



Staff Report

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**File #:** 24-0535

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**PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** 07/08/2024  
**TO:** Honorable Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** Planning & Development Department

**APPLICATION REQUEST:**

**PP2023-0007:** Precise Plan application for the review of the site plan, architecture, landscaping and other features associated with the development of a 1,900-square-foot restaurant with drive-through services, gas station with seven double-sided fuel pumps, and 3,750-square-foot convenience store on 1.40 acres, located on the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, approximately 450 feet west of Buena Vista Avenue. (Applicant: Greens Development, 16530 Bake Parkway, Suite 200, Irvine, CA 92618)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the Planning and Housing Commission** adopt Resolution No. 2491 GRANTING PP2023-0007 based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

**PROJECT SITE SUMMARY:**

**Area of Property:** 1.40 acres  
**Existing Zoning:** C-3 (APN 118-270-024) and MP (APN 118-270-054)  
**Existing General Plan:** GC (APN 118-270-024) and HDR (APN 118-270-054)  
**Existing Land Use:** Vacant  
**Proposed Land Use:** Commercial  
**Surrounding Zoning/Land Uses:**  
**N:** State Route 91  
**E:** Right-of-way for Second Street  
**S:** C-3 (General Commercial) / Commercial Center & MP (Mobile Home Park) / Vacant  
**W:** State Route 91 On/Off Ramps

**BACKGROUND**

The project site is comprised of two contiguous remnants parcels that were created in 2016 by the widening of the State Route 91 freeway and the extension of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Buena Vista Avenue to Lincoln Avenue. Prior to 2016, the western parcel was developed with a car dealership, and the eastern parcel was developed with a mobile home park that included the four-acre parcel that is

located across 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the southeast of the project site.

The project proposed by Precise Plan 2023-0007 (PP2023-0007) is for a commercial development consisting of a 1,900-square-foot restaurant with a drive-through service lane and a gas station with a 3,775-square-foot convenience store. The commercial development requires Planning and Housing Commission review and approval of a precise plan, which is the reason for PP2023-0007.

The project also requires approval of a change of zone and General Plan amendment for the eastern parcel. Both items are being requested separately as CZ2023-0006 and GPA2023-0004. CZ2023-0006 proposes to change the zoning of the eastern parcel from Mobile Home Park (MP) to C-3 (General Commercial). GPA2023-0004 proposes to amend the parcel’s general plan designation from High Density Residential (HDR) to General Commercial (GC). Both items must be approved in order for PP2023-0007 to be approved.

The western parcel does not require a change of zone or General Plan amendment because this parcel is already zoned C-3 and has a General Plan designation of GC. Table 1 summarizes the project’s zoning and general plan designation.

**Table 1: Project Summary**

<b>Project Site</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Existing Zoning/General Plan</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning/General Plan</b>
Western Parcel (APN 118-270-024)	0.81 ac	C-3 / GC	Not Applicable
Eastern Parcel (APN 118-270-054)	0.59 ac	MP / HDR	C-3 / GC
<b>Total</b>	1.40 ac		

The proposed project was initially reviewed by the Development Plan Review (DPR) Committee as DPR2022-0031 on October 27, 2022, where the applicant received preliminary comments from the DPR Committee on the proposal.

The applicant formally submitted the development applications (precise plan, change of zone and general plan amendment) to the City in September 2023. The applications were reviewed by the Project and Environmental Review (PRC) Committee on October 19, 2023 where the applicant received further comments on the project. The comments were addressed by the applicant, and subsequently, the project was scheduled for the July 8, 2024 Planning and Housing Commission meeting.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project is a proposal by Greens Development to develop 1.40 acres with three detached commercial buildings with the following uses:

- 1,900-square-foot restaurant with a drive-through lane;
- Gas station with seven double-sided fuel pumps (14 vehicle fueling positions); and
- 3,775-square-foot convenience store.

Development in the C-3 zone is governed by the commercial development standards in Chapter 17.33 of the Corona Municipal Code (CMC). Gas stations are subject to additional standards in Chapter 17.72 of the CMC. The following sections discuss the project’s site plan, parking, architecture, landscaping, signage and public improvements.

Site Plan

The applicant’s site plan is attached as Exhibit 3. The project site is surrounded by the SR-91 on-ramp to the north and west, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the south. The east portion of the site tapers into an acute corner. The layout of the development is dictated by the site’s irregular shape. The drive-through restaurant is proposed on the western and widest portion of the site. The convenience store is proposed on the eastern portion, and the gas station is situated between the restaurant and convenience store.

Thirty-two (32) parking spaces are distributed throughout the site, and a trash enclosure is located at the north perimeter. A water quality retention basin will be constructed at the far eastern portion of the site where the site tapers. Vehicular access to the site is provided from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street via two driveways proposed at the site’s south perimeter.

As demonstrated by the site plan, the project complies with the minimum yard setbacks for the C-3 zone. This includes a minimum 10-foot front yard setback along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. However, the applicant’s conceptual grading plan (Exhibit 5) depicts a front yard setback of slightly less than 10 feet at the middle and west end of the site’s frontage. A condition of approval has been placed on the project’s Conditions of Approval (Exhibit 4) requiring the applicant to revise the grading plan to comply with the 10-foot front yard setback requirement at the time of plan check submittal.

Table 2 summarizes the project’s compliance with the code’s yard setback requirements.

**Table 2: Yard Setbacks**

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>Minimum Required Yard Setbacks Per CMC § 17.33.060 For The C-3 Zone</b>	<b>Proposed Yard Setback</b>	<b>Does The Project Meet The Requirement?</b>
Front Yard (along 2 <sup>nd</sup> St.)	10 feet	10 feet	Yes, as conditioned
Interior Side Yards (west and east perimeters)	0	10’ to 35’	Yes
Rear Yard (along SR-91 freeway)	0	5’ to 10’	Yes

*Restaurant.* The customer entrance into the restaurant is located on the building’s east elevation. The entrance into the drive-through lane is located on the north side of the building and extends along the west side and exits on the south side of the building. The drive-through lane is designed to accommodate seven (7) vehicles from the order menu board, and a total of 13 vehicles from the

pick-up window which is located on the south side of the building. The drive-through lane’s stacking capacity meets the CMC’s minimum stacking space requirement of six (6) vehicles from the order menu board.

*Gas Station.* The gas station is comprised of an approximate 108’ x 40’ gas canopy that will provide shade over seven (7) double-sided fuel pumps. In total, there will be 14 fueling positions. The gas station has been reviewed for compliance with the location, minimum site area, allowable accessory uses, lighting and parking requirements established for gas stations in Chapter 17.72 of the CMC (Supplemental Site Development Standards For Automotive Related Uses).

*Convenience Store.* The customer entrance into the convenience store is located on the west elevation. Additional entrances for employees and deliveries are located on the east elevation. A 12’ x 25’ loading space for the convenience store is provided at the north perimeter of the site, near the convenience store.

The applicant will be processing a lot line adjustment application with the City’s Development Services Division to merge the two parcels into a single parcel. The lot line adjustment requires the approval of the City’s Board of Zoning Adjustment. The Conditions of Approval for PP2023-0007 require the applicant to obtain this approval before the issuance of a building permit.

Parking

The project requires 32 parking spaces per the requirements of the City’s Parking Ordinance (CMC Chapter 17.76). The project site is capable of providing the 32 required parking spaces plus one loading space for the convenience store. Table 3 summarizes the parking requirements for the project.

**Table 3: Parking Summary**

<b>Use</b>	<b>Gross Square Footage</b>	<b>Net Square Footage (minus utility room)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Parking Requirement per CMC Chapter 17.76</b>	<b>Required Parking</b>	<b>Provided Parking</b>
Drive-through Restaurant	1,900 s.f.	1,786 s.f.	1 space per 100 s.f. of floor area	18	---
Gas Station and Convenience Store	3,775 s.f.	3,500 s.f.	1 space per 250 s.f. of floor area	14	---
				<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>

1. Per CMC § 17.04.258, off-street parking is not required to be met for mechanical rooms such as utility rooms that are incidental to the operation of the structure. Therefore, the project’s utility rooms have been extracted from the project’s gross floor area to produce a net floor area for the purpose of determining the project’s required parking.

Floor Plan

The applicant’s floor plans for the restaurant and convenience store are attached as Exhibit 6. The restaurant has a floor area of 1,900 square feet. The floor plan provides no information regarding the interior layout of the building. The convenience store has a floor area of 3,775 square feet. The

floor plan conceptually depicts a cashier counter, retail shelves, refrigerated displays, and beverage counter space. As of the preparation of this staff report, the applicant has not identified a specific tenant for any of the buildings or gas station yet. Therefore, there is no information on the operations of the commercial uses within the project site.

Based on the project's total floor area of 5,675 square feet, the project has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.09, which is within the General Commercial's FAR limit of 0.5 under the General Plan.

### Elevations

The CMC prescribes no specific architectural style for commercial buildings in the C-3 zone. The applicant is proposing a contemporary architectural design for the project. The buildings feature tower elements, parapet walls with varying heights, metal awnings, and glazed storefronts and windows. The buildings' primary exterior finish is stucco with splitface block and stone veneer as accent materials. The color palette includes shades of grey and brown. The rooftops are designed to accommodate mechanical equipment which will be screened from street view behind parapet walls. The elevations and renderings for the project are attached as Exhibit 7.

The buildings are approximately 17 to 21 feet in height, measured from finish grade to the roofline (minus parapet walls). With the parapet walls and towers, the height of the buildings ranges from 21 to 26 feet. The building heights comply with the CMC's maximum building height limit of 40 feet for the C-3 zone.

### Landscaping and Perimeter Fencing

The project's conceptual landscape plan proposes a combination of flowering and evergreen trees and palms throughout the site, around the buildings and along the site's street and freeway frontages. The grounds of the site including the front yard setback area, parking lot, drive-through lane, and areas surrounding the buildings will be landscaped with a variety of shrubs. The project is conditioned to install a dense shrub along the exterior side of the drive-through lane for headlight buffering purposes.

A wrought iron fence with flowering vines is proposed at the site's westerly and northerly perimeters to enhance and screen the site from the freeway. The easterly portion of the site's north perimeter has an existing freeway soundwall which will remain. All plant materials are drought tolerant and will be reviewed for full compliance with the City's Landscape Ordinance in Chapter 17.70 of the CMC.

### Signage

Signage for the project is regulated by Chapter 17.72 (Sign Ordinance) of the CMC. The applicant's conceptual sign program is attached as Exhibit 9. The sign program proposes four parcel identification signs, which include two monuments on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street frontage and two freeway-oriented pylon signs along the freeway frontage. Additionally, exterior building signage is proposed for the buildings and gas canopy which are depicted on the elevation plans in Exhibit 5. Table 4 summarizes the parcel identification signs for the project.

**Table 4: Proposed Parcel Identification Signs**

Sign #	Sign Type & Location	Sign Height	Sign Area	Number Of Tenants Panels	Complies with the CMC?
A	Freeway-Oriented Parcel Identification Sign, at North perimeter, adjacent to the SR-91 onramp	40 feet	233.33 s.f., including the center name	4, plus the center name	No, see discussion for Sign A
B	Freeway-Oriented Parcel Identification Sign, at West perimeter, adjacent to the SR-91 onramp	15 feet	82.50 s.f.	7	No, see discussion for Sign B
C	Monument Sign, at South perimeter, adjacent to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	6 feet	31.50 s.f.	1	No, see discussion for Sign C
D	Monument Sign, at South perimeter, adjacent to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	9 feet	31.4 s.f.	1 (gas station and price sign)	No, see discussion for Sign D

*Sign A.* Sign A exceeds the CMC’s maximum sign area of 200 square feet for commercial centers that are less than 10 acres in size. A condition of approval has been placed on the project that requires the sign area for Sign A to be reduced to no more than 200 square feet at time of permit issuance.

*Sign B.* Sign B is one of two freeway pylon signs proposed for the center. The CMC restricts the number of signs that are allowed per street frontage, which is one sign per street frontage. Staff is applying this same restriction to the site’s freeway signs. Therefore, as the site only has one freeway frontage, the project may only have one freeway sign. Additionally, Sign B has four tenant panels plus three panels for the advertisement of generic services (i.e, gas, c-store, fuel) which exceed what the CMC permits. The CMC only permits the advertisement of up to four tenants and the center name.

*Sign C.* Sign C is one of two monument signs proposed along the project’s frontage on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The CMC permits only one parcel identification sign per street frontage. Therefore, the project has been conditioned to have only one sign along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

*Sign D.* Sign D exceeds the CMC’s maximum height limit of six feet for monument signs. Additionally, as stated under Sign C, the CMC permits only one parcel identification sign per street. Therefore, only Sign C or D may be permitted along the site’s street frontage. However, if Sign D advertises only the gas prices and the total sign area is reduced to no more than 25 square feet, the sign would be allowed by right per California Business and Professions Code § 13531, and therefore, would be exempted from the CMC’s sign regulations.

*Building Signage.* The drive-through restaurant is depicted with signage on all four elevations. A condition of approval has been placed on the project that limits the number of elevations with signage to three elevations, as allowed by the CMC. The gas canopy is subject to the CMC's regulations for gas stations under Section 17.72.030(H)(2).

All signage will be reviewed by the Planning and Development Department staff for compliance with the applicable code requirements and the Conditions of Approval for this precise plan at the time of permit issuance. The conditions of approval also require the applicant to update the site plan in the sign program prior to the issuance of a sign permit to accurately reflect the site plan that is attached as Exhibit 3. The site plan in the sign program site depicts a previous site plan that included a third driveway which was eventually removed from the project.

### Public Improvements

The segment of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in front of the project site is a modified secondary four-lane street. The applicant is required to construct the missing public improvements on the north half of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street adjacent to the project's frontage. The improvements include the construction of the missing roadway pavement to accommodate two 12-foot-wide travel lanes, a six-foot wide sidewalk, and a modified landscaped parkway that will vary in width from approximately one foot to five feet. The Development Services Division is requiring the applicant to dedicate a one- to five-foot wide easement to the City for utility and access purposes along the project's frontage.

In addition, the applicant will be constructing two raised medians with a left-turn pocket on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in front of the project site to allow vehicles traveling eastbound to make left turns into the east project driveway. This driveway will allow vehicles to make full turn movements. Vehicles will be restricted to right-in and right-out turn movements at the west project driveway due to the raised medians.

As there is currently no sidewalk on the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Lincoln Avenue and Buena Vista Avenue, the Development Services Division is requiring the applicant to construct a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and the SR-91 eastbound on-ramp to provide pedestrian connectivity from the south side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the project site. The applicant will need to obtain approval from Caltrans for the crosswalk since the crosswalk would require a modification to Caltran's traffic signals at this intersection. Per the Conditions of Approval, in the event the applicant is unable to obtain approval from Caltrans, the applicant shall construct a sidewalk along the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from the project easterly limits to Buena Vista Avenue to provide pedestrian connectivity to the site. An exhibit depicting the pedestrian connectivity is attached as Exhibit 10.

### Traffic Impact Analysis

The project's traffic impact was analyzed in a Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the project by a traffic engineering firm, Trames Solutions. The project is expected to generate approximately 2,077 vehicle trips per day. All nearby street intersections and the SR-91 on/off-ramps adjacent to the project site were evaluated in the Traffic Impact Analysis and would continue to operate at an acceptable level of service. As such, no traffic-related offsite improvements are warranted with development of the proposed project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

Per Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Section 6.02 of the City’s Local Guidelines, a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the project because the Initial Study identified that the project’s potentially significant effects to the environment are capable of being mitigated to less than significant. Therefore, based on the project mitigation measures identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration, there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the City, that the project may have a significant or potentially significant effect on the environment. The Mitigation Negative Declaration was recommended for adoption with companion application GPA2023-0004 (Exhibit 12).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The applicant has paid the applicable application processing fees for the project.

**PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS**

A 20-day public notice was mailed to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project site, as well as advertised in the Sentinel Weekly News and posted at the project site. As of the preparation of this report, the Planning and Development Department has not received any response from the public regarding the proposed project.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

The project has been analyzed for compliance with the Corona Municipal Code. As designed and conditioned, the project adheres to the development standards for the C-3 zone. The proposed commercial uses are permitted in the C-3 zone with approval of companion applications GPA2023-0004 and CZ2023-0006 and are compatible with the surrounding uses. The drive-through restaurant, gas station and convenience store are all considered freeway-oriented uses that are appropriate for the size and location of the project site. The development would support the local neighborhood and freeway commuters alike and would enhance a vacant infill site that would otherwise remain undeveloped due to its irregular shape.

The project has adequate vehicular access from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and enhances the safety of the area by ensuring that all missing public improvements adjacent to the site, including sidewalks, adequate roadway width, and pedestrian connectivity, will be installed or guaranteed with the development of the project.

The project’s contemporary architecture is clean and attractive and comprised of standard, durable construction materials appropriate for commercial buildings. The design, size and height of the buildings are in scale with the buildings in the neighborhood which is comprised of buildings that were built in different styles over numerous decades.

The project has been analyzed pursuant to CEQA and all potential impacts identified in the project’s initial study are capable of meeting mitigated to less than significant. The project aligns with the General Plan goals and policies related to providing a variety of land uses to serve the city’s residents and pursuing a diversified local business base to ensure the city’s fiscal viability.

Therefore, the Planning and Development Department recommends approval of PP2023-0007 subject to the recommended conditions of approval in Exhibit 4 and based on the findings of approval below.

**FINDINGS OF APPROVAL FOR PP2023-0007**

1. An initial study (environmental assessment) has been conducted by the City of Corona so as to evaluate the potential for adverse environmental impacts. The initial study identifies potentially significant effects on the environment, but:
  - a. *The project applicant has agreed to revise the project to avoid these significant effects or to mitigate the effects to a point where it is clear that no significant effects would occur, as reflected in the Conditions of Approval attached as Exhibit 4.*
  - b. *There is no substantial evidence before the City that the revised project may have a significant effect.*
  
2. All the conditions necessary to granting a Precise Plan as set forth in Chapter 17.91 of the Corona Municipal Code do exist in reference to PP2023-0007 for the following reasons:
  - a. *The project is consistent with the Corona General Plan because, with approval of GPA2023-0004, the proposed commercial use is consistent with the General Plan's General Commercial land use designation, and the project's floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.09 is within the General Commercial's FAR limit of 0.5.*
  - b. *The project, as designed and with the conditions of approval, comply with the applicable development standards established for the C-3 zone, and other applicable requirements in the Corona Municipal Code.*
  - c. *The project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and all applicable requirements and procedures of such act have been followed, and as shown by the project's Mitigated Negative Declaration in Exhibit 12, mitigation measures have been established to reduce the project's impacts on the environment to less than significant.*
  - d. *As demonstrated by the project's Site Plan and the conditions of approval for the project, the site accommodates the scale of the project, by adhering to the objective development standards required by the zoning of the site and other physical features of the proposal including fencing, water quality facilities, and signage.*
  
3. The proposal is consistent with the C-3 zone because the proposed uses are allowed and the project along with the conditions of approval comply with the development standards for the C-3 zone.

**PREPARED BY:** SANDRA VANIAN, PLANNING MANAGER

**SUBMITTED BY:** JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**EXHIBITS**

1. Resolution No. 2491
2. Locational and Zoning Map
3. Site Plan
4. Conditions of Approval

5. Conceptual Grading Plan
6. Floor Plan
7. Elevations and Renderings
8. Landscape Plan
9. Sign Program
10. Pedestrian Connectivity
11. Applicant's letter addressing the project
12. Environmental Documentation

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