



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 13, 2026

DATE: November 5, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Chris Bronczyk, Senior Planner, Planning & Building Division,
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THROUGH: Kelly Mullin, AICP, Division Director, Planning & Building Division,
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SUBJECT: Public Hearing: To consider a hazardous materials special use permit for general industrial-heavy use type, to include explosives testing and use and storage of certain hazardous materials in the High Desert planning area, as required by NRS 278.147 and Washoe County Code section 110.810.42. The project site is a 320-acre parcel (APN 066-030-05) located at 2001 State Route 34. The applicant is BRDR Properties, LLC. The hazardous materials that are proposed to be on site have the following CAS numbers: 121-82-4 (RDX), 118-96-7 (TNT), 78-11-5 (PETN), 2691-41-0 (HMX), and 7790-98-9 (AP). (WSUP25-0018 Iveson Ranch). (Commission District 5.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

The applicant, BRDR Properties LLC, is requesting to establish a general industrial-heavy use type, to include explosives testing and use and storage of certain hazardous materials, on a 320 acre parcel (APN:066-030-05) in the High Desert planning area. The hazardous materials that are proposed to be on site have the following CAS numbers: 121-82-4 (RDX), 118-96-7 (TNT), 78-11-5 (PETN), 2691-41-0 (HMX), and 7790-98-9 (AP).

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item:

Economic Impacts: Meet the needs of our growing community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

November 20, 2025. The Washoe County Planning Commission reviewed WSUP25-0018 (Iveson Ranch) and approved a special use permit for a high technology industrial use type for drone research and testing and for a private air strip use type. Additionally, the Planning Commission recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve a hazardous materials special use permit for a general industrial – heavy use type, to include explosives testing and use and storage of certain hazardous materials, as required by NRS 278.147 and Washoe County Code (“WCC”) section 110.810.42, in the

AGENDA ITEM # _____

High Desert planning area. The project site is 320 acres and is surrounded by public land. The hazardous materials that are proposed to be on site have the following CAS numbers: 121-82-4 (RDX), 118-96-7 (TNT), 78-11-5 (PETN), 2691-41-0 (HMX), and 7790-98-9 (AP). The special use permit approved by the Planning Commission also includes outdoor storage, and modifications to standards relating to landscaping, parking, noise, and paving.

August 6, 2025. A supplemental neighborhood meeting was conducted with one resident attending. The resident who attended the meeting had concerns related to hazardous materials but had no opposition to the proposed project.

July 28, 2025. A neighborhood meeting was conducted via Zoom. There were 4 residents/business owners from the notified area that attended the meeting.

BACKGROUND

The general industrial – heavy use type, to include explosives testing and the use and storage of certain hazardous materials on the project site is specifically subject to approval by the Board of County Commissioners, as required by NRS 278.147 and WCC 110.810.42

This project meets the criteria for a hazardous materials special use permit due to the fact that explosives will be tested and stored on site, and at least one category of hazardous materials as listed in NAC 459.9533 (CAS 7790-98-9 Ammonium Perchlorate) will be used and stored on the property.

NRS 278.147 provides that a special use permit must be obtained from the County's governing body prior to use or storage of explosives. The hazardous materials on site are classified as explosives since they have a classification as division 1.1d in column 3 of the Table of Hazardous Materials in 49 C.F.R. § 172.101, which is adopted by reference pursuant to NAC 459.95528. *See* NAC 459.9533(2).

As part of the hazardous materials special use permit, longer noticing periods, additional noticing and additional consultation was required, to include:

- Noticing by mail at least thirty (30) days before the public hearing in accordance with WCC 110.810.42(c)(1).
- Noticing in a newspaper of general circulation published at least thirty (30) days before the Board's scheduled public hearing on the hazardous materials special use permit.

The following agencies were also noticed as is required by WCC 110.810.42(c) and NRS 278.147(4)(a)(1-6).

- Kelly Thomas, The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection of the Nevada State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Albert Ruiz and Nicole Hoekstra of the Nevada State Fire Marshal Division.
- Marc Stewart, Industrial Hygiene Supervisor with the Division of Industrial Relations of the Nevada State Department of Business and Industry.
- Nicholas Lafronz, Safety Manager with the Division of Industrial Relations of the Nevada State Department of Business and Industry.

- And the governing body of any city or county that may be affected by the issuance of the special use permit. In this instance, notice was sent through Jan Galassini – the County Clerk.

The proposed activities at Iveson Ranch focus on small scale scientific and engineering efforts. The applicant states that all handling and testing of energetic materials will be conducted by qualified energetics industry subject matter experts and limited to controlled, small scale applications. Energetics materials are commonly used in controlled explosions. The image below provides a list of explosive materials that the applicant will be allowed to use onsite. All of the explosive materials listed are typically used in this type of testing, are well documented, and are widely recognized as industry standards.

TABLE 1: LIST OF ENERGETIC MATERIAL ON SITE

List of Energetic Material		
<i>CAS #</i>	<i>Explosive</i>	<i>Expected Applications</i>
121-82-4	RDX	Composition C-4, A5
118-96-7	TNT	Hexolite, Pentolite
78-11-5	PETN	Detasheet, Blasting Caps, Detonating Cord
2691-41-0	HMX	NONEL, PBX 9501
7790-98-9	AP	Hobby Rocket Motors

Testing activities consist of the controlled initiation of small amounts of energetic material to evaluate key performance metrics, including energy output and reaction behavior. These assessments are conducted to determine the safety, reliability, and effectiveness of the materials and associated devices. All testing occurs within a secure range and is remotely operated to ensure personnel safety. Materials must be carefully contained and managed to prevent unintended impacts beyond the designated test area.

While the Board of County Commissioners is only deciding whether to approve a hazardous materials special use permit, the overall project includes a private airstrip where employees will be flown in and out of the property, lodging facilities for employees, high tech industrial use type for drone research and testing, outdoor storage, and also includes modifications to development code standards relating to landscaping, parking, noise, and paving.

Iveson Ranch will be used to test small drones over the property. Operations will follow FAA Part 107 rules, with flights generally up to 400 feet above ground level in non-restricted airspace. The nearest restricted airspace is said to be over 100 miles away, making the remote site well-suited for these tests.

Iveson Ranch has an existing airstrip at the north end of the parcel that straddles private land and adjacent BLM land. It needs a special use permit and BLM authorization to operate. Outdoor storage was also part of the request to the Planning Commission, with the outdoor storage being utilized for trailers, cargo containers, building materials, infrequently used fleet vehicles, and on-site fire-safety vehicles/equipment. Regularly used vehicles will park wherever most convenient during operations. No energetics will

be stored in these outdoor storage areas; those will be secured in a magazine within the designated energetics zone.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) issues explosive licenses. The ATF specifically regulates storage, recordkeeping, and storage notifications in association with explosive licenses. The ATF ensures that the licensee is storing explosives in the correction magazine (storage container) based on the classification of explosives they will be utilizing. A table of distance is also utilized that shows the reviewers how much explosives a licensee wants to store, and the required distance they need to be from inhabited buildings, public highways, and passenger railways. The ATF requires explosive licensees and permittees to keep permanent records of the acquisition, disposition, and inventory of explosive materials. The ATF utilizes the records kept by the licensee to conduct explosive inspections to verify that all products are accounted for, that nothing is missing, and that the licensee did not go over the storage limit. The ATF requires any person who stores explosive materials to notify the authority having jurisdiction for fire safety in the locality in which the explosive materials are stored. Notification must include the type, magazine capacity, and location of each site where such explosive materials are stored. The ATF provided a response to Washoe County staff that they have inspected the locations that Iveson Ranch is proposing to store explosive materials, and that the storage on site is acceptable for the explosives they wish to store. The applicant has already been informed by ATF of the maximum amount of explosives that can be stored and where the magazines can be located.

On-site fire resources include two 4,000-gallon water trucks (one with a 360-degree high pressure cannon), three utility terrain vehicles equipped with 80-gallon QTAC fire skids, and stocked wildfire hand tools, PPE, and handheld extinguishers. Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District reviewed the proposal and provided substantial conditions, including conditions specific to access, water supply, and vegetation and fire mitigation-management plans.

Some of the conditions associated with the hazardous materials SUP are that the site must install a minimum of 3 monitoring wells down gradient from the “energetics” testing area to ensure no contamination of the groundwater takes place, and that sampling must occur quarterly.

There is also a condition related to time restrictions and number of weeks explosive testing can take place during the months of May and June due to collaboration with the Nevada Department of Wildlife. This condition is to ensure that the operations will not negatively impact antelope and mule deer fawning.

Lastly, as a result of the appeal filed on December 1, 2025, by the Burning Man Project (appellant), conversations occurred between the appellant, applicant and County staff, and amended conditions (Attachment E) were proposed and supported by all parties concerning limiting the number and intensity of energetics testing.

WCC Section 110.810.42, Article 810, *Special Use Permits*, requires that all of the following findings be made to the satisfaction of the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners before granting approval of the request. Staff has completed an analysis of the special use permit application and has determined that the proposal is in compliance with the required findings as follows.

- (a) Consistency. That the proposed use is consistent with the action programs, policies, standards and maps of the Master Plan and the High Desert planning area.

Staff Comment: The proposed uses are consistent with the goals, policies, and action programs of the Washoe County Master Plan and the High Desert planning area. Most of the commercial/industrial activity will take place on an already developed location within the high desert, lessening overall construction impacts on the area. Since the project is largely going to utilize daylight operations, have no new lighting, and limited traffic, this proposal is limiting new disturbance while still protecting dark skies, visual quality of the region, and with the conditions of approval, respecting local wildlife. Additionally, the GR regulatory zone allows the proposed use types subject to the approval of a special use permit. With the conditions of approval provided by reviewing agencies, the proposed project does not conflict with the relevant maps or policy direction of the Washoe County Master Plan, as further detailed in this staff report.

- (b) Improvements. That adequate utilities, roadway improvements, sanitation, water supply, drainage, and other necessary facilities have been provided, the proposed improvements are properly related to existing and proposed roadways, and an adequate public facilities determination has been made in accordance with Division Seven.

Staff Comment: The property currently has residential septic but will be required to provide commercial septic plans and water supply plans that are approved by Northern Nevada Public Health. Additionally, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District is requiring access roads to the site be upgraded to allow easier access for emergency vehicles.

- (c) Site Suitability. That the site is physically suitable for a high technology industrial use type for drone research and testing, a private air strip use type and a general industrial-heavy use type to include explosives testing, hazardous materials use and storage, outdoor storage, and for the intensity of such a development/project.

Staff Comment: The site is an existing developed location that is physically suitable for the proposed high technology industrial use type for drone research and testing. The site contains an existing airstrip and is remote to allow for energetics testing without substantial detriment to other properties. The site's topography, size, and remoteness are also appropriate for the intensity of the proposed development. Should employee housing be required at a density that exceeds the GR regulatory zoning on the property (1du/40 acres), then a subsequent special use permit will be required.

- (d) Issuance Not Detrimental. That issuance of the permit will not be significantly detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare; injurious to the property or improvements of adjacent properties; or detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.

Staff Comment: The proposal will not be significantly detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare; will not be injurious to adjacent properties or improvements; and will not negatively affect the character of the surrounding area. The explosives are being regulated by the ATF, a hazardous materials permit will be required by the State Fire Marshals division, and additional fire requirements have been identified by Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District. The applicant states that they will have fire vehicles on site to assist in fire mitigation when necessary. The proposed project has been sent to Washoe County Emergency Management and Homeland Security, NDEP (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources); the State Fire Marshal, the Division of Industrial Relations of the Nevada State Department of Business and Industry, NDOW, Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District. NNPH provided updated conditions requiring a minimum of 3 monitoring wells downgradient from the energetics testing area due to concerns of contaminating groundwater. NNPH noted that additional monitoring wells may be required and that all monitoring wells must be sampled quarterly once energetics testing has begun. Other agencies which had concerns or required conditions to be placed on the proposed project provided staff with conditions of approval that will ensure compatibility and mitigate potential health and safety impacts.

- (e) Effect on a Military Installation. Issuance of the permit will not have a detrimental effect on the location, purpose or mission of the military installation.

Staff Comment: There is no military installation in the vicinity of the subject property. This finding is therefore met.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board review the attachments submitted with this staff report and the information received during the public hearing and approve the special use permit for hazardous materials, with the Conditions of Approval included as Attachment E.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to approve a hazardous materials special use permit for BRDR Properties, LLC to allow a general industrial-heavy use type, to include explosives testing and use and storage of certain hazardous materials, on APN 066-030-05, subject to the hazardous materials conditions of approval included in Exhibit E, having made all five findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.810.42(d). The hazardous materials that are permitted to be on site have the following CAS numbers: 121-82-4 (RDX), 118-96-7 (TNT), 78-11-5 (PETN), 2691-41-0 (HMX), and 7790-98-9 (AP).”

Attachments:

- A. Planning Commission signed Action Order dated 11/21/2025 (WSUP25-0018)
- B. Planning Commission staff report dated 11/12/2025 (WSUP25-0018)
- C. Planning Commission draft minutes for 11/20/25 Meeting
- D. BCC Noticing Exhibit
- E. Modified Conditions of Approval
- F. Public Comment Before Planning Commission
- G. Public Comment after Planning Commission

cc:

Applicant: BRDR Properties, LLC

Property Owner: BRDR Properties, LLC

Representatives: Catherine Reichenberg, Esq.

Representatives: R. David Snelgrove, AICP

Representatives: Thomas H. Gallagher, PE, PLS