



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 21-495

MEETING DATE: 7/27/2021

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ursula Luna-Reynosa, Community Development Director
BY: Hayden Beckman, Senior Planner

SUBJECT:
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 20-015 (G&M OIL SERVICE STATION)

REQUEST:

To permit the construction of a new gasoline fueling service station with a 22,309 sq. ft. lot size instead of the minimum 22,300 sq. ft. lot size; the development includes four fueling pump stations, a 2,314 sq. ft. canopy, underground fuel storage tanks, a 2,182 sq. ft. retail store building with beer and wine sales (ABC Type 20 License), a 24-hour operation, and ancillary site improvements including paving, on-site parking, landscaping, and signage.

LOCATION:

14972 Springdale Street, 92647 (Northeast corner of Springdale Street at Bolsa Avenue)

APPLICANT:

Karl H. Huy, Travis Companies, Inc., 4430 E Miraloma Avenue, Suite F, Anaheim CA 92807

**PROPERTY
OWNER:**

George Pearson, G&M Oil Company, Inc., 16868 A Street, Huntington Beach CA 92647

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

1. Is the project proposal consistent with the City of Huntington Beach land use regulations (i.e., General Plan land use designation, Zoning Map and Zoning Code including any specific plans and overlay districts where applicable)?
2. Does the project proposal satisfy all the findings required for approving a Conditional Use Permit?
3. Has the appropriate level of environmental analysis been determined?

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Planning Commission take the following actions:

A) Find the proposed project categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303, Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and

B) Approve Conditional Use Permit No. 20-015 with suggested findings and conditions of approval (Attachment No. 1).

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

A) Do not make the suggested findings, which will result in a mandatory denial pursuant to Section 241.10 C. of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

B) Continue Conditional Use Permit No. 20-015 and direct staff accordingly.

PROJECT PROPOSAL:**Background:**

The proposed project (Attachment No. 2) is a request to develop a vacant property with construction of a new gasoline fueling service station and retail store with beer and wine sales at the northeast corner of Springdale Street at Bolsa Avenue (Attachment No. 4 and 5).

The project also includes operation of a new 2,182 sq. ft. convenience market in conjunction with the fueling station that would operate 24 hours per day. The convenience market requests approval of a Type 20 (Off-Sale Beer and Wine) ABC License and will incorporate certain limits to beer and wine sales, including a prohibition of beer and wine sales between 2:00 AM - 6:00 AM, and beverage size limitations.

The subject site was first developed in 1963 as a Union Oil service station, which remained in operation until 1984. That year, entitlements and building permits approved the construction of a new service station, completed in 1986. This station remained operational until 2001 when the service station was demolished. According to the State's Water Resources Control Board, a groundwater and soil remediation system was installed on the site in 2002. Subsequently, in 2020, the remediation system was removed, a Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) case was closed, and the site is vacant and unimproved.

ISSUES AND ANALYSIS:**Subject Property And Surrounding General Plan Designations, Zoning And Land Uses:**

LOCATION	GENERAL PLAN	ZONING	LAND USE
Subject Property:	CN (Commercial Neighborhood)	CG (Commercial General)	Vacant
North and East of Subject Property:	CN	CG	Commercial Building

South of Subject Property (across Bolsa Ave.):	CN	CG	Service Station with Retail Market
West of Subject Property (across Springdale St.):	I-sp (Industrial - Specific Plan Overlay)	SP11 (McDonnell Centre Business Park Specific Plan)	Industrial Distribution Center

General Plan Conformance:

The General Plan Land Use Map designation on the subject property is CN (Commercial Neighborhood). The proposed project is consistent with this designation and the goals, policies, and objectives of the City's General Plan as follows:

Land Use Element

Goal LU-1: New commercial, industrial, and residential development is coordinated to ensure that the land use pattern is consistent with the overall goals and needs of the community.

Policy LU-1(D): Ensure that new development projects are of compatible proportion, scale, and character to complement adjoining uses.

Goal LU-11: Commercial land uses provide goods and services to meet regional and local needs.

Policy LU-11 (B): Encourage new businesses to locate on existing vacant or underutilized commercial properties where these properties have good locations and accessibility.

Policy LU-12(B): Encourage renovation and revitalization of deteriorating and struggling nonresidential areas and corridors, particularly commercial locations.

The proposed construction of service station with a convenience market is designed and coordinated with the surrounding streetscape to ensure the land use pattern is consistent with the goals and needs of the community. The project removes excessive driveways onto the site, and incorporates reciprocal access between the subject site and the commercial property to the north, resulting in a safe circulation pattern that improves upon the existing circulation and access pattern. The proposed single-story development project is compatible in proportion, scale, and character of the adjoining uses. The development complies with all applicable development standards for service stations, and includes excess perimeter landscaping that buffers the street edge and adjacent commercial uses. The proposed architectural elements such as the pronounced corner tower facades, awnings, and stone veneer is compatible with and enhances the character of the adjoining uses. Furthermore, the new service station and convenience market with beer and wine sales offers a service that meets the regional and local community needs on an underutilized commercial property with an optimal location and accessibility located at the intersection of a primary (Springdale Street) and major (Bolsa Avenue) arterial highway.

Zoning Compliance:

The proposed development is consistent with the provisions of the Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance (HBZSO) with the exception of minimum lot size requirements. Section

211.04 Land Use Controls allows service stations with approval of a conditional use permit by the Planning Commission. Although convenience stores are permitted by right, the request for a Type 20 (Off-Site Beer and Wine) ABC License is also subject to approval of a conditional use permit. Additionally, HBZSO Section 230.32 Service Stations provides specific development standards for such uses, including a minimum parcel size for new development. The subject property currently includes parcel areas that will be dedicated to the City for public right-of-way and utility purposes. Following dedication of these areas, the resulting net lot size will measure approximately 22,309 sq. ft., just short of the minimum 22,500 square feet required for service stations. However, development on a substandard lot may be permitted via a conditional use permit, pursuant to HBZSO Section 230.64.

With the exception of the request to develop the property at a net lot size of 22,309 sq. ft. instead of minimum 22,500 sq. ft., the development complies with all other development standards for service stations, including minimum building setbacks, a 25 ft. by 25 ft. visibility triangle for corner parcels, parking, landscaping, and maximum building height. The service station and 2,182 sq. ft. convenience store create a parking demand of 11 spaces, which are located along the north and east property lines, on either side of the retail market. Two parallel parking spaces are located adjacent to the southwest corner of the property, and include adequate maneuvering space without impeding vehicular access to and from any adjacent fueling pump station. The development will also provide reciprocal vehicular access to the adjacent commercial property to the north to minimize vehicle trips on the surrounding street system.

Additionally, the proposal exceeds the minimum site landscaping required by the HBZSO. A minimum 10% of the net site is required (2,230 sq. ft.) as landscaping and 16.1% (3,582 sq. ft.) is proposed, including a 20 ft. deep corner planter, 10 ft. wide street side planters, and 5 ft. wide planters surrounding the proposed building at the northeast corner.

The surrounding uses to the north, east, and south are commercial businesses, with single-family uses located diagonally adjacent to the northeast corner of the subject site. To the west, across Springdale Street, is an existing industrial distribution center. The proposed site layout orients access to the property and the fueling pumps from the southwest corner of the site, abutting the existing intersection, placing the primary fueling and vehicular activities farthest from the single-family residences to the northeast. In addition, the proposed retail market building measures approximately 20-22 ft. high providing a buffer to the residential area, and impacts to the residences are not anticipated.

Although the applicant requests a 24-hour operation of the convenience store and fueling station, the Police Department recommends several suggested conditions of approval to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses. The recommendations include prohibiting beer and wine sales between 2:00 A.M. - 6:00 A.M. and limiting the sale of certain sizes of beer and wine products (Attachment No. 1).

Despite the substandard size of the property, staff supports the request because the service station is efficiently designed with adequate ingress, egress, and on-site circulation, improves the site and streetscape by providing an excess of new perimeter landscaping, and provides sufficient on-site parking to support the retail and fueling station uses. The 191 sq. ft. deficiency in minimum lot size does not preclude the development from meeting the unique development standards for service stations. Furthermore, although vacant now, the site was previously developed with two different service stations, and the service station and convenience market are appropriate uses for this corner

parcel.

Urban Design Guidelines Conformance:

The proposed project will comply with the City's Urban Design Guidelines for General Commercial development. The proposed one-story retail building and detached pump station canopy structure complies with applicable setback and height requirements and complements adjacent uses. Additionally, the design of the new retail building incorporates a four-sided architectural treatment, and includes elements such as exterior stone accent wainscoting, varied paint color accents, and a metal eyebrow feature highlighting the primary customer entry on the building façade facing the intersection. Further, the base of the columns supporting the proposed canopy and an exterior wainscoting of the retail building are treated with the same stacked stone which ties together the two different structures architecturally. For customer safety and security, lighting under the fueling canopy and over parking spaces adjacent to the retail building will provide the fueling and loading areas with sufficient lighting during nighttime hours and in a manner that prevents spillage of lighting to adjacent properties. The canopy and retail building will be oriented in a manner that allows for on-site landscaping above minimum development standards, sufficient on-site parking spaces, and site lighting that improves the quality of the commercial streetscape at the subject intersection.

Environmental Status:

The proposed project is Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303, Class 3 - *New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*, because the project involves the construction of one commercial building that is less than 10,000 sq. ft. where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

Coastal Status:

Not Applicable.

Design Review Board:

Not Applicable.

Other Departments Concerns and Requirements:

The Departments of Community Development, Public Works, Police, and Fire have reviewed the project and identified a list of applicable code requirements (Attachment No. 3). The Police Department recommends conditions of approval, including a limit on the available hours of beer and wine sales, and certain sizes of beer and wine products for sale.

Public Notification:

Legal notice was published in the Huntington Beach Wave on July 15, 2021, and notices were sent to property owners of record and tenants within a 500 ft. radius of the subject property, individuals/organizations requesting notification (Planning Division's Notification Matrix), applicant, and interested parties. As of July 21, 2021, staff has not received any inquiries or comments regarding the project.

Application Processing Dates:

DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:
June 14, 2021

MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):
August 14, 2021

SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project based on the following:

- Use is consistent with the General Plan and the Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance (HBZSO);
- Proposed project provides an additional modern facility to an existing local business and offers new public and private improvements to the surrounding uses;
- No impacts are anticipated to the surrounding properties;
- Dedication for public right-of-way improvements results in a negligible substandard lot size; and
- The improvements associated with the use will further the vision and viability of the Commercial General zone.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Suggested Findings and Conditions of Approval
2. Conceptual Site Plan, Floor Plans, and Elevations received and dated June 14, 2021
3. Code Requirements Letter dated June 17, 2021
4. Vicinity Map
5. Project Narrative