



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0750, Version: 1

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 26, 2022
TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners
FROM: Planning & Development Department

APPLICATION REQUEST:

PP2022-0001: Precise Plan application to review a proposed electric vehicle charging station with 52 charging spaces, an 8,000-square-foot market and 1,200-square-foot automated carwash, located at 1335 and 1341 W. Sixth Street in the C-3 (General Commercial) zone. (Applicant: Matt Stowe, ARG Devco, 2060 Placentia Avenue #C3, Costa Mesa, CA 92627)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Planning and Housing Commission adopt Resolution No. 2592 GRANTING PP2022-0001 based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

PROJECT SITE SUMMARY:

Area of Property: 2.42 acres
Existing Zoning: C-3 (General Commercial)
Existing General Plan: GC (General Commercial)
Existing Land Use: Vacant
Proposed Land Use: Electric charging station, market and carwash
Surrounding Zoning/Land Uses:
N: R-1-7.2 / Single family residences
E: C-3 / Commercial/office buildings
S: C-3 / Commercial buildings
W: C-3 / Chuck Wagon Restaurant and R-1-7.2 / Vacant residential property

BACKGROUND

Precise Plan 2022-0001 (PP2022-0001) is for the review of a proposed full-service electric vehicle (EV) charging station that includes 52 charging spaces, an 8,000-square-foot-market, and a 1,200-square-foot automated carwash tunnel. The project site is comprised of three vacant parcels totaling approximately 2.42 acres, located on the north side of Sixth Street, approximately 450 feet west of Sherman Avenue. The applicant intends to consolidate the parcels into a single parcel through a lot

line adjustment process. The parcels are zoned C-3 (General Commercial). Per Corona Municipal Code (CMC) § 17.33.010, the zone is intended for *“higher intensity commercial uses that serve the community and subregional needs, with an emphasis on convenient automobile access, while incorporating efficient, safe and attractive on-site pedestrian circulation. The C-3 designation is generally applied to areas appropriate to serve the entire community, including shopping centers, automotive service and repair, theaters and drive-thrus.”* The proposed market and EV charging spaces are permitted by right in the C-3 zone. Carwashes require a conditional use permit. Conditional Use Permit 2022-0002 (CUP2022-0002) is proposed for the carwash, and is being reviewed concurrent with the precise plan.

The project site is surrounded by commercial properties zoned C-3 to the west, east and south. Located to the north of the project site are five single family residential properties zoned R-1-7.2. To the northwest of the project site is a vacant property zoned R-1-7.2.

The project was initially reviewed by the Development Plan Review staff on November 18, 2021 as DPR2021-0020. The applicant formally submitted the precise plan and conditional use permit applications to the City on March 22, 2022, which were reviewed by the Project and Environmental Review Committee on April 14, 2022. The applications were deemed complete by the committee and subsequently scheduled for the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of September 26, 2022.

The applicant conducted community outreach by mailing out an informational flyer to the property owners of properties that are located within a 500-foot radius of the project site. The flyer was mailed out on July 7, 2022. A copy of the flyer is attached as Exhibit 10.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site Plan

The concept for the EV charging station is to provide customers a full-service experience that includes EV charging and washing services. Customers can wait in the market where they can purchase grab-and-go food and/or beverages.

The EV charging station site is designed with the market located on the southern portion of the property, near Sixth Street. The market has a patio with outdoor seating on the west side, and a fenced dog run on the east side to accommodate customers with pets. Behind the market is the parking lot, which includes 27 standard non-EV charging parking spaces and 40 EV charging spaces for passenger vehicles. Canopies with roof-mounted photovoltaic panels are proposed over the standard parking and EV passenger vehicle stalls. The rear portion of the property, to the north, contains a fenced area for electrical and charging equipment, 7 employee parking spaces, trash enclosure, a carwash tunnel, 3 “finishing” spaces for the car wash, and 12 EV charging spaces for delivery vans. The site plan for the project is attached as Exhibit 3. The market floor plan is attached as Exhibit 4.

The project has one access from Sixth Street via a 30-foot wide driveway. The entrance divides into two lanes - a self-serve lane and a valet lane that offers valet charging and washing services. The

valet lane is designed to accommodate approximately 8 vehicles, and allows customers to drop off their vehicles with the on-site staff. Customers that do not want valet service may go directly to a standard parking space, if visiting the market only, or directly into an available charging space to charge their vehicle. Customers cannot go directly to the carwash, as the carwash and detail services will be managed by the staff. A staff member will drive the vehicle through the carwash tunnel, detail the vehicle and then park it in one of the EV spaces. Customers would then pick-up the vehicle once charged. Since staff will be managing the carwash, queuing issues are not expected to occur at the entrance of the carwash.

The project complies with the development standards for the C-3 zone, including setbacks, floor area ratio, and landscape coverage. This includes a 20-foot landscape setback that is required for yards that abut a residential zone. The site is providing the 20-foot landscape setback along the north and northwest perimeters, as they abut residential zones. The code also requires carwash tunnels and detailing/finishing areas to be set back a minimum of 25 feet from residential zones. The carwash and finishing spaces proposed on the project site provide more than 25 feet of setback from the adjacent residential zones.

The applicant will construct a new six-foot high block wall along the site's north perimeter adjacent to the residential properties. A six-foot high block wall will also be constructed along the northwest perimeter of the site adjacent to the vacant residential property. A six-foot high tubular steel fence will be constructed along the site's west and east perimeters, which are adjacent to existing commercial developments.

Operations

Per the applicant, the station is designed to accommodate the charging hardware of all electric vehicles in the market. The applicant anticipates that most electric vehicles that come to the charging station can be charged in approximately 30 minutes, on average; while charging times for vans can range from approximately 30 to 60 minutes.

The anticipated hours of operation are the following:

- Charging spaces - Open 24 hours a day
- Market - Open 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Carwash - Open 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Since the charging spaces will be available 24 hours a day, the applicant is proposing to have night security on-site from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.

Architecture

The proposed structures have a modern and streamlined architectural design. The market has clear glass walls that are separated by a simple posts and beam frame, which will be clad in a matte black Alucobond sheet metal. The building height is 20 feet. The carwash tunnel has the same metal panel material and minimal design as the market. The canopies over the parking spaces also match the market in style and material. There are no applicable design guidelines or architectural themes in the C-3 zone. The architectural plans and renderings are attached as Exhibits 5 and 6.

Parking

The project requires a total of 42 parking spaces per the parking requirements of the Corona Municipal Code (CMC). The project site provides a total of 89 parking spaces. This number includes 34 standard (non-electric) parking spaces, including customer and employee parking; 52 electric charging spaces; and 3 finishing spaces for the car wash. Table A below provides a breakdown of the project’s parking compliance.

**Table A
Parking Summary**

Use	Parking Requirement	Required Parking	Provided Parking
Market - 8,000 s.f.	1 space per 250 s.f. of building area	32 spaces	34 non-EV spaces 52 EV Spaces
Car wash	10 spaces minimum	10 spaces	3 finishing spaces
Total Spaces:		42 spaces	89 spaces

Public Improvements

The project frontage along Sixth Street is currently improved with curb and gutter, sidewalk, two driveways and two mature street trees. The applicant is required to dedicate 5 feet of the project’s frontage to the right-of-way along Sixth Street and construct all missing public improvements along the project frontage. This includes constructing the sidewalk to a width of 12 feet to meet current city standard, as the current sidewalk width is deficient. The two driveways will be replaced with a single 30-foot-wide driveway, which will allow for full-turn movements into and out of the project site. The street trees will need to be removed in order to accommodate the construction of the new driveway and sidewalk along the project frontage. The applicant is required to coordinate with the Community Services Department for the removal and possible replacement of the street trees.

Traffic Impact Analysis

The project’s traffic impact was analyzed in a Traffic Impact Analysis (dated August 2022) prepared by TJW Engineering, a licensed traffic engineer. The project is expected to generate approximately 1,920 vehicle trips per day. All nearby street intersections and roadways evaluated in the analysis would continue to operate at an acceptable level of service. As such, no traffic related off-site improvements are warranted with development of the proposed project.

The valet queueing was analyzed and determined to be adequate by TJW Engineering. However, in the event that the valet queue exceeds the storage space provided (8 vehicles), TJW Engineering recommends that the onsite staff direct customers to park in an open charging space to prevent spillover onto Sixth Street. Planning Condition 12 of the project’s Conditions of Approval (Exhibit 11) require the tenant to maintain a management plan that mitigates congestion and stacking spillover onto Sixth Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Section 15332 of the State Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a Notice of Exemption has been prepared for the project because the project qualifies as a Class 32 (Infill Development Projects) categorical exemption under CEQA. The project is consistent

with the General Plan and zoning requirements, and would not result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality impacts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no fiscal impacts to the City, as the applicant has paid the applicable application processing fees for the project.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

A 10-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 Division staff has not received any comments from the public in response to the public notice.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The project has been analyzed for compliance with all applicable development standards and requirements. The EV parking and market are permitted uses in the C-3 zone. The carwash is allowed with approval of a conditional use permit, which is under separate review. The project as designed and conditioned meets the development standards for the C-3 zone. The project has adequate vehicular access from Sixth Street. All missing public improvements adjacent to the project site will be constructed or guaranteed with the development of the project.

Development of the proposed project would result in the consolidation and development of three underutilized and vacant parcels. The proposed uses are compatible with the surrounding commercial developments. The project provides enhanced setbacks along the perimeters that are adjacent to residential zones in addition to a new 6-foot-high perimeter block wall. The project requires 42 parking spaces, and proposed 89 parking spaces onsite, including 3 finishing spaces for the car wash.

The design, size and height of the buildings are in scale with the buildings in the neighborhood. The project's modern and simplistic architecture supports the concept of electric vehicles as being a clean transportation choice of the future. The architecture fits the eclectic character of the neighborhood, which is comprised of buildings that were built in different styles over numerous decades.

Planning and Development Department recommends approval of PP2022-0001, based on the recommended conditions of approval in Exhibit 11 and the findings of approval.

FINDINGS OF APPROVAL FOR PP2022-0001

1. A Notice of Exemption has been prepared pursuant to Section 15332 of the State Guidelines for CEQA because the project qualifies as a Class 32 (Infill Development Projects) categorical exemption under CEQA. The project, which consists of an electric vehicle charging facility, 8,000-square-foot market, 1,200-square-foot automated carwash tunnel, is less than five acres in size, is consistent with the General Plan and zoning requirements, has no value as natural habitat, has adequate utilities and public services, and would not result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality impacts.

2. All the conditions necessary to granting a Precise Plan set for in Section 17.91.070 of the Corona Municipal Code do exist in reference to PP2022-0001 for the following reasons:
 - a. *The project is consistent with the General Commercial (GC) land use designation of the General Plan because this land use is intended to accommodate a range of commercial uses that serve local neighborhoods, the community and visitors.*
 - b. *The proposal complies with the C-3 zone because the project, which consists of a market, associated parking spaces, and carwash, is capable of meeting the development standards for the C-3 zone.*
 - c. *The proposal has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and all applicable requirements and procedures of the act have been followed. As justified in Finding #1, the project will not result in significant effects to the environment because the project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning requirements, and would not result in any significant traffic, noise, air quality or water quality impacts.*
 - d. *The site is of a sufficient size and configuration to accommodate the design and scale of the proposed development, including buildings and elevations, landscaping, parking, and other physical features of the proposal, as demonstrated by the applicant's site plan in Exhibit 3 of this report.*
 - e. *The design, scale and layout of the proposed development will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments, will not create traffic or pedestrian hazards and will not otherwise have a negative impact on the aesthetics, health, safety, or welfare of neighboring uses because the project complies with the city's development standards for the subject property. The building height and layout of the structures fit the scale of the neighboring developments. The adjacent roadways are capable of handling the traffic volume attributed to the project, and all missing public improvements will be constructed or guaranteed with this project.*
 - f. *The architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, which is comprised of an eclectic mix of architectural designs, will enhance the visual character of the neighborhood by improving a vacant undeveloped property and will provide for harmonious, orderly and attractive development of the site.*
 - g. *The design of the proposed development will provide a desirable environment for its occupants and visiting public as well as its neighbors through good aesthetic use of materials, texture, and color that is aesthetically appealing appropriate for the proposed use, and will retain a reasonably adequate level of maintenance.*

3. The proposal is consistent with the General Plan for the following reasons:
 - a. *The proposed project implements the General Plan's General Commercial designation, which allows a range of commercial uses that serve the local neighborhoods, the community and visitors.*
 - b. *The project has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.08, which does not exceed the General Plan's FAR limit of 0.5 established for the General Plan designation.*
 - c. *General Plan Policy LU-11.1 states: Encourage a comprehensive range of retail, service, and other commercial uses in the City that provide goods and services to meet*

the diverse needs of Corona's residents and businesses, in accordance with the land use plans' designations and applicable density standards and design and development policies. The project provides a unique service that meets the intent of Policy LU-11.1.

- d. General Plan Policy LU-19.3 states: Promote the consolidation of small, underutilized lots, or irregularly spaced parcels into larger parcels that are conducive to and supportive of viable and more cohesive development. The project is consistent with Policy LU-19.3 because it consolidates three vacant underutilized parcels into a single parcel to allow for the cohesive development of an electric vehicle charging station.*
- e. General Plan Policy ER-13.4 states: Increase use of clean fuel and electric vehicles in the city through the support of the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure; explore opportunities to incentivize and/or facilitate installation of electric vehicle charging stations at convenience locations in Corona. The project fulfills Policy ER-13.4 by providing an electric vehicle charging station on Sixth Street, which is heavily traveled and conveniently located in proximity to State Route 91.*

- 4. The proposal is consistent with the C-3 zone because the proposed uses are allowed in the C-3 zone, and the project complies with the development standards for the C-3 zone.

PREPARED BY: SANDRA YANG, SENIOR PLANNER

REVIEWED BY: JAY EASTMAN, PLANNING MANAGER

SUBMITTED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

EXHIBITS

1. Resolution No. 2592
2. Locational and Zoning Map
3. Site Plan
4. Market Floor Plan
5. Conceptual Elevation Plans
6. Conceptual Renderings
7. Conceptual Landscaping Plan
8. Applicant's Letter Dated March 8, 2022
9. Applicant's Operation Overview
10. Applicant's Informational Flyer
11. Conditions of Approval
12. Environmental Documentation

Case Planner: Sandra Yang, Senior Planner (951) 736-2262