



KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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“Building Partnerships – Building Communities”

STAFF REPORT

Jentges Conditional Use Permit (CU-26-00001)

TO: Kittitas County Hearing Examiner
FROM: Zach Torrance-Smith, Planner I
RE: Jentges Conditional Use Permit (CU-26-00001)
DATE: June 18, 2026 (Hearing Date)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Requested Action: The proposed project is for a Small-Scale Event Facility specializing in agricultural-based therapy and wellness services. The project will utilize built residential, non-residential, and agricultural structures that exist on-site.

Location: Two tax parcels, (#474234 & #414234), located approximately 2.82 miles NE of Ellensburg, WA, In a portion of the NW ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 7, Township 18, Range 19, W.M; Kittitas County assessor’s map numbers 18-19-07000-0010 & 18-19-07000-0020.

II. SITE INFORMATION

Total Property Size:	4.72 Acres
Number of Lots:	2
Domestic Water:	Existing On-Site Well
Sewage Disposal:	Existing On-Site Septic System

Site Characteristics:

North: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.
South: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.
East: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.
West: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.

Access: The site is accessed off Alford Road.

III. ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The parcels involved in this proposal are in a land use designation of *Rural-Working* and a zoning designation of *Agriculture-20*. The proposed project is classified as a “Small-Scale Event Facility”. Small-Scale Event Facilities are allowed with a conditional use permit under KCC 17.15.060.1. The conditional use permit criteria are examined in Section VIII “Project Analysis” of this staff report.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Deem Complete: A conditional use permit application for Jentges (CU-26-00001) was submitted to Kittitas County Community Development Services department on March 31, 2026. The application was deemed complete on April 8, 2026 (See Index #2). The site was posted in accordance with KCC 15A.03.110 on April 9, 2026 (See Index #6).

Notice of Application: A notice of application for the Jentges Conditional Use Permit (CU-26-00001) was mailed and/or emailed to adjacent landowners located within 500 feet of any portion of the boundary of the proposal's tax parcels & applicable agencies (See Index's #5, #8 & #9). Notice was given to and published in the official newspaper of record for Kittitas County, and notice was posted to the Kittitas County Website on April 10, 2026, all in conformance with the Kittitas County Project Permit Application Process (Title 15A) (See Index #5 & #7). The comment period concluded on May 1, 2026.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

RR-P4: A certain level of mixed uses in rural areas and rural service centers is acceptable and may include limited commercial, service, and rural industrial uses.

Staff Consistency Statement: The proposed project will offer services to the public that require a rural setting. The service provided to clients is intended to support their health and wellbeing by providing therapeutic exercises in a quiet, rural setting. The proposed use is not a high-intensity use and is not expected to stretch rural infrastructure beyond capacity.

RR-G21: Preserve views of open space while providing opportunity for variety of rural densities.

Staff Consistency Statement: The proposed project does not include additional structures that will hinder views of open space in this rural location. All activities associated with the proposed use will take place using infrastructure on-site that already exists.

This application is consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan as outlined above.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A review by CDS staff indicated potential wetlands throughout the site. In addition, a Type-9 (U) stream runs across the Eastern and Southern portions of the site. A site visit was conducted with the Washington State Dept. Fish and Wildlife to verify on site conditions. No new structures are being proposed as part of this project. The proposal is using existing buildings less than 12,000 square feet with less than 40 parking spaces, therefore, the project is exempt from SEPA per WAC 197-11-800(1)(d) and KCC 15.04.090(1)(c).

VII. AGENCY AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

Applicable agencies, adjacent property owners, and interested parties have been given the opportunity to review this proposal. All comments are on file and available for public review. All comment submittals can be found in their entirety in Index #10. The following parties provided substantive comments during the comment period:

Agency Comments: Bonneville Power Administration, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kittitas County Public Health, Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Washington State Dept. of Health – Office of Drinking Water, Yakama Nation Fisheries, Kittitas County Public Works.

Below is a summary of their comments:

Bonneville Power Administration

BPA provided comments stating that they have no facilities in the area of this project and that they have no substantive comments.

Staff Response

As BPA stated that this project is not near any of their facilities, staff has no further comment.

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

CTCR provided comments stating that they do not have concerns regarding this project as it relates to cultural resources.

Staff Response

As CTCR stated that this project does not raise concerns regarding cultural resources, staff has no further comment.

Kittitas County Public Health

KCPH provided comments pertaining to group water systems, source classification, water testing, sanitary control areas, state requirements related to health components, well setback information, and septic review requirements. KCPH then clarified in further communication that plans brought to their attention meet Public Health requirements.

Staff Response

The applicants have stated that they will coordinate with Kittitas County Public Health regarding all stated health requirements. Staff has conditioned this project to remain in compliance with all applicable health codes and requirements.

Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

WDFW provided comments stating the need for more detailed assessment of critical areas. WDFW also provided comments related to Mercer Creek, Wilson Creek, the Wilson-Naneum Alluvial Fan, various species that are present on-site, stream discrepancies on plans, the need for further details on the clearing of brush, information pertaining to Riparian Management Zones, Critical Areas Ordinances, and the need for clarity on how critical areas on-site will be protected. WDFW requested a site visit with the applicants and with County staff. WDFW then requested that a mitigation/monitoring/restoration plan created in consultation with their agency be a condition of approval for this project.

Staff Response

Applicants responded to comments stating they welcome coordination with WDFW concerning critical areas, Mercer Creek protections, riparian buffers, and any mitigation or restoration recommendations deemed appropriate by County staff and agency specialists. Staff has reviewed WDFW's comments and has conditioned this project upon adhering to applicable conditions based on WDFW's comments.

Washington State Dept. of Health – Office of Drinking Water

WSDOH provided comments listing water access questions, questions related to the number of guests that are

expected, and questions related to how many buildings have water and the number of hydrants on-site.

Staff Response

Applicants have stated that they will coordinate with WSDOH regarding water system classification, testing, sanitary setbacks, and wastewater review requirements. Staff has conditioned this project to remain in compliance with all applicable health codes and requirements.

Yakama Nation Fisheries

YNF provided comments stating that based upon the application materials, they see no need for further investigation.

Staff Response

As YNF provided comments stating that they see no need for further investigation into the project's impact, staff has no further comment.

Kittitas County Public Works

KCPW provided comments pertaining to access specifications, driveway specifications related to fire safety, road variance specifications, road standards, grading/filling requirements, transportation concurrency requirements specifically pertaining to the number of expected vehicles, and flood specifications related to Whiskey and Mercer Creeks.

Staff Response

Applicants have stated that they will collaborate with Public Works regarding access permitting, driveway standards, traffic scoping, and any required variance applications. Because the submitted comments from KCPW included requirements, staff has conditioned this project upon successfully adhering to all transmitted requirements.

Public Comments: Two public commentors expressed concerns regarding: increased use intensity, parking thresholds, impacts to other properties, large groups, potential uses that aren't clearly stated, concerns about open ended nature of use, noise/sight/safety/light concerns, water/flood concerns and general concerns about critical areas, the character of the surrounding neighborhood being affected, road capacity, liability coverage, wind and trees falling, as well as an alleged fence dispute. The applicants responded to public comments acknowledging their concerns and stated they are committed to working collaboratively with County staff and neighbors to develop reasonable operational conditions to balance their activities with the established character of the neighborhood. The applicants then listed potential conditions attached to this project they would be in support of that are detailed in their response to comments in this project's record.

This staff report includes condition recommendations to address the comments submitted.

VIII. PROJECT ANALYSIS

In review of this proposal, it is important to consider the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan, applicable county code, public and agency comments, any identified environmental concerns and state and federal requirements. Identified below is planning staff's analysis and consistency review for the subject application.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

The proposal is consistent with the goals and policies of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan. As referenced

above in Section V of this staff report, the following Comprehensive Plan goals and policies apply to this proposal: RR-G21, RR-P4.

Consistency with the provisions of KCC 17.60A, Conditional Uses:

KCC 17.60A.015 provides the following review criteria to be considered in a conditional use analysis:

1. *The proposed use is essential or desirable to the public convenience and not detrimental or injurious to the public health, peace, or safety or to the character of the surrounding neighborhood.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: Small-Scale Event Facilities are allowed by conditional use permit within the Agriculture-20 zone. The proposal is located on approximately 4.72 acres and the facility will consist of existing structures. The property is located near a few residences and agricultural land. CDS does not anticipate the proposed use as conditioned will be detrimental or injurious to the public health, peace, safety, or to the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

2. *The proposed use at the proposed location will not be unreasonably detrimental to the economic welfare of the county and that it will not create excessive public cost for facilities and services by finding that*
 - a. *The proposed use will be adequately serviced by existing facilities such as highways, roads, police and fire protection, irrigation and drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewers, and schools; or*
 - b. *The applicant shall provide such facilities; or*
 - c. *The proposed use will be of sufficient economic benefit to offset additional public costs or economic detriment.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: Staff has notified Kittitas County Public Health and the State Department of Health of this project and these agencies have had the opportunity to submit comments and requirements for this project. Kittitas County Public Works has also been notified of this project and its location in relation to the Kittitas County Road System. The site is within Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue (District #2).

3. *The proposed use complies with relevant development standards and criteria for approval set forth in this title or other applicable provisions of Kittitas County Code.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: The Small-Scale Event Facility use is consistent with the relevant development standards and criteria including KCC 17.15.060. The Small-Scale Event Facility is permitted in the Agriculture-20 zone through a Conditional Use Permit.

4. *The proposed use will mitigate material impacts of the development, whether environmental or otherwise.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: The site has no new development proposed and included conditions account for all critical area buffers. Impacts from aspects such as traffic is mitigated through conditions.

5. *The proposed use will ensure compatibility with existing neighboring land uses.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: There are few residences in the area and any impacts should be minimal to the neighboring land uses. Staff has conditioned the proposal to meet all noise ordinances in County Code.

6. *The proposed use is consistent with the intent and character of the zoning district in which it is located.*

Applicant Response: “Yes.” (See Index #13)

Staff Response: The proposed project is located in Agriculture-20 zoning. The Agriculture-20 (AG-20) zone is an area wherein farming, ranching and rural life styles are dominant characteristics. The intent of this zoning classification is to preserve fertile farmland from encroachment by nonagricultural land uses; and protect the rights and traditions of those engaged in agriculture. Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code have allowed Small-Scale Event Facilities in Agriculture-20 zones in KCC 17.15.060(1) with a conditional use permit. Kittitas County believes that Small-Scale Event Facilities can coexist with rural lifestyles and can enhance people’s enjoyment of the rural character of the county.

7. *For conditional uses outside of Urban Growth Areas, the proposed use:*
- a. *Is consistent with the intent, goals, policies, and objectives of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan, including the policies of Chapter 8, Rural and Resource Lands;*
 - b. *Preserves “rural character” as defined in the Growth Management Act*
 - c. *Requires only rural government services; and*
 - d. *Does not compromise the long-term viability of designated resource lands.*

Applicant Response:

- i. “yes
- ii. yes
- iii. yes
- iv. yes”

Staff Response: The proposal is consistent with the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan as described above in section “V.” The use will not conflict with rural character, requires only rural government services and will not compromise resource lands.

Staff Conclusions: Kittitas County CDS finds the application, as conditioned, consistent with KCC 17.60A Conditional Uses, as described above.

Consistency with the provisions of the KCC Title 17A, Critical Areas:

A review by CDS staff indicated potential wetlands throughout the property. In addition to potential wetlands, a Type-9 (U) stream runs across the Eastern and Southern portions of the site. No new structures are being proposed as part of this project. Future structures/activities will be required to adhere to setbacks defined under KCC

17A.04.030. As such, the proposal is consistent with KCC Title 17A, Critical Areas.

Consistency with the provisions of the KCC Title 14.04, Building Code:

Any future buildings must be consistent with International Building Codes.

Consistency with the provisions of KCC Title 12, Roads and Bridges:

As conditioned, the proposal is consistent with the provisions of KCC Title 12.

Consistency with the provisions of KCC Title 20, Fire and Life Safety:

As conditioned, the proposal is consistent with the provisions of KCC Title 20.

Agency Comments:

The following agencies provided comments during the comment period: Bonneville Power Administration, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kittitas County Public Health, Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Washington State Dept. of Health – Office of Drinking Water, Yakama Nation Fisheries, Kittitas County Public Works. (See Index #10)

Public Comments: Two public comments were received for this project.

IX. Findings of Fact

1. The proposed project is for a Small-Scale Event Facility specializing in agricultural-based therapy and wellness services. The project will utilize built residential, non-residential, and agricultural structures that exist on-site.

2. Site Information

Total Property Size:	4.72 Acres
Number of Lots:	2
Domestic Water:	Existing On-Site Well
Sewage Disposal:	Existing On-Site Septic System

3. Site Characteristics:

North: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.

South: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.

East: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.

West: Existing low-density residential development with plentiful agricultural activity in an Agriculture-20 zoning designation.

4. Access: The site is accessed off Alford Road.
5. The Comprehensive Plan land use designation is Rural-Working, and the zoning designation is Agriculture-20.
6. The proposed use is permitted in this zone with a Conditional Use Permit under Small-Scale Event

Facility in KCC 17.15.060.1.

7. A conditional use permit application (See Index #1) for Jentges (CU-26-00001) was submitted to Kittitas County Community Development Services department on March 31, 2026. The application was deemed complete on April 8, 2026. The site was posted in accordance with KCC 15A.03.110 on April 9, 2026.
8. Notice of Application: A notice of application for the Jentges Conditional Use Permit (CU-26-00001) was mailed and/or emailed to adjacent landowners located within 500 feet of any portion of the boundary of the proposal's tax parcels & applicable agencies (See Index's #5, #8 & #9). Notice was given to and published in the official newspaper of record for Kittitas County, and notice was posted to the Kittitas County Website on April 10, 2026, all in conformance with the Kittitas County Project Permit Application Process (Title 15A) (See Index's #5 & #7). The comment period concluded on May 1, 2026.
9. A SEPA Checklist was not required under WAC 197-11-800(1)(d) and KCC 15.04.090(1)(c) due to the proposal having all buildings less than 12,000 square feet and less than 40 parking spaces. No new structures are being proposed as part of this project.
10. The proposal is consistent with the goals and policies of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan. As referenced above in Section V of this staff report, the following Comprehensive Plan goals and policies apply to this proposal: RR-G21 and RR-P4.
11. Grading requirements are subject to the standards outlined in Kittitas County Code Title 14.
12. The following agencies provided comments during the comment period: Bonneville Power Administration, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kittitas County Public Health, Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Washington State Dept. of Health – Office of Drinking Water, Yakama Nation Fisheries, Kittitas County Public Works.
13. Two public comments were received for this proposal.
14. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with the provisions of KCC 17.60A, Conditional Uses.
15. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with the provisions of KCC Title 12, Roads and Bridges
16. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with the provisions of KCC Title 14 Building and Construction
17. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with the provisions of KCC 17A, Critical Areas.
18. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with KCC 20, Fire Life and Safety.
19. This proposal, as conditioned, is consistent with KCC Title 17, Zoning.

X. Conclusions:

1. As conditioned, the development meets the goals, policies and implementation recommendations as set forth in the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.
2. As conditioned, this proposal is consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

3. Public use and interest will be served by approval of this proposal.
4. As conditioned, the proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Code Title 17 Zoning, Title 17A Critical Areas, Title 14 Buildings and Construction, Title 12 Roads and Bridges and Title 20 Fire and Life Safety.

XI. Recommendation and Conditions of Approval:

Kittitas County recommends *approval* of the Jentges Conditional Use permit CU-26-00001 based on the above staff analysis, findings of fact, and conclusions with the following conditions of approval.

1. The project shall proceed in substantial conformance with the plans and application materials on file with CDS that were revised and received on March 31, 2026, and subsequent information included in the complete file index except as amended by the conditions herein.
2. The property shall have an annual Fire, Life, Safety inspection by the Fire Marshal.
3. An approved access permit for commercial access shall be required from the Kittitas County Dept. of Public Works prior to creating any new driveway access or altering an existing access. Paved approach is required, per KCPW.
4. Driveways over 150' in length will be required to be a minimum of 16' wide with 2' of clear zone on each side and meet the standards of Appendix D of the International Fire Code for IFC Turnarounds/Kittitas County Road Standard 5 and 6.
5. Per Kittitas County Code, only one access is permitted. A Road Variance application will need to be applied for to access or to change the agricultural access to commercial access. Application for a Road Variance does not guarantee second access.
6. Maintenance of driveway approaches shall be the responsibility of the owner whose property they serve. The County will not maintain accesses.
7. Except as exempted in KCC 14.05.060, no grading or filling upon a site involving more than one hundred (100) cubic yards shall be performed without a grading permit from the County Engineer or Public Works designee (KCC 14.05.050). An application for grading in excess of five hundred (500) cubic yards shall be accompanied by an engineered grading plan (KCC 14.05.080). Grading over 500 cubic yards also requires a SEPA checklist to be submitted and approved by Kittitas County Community Development Services.
8. There shall be no parking on any Right-Of-Way or Alford Road at any time.
9. All applicable Kittitas County Road Standards apply to this proposal. Access is not guaranteed to any existing or created parcel on this application.
10. Applicants shall provide a scoping letter so a courtesy screening may be completed to determine if a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required. Scoping letter shall include quantity of vehicles throughout the entire operation hours, quantity of vehicles in the peak hour of operation, and estimated number of vehicles arriving and departing East and West. Vehicles in scoping letter

should include all vehicles such as delivery vehicles, employees, customers, etc.

11. All activities shall comply with the County's Noise Ordinance in KCC 9.45 as stated now or as amended. Any noise that would violate the noise ordinance shall require a noise variance as seen in KCC 9.45.070 as stated now or as amended.
12. All development, design and construction shall comply with International Fire Code requirements and KCC Title 20 Fire and Life Safety. Please contact the Kittitas County Fire Marshal for specific requirements.
13. Accessible parking and route to Accessible space(s) provided with hard surface such as asphalt or concrete shall be required. The parking symbol and signage of Accessibility is required. Accessible parking spaces shall be located on the shortest accessible route of travel from adjacent parking to an accessible building/pedestrian entrance per WAC 51-50-1106. Wherever practical, the accessible route shall not cross lanes of vehicular traffic. Where crossing traffic lanes as necessary, the route shall be designated and marked as a crosswalk.

Verify there is no more than 1:20 slope for the Accessible path from Accessible Parking to the building(s) and all facilities entrances and amenities. Please show path and state the maximum allowed slope on the drawings.

All buildings or facilities shall be made Accessible per ANSI A-117; the latest adopted edition. Please show all Accessible features for rooms, counter areas and seating areas where Accessibility is required. Please show precise details such as counter heights, maximum reach distances, door swings, etc. Restrooms shall meet Accessibility with the same level of detail.

Please show this accessibility on an updated site plan and building permits for approval. Accessibility requirements must be approved by Kittitas County Community Development Services prior to any events taking place.

14. The applicant shall comply with all local, state and federal regulations at the time of building permit submittal.
15. Owner/applicant must obtain authorization from the Department of Ecology if withdrawing over 5,000 gallons of water per day.
16. Should ground disturbing or other activities related to the proposed project result in the inadvertent discovery of cultural or archaeological materials, work shall be stopped in the immediate area and contact be made with the Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP). Work shall remain suspended until the find is assessed and appropriate consultation is conducted. Should human remains be inadvertently discovered, as dictated by Washington State RCW 27.44.055, work shall be immediately halted in the area and contact made with the coroner and local law enforcement in the most expeditious manner possible.
17. Failure to comply with conditions of approval may result in limitation or revocation of the conditional use permit in accordance with KCC 17.60A.100.
18. The applicant shall adhere to all stormwater discharge, pollution prevention, and water rights requirements set forth by the Washington State Dept. of Ecology (WSDOE).

19. The proposed project shall remain in compliance with all applicable health codes and requirements.
20. A “Mitigation, Monitoring, and Restoration Plan” shall be prepared in consultation with Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. This plan shall include information regarding the removal of underbrush to increase usable land and where this will occur relative to the Riparian Management Zone (RMZ) associated with Mercer Creek, referenced in Kittitas County’s Critical Areas Ordinance (KCC 17A.04.030).