



Agenda Report

File #: 19-0593

**AGENDA REPORT
REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

DATE: 7/17/2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Community Development Department

SUBJECT:

Public Hearing for City Council consideration of Ordinance No. 3298, first reading of an Ordinance of the City of Corona, California for SPA2018-0003 an application to amend the signage development standards under Section 12.9.4(H) of the El Cerrito Specific Plan (SP91-02) to allow for new signage for the Crossings at Corona shopping center located at the northeast corner of Interstate 15 and Cajalco Road due to the physical changes of the property as a result of the Cajalco Road Interchange Improvement Project. (Applicant: Scott Thayer, Castle & Cooke Corona Crossings, LLC)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

1. Approve SPA2018-0003 as recommended by the Planning and Housing Commission.
2. Introduce by title only and waive full reading for consideration of Ordinance No. 3298, first reading of an ordinance approving an amendment to the El Cerrito Specific Plan (SP91-02) to allow for new signage for the Crossings at Corona shopping center located on the northeast corner of Cajalco Road and Interstate 15 due to the physical changes of the property as a result of the Interstate 15 and Cajalco Road Interchange Improvement Project. (SPA2018-0003)

ANALYSIS:

SPA2018-0003 is a proposal by Castle & Cooke to amend the sign regulations governing the Crossings at Corona shopping center located on the northeast corner of Interstate 15 and Cajalco Road to allow for taller and larger monument and pylon signs within the center. The regulations being amended are under Section 12.9.4(H) of the El Cerrito Specific Plan. The applicant is seeking the amendment because the signage at the subject site has been impacted visually by the recent construction associated with the I-15 & Cajalco Road Interchange Improvement Project. The interchange improvements include the reconstruction of the Cajalco Road bridge over Interstate 15, an elevated I-15 northbound onramp from Cajalco Road, and the widening of Cajalco Road within

this improvement area.

Background

At the time of construction of The Crossings shopping center a total of 13 freestanding signs (10 monuments and 3 pylons) were constructed along the site's west and south perimeters adjacent to Interstate 15 and Cajalco Road to capitalize on the center's location and visibility from Interstate 15 and immediate access from Cajalco Road. Originally, the shopping center had three 6-foot high monument signs and one 35-foot high pylon sign located along the property's Cajalco Road frontage and seven 14-foot high monument signs and two 60-foot high pylon signs located along the property's Interstate 15 frontage. Construction of the Cajalco Road Interchange Improvement project has since resulted in the removal of the three monument signs along Cajalco Road and seven monument signs and one pylon sign along the frontage facing I-15. Of the existing signs on the property, two signs are being protected in place which include one existing 60-foot high pylon sign along the site's freeway frontage and one existing 35-foot high pylon sign along the Cajalco Road frontage.

Proposed Specific Plan Amendment

To mitigate the physical impacts created by the I-15/Cajalco Road interchange improvement project, Castle & Cooke is proposing to amend the El Cerrito Specific Plan to accommodate a new freestanding signage program for The Crossings and replace signage visually and physically impacted by the interchange improvement project. The following summarizes the number of signs being replaced with new signage on the property.

Current Signage (Removed)				New Signage		
Location	Number	Height	# Tenant Panels Per Sign	Number	Height	# Tenant Panels Per Sign
Cajalco Rd.	3	6 feet	2	3	14	3
I-15	7	14 feet	2	3	33.5 feet	5
I-15	1	60 feet	6	1	92 feet (62 feet exposed at street grade)	6 + Electronic Panel

The applicant's proposal includes a sign program for the center which reflects the new signs described above. The architectural style of the new signs will resemble the same style of the current signs on the property. The change is mostly reflected in the size and height of the new signage. The I-15/Cajalco interchange improvements has resulted in the widening of Cajalco Road adjacent to the shopping center which caused the monument signs in this area to be removed, an increase in the grade elevation of the street as it approaches the bridge over the I-15 and northbound on-ramp, and new retaining walls that are approximately 12 feet high along the center's I-15 frontage which has blocked the view of the existing monument signs in this area. In total, 11 signs are being removed and being replaced with 7 monument signs that are taller to provide the same number of tenant spaces that were initially available on the previous signs. The new taller signs are capable of supporting additional tenant spaces so that there is a no net loss of advertisement space along the freeway.

The amendment also introduces new center identification signage in the form of horizontal freestanding channel letters. This new sign is being placed along the freeway frontage and has a length of 105 feet and height of 15 feet with the sign support structure; however, the height of the channel letters are only 8 feet. Smaller versions of this sign would also be allowed on the other street frontages adjacent to the center. Additionally, the applicant is adding an electronic message center board on the new 92-foot high freeway pylon sign. The message board is 12' x 26' and will be in conjunction with the 6 tenant spaces also provided on the sign. The electronic message board will advertise events at the center as well as tenants. Although the overall height of the sign is 92 feet only 62 feet of the sign will be visible from the street grade due to the rise in the elevation of the street as it approaches the new northbound on-ramp for I-15.

The Crossings shopping center is the only site within the El Cerrito Specific Plan area that will be affected by the amendment proposed under Section 12.9.4(H) as this code section applies only to properties that are in the CC (Commercial Center) District and the shopping center is currently the only site with this zoning.

The proposed amendment and sign program enhance the appearance of the commercial center and requires signage to use quality materials and be architecturally compatible with the center's buildings making it consistent with General Plan Policy 2.5.8 which is for the City to work with property owners and developers of freeway-oriented commercial centers to establish an urban design program for commercial centers to enhance their aesthetic quality, image, and "fit" with adjoining land uses.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

The Infrastructure Committee at its meeting on September 5, 2018 discussed the proposed amendment and new signage program. The Committee wanted to see the applicant make proper provisions in the amendment to facilitate the re-occupation of vacancies within the shopping center with quality users that might benefit from added visibility from the street. Overall, the Committee did not object to the new signage.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The applicant paid \$5,757.00 in application processing fees for the specific plan amendment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Per Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a Notice of Exemption has been prepared for the project because Section 15061(b)(3) states that a project is exempted from CEQA if the activity is covered by the *common sense exemption* that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This amendment is solely a

text revision and there is no possibility that adopting this Ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment. Additionally, the new signage as a result of this ordinance is replacing signage that already exists in the area.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting of June 10, 2019, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Siqueland/Shah) and carried unanimously with Vice Chair Jones absent, that the Planning and Housing Commission recommend approval of SPA2018-0003 to the City Council based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 4.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

REVIEWED BY: KERRY D. EDEN, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

REVIEWED BY: MICHELE NISSEN, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

SUBMITTED BY: MITCHELL LANSDELL, ACTING CITY MANAGER

Attachments:

1. City Ordinance No. 3298.
2. Locational and Zoning Map.
3. Planning and Housing Commission Staff Report.
4. Draft Minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of June 10, 2019.