



CARSON PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 27, 2024
FROM: Christopher Palmer, AICP - Planning Manager
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SUBJECT: Site Plan and Design Review 00007-24 and Conditional Use Permit 1132-24 (South Bay Fleet Specialist)

PROJECT/APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Summary: Finding a CEQA exemption and conditionally approving Site Plan and Design Review No. 00007-24 and Conditional Use Permit No. 1132-24 for a new auto repair and collision facility with a paint spray booth (South Bay Fleet Specialist)

Project Location: 17126 S Broadway St. (APN # 6126-005-008)

Zoning: Manufacturing - Heavy, Design Overlay (MH-D)

Project Applicant: Angelica Gomez/South Bay Fleet Specialist

I. OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

This project, located at 17126 S Broadway St, involves the following applications for the development of the 7,870.60 square foot property:

- Section 9141.1 of the Carson Municipal Code (CMC) requires approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) by the Planning Commission for the use of Vehicle Service and Repair with a paint Spray Booth in the MH-D zone. The use would be subject to the limitations of CMC 9138.14.
- Section 9113.2 requires that a development plan shall be approved for all developments within a Design overlay zone and shall be subject to section 9172.23 for Site Plan and Design Review. Typically, this application would be reviewed administratively, but is being brought to the commission for a concurrent review with the Conditional Use Permit.

B. Project Description

The project site is located on the corner of Broadway St. and Walnut St. The site is 7,860.60 square feet in area.

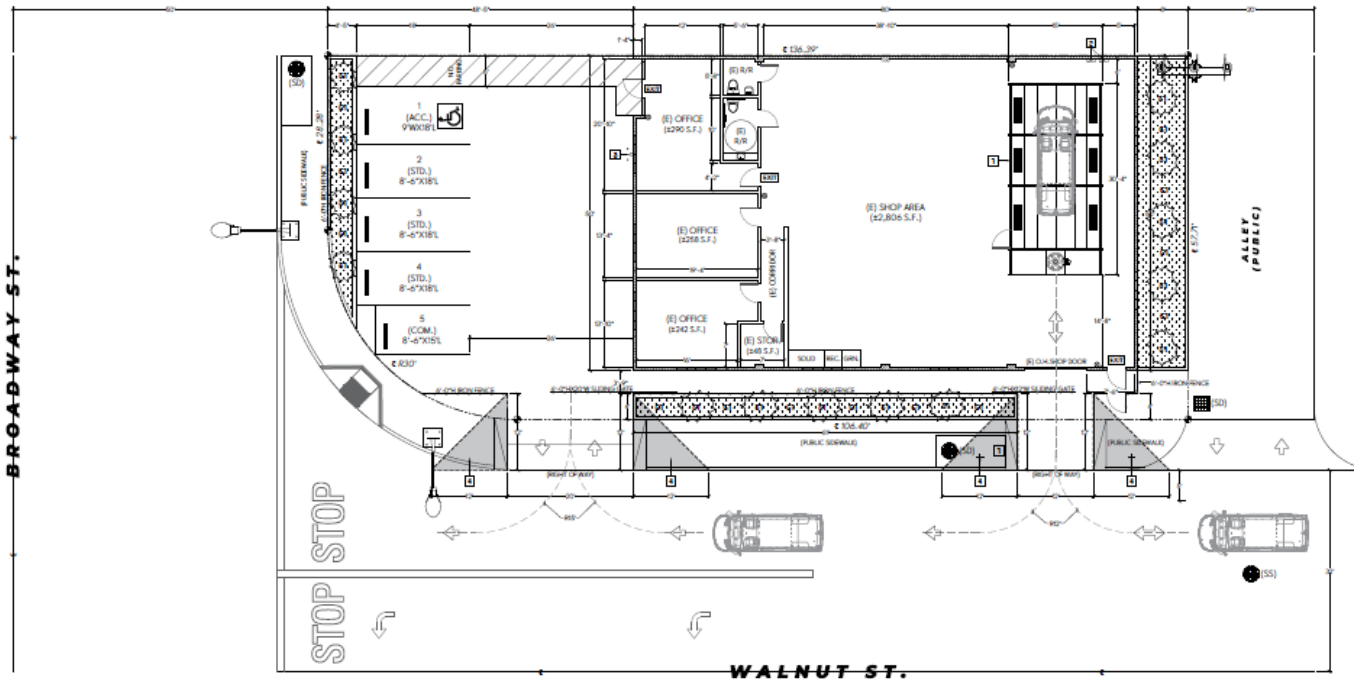
As shown in the attached Development Plans (Attachment 1), the proposed project includes the following:

The existing 3,920 square foot building will be used and maintained by the applicant as an auto repair and collision shop. A paint spray booth will be added to the interior of the building. The building has one 10'W X 10'H roll-up door which opens directly onto Walnut Street that will be removed and replaced by a 16'W X 12'H heavy-duty, steel, roll-up door. Additional building improvements include new paint, new exterior lighting, new address identification signage, and new windows facing Broadway. Other site improvements include a new 6-foot-high wrought-iron fence running along Broadway and Walnut, 814 square feet of new landscaping, and new mechanical equipment with screening on the roof of the building. The applicant is not proposing business signage at this time, all future signage proposals will be reviewed as a modification to DOR-00007-24.

The applicant is proposing 5 parking spaces:

- 3 standard spaces (8'6"x18')
- 1 compact spaces (8'6"x15')
- 1 van accessible space (9' x 18') with 9' loading zone.

Vehicle access to the property is via two driveway entrances on Walnut Street. One driveway leads to the 5 parking spaces and the other will lead to the Service Bay inside the building. The proposed vehicle circulation was reviewed the City's Traffic Engineer and found that that the proposal was adequate, with the inclusion of the conditions of approval including (i) a requirement that the sliding gates across the driveway entrances to both the Service Bay and parking lot remain open during business hours to prevent queuing into the public right of way and (ii) a requirement to paint curbs red along Walnut abutting the proposed development within the 12' X 12' visibility triangle area as indicated on the development plans.



The project proposes 814 square feet of landscaping. The proposed landscaping does not meet the requirements of CMC Section 9162.52 for interior landscaping of parking lot facilities, as all landscaping is proposed within a setback area. However, CMC Section 9182.41.D provides that where a site is originally lawfully developed and subsequently becomes nonconforming with respect to landscaping of parking area, and cannot be made conforming without incurring a capital expenditure or loss, such landscaping nonconformity is allowed to continue indefinitely. Here, the site was originally lawfully developed, and the landscaping nonconformity cannot be correct without incurring a capital expenditure or loss; therefore, the landscaping nonconformity is not required to be addressed. The proposed 814 square feet of landscaping does adhere to CMC Section 9138.14.B.2 which requires at least 10% of the total site area be landscaped. The proposed landscaping will provide a better visual atmosphere on a corridor which does not typically include landscaping due to the original development of Broadway Street.

A recent visit to the site has revealed that multiple site improvements have already been completed. The building has been painted white with black trim around the windows, new windows have been installed in the office space along Broadway, 2 address identification signs have been installed facing Broadway and Walnut, the 6-foot-high wrought-iron fence has already been installed along Broadway and Walnut, and the new heavy-duty, roll-up door has already been installed. These improvements can be seen in Site Photos from a recent site visit (Attachment 2B). These photos show that the wrought-iron fence is located within the site visibility triangle and has not been constructed as indicated on the plans. A condition of approval has been included to re-locate the wrought-iron fence to match the development

plans. Additionally, as a condition of approval, the developer must submit an updated set of plans that includes all of the completed site and building improvements that are not included on the submitted development plans.

C. Existing Conditions

1. Site Conditions

The subject property was previously utilized as a printing shop. Business License records indicate that the prior use ceased operation in February of 2024. County Assessor data indicates that the existing building was constructed in 1948. No additional building permits could be located on file with the City or the County.

2. Land Use Information

The project site is located on the corner of Broadway St. and Walnut St. The site is 7,860.60 square feet in area and the APN number for the property is 6126-005-008.

The project site is surrounded by Heavy Industrial-zoned properties to the North, East and West and Light Industrial-zoned properties to the South. This property and all surrounding properties are designated as Industrial, Light (IL) land use in the 2040 General Plan Land Use Element.

The following table summarizes the surrounding land uses, zoning designations, and General Plan land use designations.

Land Use Summary Table

	Existing Use	Zoning	General Plan
Subject Site	Vacant	MH-D (Manufacturing Heavy, Design Overlay)	Light Industrial
North of Subject Site	Adhesive manufacturing	MH-D (Manufacturing Heavy, Design Overlay)	Light Industrial
South of Subject Site (across Walnut)	Office/Business Park	ML-D (Manufacturing Light, Design Overlay)	Light Industrial
East of Subject Site (across alleyway)	Office/Business Park	MH-D (Manufacturing Heavy, Design Overlay)	Light Industrial
West of Subject Site (across Broadway)	Natural Gas Distribution	MH-D (Manufacturing Heavy, Design Overlay)	Light Industrial

II. ANALYSIS

A. General Plan Consistency

The proposed auto repair and collision shop is consistent with the General Plan land use designation of Light Industrial as the site falls within the designation’s intent to provide for a wide variety of industrial uses, and to permit commercial uses subject to criteria outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. Auto Repair and Collision is consistent with that intent and will not adversely impact the neighboring industrial and office uses.

B. Zoning Ordinance Compliance

The proposed development project is consistent with the Manufacturing, Heavy (MH-D) zoning designation, which allows for both vehicle service/repair and collision repair with a spray booth with approval of a CUP.

1. Industrial Development Standards

The proposed development complies with the following development and design standards of the CMC:

Code Section	Requirement	Proposed	Complies?
9141.1 – Uses permitted	Conditional Use Permit	Obtain proper CUP for operation	In Process
9136.12 - Building Height	No Height Limitation provided additional yard spaces.	18’	YES
9136.23 – Broadway St. (Front) Setback	5’ Minimum	25’	YES
9136.24 – Walnut St. (Side) Setback	10’ minimum	7’9”	NO (SEE BELOW DISCUSSION)
9136.25 - Property Line (Rear) Setback	No minimum at proposed height	8’	YES
9136.29 – Encroachments	Must meet encroachment requirements	Parking and Fence proposed to encroach in front and side setback and meets requirements	YES/NO (SEE DISCUSSION BELOW)
9146.3 – Fences, Walls and Hedges	8’ maximum	6’ Wrought-Iron Fence	YES

2. Site Development Nonconformities

As mentioned previously, records indicate that this site was lawfully developed into its current state in 1948 and hasn’t changed significantly over time. This has resulted in site non-conformities with respect to today’s zoning code, found below:

- **Parking:** CMC Section 9162.21.C.5. requires 1 automobile parking space per employee on the largest shift, plus 2 parking spaces for each service bay. This means that 8 parking spaces are required and only 5 are being provided. However, when we look at the previous use, we can see that it was also non-conforming. The prior use of the print shop is classified as a manufacturing use with small grade level loading facilities. This classification requires 1 parking space per 500 square feet of manufacturing area and 1 parking space per 300 square feet of office area. This equates to 5.6 manufacturing parking spaces and 2.6 office parking spaces for a total of 8.2 parking spaces.

CMC Section 9182.41.D provides that where a site is originally lawfully developed and subsequently becomes nonconforming with respect to number of parking spaces, and cannot be made conforming without incurring a capital expenditure or loss, such parking nonconformity is allowed to continue indefinitely, except that any intensification of a use shall be required to provide additional parking to serve that intensification. In this case, there is no intensification of use and the nonconformity in the number of parking spaces cannot be correct without incurring a capital expenditure or loss; therefore, the site non-conformity with respect to number of parking spaces is not required to be addressed.

- **Setbacks**

CMC Section 9146.29.K states that parking is not permitted within 10 feet of an existing right of way. Additionally, CMC Section 9146.24 requires a side setback of at least 10 feet when abutting a street. The existing site development does not meet either of those setback requirements.

However, CMC Section 9182.41.A provides that where a site is originally lawfully developed and subsequently becomes nonconforming with respect to setbacks and/or encroachments into yard areas, and cannot be made conforming without incurring a capital expenditure or loss, such nonconformity is allowed to continue indefinitely.

- **Landscaping**

CMC Section 9162.52 requires 5% of interior parking facilities be landscaped. Additionally, CMC Section 9138.14.B requires that both a landscaped planter with a minimum inside width of ten (10) feet be placed along the front and streetside property lines and a three hundred (300)

square foot planter with a minimum dimension of ten (10) feet be provided at the corner of intersecting streets unless a building is located at the corner (which here would be the corner of Walnut and Broadway).

Due to the existing development of the site, it was not possible to fully meet the landscaping development standards listed above as it created issues for vehicle circulation in the parking lot. However, as detailed above, the existing landscaping nonconformity on the site is allowed to continue indefinitely under CMC Section 9182.41.D. Also, the requirements of CMC Section 9138.14.B were met to the maximum extent possible in that at least 10% of the lot will be improved with landscaping.

C. Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan and Design Review Applications

Section 9138.14.C of the CMC states that approval of a CUP for an automobile/vehicle service and repair use shall only be granted if the Commission makes the following findings in the affirmative:

- The project is designed so that form and scale are harmonious and consistent with the character of the specific site, the adjacent uses and structures, and the surrounding neighborhood.
- The site design, including the location and number of driveways, will promote safe and efficient on-site and off-site traffic circulation.
- Service bay openings are designed to minimize the visual intrusion on surrounding streets and properties.
- Lighting is designed to be low-profile, indirect or diffused and to avoid adverse impacts on surrounding uses.

Section 9143 of the CMC requires the following special criteria be considered prior to approval of a Conditional Use Permit in an industrial zone:

- Possible hazards to the surrounding area as a result of the proposed use.
- Possible hazards to the proposed use due to proximity or interaction with uses in the surrounding area.
- Cumulative and interactive effects upon the environment and public safety resulting from the interrelation, magnitude, and intensity of industrial activities in the area.

Additionally, Carson Municipal Code Section 9172.21 (Conditional Use Permit) states that the Commission shall approve a CUP if it is able to make affirmative findings based on criteria that include General Plan consistency, ability of the site to accommodate the proposed use and development, adequacy of street access, traffic capacity, and water supply for fire protection, compatibility with the character of the area, and such other criteria as are specified for the particular use in the Zoning Ordinance, and if the Commission finds that any adverse effects will occur as a result of the proposed use and

development, such effects must be found to be justified by the benefits to the public interest which will occur as a result of such use and development.

Lastly, Section 9172.23 (Site Plan and Design Review) states that the Commission shall approve a Development Plan if the Commission is able to make affirmative findings based on criteria that include compatibility with the General Plan and surrounding uses, compatibility of architecture and design with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, convenience and safety of circulation for pedestrian and vehicles, attractiveness, effectiveness and restraint in signing graphics and color, and conformance with any other applicable design standards.

Staff has analyzed the project for compliance with the above finding requirements and has found that the project, with the proposed conditions of approval, meets the requirements for approval. First, the proposed small-scale auto repair and collision operation is an adequate fit for the existing site and surrounding industrial area, the use will not increase the possibility of hazards to the surrounding area or be subject to possible hazards due to proximity or interaction with uses in the surrounding area, and the use is consistent with the General Plan, including the uses intended for the Light Industrial designation in the General Plan. The use of the existing service bay opening, and the incorporation of landscaping will minimize visual intrusion on surrounding properties. The project will also be adequately accommodated by the existing water supply due to the lack of any expansion of the building footprint. Lighting conditions have been imposed to ensure compliance with the lighting-related findings. The Additionally, the site circulation has been reviewed and approved by the City's Traffic Engineer and will promote safe and efficient on-site and off-site traffic circulation, subject to the proposed conditions of approval of the project.

Additionally, staff finds that the proposed site and building design improvements, with the proposed conditions of approval, are compatible with the general plan and surrounding uses in respect to CMC 9172.23. The fresh paint, new windows, and roll-up door will bring an updated look to the building. This improvement, along with the new landscaping, will provide a smooth transition from the office space adjacent to the property to the existing heavy industrial uses to the North and West. Relocation of the wrought-iron fence will ensure that the property circulation is safe for pedestrians and vehicles. The 2 address identification signs demonstrate constraint and match well with the building design. Future business signage will be reviewed by the Planning Division for compatibility with the findings of CMC 9172.23.

B. Public Hearing Notice

Public Notice was given in accordance with Chapter 9173.22 of the CMC. The Planning Department mailed notification to property owners within a 750-foot radius of the site and notices were posted on-site.

C. Environmental Analysis

The project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Existing Facilities) pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. Examples include (a) interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances, and (d) Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood.

The project meets the foregoing examples and involves negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 24-____, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON FINDING A CEQA EXEMPTION AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW NO. 00007-24 AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1132-24 FOR A NEW AUTO REPAIR AND COLLISION FACILITY WITH A PAINT SPRAY BOOTH (SOUTH BAY FLEET SPECIALIST)"

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Development Plans
- 2) Site Photos
 - A. Existing Photos
 - B. Site Visit Photos
- 3) Trip Generation Memo
- 4) Notice Radius Map
- 5) Draft Resolution No 24- ____
 - A. Legal Description
 - B. Conditions of Approval
- 6) Public Hearing Notice