



CARSON PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 13, 2025
FROM: Christopher Palmer, AICP - Planning Manager
BY: Richard Garcia, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: Design Overlay Review 1747-18, Conditional Use Permit 1076-18

PROJECT/APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Summary: A request for approval of a Site Plan and Design Review (DOR) and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to develop a new drive through car wash and related site improvements at a 2.5-acre property that currently contains a Chevron gas station and McDonald's.

Project Location: 17455 Central Ave. (APN # 7319-017-096)

Zoning: Corridor Mixed Use (CMX)

Project Applicant: Max Netty/Richard Finkel

Project Owner: Dar-Sheng Chen

I. OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

This project, which is located at 17455 Central Avenue, involves the following two applications for the new development on a 2.5-acre property:

- Carson Municipal Code (CMC) section 9131.1 requires that all permitted commercial uses are subject to the requirements of a site plan and design review (DOR). CMC Section 9172.23 requires approval of a DOR by the Planning Commission for new construction having an estimated valuation of \$50,000 or more. DOR 1747-18 is to allow construction of a 3,146 square foot drive-through carwash.
- Section 9131.1 of the CMC requires approval of a CUP by the Planning Commission for the development of a carwash facility. CUP 1076-18 is to allow the operation of a 3,146 square foot drive-through carwash.

B. Project Description

As shown in the attached site plan and floor plans Exhibit(s) A and B, the proposed project would include a new carwash building as follows:

Carwash (east side of property)

The proposed 3,146 square foot Carwash building is located on the eastern side of the property. The building measures approximately 101 feet long and 35 feet wide and contains an office, various equipment rooms, a bathroom, and an automated vehicle washing tunnel. Vehicle entrance and exits are located at the south and north ends of the washing tunnel, respectively. The building setbacks exceed the requirements of Section 9138.14 (F) of the CMC. Section 9138.14(F) requires the carwash to be at least 20 ft from any residential property line, and 30 ft from any public street. The carwash proposed has a measured distance of approximately 43 feet from E. Albertoni St. to the North, approximately 68 feet from the nearest residential property line located to the south, and over 130 feet from Central Ave. to the east.

The proposed exterior materials for the carwash building include a blend of tan and grey precision concrete block and split face concrete block, Mirrored glass aluminum frame, and metal clad awnings. The building measures a few inches over 24 feet tall at its highest point and has a lower-level roof just under 22 feet in height. The designed roof is flat across the entirety of the proposed building.

The carwash drive through consists of two lanes with capacity for five to six vehicles per lane. Self-service vacuum stations and trash receptacles are located at 8 parking stalls on the east side of the building. Although the CMC does not specify the parking requirements for automobile/vehicle washing, staff have historically applied a parking ratio of 1:300 for this use. Based on the applied parking requirement, the carwash requires 10 parking spaces with 10 provided, including one ADA accessible stall. A new 8- foot-tall block wall is proposed along the south property line that will be incorporated for noise mitigation. New landscaping will be incorporated into the property for visual enhancement of the new addition to the property.

The Carson Municipal Code Section 9138.14 limits the hours of operation from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week, when located adjacent to a residential zone. As residences are located to the south of the project site, a condition of approval is included so that the hours of operation for the carwash meet code. The applicant anticipates a total of 3 employees for the business to be present during the operating shifts.

Access to the property is provided by four driveways, two on Albertoni Street and two on Central Ave. Movements on the driveways along Albertoni Street are restricted to right turns only as the street is one way traffic. Left turns into the project site for one of the driveways along Central are prevented by a raised median. The southernmost driveway along Central does have access from traffic going north on Central through a designated left turn lane into the project site. Regarding interior circulation and queueing of automobiles using the proposed carwash, the city's traffic engineer has reviewed the proposed project and finds the interior circulation acceptable.

Exhibit A

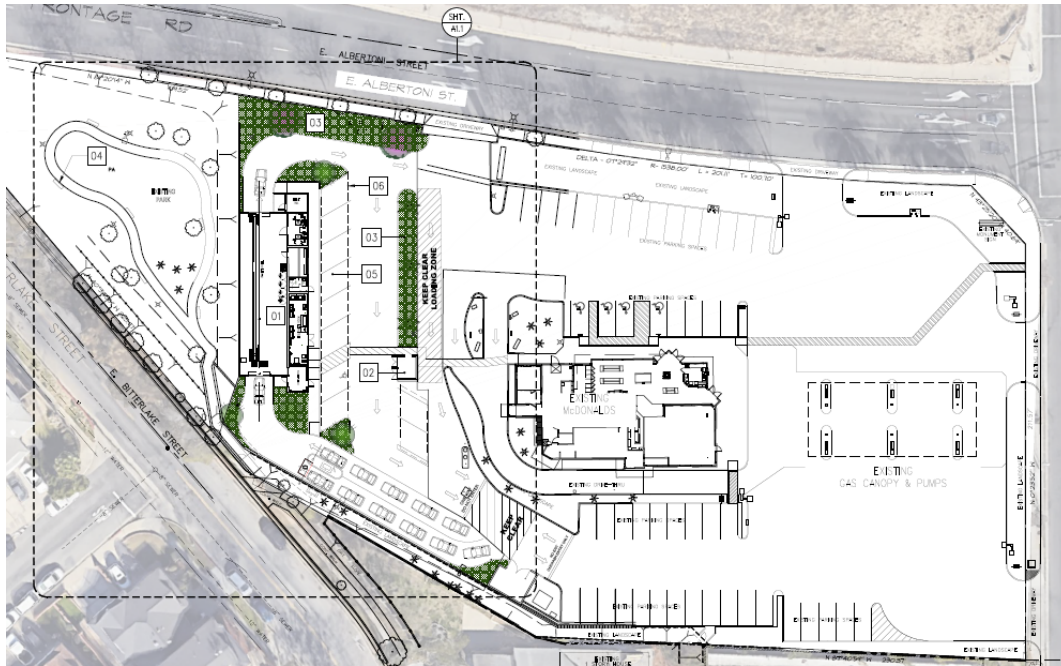
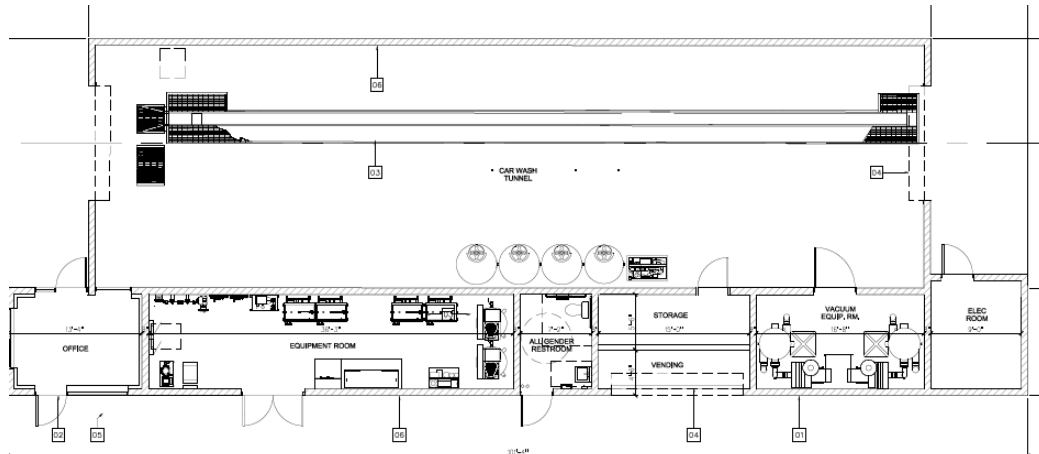


Exhibit B



1. Land Use Information

As shown on the attached radius map the project site sits on the southwest corner of the intersection of Albertoni St. and Central Ave. The site is 2.54 acres (110,659.05 sq ft) in area and has a Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Parcel Number of 7319-017-096.

The project site is surrounded by a variety of uses in the surrounding areas, residential neighborhood to the west, 91 freeway to the north and a commercial plaza to the south and east. The property is currently developed with a Chevron gas station and McDonalds and has a small part on the west side of the property.

The following table summarizes the surrounding land uses, zoning, general plan designations:

Land Use Summary Table

	Existing Use	Zoning	General Plan
Subject Site	Chevron Gas Station/McDonalds	Corridor Mixed Use (CMX)	Corridor Mixed Use (CMX)
North of Subject Site	91 Freeway	91 Freeway	91 Freeway
South of Subject Site	Residential/Commercial Plaza	Corridor Mixed Use (CMX) Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Corridor Mixed Use (CMX) Medium Density Residential (MDR)
East of Subject Site	Commercial Plaza in City of Compton	City of Compton	City of Compton
West of Subject Site	Residential	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Medium Density Residential (MDR)

2. As previously stated, the property is located within the Corridor Mixed Use zone and has a General Plan Designation of Corridor Mixed Use (CMX). At the time of submittal, the zoning of this property was Commercial General, all development standards are subject to the General Commercial zones regulation. The permitted uses in the zone include retail sales, retail service, restaurants, personal service, recreation, and others.

II. ANALYSIS

A. General Plan Consistency

The proposed development project is consistent with the General Plan and General Plan designation (CMX) of the site for the following reasons:

- The Land Use Element of the City of Carson General Plan classifies the project site as Corridor Mixed Use, which allows for the proposed carwash use.
- The Land Use Element of the City of Carson General Plan includes Policy 10: “Promote development of neighborhood-scaled commercial centers in residential areas to serve the everyday needs of nearby residents.”

The proposed project advances this policy, as there is no other business in the close proximity of this residential neighborhood providing this service to the community. Residents would no longer need to drive across town to find a self-service drive through carwash.

- According to an Acoustical Noise Study submitted by the applicant, the project's operational noise level is predicted to exceed the 55 dBA daytime hourly noise limit specified by the City of Carson General Plan Noise Element and the City's Noise Control Ordinance (CMC Article V, Chapter 5) with respect to noise levels at the residential receptors to the south of the project site. The main source of noise associated with the proposed project is the 12 proposed blowers that would be involved in the carwash operation to dry the cars. Notably, the Noise Study also finds that the current ambient noise level is already above the limits identified in the Noise Element and Noise Control Ordinance when measured at the residential receptors to the south of the project site, primarily due to traffic in the area.

To address the exceedance, the Noise Study contains proposed mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the project conditions of approval to reduce the noise levels it is proposed to add silencers to each of the 12 proposed blowers, and incorporation of a 10-foot CMU wall to further mitigate the generated noise. (see Condition of Approval No. I.12). The condition also allows for on-site sound level verification measurements of the operational car wash, as was suggested in the Noise Study. With this mitigation in place, the Noise Study concludes that the carwash noise levels would be reduced to levels that do not exceed the 55dBA limit at all but one of the residential receiver locations, and that the overall hourly noise level at those two locations would only exceed the existing ambient sound level by less than 1dB.

According to the Noise Study, a change in sound level of 3dBA is barely perceptible to the average human ear, and the project, with the mitigation in place, would increase the current ambient noise levels by significantly less than 3dBA at all residential receptor locations. Also, according to the Noise Study, the carwash noise levels, as mitigated, would not exceed the Noise Element's maximum (at any location, including on-site) limit of 75 dBA. Finally, as noted above, a new 8- foot-tall block wall is proposed as part of the project design along the south property line, which is expected to provide further noise mitigation.

- A project is consistent with the general plan if, considering all its aspects, it will further the objectives and policies of the general plan and not obstruct their attainment. Perfect conformity is not required, but the project must be compatible with the general plan's objectives and policies. *San Francisco Tomorrow v City & County of San Francisco*, 229 Cal.App.4th 498, 513 (2014). To the extent the above-described insubstantial increases to existing ambient noise levels associated with the proposed project may not be in "perfect conformity" with the Noise Element's 55dBA limit, such increases do not render the project inconsistent with the Noise Element, as considering all its aspects, the proposed project, with the conditions of approval incorporating the above-described noise mitigation, will further the objectives and policies of the General Plan and not obstruct their attainment.

B. Zoning Ordinance Compliance

The proposed development project is consistent with the Zoning ("CG"— Commercial, General) designation of the site at the time of submittal, which allows automobile/vehicle washing uses with a CUP. The proposed project complies with the following development and design standards of the CMC:

Applicable Zoning Ordinance Sections	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Comments
Commercial and General Development Standards			
9131.1, Uses Permitted	X (with proposed CUP)		CG: Automobile/vehicle washing uses are conditionally permitted.
Applicable Zoning Ordinance Sections	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Comments
9162.21 Parking Spaces Required.	X		Between the Chevron/McDonalds and the Carwash there are 26 parking spaces required with 71 provided in total.
9136.12 Height of Buildings and Structures.	X		No building or structure shall exceed a height of 30 feet. The maximum height of the proposed car wash is 24 feet 2 inches.
9136.3 Fences, Walls, and Hedges.	X		A 10-foot-tall solid masonry wall is proposed along the southern property line, abutting residences. Part of Mitigation A for the generated noise.

1. DOR Application

The proposed development meets the criteria for DOR approval pursuant to CMC 9172.23 (D). In addition to being consistent with the General Plan, the project provides a modern design similar to current development trends for newer carwashes. The project is compatible in design and scale with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, consisting of a mixture of residential and commercial uses. Furthermore, the project provides adequate vehicle circulation and has been cleared by our city traffic engineer.

2. CUP Application

The proposed carwash meets the development standards required by the municipal code including minimum lot area, setbacks, design, and hours of operation. The project will include an 8-foot-tall block wall adjacent to the residences to the south and the carwash building exceeds the setback requirements to residences as required by CMC section 9138.14 (F). Additionally, sufficient landscaping is provided throughout the site. As previously mentioned, vehicle access to the project site will be served by four driveways. Adequate traffic capacity is provided as confirmed by the Traffic Engineer.

3. Public Hearing Notice

Public Notice was given in accordance with Part 7 of the CMC. Notice of public hearing was posted to the project site and mailed to property owners and occupants within a 750' radius by April 23rd, 2025. The agenda was posted at City Hall no less than 72 hours prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

C. Environmental Analysis

The proposed request for approval of a Site Plan and Design Review (DOR) and Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to develop a new drive through car wash and related site improvements at a 2.5 acre property that currently contains a Chevron gas station and McDonald's is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, which consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. As noted above, the project involves construction and location of only one new, small facility or structure, a 3,146 square foot Carwash facility/structure. None of the exceptions to the categorical exemption set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed project. Without limitation of the foregoing, as it pertains to the exception set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(c), there are no unusual circumstances associated with the proposed project, and the project will not result in generation of a substantial increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project, as detailed above and in the Acoustical Noise Study. Also, the project will not result in generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels, as detailed in the Acoustical Noise Study.

D. CFD/DIF Discussion

In accordance with Article XI (Interim Development Impact Fee Program) of the Carson Municipal Code ("CMC"), the applicant, property owner, and/or successor to whom these project entitlements are assigned ("Developer") shall be responsible for payment of one-time interim development impact fees ("IDIF") at the applicable amounts/rates detailed in condition of approval number I.13 for each square foot of commercial development constructed for the project. If the project increases or decreases regarding the square footage constructed, the total IDIF amount will be adjusted accordingly at the applicable rate.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In the judgment of staff, the project is consistent with the General Plan and General Plan Land Use Designation. The project provides a modern design, compatible with existing and anticipated development in the area. The project provides adequate vehicle circulation; furthermore, the project provides neighborhood-scaled commercial use adjacent to a residential area to serve the everyday needs of nearby residents.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission:

- **ADOPT** Resolution No. 23- __, entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON FINDING A CEQA EXEMPTION AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW NO. 1747-18 AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 1076-18 TO DEVELOP A NEW DRIVE THROUGH CAR WASH AND RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS AT A 2.5 ACRE PROPERTY THAT CURRENTLY CONTAINS A CHEVRON GAS STATION AND MCDONALDS."

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Development Plans
- 2) Radius Map
- 3) Traffic Study
- 4) Noise Study
- 5) Public Hearing Notice
- 6) Draft Resolution No 25-_____.
 - A. Legal Description
 - B. Conditions of Approval