



# CITY OF CARSON

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING:

January 22, 2008

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SUBJECT:

Design Overlay Review No. 1019-07; Conditional Use Permit No. 680-07; and Variance No. 503-07

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APPLICANT:

Wes Jones  
1935A Mathews Avenue  
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Deleted: Huizar Design Development  
Attn: Jesse Huizar

OWNER:

Antonio Rubio  
8818 Beaudine Street  
South Gate, CA 90280

Deleted: 16110 S. Menlo Avenue #11

Deleted: Gardena, CA 90247

REQUEST:

To construct a new 1,361 square foot building for minor truck repair service for property located in the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone district and within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area.

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PROPERTY INVOLVED:

21252 S. Alameda Street

### COMMISSION ACTION

Concurred with staff

Did not concur with staff

Other

### COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Chairman Faletogo			Graber
		Vice-Chair Hudson			Saenz
		Cannon			Verrett

**Item No. 11A**

## I. Introduction

The applicant, Wes Jones, on behalf of the property owner, Antonio Rubio, is requesting authorization to construct a new 1,361 square foot truck service facility for minor service repair to include oil/lube changes for property located at 21252 S. Alameda Street. The subject property is located in the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone district, has a General Plan land use designation of Light Industrial, and is within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area.

The project requires the following three discretionary permits: Design Overlay Review No. 1019-07 for overall project design; Conditional Use Permit No. 680-07 for vehicle repair facilities within 100 feet of a residential zone; and Variance No. 503-07 from Sections 9146.23 (Front Yard) and Section 9146.24 (Side Yard) setback requirements.

## II. Background

The subject property is vacant and currently measures 115 feet wide by 73 feet deep, comprising a total area of approximately 8,395 square feet, or 0.19 acre. The City will require a five-foot street dedication along Jackson Street, thereby reducing the property width to 110 feet. The property is comprised of four parcels, which are required to be merged prior to the issuance of a building permit. According to building permit records, in 2003 the former property owner, Mr. Patel, obtained a demolition permit to demolish the former transient Sunset Motel. The permit however was never finalized and has since expired. As a condition of approval, the new property owner will be required to renew the demolition permit prior to the issuance of a building permit.

There is one previously approved discretionary permit for this property, Design Overlay Review (DOR) No. 921-05. On February 14, 2006 the Planning Commission recommended approval to the Redevelopment Agency approval of this DOR for the construction of a 4,300 square foot, two-story industrial building to include office space and a caretaker's unit. At their March 21, 2006 meeting, the Redevelopment Agency approved DOR 921-05. The former applicant and last property owner, Mr. Wes Jones, decided not to pursue construction of the building and instead sold the property to the current owner, Mr. Antonio Rubio.

The property is located at the southeast corner of Alameda Street and Jackson Street. It is bounded by Harbor View Avenue to the east and the Union Pacific railroad (Alameda Corridor) to the west, Jackson Street to the North and Monroe Street to the south. Adjacent to the west of the subject property is Alameda Street and the Union Pacific railroad across the street. To the north and south are various light industrial uses, including auto repair and dismantling businesses located on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet). To the east across an approximate 15-foot wide alley are residential uses, including four multi-family units and single-family lots.

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### III. Project Description

The property owner recently acquired the site and proposes to construct a 1,361 square-foot building for minor truck oil and lube change operations. No other truck repair work is proposed at this site. The building features steel, pre-engineered, decorative corrugated metal exterior panels. Three service bays with adequate height will accommodate semi-truck cabs only. The service bays will be equipped with metal, sectional roll-up doors of color to match the building which will close after business hours. The approximately 53 foot by 23.5 foot metal building includes a sales and office area on the first floor and a small, eight foot by 14.5 foot waiting area on the second floor.

A 16-foot high concrete masonry wall (CMU) will be placed along the western property line, adjacent to the alley and an eight foot CMU wall will be placed along the southern property line. The site will contain a trash enclosure with an appropriate roofing material to prevent water from entering the unit. The site contains nine parking spaces and complies with all other Carson Municipal Code (CMC) development standards, with the exception of the required front and side yard setback requirements.

The site will be graded to drain toward the perimeter landscaped planter areas, as recommended by the SUSMP (Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan) requirements as stated in Article V Sanitation & Health, Chapter 8 Stormwater & Urban Runoff Pollution Control section of the CMC. Each service bay and the used oil enclosure will contain a floor drain connection to a main clarifier on site and the filtered water will then be directed to the storm drain.

#### Operations

The property owner, a truck driver by trade, will employ a total of three mechanics. Operations at the site will consist solely of oil and lube changes for semi-trucks. New and used oil will be stored in double-walled tanks located in the pit areas. The removal of used oil and delivery of new oil will occur on a weekly basis. No containers, truck chassis or other truck equipment will be allowed on the premises. Estimated hours of operation will be from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

### IV. Analysis

#### DESIGN OVERLAY REVIEW

Carson Municipal Code (CMC) Section 9172.23 (B) (1) (a) states that an application for approval of a Development Plan shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for determination in any case involving construction of a new building or structure having an estimated valuation of \$50,000 or more. Because the proposed project has been valued at more than \$50,000 it is subject to a Site Plan and Design Review requiring a public hearing before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission recommendation will be forwarded to the Redevelopment Agency for

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their consideration, since the property is located within Redevelopment Project Area No. 1. Section 9172.23 (D) (1) states that a Site Plan and Design Overlay Review application shall be submitted and recommended for approval if the project meets specified criteria as follows:

**a. Compatibility with the General Plan, any specific plans for the area and surrounding uses.**

The General Plan currently designates the subject property as Light Industrial and the site is within the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone district. The proposed project is permitted within the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone district subject to a Conditional Use Permit for vehicle repair facilities located within 100 feet of a residential zone. The use adheres to the goals and policies described in the Land Use Element of the General Plan for the proposed Light Industrial designation.

The city is in the process of evaluating the feasibility of a sound wall along the Alameda Corridor. Preliminary plans have identified several possible locations for a sound wall if funding is available. The proposed development would be compatible with sound wall locations adjacent to or east of the alley. The project would not be consistent if the city determined that that a sound wall should be located west of the alley. Staff does not believe that a wall location within the existing industrial properties is feasible due to the excessive costs. An item will be placed on the Planning Commission agenda to review the Alameda Corridor sound wall study within the very near future.

Surrounding land uses consist of various light industrial uses, including auto repair and dismantling businesses located on small lots to the north and south of the site. To the west of the site is the Union Pacific Railroad and to the east across an approximate 15-foot wide alley are residential uses, including four multi-family units and single-family lots. The proposed land use will be consistent with surrounding, predominately light industrial land uses.

**b. Compatibility of architecture and design with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, including the aspects of the site planning, land coverage, landscaping, appearance, scale of structures, open spaces, and other features relative to a harmonious and attractive development of the area.**

The design and architecture of the proposed development conforms to all the applicable design and development standards of the CMC, with the exception of the required front and side yard setbacks. Variance No. 503-07 addresses these deviations. The proposed building features steel, pre-engineered, decorative corrugated metal exterior panels. A 16-foot high concrete masonry wall (CMU) will be placed along the western property line, adjacent to the alley and an eight-foot CMU wall will be placed along the southern property line. The proposal

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includes a trash enclosure with an appropriate roofing material to prevent water from entering the unit. The proposed project will provide the required nine parking spaces.

The proposed development will serve to revitalize this blighted property by providing quality design, site upgrades and a land use that will cater to truck drivers living and/or working within the Carson area. The development contains an attractive design which will serve as a model design for other similar businesses in the immediate area. As such, the project is compatible with the existing and anticipated development in the area.

**c. Convenience and safety of circulation for pedestrians and vehicles.**

The proposed development will contain one 30-foot wide driveway along Alameda Street. The project layout incorporates handicap and pedestrian accessibility from the sidewalk and parking lot area. Parking areas provide adequate and safe circulation of vehicles and pedestrians on site.

**d. Attractiveness, effectiveness and restraint in signing, graphics and color.**

The building will contain wall mounted signage in compliance with the sign regulations of the Carson Municipal Code.

**e. Conformance to any applicable design standards and guidelines, which have been adopted pursuant to Section 9172.15.**

Pursuant to the Redevelopment Plan for the Merged and Amended Project Area, future development within such Project Area includes an emphasis on the abatement of unwanted, conflicting and blighted land uses. The proposed project will facilitate the redevelopment of a currently blighted, vacant lot and allow for the development of a new vehicle repair facility, which will provide increased tax revenue, jobs to the community and showcase a new contemporary development. The proposed development is consistent with the general intent of the Redevelopment Plan for the area.

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**

The Planning Commission can approve the Conditional Use Permit with a stipulation that the authorization is contingent upon Redevelopment Agency approval of Design Overlay Review No. 1019-07 and that any change to the DOR will require review by the Planning Commission before this Conditional Use Permit becomes effective.

The applicant requests a Conditional Use Permit per Section 9138.2 (Vehicle Service and Repair) for vehicle repair within 100 feet of any residential zone. The Planning Commission, by Resolution, shall render its approval based on the ability to make affirmative findings based on the following criteria:

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**a. The proposed use and development will be consistent with the General Plan.**

The General Plan designates the subject property for Light Industrial uses. The proposed development is consistent with permitted uses and adheres to the goals and policies described in the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

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**b. The site is adequate in size, shape, topography, location, utilities, and other factors to accommodate the proposed use and development.**

The proposed development will be located on a relatively flat parcel of land within the ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) zone district adjacent to other light industrial land uses. The site is adequate in size, shape, and topography and has access to required utilities as it is located within an urbanized area. The project meets all development standard requirements with the exception of the required front and side yard setback areas. Variance No. 503-07 addresses these two deviations.

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**c. There will be adequate street access and traffic capacity.**

The property has access from Alameda Street, a major highway, capable of providing adequate traffic capacity for the proposed development. A 30-foot wide driveway is proposed and there is ample on-site circulation to accommodate the development and street access.

**d. There will be adequate water supply for fire protection.**

The County Fire Department has reviewed the proposed project and concludes that adequate water supply exists to meet current and anticipated fire suppression needs. The County Fire Department has imposed several conditions, which are incorporated in the Conditions of Approval for this project.

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**e. The proposed use and development will be compatible with the intended character of the area.**

The site is designated for light industrial land uses in both the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed development will serve as a model design for future developments of similar land uses, particularly the existing dilapidated truck repair facilities located on Alameda Street. The subject site is located on a corner location and will serve to revitalize a vacant lot and promote an aggressive stance towards new development and revitalization of existing surrounding developments. The project is compatible and within character of surrounding land uses, both functionally and architecturally.

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## VARIANCE

The applicant is requesting Variance No. 503-07 from Sections 9146.23 (Front Yard) and Section 9146.24 (Side Yard) setback requirements. The CMC requires a minimum 10 foot front and side yard setback when parking is located within the setback areas. The applicant is requesting a five foot front and five foot side yard setback.

Section 9172.22 of the CMC states a variance “shall be granted only when, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, the strict application of this Chapter deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.”

A special circumstance is applicable in this case due to the parallelogram shape of the subject property. The parcel measures 115 wide by 73 feet deep, but is oddly shaped because Alameda Street runs diagonal to Jackson Street. In addition, the city will require a five-foot street dedication along Jackson Street, thereby reducing the lot width to 110 feet. This equates to an 8,030 square foot lot within the ML-D zone. The proposed building is only 1,361 square feet and nine parking spaces are required. In order to accommodate the development and revitalize this currently vacant, blighted lot, the property owner proposes a five foot, front and five foot side yard setback area. The owner will actually landscape and maintain the full 10 foot side yard setback area along Jackson Street until the city actually widens the street.

The granting of this variance is justified due to the odd configuration of the lot and the layout of the proposed development. While the building could be oriented toward the southern end of the property, staff encouraged this layout in order to buffer the residential neighborhood located to the east of the site from the proposed use and from the train and truck activities along the Alameda Corridor. The strict application of the code in relation to the front and side yard setbacks deprives the property of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity with similar oddly configured lots and zero front and side yard setbacks.

## V. Environmental Review

Pursuant to Section 15303, Class 3 (New Construction of Small Structures), of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the proposed project is located within an urbanized, industrial area and does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment and is found to be Categorically Exempt.

## VI. Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with the requirements set forth in the Municipal Code for the approval of the Design Overlay Review, Conditional Use Permit and Variance. The proposal is compatible with the existing light industrial land

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uses in the area. The minor truck repair facility features an attractive architectural design and building materials which will serve to promote rehabilitation of other similar land uses within the immediate vicinity. The business is expected to provide jobs and increase the city's tax revenue. The project is consistent with existing and anticipated development in the area and is a significant upgrade to the site.

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The proposed project's relationship to the goals and objectives stated in the General Plan includes, but is not limited to, the protection and enhancement of property values, providing the community with additional consumer services and the redevelopment of an underutilized property which, as a vacant property, deteriorates from the character of the neighborhood.

### VII. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

- **APPROVE** the Categorical Exemption; and
- WAIVE further reading and ADOPT Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF DESIGN OVERLAY REVIEW NO. 1019-07 TO THE CARSON REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 680-07 AND VARIANCE NO. 503-07 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A 1,361 SQUARE FOOT TRUCK REPAIR FACILITY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 21252 S. ALAMEDA STREET."

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### VIII. Exhibits

1. Zoning Map
2. Proposed Resolution
3. Site Plan, Floor Plan, Elevations (Under separate cover)

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Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rocio Lopez, Planner

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Signo, AICP, Senior Planner

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sheri Repp, Planning Manager

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dimension of 95 feet wide by 265 feet

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deep. The property owner will be required to merge both parcels prior to the issuance of a building permit		
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eastern/western parcel contained a single family residential dwelling unit constructed in the 1940s which was demolished in 1998. An existing single-family dwelling unit on the eastern/western parcel which was built in the		
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according to building permit records and the remaining		
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, vacant single family dwelling unit		
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will be demolished.		
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The site is located to the immediate west of Broadway Street and to the east of Figueroa Street. Surrounding land uses include an unpaved lot used for storage to the immediate east; non-conforming multiple family residential dwelling units to the immediate west and across the street to the north		
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; and a construction storage yard to the south of the site.		
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The building features a Spanish Mediterranean architectural design theme with a focal tower with light concrete tile roofing; decorative intermediate pilasters; cornice trim and stucco banding throughout. The height of the building to the top of the tower is 30 feet and 20 feet throughout the remaining structure. Garage doors will be metal, sectional roll-up of color to match the building pattern. An eight-		

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foot high stucco masonry wall will replace the existing dilapidated chain-link fence

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surrounding the entire property. The site will contain a trash enclosure and used oil enclosure with an appropriate roofing material to prevent water from entering the enclosures. The site will contain 25 parking spaces

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CMC development standards, including setbacks, height requirements, landscaping and trash enclosure areas.

The project's sign program will contain signage above each service bay listing only the business name and logo, consisting of individual channel letters, 24-inch maximum height, not to exceed 70% of the bay frontage. The tower

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will contain the name of the automobile center, such as Martin Auto Center. No other signage is proposed at this time.

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proposes to lease six auto repair bays to mechanics specializing in minor to major auto repair such as oil changes, transmission repair, engine rebuilding, tire rotation, tune ups, etc. The majority of vehicles will be passenger type, no truck or boat repair is being proposed. Each bay

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will have one employee and estimated

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with a decorative masonry wall, a new trash enclosure and waste enclosure units, and a new sign program.

The site contains an existing single family residence which has been vacant for several years.

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project's sign program will contain signage above each service bay listing only the business name and logo, consisting of individual channel letters, 24-inch maximum height, not to exceed 70% of the bay frontage. The tower shall contain the name of the automobile center, such as Martin Auto Center. No other signage is proposed at this time. The sign program shall comply with the

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Redevelopment Project Area No. 1