

From: [Eric May](#)
To: [Alyssa Pont](#); [Chad E. Roberts](#); [Keval Patel](#)
Subject: RE: Zipline - Agriculture Use Follow Up
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 11:43:00 AM

Alyssa, Keval, and Chad,

Thank you for providing the materials related to the agricultural applications of Zipline's technology.

I have conferred with staff s to whether the drone testing facility could constitute a "small experimental agricultural and seed research facility" that might be authorized through a non-discretionary Site Plan Review under Section 8-2.306(q) of the County Code of Ordinances. The Zoning Code defines "agricultural and seed research" as "industrial or scientific uses subordinate to, and in support of agriculture, and include product processing plants and agriculturally based laboratories or facilities for the production or research of food, fiber, seeds, animal husbandry or medicine, and may include administrative office space in support of the operation." YCCO § 8-2.307. Based on the information provided, our prior discussions, and publicly-available information, planning staff has determined that such an interpretation would expand the scope of uses that have historically qualified as "agricultural" under the code. Accordingly, staff is not prepared to approve a Site Plan Review for the project.

We are mindful that reasonable minds might differ on this question. The Zoning Code allows Planning staff to refer a Site Plan application to the Planning Commission "for interpretation and determination" as to whether the requested use is eligible for Site Plan Review. *See* YCCO § 8-2.215(d). If Zipline is interested in pursuing the Site Review option further, then staff is prepared to submit the interpretive question to the Planning Commission. Zipline would need to submit the application form ([link](#)), accompanied by a \$4,874.58 deposit. Planning staff would then prepare a staff report on the interpretation issue and present it to the Planning Commission. If the Planning Commission agrees with Zipline's interpretation and determines the drone testing facility falls under the small experimental agricultural and seed research facility use type, then Planning staff would process the Site Plan application accordingly.

Please note that we expect the cost of bringing the matter to the Planning Commission for interpretation and determination to exceed the initial \$4,874.58 deposit amount, given the complexity of reviewing the project and the interpretive issue presented. Additionally, County staff would ask Zipline to commission a biologist's report to help inform the Planning Commission of the project's potential impacts to protected species, if any. County staff may consult with a qualified biologist to peer review the report. The Planning Commission would likely hear the item within two months of application submittal.

Please let me know if Zipline would like to take the Site Plan Review interpretation to the Planning Commission, or whether you would prefer to apply for the code amendment and use permit, as we discussed previously. In the meantime, Zipline should continue its efforts to apply for and obtain the ministerial permits we identified at our meeting (building, electrical, water, septic, electricity, etc.).

As always, please let me know if you have any questions or if you'd like to discuss the matter further.

Sincerely,
Eric

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From: Alyssa Pont <alyssa.pont@flyzipline.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:28 PM
To: Eric May <Eric.May@yolocounty.gov>
Cc: Chad E. Roberts <croberts@hsmllaw.com>; Keval Patel <keval.patel@flyzipline.com>; Madeline Klein <madeline.klein@flyzipline.com>; SCOTT STONE <sastone57@gmail.com>; casey stone <boyeatsbeef@yahoo.com>
Subject: Zipline - Agriculture Use Follow Up

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Hi Eric,

Thank you very much for speaking with the Zipline legal team on Friday. We greatly appreciate your time, attention, and solution-orientation on this matter, and we are looking forward to working with you and Yolo County to find a viable path forward for our research facility.

As we discussed, we strongly believe that our testing facility's use is best characterized as a "small experimental agricultural and seed research facility." As per Section 8-2.306(q) of the YCC, "small, experimental, or pilot agricultural and seed research facilities occupying no more than five (5.0) acres of a site, which are incidental to the main agricultural use, may be allowed through the issuance of a Site Plan Review."

First, please find attached the site layout for the research facility, which shows that our research facility occupies less than 5 acres of the 7,445 acre Yolo Land & Cattle property. Our use of that property is incidental to Yolo Land & Cattle's agricultural operation—we do not have any impact on Yolo Land & Cattle's operations, including their cattle and livestock grazing.

What's more, Yolo Land & Cattle's license to Zipline to use .067% of their property is tied to their commitment to improving agriculture through technology experimentation and development. This is because Zipline is a mission-driven public health and agricultural logistics company. In terms of that agricultural work, Zipline's technology has primarily been used in rural and agricultural areas – making over 1 million deliveries made in those communities. Among those 1 million deliveries, agricultural