



April 20, 2023

Via Email Only

Planning and Housing Commission, City of Corona
400 South Vicentia Ave.
Corona, CA 92882

Planning and Development, City of Corona
400 South Vicentia Ave.
Corona, CA 92882

**RE: 4300 Green River Road / Proposed Starbucks Drive-Through and Walk-Up Only
Conditional Use Permit – CUP 2021-0004**

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners and Planning Staff:

As you know, the owner, Green River Coffee Company, at the above-mentioned address has filed a Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”) application to allow an approximately 966 square-foot drive-through and walk-up window (with no interior and/or exterior seating) coffee shop (Starbucks) within the existing Green River Promenade Shopping Center.

As part of this CUP application process, it has been a pleasure to work with Planning Staff and the Commissioners. Throughout the process, Planning Staff has been supportive, responsive, and professional; and, the Commissioners have provided great feedback and insight regarding any potential issues and/or concerns. As a result of the meetings with Planning Staff and the two (2) public hearings with the Commission (in February and April of this year), we are providing additional and detailed information regarding the project in advance of the next scheduled Planning Commission hearing so that you may have time to fully review. We welcome any questions, feedback, and/or if you would like to meet on-site to review and discuss the project. Again, we are excited for Starbucks to open and operate within the City of Corona and appreciate the support received from the City and nearby business owners and operators.

As a result of the last Planning Commission hearing, on Monday April 10, 2023, we wanted to take an opportunity to clearly present the project details and address your questions. As discussed in more detail below, the site plan for the proposed Starbucks has been re-designed in order to address the questions and concerns voiced by the Commissioners; specifically, the site plan proposed by Starbucks, as enclosed, depicts an 18-car drive-through queuing (rather than the originally proposed 14-car drive-through queuing). Additionally, the parking for the proposed Starbucks (along with the parking for the existing Shopping Center) is more than adequate and will properly serve the needs and demands of the visitors and employees of the Center. Lastly, the close of the first drive-aisle entrance will result in a clearer path of safe travel for vehicles, the additional queuing for the drive-through, and a reduction in cut-through vehicular traffic within the existing Shopping Center.

18-Car Drive-Through Queuing:

The Corona Municipal Code (“CMC”) requires six (6) stacking spaces past the menu board and Starbucks operations requires a minimum of seven (7) cars stacked from the pick-up window to the menu board. Therefore, thirteen (13) cars stacked is required in the drive-through. As originally proposed, the design of the drive-through was to accommodate a queuing of 14 cars; however, in response to the Commissioners concerns, the site plan has been re-designed (and resubmitted) to allow for 18 cars to stack in the drive-through queue. In order to accomplish this large number of

cars in the drive-through, the infiltration system is being changed from a bio-infiltration basin to a design that utilizes pervious pavement along with a dual-entry lane in the drive-through. We also looked more closely at the Grand Terrace Starbucks, as recommended, and attempted to design this drive-through more in line with the Grand Terrace location; as a result, we were actually able to secure an 18-car queuing at this location, as opposed to the the 17-car stacked in the queue at the Grand Terrace location.

As demonstrated by the queuing surveys, the 18-car queuing system will more than meet the expected demand of drive through customers. Specifically, the analysis indicated the following:

Weekday (Thursday: 6:00 am – 9:00 am; 11:00 am – 1:00 pm; 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm)

- On average, a queue of 7 vehicles in the drive-through lane can be expected during the morning, midday, and evening peak hours
- 85 percent of the drive-through customers will not wait in a line longer than 12 vehicles
- 95 percent of the drive-through customers will not wait in a line longer than 14 vehicles

Weekend (Saturday: 7:00 am – 9:00 am; 11:00 am – 1:00 pm)

- On average, a queue of 9 vehicles in the drive-through lane can be expected during the morning and midday peak hours
- 85 percent of the drive-through customers will not wait in a line longer than 14 vehicles
- 95 percent of the drive-through customers will not wait in a line longer than 17 vehicles

With a queuing of 18-cars, the newly proposed site plan and drive-through is compliant with the Corona Municipal Code and will certainly serve the demands of drive-through customers, as evidenced by the queuing surveys. As the November 11, 2021 Traffic Impact Assessment noted, “the 85th percentile queue is generally the industry standard utilized when designing/sizing the length of the proposed drive-through lane”; and, thus, here, the 18-car queuing provides more than enough demand for potential drive-through customers. Moreover, this newly proposed site plan addresses the concerns from the Commissioners as it allows for a much greater number of cars in the drive-through queue and utilizes a dual-entry lane, as requested and desired.

Parking at the Proposed Starbucks and Existing Green River Promenade Shopping Center:

The City requires, pursuant to the Corona Municipal Code, 1 parking space per 375 square feet of floor area for General Retail and Office uses. As a result, based upon the approximate square footage of this proposed Starbucks (966 square-feet), three (3) parking spaces are required; however, Starbucks will provide eight (8) parking spaces on the parcel. Further, as detailed by Planning Staff, a total of 452 parking spaces are required in the Shopping Center; however, there will actually be a surplus of seven (7) additional parking spaces as a total of 459 parking spaces will be provided.

Moreover, as the April 25, 2022 Updated Parking Demand Analysis found through conducting parking surveys, the “site experienced a weekday (Thursday) peak parking demand of 129 vehicles (49% utilization) within the entire site at 4:00 PM and a weekend (Saturday) peak parking demand of 125 vehicles (47% utilization) within the entire site at 12:00 PM.” As such, the parking at the Shopping Center will not be negatively impacted by the proposed Starbucks as parking remains adequate (and, in reality, parking is in surplus of the requirements under the Corona Municipal Code and the needs of the existing Center) as evidenced by the parking counts and photographs.

Further, with respect to parking for employees, the property owner for Green River Promenade Shopping Center, through the Rules and Regulations for all leases at the property, reserves the right to require or make changes relative to the location of where employees are designated to park,

which includes, but is not limited to requiring employees to park in the rear of the Shopping Center. However, to date, we are informed that the property owner has not had to enforce any such requirement because parking has not been impacted at the Shopping Center; but, if ever impacted, the property owner reserves such right.

Removal of First Drive-Aisle Entrance:

As mentioned during the last Planning Commission hearing earlier this month, there were questions and/or concerns regarding the closure of the first drive-aisle entrance into the Shopping Center from Green River Road. Specifically, coming off Green River Road, there is an entrance to the parcel +/- 128 feet from Green River Road and there is another entrance to the parcel another +/- 72 feet past the first entrance.

The site plan proposes to close off the first entrance (approximately 128 feet from Green River Road) in order to allow a longer stacking/queue in the drive-through lane. Closing off this entrance is consistent with appropriate site access design by maximizing the throating, which eliminates unsafe conflicting movements within the main site access drive aisle, and also helps to direct traffic to the rest of the center and provide a clearer path of drive traffic to the Shopping Center and office buildings on the other side. Further, the closure of this first drive aisle will result in far less cut-through traffic within the Shopping Center, which has been a concern for the property owner, as the property owner has even contemplated closing off this drive-aisle regardless of the proposed Starbucks development. Notably, the second drive-aisle (approximately 72 feet past the first entrance) contains speed bumps along the path of travel whereas the first drive-aisle does not, and unfortunately, it has become common place for drivers to utilize the first drive-aisle to cut through the Shopping Center (and avoid speed bumps) in an effort to avoid any traffic on Green River Road. Of course, this poses a safety concern and thus, the elimination of this first drive-aisle entrance not only provides a clearer path of travel, but a safer path of travel as well.

Trash Enclosure:

At the last Planning Commission hearing, there was also a comment and/or question regarding the proposed location of the trash enclosure at the site. In order to address this comment, multiple locations were evaluated for the location of the trash enclosure and the final location was determined based upon the following rationale:

- o The existing location and size of the trash enclosure meets the Health Code requirements as well as Starbucks operational requirements
- o The existing location of the trash enclosure results in a ideal length of travel for Starbucks employees (i.e., an employee does not have to travel a long distance)
- o The existing location of the trash enclosure is on main aisle in order to allow for necessary and easy trash pickup
- o An accessible (and safe) path of travel from the store to the trash enclosure is required and the existing location of the trash enclosure meetings this requirement

In sum, the proposed location of the trash enclosure best serves the needs of the proposed business and meets the Health Code requirements related to location and size.

Lastly, as demonstrated at the prior Planning Commission hearing, both through public testimony and Planning Staff's report regarding calls and letters submitted, there is a great deal of support from the community for this proposed Starbucks. In fact, all outreach to the existing tenants at Green River Promenade Shopping Center has been positive and people are anxiously awaiting the approval and ultimate opening of the proposed Starbucks. The Starbucks will serve existing business owners and operators as well as visitors and residents in the area. Further, with the site



plan changes, as recommended by the Planning Commission, and implemented by the Applicant, the use will be desirable and provide a benefit to the City.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to work with Planning Staff and the Planning Commission to bring a great operator to the City of Corona.

At the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 8, 2023, which we understand to be the date that the Planning Commission will hear this item, we will have the following subject matter experts available to answer any additional questions and concerns:

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pad A Property Owners: | Chuck Levine and Rich Gebele |
| Shopping Center Owner: | Orion Wise |
| Starbucks District Manager: | Jihad Abdullah |
| Starbucks Store Development Manager: | Thomas Driessen |
| Traffic Engineer: | Kiel Maberry |
| Bickel Group Architecture: | Kate Curtin Chloe Watson |

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing the conversation at the May 8, 2023 Planning Commission meeting and we respectfully request that the Planning Commission approve this Conditional Use Permit application.

Sincerely,

Kate Cizek Curtin, AIA | Project Manager

bg | Bickel Group Architecture

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