



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, January 18, 2022

**TO:** PLANNING COMMISSION

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

**SUBJECT:** SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (APPLICATION NO. 627) FOR AN AUTOMATED CAR WASH FOR EXISTING GAS STATION LOCATED AT 1455 FREEDOM BLVD (APN: 016-061-06)

---

## RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution recommending that the Planning Commission approve the project to allow construction of a new 1,600± square foot automated drive-thru mechanical car wash in an existing gas station with mini-mart located at 1455 Freedom Boulevard (APN 016-061-06). The recommendations are based on the findings attached to the Resolution as Exhibit A and subject to the conditions of approval attached to the Resolution as Exhibits B, and C.

---

## BASIC PROJECT DATA

**Application No.:** 627

**Location:** 1455 Freedom Blvd

**APN:** 016-061-06

**Lot Size:** 0.52± acres (22,956± square feet)

**General Plan:** General Commercial (CG)

**Zoning:** Neighborhood Shopping Center (CNS)

**Surrounding General Plan/Zoning:** Public/Quasi Public (P/QP) in the Institutional (N) Zoning District to the north, General Commercial (CG) in the CNS Zoning District to the west, east, and south.

**Existing Use:** 2,363± square foot mini-mart with fueling stations

**Proposed Use:** same use with new self-automated 1,600± square foot drive thru car wash

**Surrounding Uses:** Various commercial uses to the south, west and east. Institutional uses to the north east

**Flood Zone:** N/A

**Applicant:** Brenda Ramirez, CVEAS, Inc. 2511 Logan Street, Selma, CA 93662

**Property Owner:** Shashi Sharma, Watsonville Petroleum, 82 N. Main Street, Milpitas, CA 95035

## **BACKGROUND**

According to the Santa Cruz County Assessor's Office, in 1968 the parcel was developed with a 2,363± square foot gas station containing two pump islands including four fueling stations.

On December 30, 1986, the City of Watsonville Community Development Department issued an Administrative Use Permit (U-71-86) to allow a mini-mart with an ABC Type 20 License for off-sale beer and wine sales in conjunction with an existing gas station located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

On January 29, 2003, the City of Watsonville Community Development Department issued a no fee Special Use Permit (PP2002-232) to allow a change of ownership of an existing gas station with mini-mart operating an ABC Type 20 license for off-sale beer and wine sales located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

On August 28, 2005, the City of Watsonville Community Development Department issued a Special Use permit (PP2005-309) for a change of ownership of an existing gas station with mini-mart operating an ABC Type 20 license located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

On February 13, 2013, the City of Watsonville Community Development Department issued a Special Use Permit (PP2013-3) for a change of ownership of an existing gas station with mini-mart operating an ABC Type 20 license located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

On April 2, 2013, the City of Watsonville Planning Commission approved a Special Use Permit with Design Review (PP2013-31) for the construction of a 1,097± square foot addition to an existing gas station for expanding a convenience store operating an ABC Type 20 license located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

On May 6, 2014, the City of Watsonville Planning Commission approved a Special Use Permit with Design Review (PP2014-46) for the construction of a 1,640± square foot car wash to an existing gas station with mini-mart located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06). The applicant/property owner had two years to finalize the Planning Commission's approval with issuance of a building permit. No building permit was issued for the approved project and, therefore, the approval expired on May 6, 2016.

On September 9, 2020, Brenda Ramirez, on behalf of Shashi Sharma, property owner, submitted a Special Use Permit with Design Review and Environmental Review (Application No. 627) for a proposed 1,600± square foot automated drive thru mechanical car wash in an existing gas station with mini-mart operating an ABC Type 20 License located at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06).

Staff determined that the property at 1455 Freedom Blvd (APN: 016-061-06) is located within the Neighborhood Shopping Center (CNS) Zoning District. The CNS zoning district does not allow automated mechanical drive-thru carwashes. The Planning Commission approval of

Special Use Permit with Design Review (PP2014-46) for the construction of a 1,640± square foot automated mechanical drive-thru car wash to an existing gas station with mini-mart located at 1455 Freedom Blvd was approved in error. As the CNS zoning district does not allow automated drive-thru car washes, in order to move the project forward, a zoning code text amendment is required for the CNS zoning district.

On September 7, 2021, the City of Watsonville Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. 12-21 (PC) recommending that the City Council adopt an ordinance amending section 14-16.1403 (Conditional Uses Table) of the Watsonville Municipal Code to allow mechanical car washes (GLU 6341) as conditionally permitted use in the Neighborhood Shopping Center Zoning District.

On October 26, 2021, the City of Watsonville City Council adopted Ordinance No. amending Section 14-16.1403 (Conditional Uses Table) of the Watsonville Municipal Code to allow mechanical car washes (DLU 6341) as conditionally permitted uses in the Neighborhood Shopping Center Zoning District.

## **PROCESS**

### Design Review

All new construction, exterior remodeling, additions, or changes in use requiring additional parking, which involve structures used for multi-family residential, commercial, industrial or public purpose are subject to a Design Review. [WMC § 14-12.400](#). No Building Permit shall be issued for a development subject to a Design Review until a Design Review Permit has been approved in accordance with WMC Chapter 14-12 and conditions of approval have been met.

When considering applications for Design Review, the Planning Commission shall evaluate the impact of the Design Review on and its compatibility with surrounding properties and neighborhoods to ensure the appropriateness of the development and make the findings set forth in [WMC Section 14-12.403](#). The findings for a Design Review Permit are substantially similar to those required for Special Use Permits, except for the finding set forth in subdivision (e) of WMC Section 14-12.403, which requires additional design elements to ensure an overall harmonious design to minimize adverse effects of the proposed development on adjacent properties.

### Special Use Permit

Pursuant to WMC Section 14-16.1403(b), establishment of an automated mechanical drive-thru carwash is subject to a Special Use Permit approved by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission is authorized to approve Special Use Permits in accordance with the procedures set forth in WMC Sections [14-12.509](#) through [14-12.512](#) if it can make the findings required by [14-12.513](#).

The purpose of the Special Use Permit is to ensure the proper integration of uses which, because of their special nature, may be suitable only in certain locations or zoning districts

or only provided that such uses are arranged or designed in a particular manner.<sup>1</sup> This special review shall be for the purpose of determining that the proposed use is, and will continue to be, compatible with surrounding, existing, or planned uses; and for the further purpose of establishing such special conditions as may be necessary to ensure the harmonious integration and compatibility of uses in the neighborhood and with the surrounding area.<sup>2</sup>

### Environmental Review

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires local and state governments to consider the potential environmental effects of a project before making a decision on it. CEQA's purpose is to disclose any potential impacts of a project and suggest methods to minimize identified impacts so that decision-makers will have full information upon which to base their decision. Certain classes of projects, however, have been identified that do not have a significant effect on the environment, and are considered categorically exempt from the requirement for the preparation of environmental documents. [State CEQA Guidelines § 15300](#).

### **STANDARD OF REVIEW & APPEAL PROCESS**

The decision whether to approve this Special Use Permit with Design Review (App. No. 627) is adjudicative, sometimes referred to as quasi-judicial. The Planning Commission is called upon to determine whether this project complies with local ordinances.

Whether a particular decision is adjudicative or legislative affects the requirements for findings to support the decision. Legislative decisions involve the adoption of broad policies applicable to many situations (e.g., general plan amendments). Adjudicative (or “quasi-judicial”) decisions, on the other hand, apply already adopted policies or standards to individual cases, such as a variance or conditional use permit application.

Adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions are based on evidence and must always be supported by findings.<sup>3</sup> Legislative decisions, however, need not be accompanied by findings unless a State law or City ordinance requires them.

The decision before the Planning Commission—a Special Use Permit with Design Review—is an adjudicative/quasi-judicial decision and requires findings, either for denial, or as recommended, for approval that is supported by substantial evidence. *Toigo v Town of Ross* (1998) 70 Cal App 4th 309; see also *Petrovich v. City of Sacramento* (2020) 48 Call App 5<sup>th</sup> 963

If the Planning Commission's decision is appealed, the City Council would consider whether the action taken by the Zoning Administrator was erroneously taken and may sustain, modify or overrule the action. In order for an official action to be overturned by an appeal, the City Council must find that the action taken by the Planning Commission was taken erroneously

---

<sup>1</sup> [WMC § 14-12.500](#)

<sup>2</sup> [WMC § 14-12.501](#)

<sup>3</sup> Quasi-judicial decisions require the decision-making body to take evidence and use its judgment to make factual as well as legal determinations about whether a particular property or project meets the standards established by the land use ordinance.



and was inconsistent with the intent of the Zoning District regulations that regulate the proposed action. [WMC § 14-10.1106](#)

## DISCUSSION

### Existing Site

The 0.52±-acre parcel is developed with a 2,363± square foot mini-mart with gas station containing two pump islands including four fueling stations under a 1,215± square foot canopy. The gas station and mini-mart are operated by 7-Eleven and 76 Gas Station. Adjacent to the parcel is an existing shopping center providing groceries, restaurants, and an array of commercial uses. The parcel is located at the intersection of Freedom Blvd and Alta Vista Avenue. Freedom Blvd is identified as one of the seven major arterials<sup>4</sup> in the Watsonville 2005 General Plan. Access to the parcel is derived off one 35±-foot wide driveway approach of Alta Vista Avenue. Two more 30-foot wide driveway approaches are derived off Freedom Blvd. The parcel also has a fourth access onto the adjacent Alta Vista Shopping Center. Figure 1 identifies the parcel and surrounding uses.



**FIGURE 1.** Aerial Photograph of Project Site and Surrounding Uses  
Source: Google Earth, 2021

<sup>4</sup> Major Arterial: A relatively high speed, long distance surface street designed to move large volumes of traffic across the urbanized area and to provide access to the freeway.

## Proposed Project

The project proposes construction of a 1,600± square foot detached automated drive-thru car wash on an existing gas station with a 2,363± square foot mini-mart. As shown on the site plan (Attachment 1, sheet A1.1), the proposed drive-thru car wash would provide the following associated site improvements:

- 3,466± square feet of new landscaping
- New 42-inch wrought iron fencing
- New trash enclosure
- Accessible path from public right-of-way to mini-mart
- Fire sprinklers
- New car wash water reclamation system
- Driveway approach abandonment at Alta Vista Ave

## ***Special Use Permit with Design Review***

When considering applications for Special Use Permit with Design Review, the Planning Commission shall evaluate the impact of the project on and its compatibility with surrounding properties and neighborhoods to ensure the appropriateness of the project at a particular location. This includes being able to make the finding that the proposed project is consistent with policies of the General Plan.

## General Plan

Land designated General Commercial (CG) in the *City of Watsonville's 2005 General Plan* allows for a variety of commercial related uses, including retail sales; personal, professional, financial, business and medical offices and services; entertainment; lodging; restaurants and automobile sales intended to serve the needs of the community and the surrounding region. Intensities in these areas shall not exceed a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.45.

The project is proposing a 1,600± square foot automated drive thru mechanical car wash in an existing gas station with a 2,363± square foot mini-mart and 1,215± fueling station canopy. The FAR for the proposed project is 0.23<sup>5</sup>.

The proposed project is also consistent with the following General Plan goals, policies and implementation measures:

- **Goal 4.3 – Commercial Land Use.** Revitalize the central business district and provide adequate neighborhood commercial services.
- **Policy 4.C – Commercial Land Use.** The City shall plan for revitalization of the central business district along with the distribution of convenient neighborhood commercial centers.

---

<sup>5</sup> Floor Area Ratio Calculation: building area ÷ lot area = FAR (5,178 SF ÷ 22,956 SF = 0.23)

- **Implementation Measure 4.C.2 – Neighborhood Commercial Land Use.** The City shall designate an appropriate amount of land for neighborhood commercial services to meet the daily shopping needs of surrounding residential populations.

The project proposes construction of a new 1,600± square foot automated drive thru mechanical car wash in an existing gas station with a 2,363± square foot mini-mart. The new car wash would complement the existing gas station with mini-mart and shopping center by providing a convenient location for residents to patronize. The car wash would also serve the surrounding neighborhoods as the parcel is located on Freedom Blvd, a major arterial road, that can sustain high volumes of traffic.

### Zoning

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. [WMC § 14-16.1400](#)

The proposed project to construct a 1,600± square foot automated drive-thru mechanical car wash is a conditionally permitted use within the CNS Zoning District, requiring approval of a Special Use Permit by the Planning Commission.

### Conformity with Zoning District Regulations

The project, as conditioned, is also consistent with all development regulations for the proposed 1,600± square foot automated drive thru mechanical car wash in the CNS Zoning District.

**Parking.** Pursuant to WMC Section 14-17.801(e), a gas station with minimart requires one space per each 200 square feet of floor area. As shown on the site plan (Attachment 1, sheet A1.1), the minimart is 2,363± square feet in size, requiring 12 parking spaces<sup>6</sup>. The site plan shows that 13 total parking spaces are provided on-site. Four parking spaces are provided adjacent to the car wash exit, one ADA space is provided to the north west of the minimart, and the remaining 8 spaces are provided under the 1,215± square foot fuel canopy. The proposed carwash is ancillary to the existing mini mart with service station, therefore no extra parking spaces are required. Also, the automatic carwash allows stacking of four vehicles, which serve the carwash.

**Circulation and Access.** The proposed project includes two driveway access points, both off Freedom Blvd. A third driveway approach off Alta Vista Ave would be closed off and replaced with a sidewalk, curb, gutter, and landscaping strip. This would allow stacking and queuing of vehicles for the car wash and would provide better circulation. From the two driveway access points off Freedom Blvd, vehicles would traverse the site into the fueling stations or the car wash in a counter-clockwise pattern, entering the carwash on the

---

<sup>6</sup> Parking calculation: size of minimart ÷ 200 SF = (2363 ÷ 200 = 11.8 parking spaces)

northeastern side of the site and exiting on the southeastern side of the site. Pedestrian access is provided via sidewalks and walkways connecting all the existing on-site buildings and off-site sidewalk along Alta Vista Ave. Additionally, the circulation throughout the site is designed to minimize conflicts with bicyclists, pedestrians, and other motorists. A Traffic Impact Study (Attachment 2) was prepared by Vang Inc. Consulting Engineers to determine whether the proposed carwash could have any significant impacts on the transportation network. The study found that the car wash would not have a significant impact on the surrounding transportation network, and should be approved with fulfillment of the following mitigation measures:

- It is recommended the east bound left turn lane on Alta Vista Ave be extended to provide for 130 Feet of storage with a 60 FT bay taper.
- Provide adequate wayfinding, signage, and illumination on-site to optimize safety and to reduce conflicts among delivery trucks, motorist, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- Provide on-site bike racks/bike lockers and pedestrian accessibility to all proposed buildings and offsite sidewalk.
- The project shall pay its fair share of the City-wide traffic impact fee.
- The City shall continue to monitor traffic operations at Freedom Blvd and Alta Vista Ave intersection.

These mitigation measures are included as conditions of approval. The project is also conditioned to require an encroachment permit for all proposed work in the public right-of-way. As conditioned, the project meets all WMC regulations related to circulation and access.

**Setbacks.** The CNS Development Standards regulate setbacks for projects proposed in the CNS Zoning District. The CNS Zoning District standards allow construction of commercial buildings with no setbacks, when the property is abutting another commercial property. As shown on the site plan (Attachment 1, sheet A1.1) the new car wash has the following setbacks:

**TABLE 1** CNS Setback Standards

Setbacks	CNS setbacks	Project setbacks
Front	15 FT	118 FT
Rear	0 FT	10 FT
Sides	0 FT	35 FT and 30 FT
Buildings	6 FT	6 FT

**Building Height.** The CNS Zoning District allows a maximum height of 35 feet for buildings. As shown on the plans (Attachment 1, sheet A2.0), the proposed automated drive thru car



wash building height is 20± Feet. As such, the proposed building height meets the building height standards for the CNS Zoning District.

**Landscaping.** The CNS Zoning District landscaping standards is dependent on location of buildings to each other and to the parking lot arrangement. The landscaping areas are required to promote visual aesthetic appeal and to maintain environmental balance. As shown on the landscaping plans (Attachment 1, sheet L1.0), 3,466± square feet of landscaping are proposed for the project site. Totalling 15 percent of the site. The proposed landscaping would border the property line along the sidewalk adjacent to Alta Vista Ave and the adjacent shopping center screening the proposed car wash from public view.

The proposed Planting Plan provides a preliminary list and depicts location of trees and shrubs. The proposed plantings include an appropriate mix of drought-tolerant species suitable for the Central Coast region. A complete list is provided in Table 2.

**TABLE 2** Preliminary Plan List

Latin Name	Common Name	Size	Quantity
Prunus Bureiana	Flowering Plum	15 gal	5
Chitalpa Tashkeniensis	Pink Dawn	15 gal	2
Ceroc Occidentalis	Wester Redbud	15 gal	6
Lavandula Angustifolia	English Lavander	5 gal	6
Kniphofia Uvalia	Red Hot Poker	1 gal	24
Dietes Bicolor	Fortnight Lily	1 gal	18
Callistemon Viminanalis	Little John Bottlebrush	5 gal	24
Lantana Montevicensis	Purple Tailing Lantana	5 gal	9
Raphiolepis Umbellata	Veddo Hawthorn	5 gal	9
Salvia Chickering Allen	Sage	5 gal	5
Baccharis Pilularis	Dwarf Coyote Brush	5 gal	25
Morea Irridioides	Fortnight Lily	1 gal	8

Source: CVEAS Plans Sheet L1.0

A project Condition of Approval requires the applicant to submit a final Landscape and Irrigation Plan for review and approval by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit. The Landscape Plan shall be in substantial compliance with the Planting Plan (Attachment 1, sheet L1.0). All plantings are required to be drought tolerant, all trees are required to be 24-inch box specimens, and a minimum of 25 percent of all shrub material shall have a minimum 5-gallon container size. In addition, the project has been conditioned to provide an automated, low-flow irrigation system (e.g. drip irrigation system) for all landscape areas, which requires programming for night and early morning hours in order to minimize evaporation.

**Fencing.** The CNS Zoning District standards requires perimeter fencing compatible with the architectural style of the project. As shown in the plans (Attachment 1, sheet A1.1-A1.3) a 42-inch tall wrought iron fence is proposed enclosing the project site, except for the frontage adjacent to Freedom Blvd. A project Condition of Approval requires the applicant to submit for a Fence Permit to the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit.

**Elevations, Colors and Materials.** The Plan Set includes elevations and renderings for the proposed car wash (Attachment 1, sheet A2.0). The proposed architectural design is compatible with an automated mechanical car wash setting. It has a modern look, with some façade articulation with colors to create visual interest. Proposed materials include concrete with a stucco finish.

**Trash Enclosure.** The project is conditioned to meet WMC Section 6-3.610 which requires any development to include adequate, accessible, and convenient areas for collecting, storing, and loading solid waste or recyclable materials. The trash enclosure would be designed and constructed under current City Public Improvement Standards.

**Lighting/Visual Impact.** Nighttime illumination has the potential to change ambient lighting conditions that creates a visual nuisance or hazard. The impact of nighttime lighting depends upon the type of use affected, the proximity to the affected use, the intensity of specific lighting, and the background or ambient level of the combined nighttime lighting. Nighttime ambient light levels may vary considerably depending upon the age, condition, and abundance of point-of-light sources present in a particular view. The use of exterior lighting for security and aesthetic illumination of architectural features may contribute substantially to ambient nighttime lighting conditions.

Spillover of light onto adjacent properties (“light trespass”) has the potential to interfere with certain activities including vision, sleep, privacy and general enjoyment of the natural nighttime condition. Light sensitive uses include residential, some commercial and institutional uses and natural areas. Changes in nighttime lighting may significantly impact sensitive land uses if a proposed project increases ambient lighting conditions beyond its property line and project lighting routinely spills over into adjacent light-sensitive land use areas.

The CNS Zoning District recommends illumination for the parking lot areas and pedestrian walkways throughout the project site. The proposed project did not submit a photometric plan, however, in order to make the finding that the project would not create a visual nuisance or hazard, all lighting must be designed for specific tasks (e.g. illuminating parking, paths, and entries). The project is conditioned to submit a Site Photometric Plan to show the location of proposed lighting and the amount of light, measured in foot-candles (fc), on the ground surface. Proposed lighting may take the form of pole or wall-mounted fixtures and shall be installed at intervals and heights to ensure adequate lighting of the parking lot and car wash. The Lighting Photometric Plan shall also demonstrate that proposed lighting would not create

a significant source of spillover light onto adjacent properties or a glare nuisance to motorist on public streets.

**Drainage.** In 2014, the City adopted Ordinance No. 1299-14 (CM), amending WMC Section 6-3.535 to require that Resolution No. 4-14 (CM) be implemented for all applicable new development and redevelopment construction projects. Resolution No. 4-14 (CM) provides post-construction stormwater management requirements (PCRs) for applicable projects. The primary objective of the PCRs is to ensure the reduction of pollutant discharges to the maximum extent possible and prevent stormwater runoff from causing or contributing to a violation of water quality standards. The PCRs categorize projects into four primary tiers based primarily on the net increase in impervious surfaces that would result from a project (i.e., the amount of new and replaced impervious surfaces). Each PCR tier is linked to increasingly stringent performance requirements for stormwater management and treatment. Each PCR tier is subject to the performance requirements of that tier, plus the performance requirements of the lower tiers, as applicable.

The proposed project would create 1,600± square feet of new impervious surface area. The proposed project is not considered a regulated project as the new development is creating less than 2,500 square feet of new impervious surface. Table 3 provides a summary of the PCR tiers and their associated performance requirements for stormwater management and treatment.

The project is conditioned to provide erosion control measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) at time of construction. The car wash would also provide the best water efficient recycling system. Any wastewater generated from pre-washing of vehicles is prohibited from discharging to the valley gutter that’s connected to the storm drain. Prior to submittal of a building permit, the project is conditioned to revise the plans to show the detail, size, and location of the clarifiers needed for the pretreatment of the car wash wastewater prior to discharge to the City sewer. A utility easement is also required with the adjacent APN 016-061-10 to allow connection to the existing storm drain located in the public right-of-way.

**TABLE 3** Summary of City of Watsonville Post-Construction Requirements

PCR Tier	Requirements
<p><b>Tier 1</b></p> <p>Projects that create or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface, including detached single-family home projects.</p>	<p><b>Performance Requirement 1 – Site Design &amp; Runoff Reduction</b></p> <p>Implement site design and runoff reduction measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit disturbance of creeks and natural drainage features.</li> <li>• Minimize compaction of highly permeable soils.</li> <li>• Limit clearing and grading of native vegetation to the minimum area necessary.</li> <li>• Minimize impervious surfaces.</li> <li>• Minimize runoff by incorporating permeable surfaces and directing runoff toward permeable areas or to rain barrels for reuse.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 2</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Requirement 2 – Water Quality Treatment</b></p>

PCR Tier	Requirements
<p>Projects, except detached single-family homes, with 5,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*.</p> <p>(Detached single-family home projects with 15,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*.)</p>	<p>Tier 1 performance requirements, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat stormwater runoff using one or more on-site systems, including low impact development treatment systems, biofiltration treatment systems, and non-retention based treatment systems.</li> <li>• Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requires of PCR Tier 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 3</b></p> <p>Projects, except detached single-family homes, that create or replace 15,000 square feet or more of impervious surface.</p> <p>(Detached single-family home projects with 15,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*.)</p>	<p><b>Performance Requirement 3 – Runoff Retention</b></p> <p>Tier 2 performance requirements, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use low impact development standards to prevent offsite discharge of runoff from events up to the 95th percentile rainfall event.</li> <li>• Where technical infeasibility prevents full on-figure site retention requirements, retention-based stormwater control measures shall be provided for no less than 10 percent of the project's impervious surface area.</li> <li>• Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requires of PCR Tier 3.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 4</b></p> <p>Projects that create and/or replace 22,500 square feet or more of impervious surface in Watershed Management Zone 1.</p>	<p><b>Performance Requirement 4 – Peak Management</b></p> <p>Tier 3 performance requirements, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control peak flows to not exceed pre-project flows for the 2-year through 10-year storm event.</li> <li>• Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requires of PCR Tier 4.</li> <li>• Submit an Operations and Maintenance Plan for structural stormwater control measures to the City of Watsonville for review and approval prior to final construction sign-off.</li> </ul>

Engineering staff reviewed the projects proposed stormwater management plans and found them to be consistent with the post construction storm water requirements.

**Automated Mechanical Car Wash.** The WMC establishes criteria and standards for automated mechanical car washes (Attachment 3). Those standards require a design appropriate for the site and surrounding traffic patterns and activities for the area. Sufficient space is required to provide service vehicles efficiently, to meet on-site parking and maneuvering needs, and to ensure safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians on and around the site. The minimum parcel size to establish an automated mechanical car wash is 10,000 square feet, plus 4,000 square feet for each 2 gasoline pumps, plus 7,000 square feet for each additional gasoline pump. The gas station with mini-mart contains two pump

islands with four fueling stations. Using the above standard, a lot size of 18,000 square feet is required to develop an automated mechanical car wash. The parcel size is 22,956± square feet, meeting the minimum lot size standard for automated mechanical car washes.

The proposed 1,600± square foot automated mechanical car wash is developed on a parcel providing on-site parking, drainage is maintained on-site, sufficient space allows maneuvering for vehicles, landscaping screens the car wash from public view and decorative fencing is provided enclosing the parcel from the adjacent shopping center. As conditioned, the project meets the automated mechanical car wash standards.

## ***Environmental Review***

### Traffic

A Traffic Study was prepared by Vang Inc. Consulting Services that indicates the project would not result in a significant increase in traffic (Attachment 2). The study forecasts that the project would generate 0 net new weekday trips, 0 net new AM peak hour trips, and 79 net new PM peak hours trips. The existing gas station and convenience store vehicle trips are already on the roadway and therefore is included in the traffic counts. Net new vehicle trips are those trips that are actually added to the transportation network by the development. Only the proposed carwash would generate new traffic/project trips. Therefore, no new traffic related impacts would result from project implementation.

### Categorical Exemption

A Categorical Exemption has been prepared for the construction of a 1,600± square foot automated mechanical drive thru car wash on a 0.52± acre site in an urbanized area, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project would have a significant effect on the environment. *CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3)*. In addition, this project is eligible for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption, pursuant to Section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, as the project involves the construction of a small structure on a site in an urbanized area where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The proposed project is located on a 0.52± acre parcel within the CNS zoning district surrounded by commercial uses. Landscaping would be installed adjacent to the car wash, providing screening and enhancing the appearance of the site. The building's architectural design is compatible with a car wash and gas station setting. Fencing is provided separating the project site from the adjacent shopping center. The project meets the requirements of the Watsonville Municipal Code, as conditioned, and would not cause material damage to other properties in the vicinity. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution approving the Special Use Permit with Design Review and Environmental Review (Application No. 627) to allow construction of a 1,600 square foot automated mechanical car wash for an existing gas station with mini-mart located at 1455 Freedom Blvd, based on the attached findings and conditions.

## **ATTACHMENTS**



1. Watsonville Car Wash Building Plans (received September 9, 2020, revised April 2, 2021, and revised again on May 25, 2021)
2. Traffic Impact Study – (Dated April 1, 2021 – prepared by Vang Inc. Consulting Engineers)
3. Automobile Mechanical Wash Criteria and Standards