**

1 ITEM

2 Consideration of a use permit to allow a bonded wine barrel storage facility within a 39,000
3 square foot portion of an existing permitted 123,600 square foot industrial building, at 865
4 Silverado Trail (APN 011-050-024).

5 BACKGROUND AND SETTING

6 The project property is located along the
7 southwest side of Silverado Trail,
8 approximately 0.2 miles southeast of the
9 intersection of Lincoln Avenue (State
10 Route 29) and Silverado Trail. The 14.6-
11 acre property is currently developed with
12 a 123,600-square foot industrial building,
13 formerly home to Calistoga Beverage
14 Company, which closed in November of
15 2009. The building is currently vacant,
16 and the bottling lines have been
17 removed.

18 On May 22, 2013, the Planning
19 Commission adopted PC Resolution
20 2013-16 allowing a new winery within the
21 existing industrial building. The winery
22 use would have occupied the southern
23 portion of the building (approximately
24 27,000 square feet).

25 On February 12, 2014, the Planning
26 Commission adopted PC Resolution
27 2014-03 allowing a wine barrel broker,
28 storage and repair within the existing industrial building (approximately 9,700 square
29 feet).

30 The building, landscaping and parking areas occupy approximately 9.5 acres of the site
31 fronting Silverado Trail that are within the Light Industrial (I) Zoning District. The
32 undeveloped 5.1 acres on the southern half of the property are located in the Community



Aerial view of the subject property.

33 Commercial (CC) Zoning District and is not part of the project. Driveway access to the
34 building and parking areas is via Silverado Trail. A west-bound left-turn lane currently
35 exists at the frontage along with a large grassy berm that helps screen the structure from
36 view. The property has 96 standard parking spaces, 2 handicap accessible spaces, 6
37 truck parking spaces, and 13
38 truck docks.

39 The intent of the project is to
40 provide wine barrel storage
41 opportunities for winery
42 customers that have been
43 impacted by recent fire
44 events. The project will
45 support the local wine
46 industry at a time when
47 recent wildfires have
48 disrupted the operations of
49 many local wineries as well
50 as providing jobs for the local
51 economy.



View of parking lot & front of building looking west.

52 **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION**

53 The use permit application under consideration proposes to utilize approximately 39,000
54 square feet of floor area of the existing permitted 123,600 square foot industrial building
55 for use as a bonded wine barrel storage facility. The remaining portion of the building is
56 not part of the current application.

57 The portion of the building that would be used for bonded barrel storage will be improved
58 to city standards consistent with its intended occupancy. Proposed improvements will
59 include interior walls, required improvements to existing floor drains and temperature
60 control systems (i.e. A/C units) to be provided in more detail when submitting for a building
61 permit. A fire alarm system and sprinklers are existing throughout the building. No
62 changes to either the existing site plan or building elevation are proposed as part of this
63 application.

64 The project would operate seven days per week with hours of operation from 5am to 6pm
65 and would have up to ten employees. An estimated 30 daily trips would be attributed with
66 the ten employees, assuming that they are all working at the same time. In addition to
67 employee trips, the project would generate approximately five daily vehicle trips except
68 during the typical six-week harvest when barrel related vehicle trips would increase to a
69 maximum of ten trips daily.

70 A maximum of 8,000 barrels would be stored within the proposed space, which would be
71 considered full capacity and would be stacked five barrels high or less. As the length of
72 time needed to age wine varies depending on the wine makers desires and the varietal

73 of wine stored, the amount of daily in and out traffic of wine barrels would be significantly
74 less than what has been previously approved at the project property. Barrels would be
75 unloaded and loaded via an existing load dock on the north side of the existing building
76 with a forklift. Movement of barrels will also occur just outside the building at ground level.
77 As previously stated, the project would have up to ten employees. As indicated on the
78 site plan, a total of 37 parking spaces will be provided to serve the project.



79 *View of storage facility facing north – west & east views.*

80 **ANALYSIS**

81 **A. General Plan Consistency**

82 Land Use Designation: The General Plan designation for the project area is Light
83 Industrial. The Silverado Trail frontage of the property is also subject to the Entry Corridor
84 2: Downvalley Silverado Trail overlay, which recognizes the existing light industrial facility.
85 In addition, development in all entry corridors shall incorporate applicable features
86 specified in the General Plan. These features include generous landscaped setbacks,
87 screened parking areas, and low-rise buildings. No change to the building's exterior is
88 proposed as part of this project.

89 The Resort Character Area overlay, which also applies to the property, allows re-use of
90 the existing industrial building, as well as the proposed light industrial use. Areas
91 designated for industrial uses include light manufacturing, bottling plants, and storage.
92 The project is consistent with these uses.

93 Economic Development: Calistoga Vintner's Service would expand the economic activity
94 within an underutilized building and provide a service to local wineries, consistent with
95 General Plan Objective ED-1.2.

96 **B. Zoning Ordinance Compliance**

97 The project site is zoned Light Industrial (I). Wine barrel storage is not a use specifically
98 listed as conditionally permitted uses in the Light Industrial (I) Zoning District. However,
99 per CMC Section 17.26.020 the Planning Commission may determine that the use is
100 allowed if it is similar to the list of allowed uses. Staff believes the wine barrel storage is
101 similar to those uses typically associated with wineries, which is an allowed use. As such,
102 the Planning Commission may authorize the use subject to use permit approval. The
103 findings for permitting the unclassified use are contained in the draft resolution.

104 The Zoning Ordinance's parking regulations require 20 parking spaces for the project,
105 based on the following ratio of one (1) parking space for every 2,000 square feet of
106 storage area, a total of 20 spaces are required for the approximately 39,000 square feet
107 of storage area. Staff finds that the total parking demand can be readily accommodated
108 by the previously mentioned 96 standard parking spaces and two handicap accessible
109 spaces available on the property of which 37 parking spaces are allocated for the project.

110 **C. Growth Management**

111 The property carries an annual baseline of 70 acre-feet of water and 95 acre-feet of
112 wastewater. This translates into 30,393 units of wastewater per year and 51,382 units of
113 water per year, where each unit is equal to 748 gallons. As the proposed use does not
114 involve grape processing and will have the same number of employees that was proposed
115 under UP 2013-05, the project would operate within the property's current allocation of
116 water and wastewater. The property's current allocation of water and wastewater is more
117 than sufficient to accommodate the proposed use and a condition of approval is proposed
118 that would ensure that the property's water and wastewater use does not exceed the
119 established annual baseline.

120 **D. Traffic and Circulation**

121 The former uses on the property involved a wine barrel broker, storage and a repair
122 operation (UP 2014-02); winery (UP 2013-05); and water production and bottling facility
123 (Calistoga Beverage Company). Truck trips and employee trips associated with the
124 former uses as a water production and bottling facility far exceed the trips anticipated with
125 the approved winery and wine barrel operation, and the proposed bonded wine barrel
126 storage facility. Only minor changes in the traffic patterns would occur as a result of this
127 project, which are insignificant and would have no significant change to the existing traffic
128 volumes or level of service at key intersections.

129 Furthermore, the General Plan accepts a lower level of service at key intersections. In
130 order to maintain the character of Downtown Calistoga, as part of the General Plan EIR
131 the City Council approved a statement of overriding considerations that exempts LOS

132 standards within downtown, including the study intersection of SR-29/128/SR-29. It is also
133 assumed that traffic associated with the property has already been counted in the traffic
134 volumes that existed at the time of this determination.

135 **E. Health and Safety**

136 With oversight and restrictions, the use will not result in fire hazards. The Fire Department
137 has reviewed the application and has indicated that a fire sprinkler and alarm system
138 currently exist within the building. However, the Fire Department would require they be
139 evaluated and tested for the new use prior to occupancy. Additionally, the alarm system
140 would need to be properly programmed to identify the use and its address.

141 **FINDINGS**

142 To reduce repetition, all the necessary findings are contained in the draft resolution.

143 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

144 As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any correspondence regarding this
145 application.

146 **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

147 Staff has determined that the proposed project is Categorically Exempt from the
148 requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section
149 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the CEQA Guidelines.

150 **RECOMMENDATION**

151 Approve the use permit application with conditions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution
2. Vicinity Map
3. Project Description dated July 22, 2021
4. Project Plans