



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, October 26, 2021

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MERRIAM  
IVAN CARMONA, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

**SUBJECT:** TEXT AMENDMENT TO CNS ZONING DISTRICT TO ALLOW  
MECHANICAL CARWASH (DLU 6341) AS CONDITIONALLY  
PERMITTED USE

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## **STATEMENT OF ISSUES:**

Text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow mechanical carwash (DLU 6341) as a conditionally permitted use in the Neighborhood Shopping Center District.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt an Ordinance modifying subdivision (b) of Section 14-16.1403 (District Regulations) to allow mechanical carwash (DLU 6341) as conditionally permitted use in the CNS (Neighborhood Shopping Center) zoning district.

## **DISCUSSION:**

On September 7, 2021, the Planning Commission adopted a Resolution recommending that the City Council adopt a modification to the CNS (Neighborhood Shopping Center) zoning district to allow mechanical carwash (DLU 6341) with approval of a Special Use Permit.

“The purpose of the Neighborhood Shopping Center (CNS) Zoning District is to establish regulatory controls on commercial shopping center complexes located outside the central business district of the City; and to provide predominantly commercial retail with limited service and amusement uses on a common parcel, or a combination of adjacent parcels with common access for the public to be located on major streets and arterials<sup>1</sup>.”

A wide range of retail commercial and certain business and personal service-related uses are permitted in this District. Shopping centers often have automobile service stations (GLU 51), which are principally permitted under § 14-16.1401. While mechanical car washes (DLU 6341) are allowed conditionally in other commercial zoning districts, they are not a conditionally

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<sup>1</sup> [Section 14-16.1400 of WMC](#)

permitted use in the CNS Zoning District<sup>2</sup>. This omission is the reason for the proposed text amendment.

Car washes are often appurtenant to gas stations if they can be accommodated on the premises. The City has established criteria and standards for combining the servicing of motor vehicles with their washing on a drive-in or drive through basis. Key design consideration include that the site is sufficiently large to allow the addition of a car wash while ensuring the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians on and around the site.

As areas zoned CNS are intended to provide convenient shopping with limited amounts of retail and service uses to adequately supply the day-to-day needs of the community, allowing car washes in the CNS Zoning District would provide a useful service in convenient locations. Similar to the CT, CV and CN Zoning Districts, the CNS Zoning District is located predominantly on major streets. The Watsonville 2005 General Plan identifies East Lake Avenue, Freedom Boulevard, and Main Street as major arterial streets that can accommodate high volumes of traffic.

The text amendment to allow mechanical car washes would provide zoning ordinance consistency given that there are existing car washes in the zoning district, and this district is very similar to the CT, CN, and CV districts. These Districts are located in convenient locations surrounded by residential neighborhoods, major streets, shopping centers that provide retail and service uses for the day-to-day needs of the community. Existing car washes in the CNS District would now conform to the Zoning ordinance in the Municipal Code.

Proposed automotive car washes (DLU 6341) within the CNS Zoning District would still require a Special Use Permit, giving the City the ability to determine whether such use would satisfy the Zoning Ordinance in the proposed location.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The proposed zoning code text amendment may allow for greater flexibility for property owners and existing gas station owners to expand their businesses by proposing installation of a mechanical car wash (DLU 6341). This aligns with Strategic Plan Goal 4: Economic Development by amending the ordinance to allow greater flexibility of development for gas station owners.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact to the City by approval or denying the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment.

#### **ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

1. Deny the proposed amendment
2. Adopt the proposed amendment, with revisions

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<sup>2</sup> Automobile car washes are allowed in the Neighborhood Commercial (CN), Thoroughfare Commercial (CT), and Visitor Commercial (CV) Zoning Districts with issuance of a Special Use Permit.

**ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):**

1. Staff Report from September 7, 2021 Planning Commission meeting