



STAFF REPORT
7/3/2024

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Sun Community Credit Union

SPECIFICS: Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 381, Architectural Review (AR) 24-07 to a 4,130 sq. ft. single story credit union branch with 24 parking stalls and 2 freestanding drive-up ATMs on a 1.97-acre site located at the Northeast corner of Cesar Chavez Street and Valley Road. (APN 778-242-026). Applicant: LaMacchia Group, LLC

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant request that the Planning Commission approve Resolution No. PC2024-13 approving Conditional Use Permit No. 381 and Architectural Review No. 24-07 a 4,130 sq. ft. single story credit union branch with 24 parking stalls and 2 freestanding drive-up ATMs on a 1.97-acre site located at the Northeast corner of Cesar Chavez Street and Valley Road with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff.

BACKGROUND:

The subject site consists of 1.97 acres of vacant commercial property consisting of two parcels on the Cesar Chavez Street Corridor and appears to have been vacant in all historical aerial photographs dating from 1939. In February 2011 the City prepared a report entitled “Improving Neighborhood Connections Along Coachella’s Harrison Street Corridor” (Corridor Plan) developed through a grant with Caltrans to make the Corridor safer for communities on both sides of the Street and envisions development patterns that foster a safer experience for pedestrians including new development characterized by buildings framing the Corridor rather than parking lots which was the previous development pattern. Cesar Chavez Street was once Harrison Street and previous to that it was the State Highway 86 and served a major highway through the Coachella Valley to the Salton Sea. The corridor no longer serves this purpose with the construction of the Expressway



86. The Coachella General Plan recognizes this plan and a policy of the Harrison Street Corridor Sub-area requires new development to follow the vision and design direction of the report.

Sun Community Credit Union (Sun Community) intends to establish a branch at this location. Sun Community was founded in 1954 with right branches in Brawley, Calexico, Calipatria, El Centro, Holtville, Imperial, Indio, Palm Springs.

Figure 1: Improving Neighborhood Connections Along Coachella’s Harrison Street Corridor exhibits relevant to subject site.

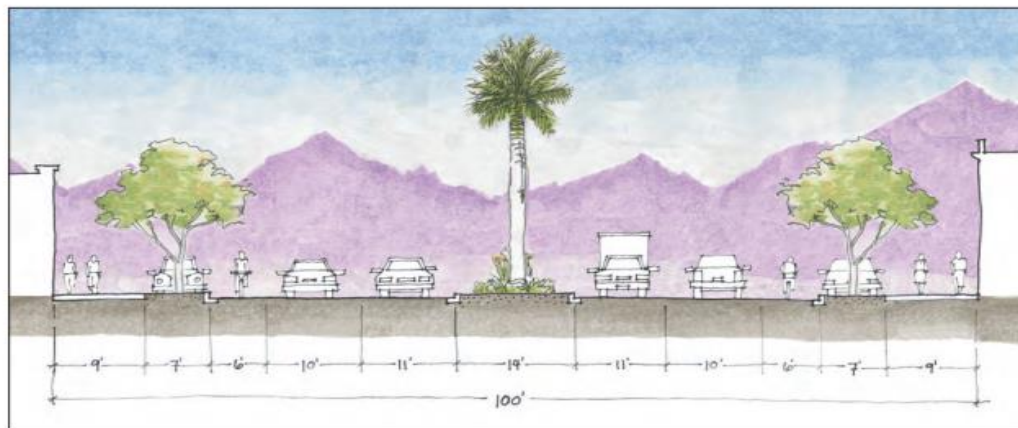
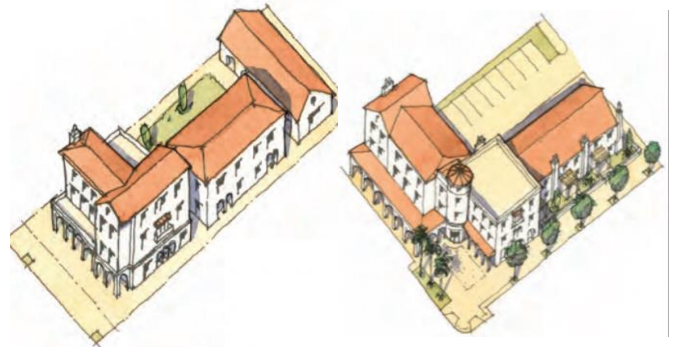
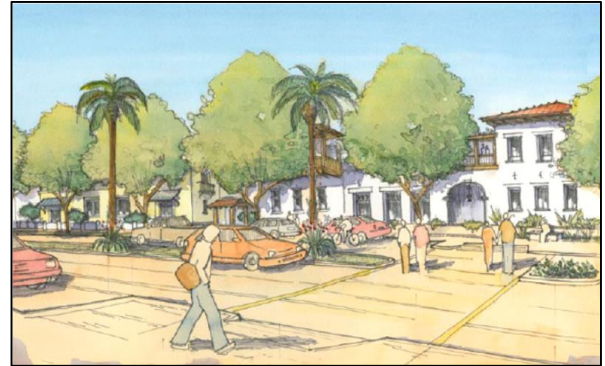


Figure 4.16: Harrison Street from Grapefruit Boulevard to Avenue 50 looking north – Proposed Option 1

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The surrounding land uses and zoning designations are as follows:

- North:** Family Dollar, (C-N, Neighborhood Commercial).
- South:** Vacant (C-N, Neighborhood Commercial).
- East:** Residential neighborhood (S-N, Suburban Neighborhood).
- West:** Cesar Chavez Street and (C-N, Neighborhood Commercial).

Site Plan

The applicant proposes construction of a 4,130 sq. ft. single-story Sun Community Credit Union commercial building. The proposed building orientation is largely consistent with the Corridor Plan with the building framing the corridor and parking placed at the rear of the site, which promotes the Plan's vision of a walkable environment with a well-designed public realm. The Corridor Plan identifies possibilities for multi-tenant building uses occupying the entire site frontage, buildings with entrances facing Cesar Chavez Street and a sidewalk up to 9 feet in width. The applicant does not propose the building setback from the sidewalk by 14 ft, a 6 ft wide sidewalk and building entrance at the building elevation fronting Valley Road. The applicant proposes to remove the existing sidewalk along the Cesar Chavez Street frontage and construct a new sidewalk separated from the street by a 13-foot-wide landscape parkway, which provides an opportunity for a safer pedestrian experience with opportunities for shading from trees from landscaping areas on both sides of the sidewalk.

There are two, 24 ft wide entry driveways, one to be constructed on both sides of the north property line of the subject site southern parcel at Cesar Chavez Street and the other at Valley Road. The Cesar Chavez Street driveway will facilitate shared access for any development proposed for the northerly parcel. A drive thru ATM is proposed with a one-way stacking lane that accommodates up to 6 queuing vehicles. On-site storm water retention is proposed with underground stormwater retention chambers beneath existing driveways. Twenty-four (24) parking stalls are proposed including two A.D.A. stalls where 16 parking stalls are required by the Coachella Municipal Code (C.M.C.), thereby the project has an 8-parking stall surplus. Staff has communicated to the applicant that additional building area at the site would supported for multi-tenant development due to the existing parking surplus that would enable an additional 2,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. A trash enclosure is proposed at the northeast corner of the site and a block wall is proposed at the rear of the property.

The applicant proposes an approximately 2,305 sq. ft. plaza area at the entrance to the building with seating, landscape planters and a proposed stone water feature anticipated to be an art in public places piece. The proposed art piece will require a separate detailed submittal for approval by the Coachella Cultural and Arts Commission. An outdoor walk up ATM is proposed at the western elevation of the building.

Figure 2: Site Plan

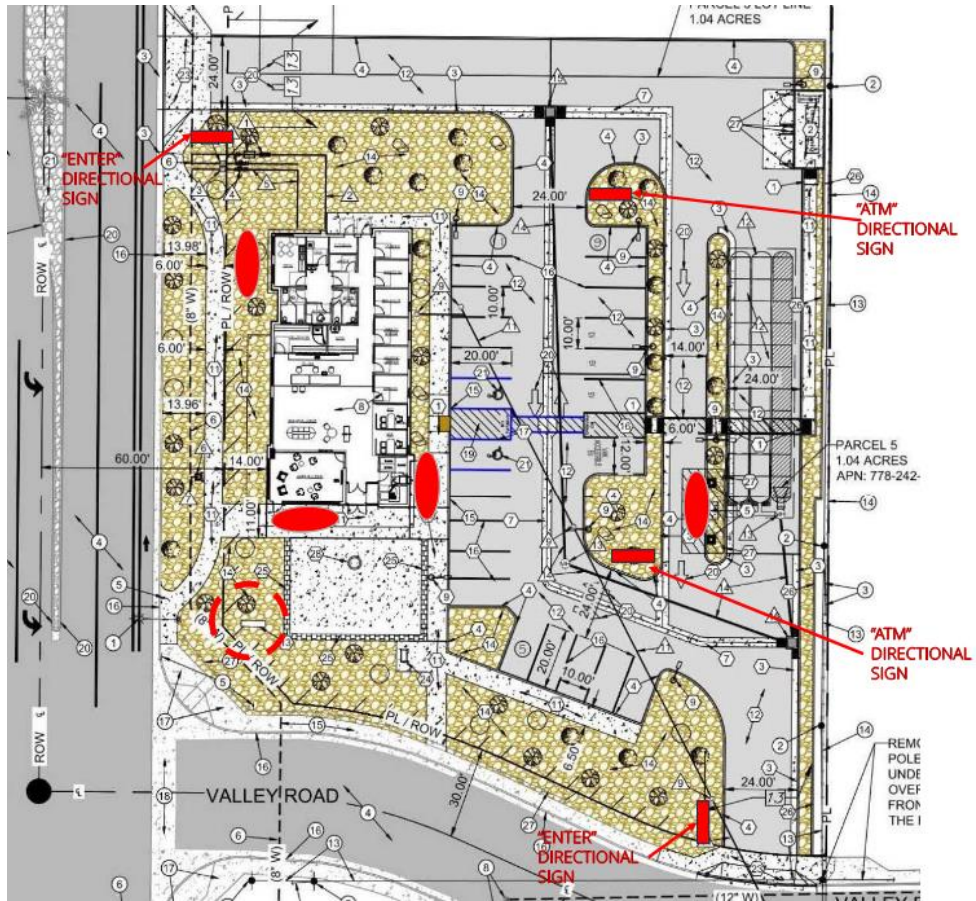


Figure 3: Renderings at the Corner of Cesar Chavez Street and Valley Road





Figure 4: Cesar Chavez Street (Westerly) Elevation



Figure 5: East Elevations

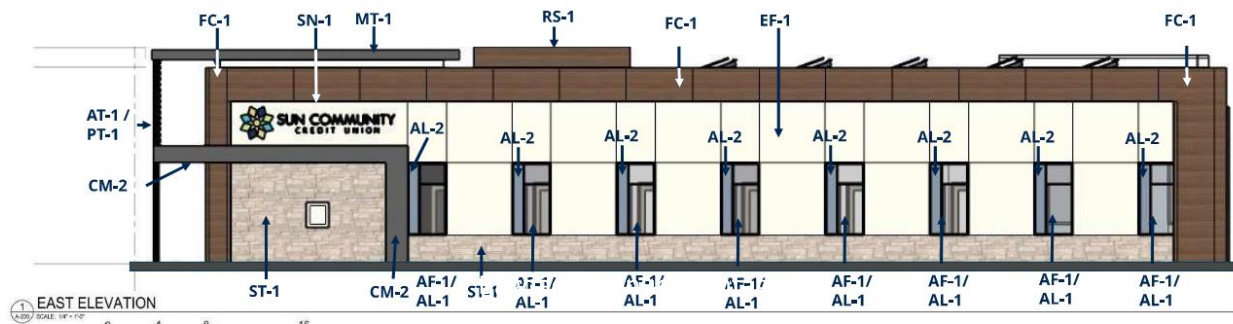


Figure 6: North Elevation

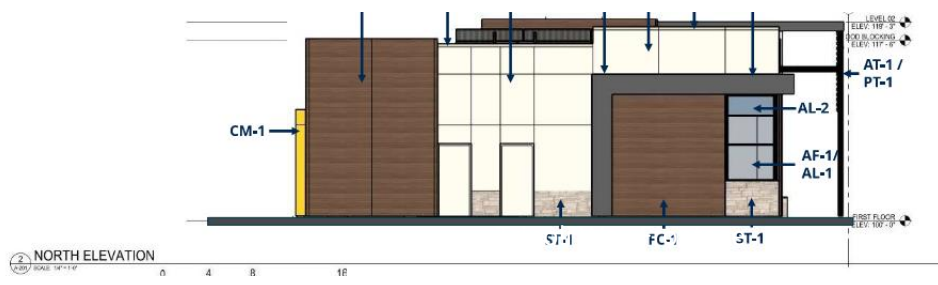


Figure 7: South Elevation



Architectural Design

The applicant proposes a modern architectural theme characterized by clean horizontal lines and large expanses of windows. The Cesar Chavez Street has a well-articulated design with pronounced Sun Control Louver element extending from westerly and southerly elevations to accommodate passive solar design consistent with General Plan policies for energy efficiency. Exterior walls consist of a combination of stucco (“white”), thin-set masonry veneer (“earth tone”), and pecan colored fiber cement siding (“brown”). A metal roof screen is proposed around the proposed rooftop equipment. Staff is supportive of the design as it integrates with the architectural design and colors of the building.

Sign Program

Signs programs are required for projects that propose an identification sign such as a monument sign and requires approval by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission review of the sign programs includes, but not limited to, sign placement, color, architectural integrity, construction material, legibility, size and scale, and illumination. The applicant may have a total sign area not to exceed 2 sq. ft. for every linear foot of building frontage on any one side of the business. The applicant has 90 linear feet of building frontage facing Cesar Chavez Street and is therefore permitted to have 180 sq. ft. of total sign area. The applicant proposes channel lettering for wall signs but does not provide a detail of how the sign is illuminated. Condition of approval 11 has been added requiring that the wall signs be illuminated as halo-lit signs. The applicant proposes one monument sign at a height of 4 ft 6 inches near the corner of Cesar Chavez Street and Valley Road.

Landscape Design

The plant palette shows a variety of trees including “Willow Acacia”, “Chilean Mesquite,” “Moon Lagoon Eucalyptus,” “Fruitless Olive,” “Palo Verde,” and “California Fan Palm.” The project is conditioned to modify the landscape plan to substitute California Fan Palm with Date Palm, substitute Palo Verde with another drought tolerant shade tree and integrate shade trees to the Cesar Chavez Street landscape parkway. Shrubs and succulents include “Yellow Oleander”,

“Coral Fountain”, “Sticks on Fire”, “Whales Tongue Agave.” Decomposed granite and Mexican Beach pebbles are proposed as groundcover.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The proposed project is within the Neighborhood Center land use designation of the General Plan 2035 Land Use and Community Character Element. The Neighborhood Center designation is intended to create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities—often mixed with multi-family housing—within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods. The project is consistent with the policies of the Land Use and Community Character's Sub-Area #4 policies, which recognizes the Cesar Chavez Street Corridor will become a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use corridor with a diverse mix of retail, commercial and residential uses. New development will be more urban in design with buildings that frame the street and parking located back of the buildings. While transformed over time, the corridor will continue to serve as a major thoroughfare and a major retail street for the City, focusing on goods and services that meet the daily needs of residents.

CONSISTENCY WITH ZONING

The subject site is zoned C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) zone, which allows for local service businesses primarily intended to serve the immediate neighborhood as a permitted use. A conditional use permit is required for the proposed drive through ATM. The project complies with the development standards of the C-N zone and C.M.C. as outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Development Standards

	Zoning Ordinance/ Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan	Proposed	Complies with Code
Parking (Minimum)	Zoning - Retail: 1 parking space for each 250 sq. ft. of gross floor area.	-On-Site Parking 24 spaces	Yes. 16 parking spaces are required. There is a surplus of 8 parking spaces.
Lot Requirements	Zoning - Minimum Lot width 50'	Lot width exceeds 50'	Yes
Height (maximum)	Zoning - 50' maximum	19'	Yes
Landscaping	Zoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking area or driveway abutting a street requires a 10' setback fully landscaped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas exceed 10' fully landscaped setback • Internal landscaping % not identified but 	Yes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal landscaping equal to a minimum of 5% of the parking and driveway area. • One 15 gallon tree for every 10 parking spaces. • All landscape planter beds in interior parking areas shall be not less than 5’ in width 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required by condition of approval. • One 15-gallon tree for every 10 spaces. • The rear property line planter to the rear of Panda Express is 5’. 	
Signs	<p>Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 180 sq. ft. total allowable wall signage • Main sign 50 sq. max • 6’ high monument sign and not exceed 32’ in sign area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 130 sq. ft. sign area total provided • Main sign is 37 sq. ft in area • Monument sign 4’6” in height and 27 sq. ft. in area 	Yes

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CONSIDERATION

The City of Coachella has determined that the proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 as an infill development because the project involves development on a site under five acres where the parcel complies with General Plan policies and zoning regulations, and where the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, and where the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services, and the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. The subject site is surrounded on all sides by urban uses and has no suitable habitat for endangered species. There are existing utilities and public services available to serve the site. As proposed, the project will comply with General Plan policies and zoning code regulations and the project does not result in any significant traffic, air quality, or water quality impacts. As such, no additional environmental review is required.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 2024-13 approving of CUP No. 381 and Architectural Review No. 24-07 with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff.
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 2024-13 approving of CUP No. 381 and Architectural Review No. 24-07 with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff, as modified by the Planning Commission.
- 2) Deny the proposed project.
- 3) Continue this item and provide staff and the applicant with direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff recommends alternative #1.

Attachments:

1. PC Resolution No. 2024-13 for CUP No. 381 and AR No. 24-07
Exhibit A – Conditions for Approval for CUP No. 381 AR No. 24-07
Exhibit B - Development Plan Set (Site Plan, Floor Plan, Elevations, Landscape Plan,
Sign Program)
2. Correspondence from IID and Riverside County Fire
3. Harrison Street Corridor Plan excerpts
4. Existing Conditions Photos