

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

SUBJECT: 1381 CALLE JOAQUIN (ARCH-0783-2021) REVIEW OF A NEW 30,986 SQUARE FOOT AUTO DEALERSHIP AND SIGN PROGRAM, WITH A REQUEST FOR A FENCE HEIGHT EXCEPTION

BY / FROM: Rachel Cohen, Senior Planner
 Phone Number: 805-781-7574
 Email: rcohen@slocity.org

APPLICANT: Rich Development

REPRESENTATIVES: Kristine Simmons
 & Tab Johnson

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Draft Resolution (Attachment A) entitled, “A resolution of the San Luis Obispo Planning Commission approving the architectural design of a new 30,986 square foot auto dealership and sign program with a request for a fence height exception and a determination that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as represented in the Planning Commission Agenda Report and attachments dated May 25, 2022 (1381 Calle Joaquin, File #ARCH-0383-2021).”

2.0 SITE DATA

Location	1381 Calle Joaquin
Site Area	2.84 Acres (123,710 s.f.)
Site Condition	Vacant
Zoning	C-T-SF (Tourist Commercial) with a Special Focus Overlay
General Plan	Tourist Commercial
Surrounding Uses	East: Highway 101 West: Agriculture and Auto dealerships North: Hotel, Agriculture, and Auto dealership South: Auto dealership and motel

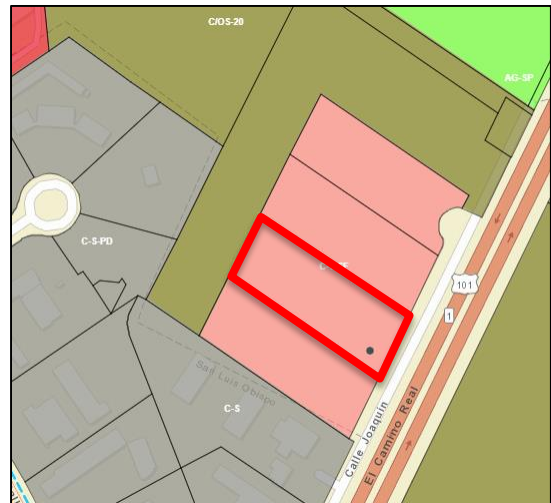


Figure 1: Project Site

3.0 SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing a new 30,986 square foot auto dealership (Attachments B - D). The project's architecture is modern in design and utilizes rectilinear forms, flat roofs, and large areas of glazing / storefronts. Exterior materials include concrete panels, metal panels, metal canopies, and an aluminum storefront. The structure is mostly gray and white with accents of neon red. The project also proposes a sign program that includes sizing, quantity, and design standards for all signs on the site (Attachment E).

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The applicant is also requesting a fence height exception to allow an 8-foot-tall metal picket style fence where normally a 6-foot-tall fence is allowed (Attachment B, Sheet A-4).



Figure 3: Elevation of the Project as viewed from Calle Joaquin

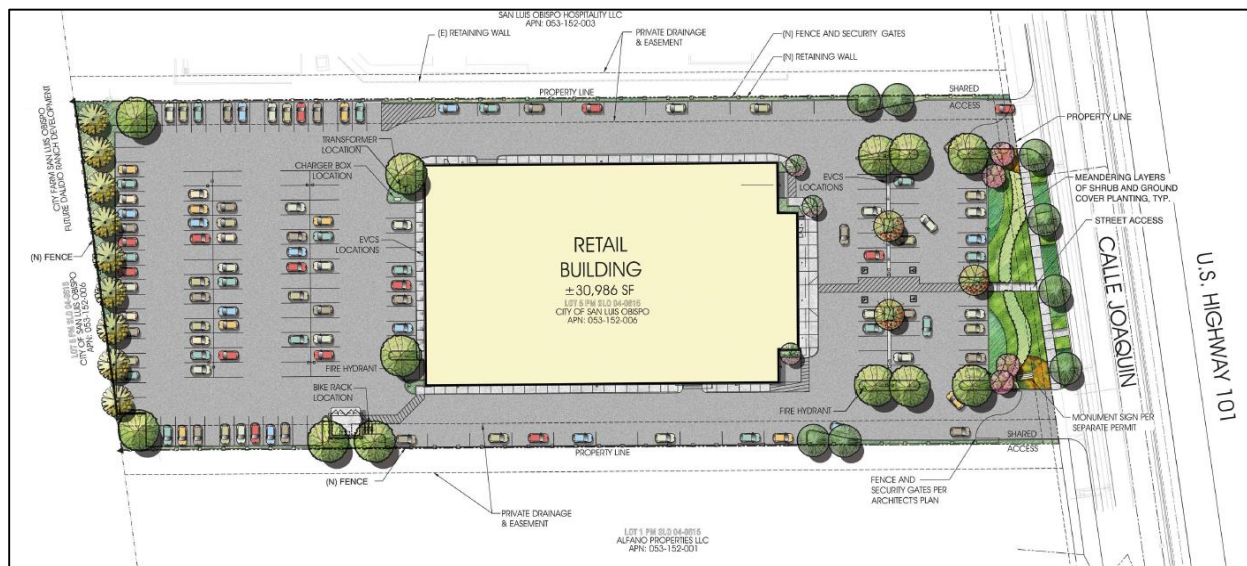


Figure 2: Site and Landscape Plan

4.0 COMMISSION'S PURVIEW

The Planning Commission's role is to review the project for consistency with the General Plan, [Zoning Regulations](#), [Community Design Guidelines](#) (CDG), [Sign Regulations](#), and applicable City development standards. Planning Commission (PC) review is required for development projects that consist of 10,000 square feet or more of new commercial construction.

5.0 PREVIOUS REVIEW

On April 18, 2022, the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) reviewed the project for consistency with the CDG and Sign Regulations ([ARC Report, 04/18/2022](#)). The ARC recommended that the Planning Commission find the project consistent with the CDG and Sign Regulations with direction that the applicant should include additional articulation along the auto dealership's exterior north elevation through the use of colors, materials, and/or windows.

6.0 PROJECT STATISTICS

Site Details	Proposed	Allowed/Required*
Setbacks		
Front	~150 feet	10 feet
Side	37 feet	No setback
Side	37 feet	No setback
Rear	~205 feet	20 feet
Maximum Height of Structure	30 feet	45 feet
Max Lot Coverage	25.05%	75%
F.A.R.	0.25	2.5
Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	175	88
EV Ready	10	9
EV Capable	22	22
Number of Bicycle Parking Spaces	13	13
Number of Motorcycle Parking Spaces	5	5

*2019 Zoning Regulations

7.0 PROJECT ANALYSIS

The proposed development must conform to the intentions, standards and limitations of the Zoning Regulations and Engineering Standards and be consistent with the applicable CDG and Sign Regulations. Staff has evaluated the project's consistency with relevant requirements and has found it to be in compliance, as discussed in this analysis.

7.1 Consistency with the General Plan

The General Plan Land Use Element (LUE) Chapter 8 provides policies for Special Focus Planning Areas. The proposed project site is located within the Calle Joaquin Auto Sales planning area (Program 8.11¹), which identifies that parcel in this area may be appropriate for auto sales depending on the market. The proposed auto dealership is consistent with Program 8.11 because it proposes auto sales and provides transition to the agricultural parcels to the north and preserves the viewsheds from Highway 101.

¹ 8.11. Calle Joaquin Auto Sales Area. These four vacant lots are suitable for commercial mixed use and other uses described under the Tourist Commercial designations. Portions of the site may be appropriate for use as auto sales, depending on market demand. Development of this area must address preservation of and transition to the agricultural parcels/uses to the northwest; connectivity to the Dalidio Ranch area; viewshed preservation; and treatment as a gateway to the City visible from Highway 101.

7.2 Consistency with the Zoning Regulations

In accordance with Chapter 17.52 (Special Focus Area (S-F) Overlay Zone) of the Zoning Regulations, auto dealerships are an allowed use within the C-T-SF zone because the use is consistent with and expressly allowed by Land Use Element Program 8.11. The project complies with the development standards noted in Section 17.52.030 because it adheres to the requirements of the underlying C-T zone and the provisions set forth in the Calle Joaquin Auto Sales planning area.

Fence Height Exception: The project includes an 8-foot tall black, iron, picket fence around the project site. The applicant is requesting a 2-foot fence height exception where normally a 6-foot fence is allowed. The fence height exception is consistent with the intent of Section 17.70.070 of the Zoning Regulations because the additional height addresses concerns related to security for the project site and would not pose any potential adverse effects on surrounding properties such as, traffic, vehicular and pedestrian safety, scale, and lighting because the proposed fence is an open picket design that allows for visibility from adjacent properties and is not located within any site triangles for vehicular or pedestrian paths of travel.

7.3 Architectural Review Commission Review Direction

The ARC found the project consistent with the CDGs and provided one directional item for the applicant to consider incorporating into the project design to be reviewed and evaluated by the PC prior to taking final action on the project:

ARC Direction: The applicant should include additional articulation along the auto dealership's exterior north elevation through the use of colors, materials, and/or windows to be consistent with CDG guidance on four-sided architecture.

Response: Per ARC's direction, the applicant has provided revised elevations that show the addition of windows on the north elevation (see Figure 4). Staff finds that the revised elevation is consistent with ARC direction and recommends Condition of Approval No. 2 to ensure that plans submitted for a building permit include windows as proposed, subject to the approval of the Community Development Director.

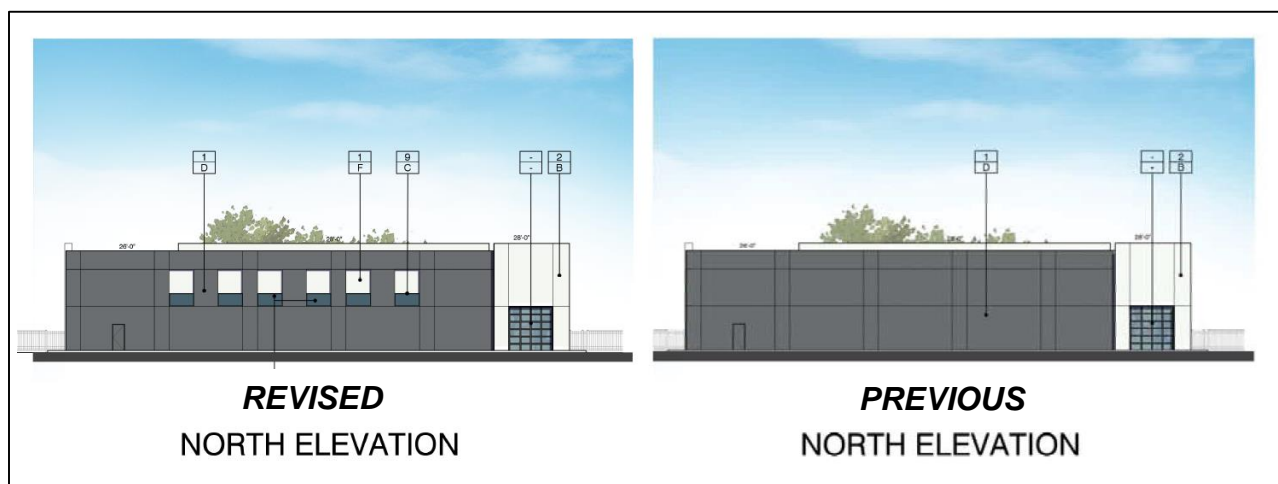


Figure 4: Comparison of the previous and revised north elevation

7.4 Sign Regulations

The Sign Regulations are intended to protect and enhance the character of the community against visual blight and the proliferation of signs. Signs have an important design component and must be architecturally compatible with the character of surrounding development. It is the intent of the Sign Regulations to regulate the time, place and manner under which signs are permitted, and not the content of signage. Content shall not be used as a basis for determining whether or not a proposed sign may be permitted.

Per Section [15.40.485](#) of the Municipal Code, a Sign Program is required for the project to establish ongoing sign requirements and to ensure the signage is complementary and compatible with the development and surrounding commercial district. Table 2 (below) outlines the proposed Sign Program for the project. Sign programs may supersede limitations outlined in the City's Sign Regulations and do not have to comply with standards such as height, size, and number. A detailed Sign Program is included as Attachment E. The ARC reviewed the Sign Program at their April 18, 2022, meeting, and found that the proposal results in signage that is compatible with the development, complementary to project architecture, and provides a superior design.

Table 1: Proposed Sign Program

Sign Program	Proposed
Number of Signs	4 + miscellaneous signs and temporary window signs
Cumulative Area of Signs	288.84 sq. ft. + miscellaneous signs and temporary window signs
Major Building Tenant Signage (Wall Signs)	<p><u>Total number of signs</u> = 3</p> <p><u>Areas</u>: 17.45 s.f., 88.78 s.f., and 9.28 s.f.</p> <p><u>Illuminated</u>: Internal LED</p> <p>The sign area shall not exceed two (2) square foot per every, one (1) lineal foot of the building's frontage. The maximum length of the sign shall not exceed 75% of the tenant leasehold space.</p>
Center Freestanding Sign	<p><u>Total number of signs</u> = 1</p> <p><u>Height</u> = 20 feet</p> <p><u>Width</u> = 8 feet 8 inches</p> <p><u>Area</u> = 173.33 square feet</p> <p><u>Illuminated</u>: Internal LED</p>
Miscellaneous Small Signs for Exterior Service / Charging Station Signs	<p><u>Total number of signs</u> = no limit</p> <p><u>Area</u> = 6 square feet</p> <p><u>Height</u> = The maximum letter and logo height shall not exceed 18 inches.</p> <p><u>Illuminated</u>: None</p>
Temporary Window Signs	Shall not exceed 25% of window area of each window; total area of all signs shall not exceed 50 square feet.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Class 32, Infill Exemption) because the project is consistent with General Plan policies for the land use designation and is consistent with the applicable zoning designation and regulations. The project site occurs on a property within city limits, of no more than five acres, substantially surrounded by urban uses, with no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.

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Based on compliance with existing regulations, approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to noise, air quality, or water quality, and is served by required utilities and public services. The project has been reviewed by the City Public Works Department, Transportation Division, and no significant traffic impacts were identified, based on the size and location of the project.

9.0 OTHER DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

The project has been reviewed by various City departments and divisions including Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Building, Utilities, and Fire. Staff has not identified any unusual site conditions or circumstances that would require special conditions. Other comments have been incorporated into the draft resolution as conditions of approval.

10.0 ALTERNATIVES

- 10.1 Continue project. An action to continue the item should include a detailed list of additional information or analysis required to make a decision.
- 10.2 Deny the project. An action denying the project should include findings that cite the basis for denial and should reference inconsistency with the General Plan, CDG, Sign Regulations, Zoning Regulations or other policy documents.

11.0 ATTACHMENTS

- A - Draft Resolution approving application ARCH-0783-2021 (1381 Calle Joaquin)
- B - Project Plans_ARCH-0754-2021 (1381 Calle Joaquin)
- C - Landscape Plans_ARCH-0754-2021 (1381 Calle Joaquin)
- D - Preliminary Improvement Plans_ARCH-0754-2021 (1381 Calle Joaquin)
- E - Sign Program_ARCH-0754-2021 (1381 Calle Joaquin)