



STAFF REPORT
7/22/2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Luis Lopez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Coachella Travel Center

SPECIFICS:

- a) Environmental Assessment (EA 18-05) adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Program for the development of the Coachella Travel Centre project.
- b) Ordinance No. 1148 approving Change of Zone (CZ 18-11) from A-R (Agricultural Reserve) to C-G (General Commercial).
- c) Conditional Use Permits (CUP 310 and 311) for drive-thru restaurant, car wash and truck wash facilities.
- d) Variance (VAR 18-09) to allow a four-story hotel building in excess of 50 feet in height, in the C-G (General Commercial) zone.
- e) Architectural Review (AR 18-09) to allow a new 3,800 sq. ft. convenience store with service station, 1,200 sq. ft. drive-thru restaurant, 5,555 sq. ft. restaurant, 2,677 sq. ft. car wash tunnel, 4,754 sq. ft. truck washing facility, and 11, 259 sq. ft. 4-story hotel with related infrastructure on 14.1 acres of vacant land located on the south side of Avenue 50 between the Whitewater Channel and the State Route 86 Expressway.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council open the public hearing and continue this item, including all requested entitlements, to the September 9, 2020 City Council meeting.

BACKGROUND:

This item was continued from the May 13, 2020 and the July 8, 2020 City Council meeting dates due to numerous issues previously identified by City Council and staff that had yet to be addressed before the City Council could make an informed decision about the proposed development project. Additionally, the City has been in discussions with the City Attorney's office about the future roadway infrastructure project.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

The City Council and City staff previously raised traffic concerns with the project, as a result of the following issues:

- 1) Inadequacy of the traffic analysis discussed in the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document in light of existing substandard conditions at the intersection of Avenue 50 and Tyler Street, near the project entry and the need for a traffic impact analysis to be prepared by a licensed traffic engineer.
- 2) Seasonal flooding issues that result in closure of Avenue 50 at the Whitewater Channel immediately adjacent to the main entrance into the property and the proposed project.
- 3) Concern regarding the Cal Trans Bridge Inspection Report for the Dillon Road Bridge requiring posting weight restriction limits signs for truckers to use alternate routes.
- 4) City Engineer concerns for public sewer and water improvements conceptual-level engineering plans and analyses to be submitted for review prior to final decision actions for the project.

The applicant has indicated that they are waiting for the City of Coachella to make an offer to purchase the subject property for the Avenue 50 / 86 Expressway Interchange project. As such, the developer has not met with the City Engineer to further discuss the scoping for a traffic study and for concept-level utility plans for the project.

The City Attorney has indicated that an appraisal of the property has been ordered and the applicant is willing to continue this item for another 49 days to September 9, 2020.