



STAFF REPORT
6/5/2024

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Coachella Sunline Transportation Hub (Architectural Review No 21-13 Modification)

SPECIFICS: for exterior design modifications to the break room building of the Coachella Sunline Transportation Hub (Transit Hub). The entire project includes bus service that with a 540 sq. ft. Sunline Transit Agency breakroom/office building, 5 bus shelters, landscape improvements and a corner focal point for a future public art installation located at the Southeast corner of Cesar Chavez Street and 4th Street (APN 778-080-021). Applicant: Sunline Transit Agency.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Sunline Transit Agency (Sunline) requests Planning Commission approval of design modifications to the 540 sq. ft. Coachella Sunline Transportation Hub (Transit Hub) breakroom/office building that is part of a transit hub for bus service that also includes 5 bus shelters, landscape improvements and a corner focal point for a future public art installation located at the Southeast corner of Cesar Chavez Street and 4th Street (APN 778-080-021).

BACKGROUND:

The subject site is a .86 acre vacant property, part of the Pueblo Viejo Villas Transit-Oriented Development. The site is proposed as a transit center and associated with the construction of the 105-unit Pueblo Viejo Villas multi-family apartment project. The Pueblo Viejo Villas was completed May 2022 and is currently occupied by tenants. The City Engineer authorized a Lot Line Adjustment (LLA 2018-02) that created the alignment for a one-way loop street that would provide an exit to Cesar Chavez Street and full access from 4th Street for the Transit Hub and the Pueblo Viejo Villas development. The loop street also provides access to angled parking in from of the multifamily residential building.



The transit hub is funded through the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant from the California Department of Housing and Community Development for \$14.8 million, of which \$1,813,500 is designated for transit hub design and construction. The grant also provides funding for 4 Sunline buses, 40 vans, \$696,500 in street improvements, and an \$8,395,407 housing loan for the Pueblo Viejo Villas project.

The project was first presented to the Planning Commission on January 19, 2022 and the Commission requested that staff recommended revisions be integrated into the project and that restrooms be incorporated. The item was presented to the City Council at their regular meeting on February 9, 2022 as a presentation update. Councilmembers expressed concerns about the project design and also reaffirmed Planning Commission's recommendations for a public restroom. On July 6, 2022, the applicant proposed new revisions to the project design with an estimated construction cost \$1,774,859, within the designated budget for the transit hub. The estimated construction cost of the previous project design was \$1,163,000.

The project is now under construction with curb, sidewalk, fencing, and some landscaping installed. The breakroom building has been placed on-site without any City approvals of a building permit and the applicant indicated that some additional design improvements such as the installation of wall tile and roof tile still need to occur. Staff is concerned that the building was installed out of compliance with several project design requirements in the proposed renderings and specified in the conditions of approval. Staff communicated to the applicant that the proposed design modifications would require an Architectural Review Permit modification by the Planning Commission.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The surrounding land uses and zoning designations are as follows:

- North:** Fourth Street and Chevron gas station and convenience store (C-G, General Commercial).
- South:** Pueblo Viejo Villas apartment development. (C-G PUD, General Commercial – Planned Unit Development).
- East:** Apartment complex and Department of Public Social Services (C-G, General Commercial).
- West:** Cesar Chavez Street and Rite Aid Pharmacy (C-G, General Commercial).

Site Plan

The transit hub is accessed by vehicles entering the Mario Lazcano Drive loop road from 4th Street to pick up and drop off bus riders at the bus shelter locations and exit back onto Cesar Chavez Street or onto 4th Street. Figure 1 identifies one large “swoosh” shaped canopy on the island and two large “swoosh” shaped canopies. Sidewalks throughout the transit center are largely 6 feet in width (natural gray concrete) and provide pedestrians access to the transit hub. Sidewalks are wider at about 8 feet in width near the proposed lounge building.

A 540 sq. ft. Sunline Transit Agency lounge and breakroom building is proposed at the south portion of the transit hub. The building is not available for public use and will be used exclusively

by Sunline Transit Agency staff. The floor plan for the building includes a mechanical room, unisex bathroom, breakroom, janitor room, and office. Bike racks are located adjacent to two sides of the building. A public restroom is not incorporated into the project design. Streetscape furniture and amenities include:

- Ten (10) site benches
- Five (5) trash receptacles
- Six (6) bike racks
- A bicycle service stand

Figure 1: Revised rendering of transit hub



On-site storm water retention is provided by an above ground retention basin of approximately 12,300 sq. ft. in area that also provides storm water retention for the Department of Public Services building. The retention basin construction is complete and a new decorative metal fence installed.

Architectural Design

The original transit hub design features include five (5) bus shelters consisting of two (2) hyper sail panels per bus shelter to provide shade for waiting bus riders and was revised and approved by the Planning Commission to be replaced with two (2) large “swoosh” shade structures 20’ by 40’ and one (1) small shade structure 15’ x 18’ with a brown colored frame and a “desert sand” fabric. Decorative street lighting consistent with 6th Street lighting standards is incorporated.

Figure 2: New Proposed Bus “Swoosh” shade structure



The proposed Sunline breakroom building is a pre-fabricated building. Sunline designers developed modified exterior elevations with a red tile roof, stucco exterior, exposed rafters tail and beams, wood doors, window iron work and a tile sign more in the character of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture as shown in figure 5. The applicant revised the building design further with with foam decorative pop-outs, digital sign, expanded mosaic features, and water fountain with bottle filter.

Figure 3: Original Rendering of the Sunline Breakroom Building

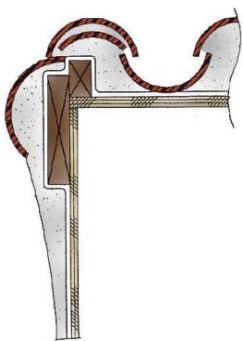


Figure 4: Planning Commission approved Sunline Breakroom Building subject to conditions

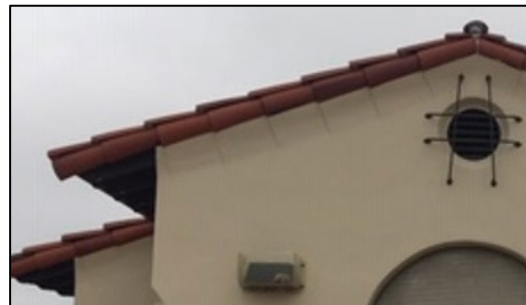


The project conditions of approval included design requirements for consistency with the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan. Many of the conditions of approval have not been complied with. Below identifies how the proposed building complies with the conditions of approval:

1. Ensuring sufficient window and door recesses on breakroom building.
The window and doors were not recessed and instead the applicant designed trim pop-outs to add dimension and shadow.
2. Add stucco pattern that encapsulate the tile at the roof gables to create attractive shadow patterns to the breakroom building. **Applicant stucco scaling pattern is currently a color that does not match the stucco and out of compliance with the character of the design feature. Applicant states that they will address color.**

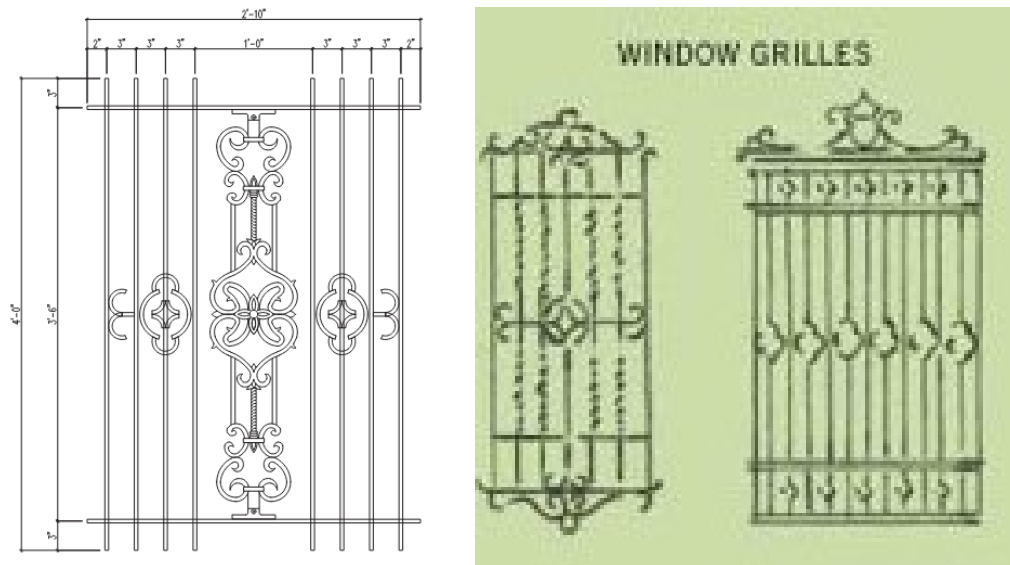


This creates an attractive shadow pattern



3. Utilize decorative window grilles and incorporate light green window color. **The applicant has not incorporated light green window borders and the window grilles do not match design of submitted plans that are acceptable to City staff.**

Figure 5: Decorative Iron Grill in Plan Check and example of Spanish Colonial Design grilles



4. Add decorative lighting to the breakroom building. **Lighting design is acceptable.**
5. Utilize two-piece clay tile roofing with booster tiles on the edges and random mortar packing. The mortar shall packed on 100 percent of the tiles in the first two rows of tiles and along any rake and ridgeline, and packed on 25 percent of the tiles on the remaining field. Mortar packing shall serve as a bird stop at roof edges. The volume of mortar pack to achieve the appropriate thickness shall be equivalent to a 6 inch diameter sphere of mortar applied to reach tile. **Applicant states that they will address the condition in the design and is a note in the plans in plan check.**
6. Stucco walls shall consist of 'steel, hand trowel', smooth Mission finish and slight undulations (applied during brown coat) and bull-nose corners and edges. There are no stucco walls as the building is a pre-fabricated building. **Corners and edges on the installed building are sharp and not bull-nose shaped.**

Aside from the building design not compliant with the conditions of approval, the building design was further modified from the original design intended for arched wall pop-outs to resemble the Veteran's Memorial Park restroom design (Figure 8). Instead the arched pop-outs do not extend to the ground level as the Veteran's restroom does. The applicant also removed all exposed wooden rafter tails which provide architectural variation and shadows. Staff has provided other examples of Spanish Colonial Revival design for similar sized municipal buildings in Figures 9 and 10 for reference for good implementation of Spanish Colonial Revival design.

Figure 6 and 7: Breakroom Building Existing Conditions (Installed)



Figure 8: Veteran's Memorial Park restroom design



Figure 9 and 10: Spanish Colonial Revival Municipal Building Example



Signage

Signage for the transit hub is proposed on the north elevation of the Sunline breakroom building consisting of a tile design identifying the “Coachella Transit Center.” A digital sign is also proposed as a new addition to the building design.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The proposed project is within the Downtown Center land use designation of the General Plan 2035 Land Use and Community Character Element. The Downtown Center is intended to bring the entire community together in a one-of-a-kind Coachella Center. The Coachella Sunline Transit Hub would accomplish the General Plan goals of bringing the community together by creating a transit center that brings visitors to the City's Pueblo Viejo district from the City and throughout the Coachella Valley.

CONSISTENCY WITH ZONING

The subject site is zoned C-G PUD (General Commercial Planned Unit Development) zone. The project complies with the development standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

CONSISTENCY WITH PUEBLO VIEJO DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

The subject site is located within the Cesar Chavez Street Subarea of the Pueblo Viejo District Design Guidelines. The Guidelines provide for guidance in the design of the architecture, signs, streetscape, street furniture and landscaping and its application is explained throughout this report. The design guidelines have been identified below, along with identification if proposed design is in compliance with the guidelines,

Spanish Colonial revival Architecture

3.3.1.2 Walls

- Smooth or sand-float finish concrete with tastefully placed adornments
- Not Compliant**

3.3.1.4 Articulation and Decorative Elements

- Patterned Cutouts in smooth stucco used to decorate walls, chimneys, and vents.
- Terra-cotta or cast concrete ornaments
- Compliant**

3.3.1.5 Windows and Doors

- The window, grilles, and doors are typically earth tones such as dark brown, terra-cotta reds, and light greens.
- Not Compliant.**

3.3.1.9 Lighting

Spanish Colonial Revival-style outdoor lighting fixtures with the features listed below include:

- Wrought iron lighting fixtures, including lanterns of many different shapes



- Clear glass shades to accent candle-shaped bulbs or amber shaded glass
- Grandly ornamented fixtures with scrolled metal accents
- Fixtures are either mounted to the wall or hung using chains
- Substantially Consistent**

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CONSIDERATION

The City of Coachella has determined that the proposed project qualifies for a CEQA exemption under Section 15332. Class 32 consists of projects characterized as in-fill development meeting the conditions described in this section; (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations; (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site where no more than five acres are to be developed and substantially surrounded by urban uses; (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species; (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. Therefore, the City has acknowledged that the project is exempt from CEQA.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 2024-12 approving Architectural Review No. No. 21-13 Modification;
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 2024-12 approving Architectural Review No. No. 21-13 Modification with modifications as approved by the Planning Commission.
- 3) Deny the modifications and uphold approvals of Resolution No. PC 2022-01;
- 4) Continue this item and provide staff and the applicant with direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

The applicant is proposing modifications to the Sunline Transit Hub breakroom building as follows:

1. No exposed rafter tails as identified on the original design.
2. No window grill in character of Spanish Colonial Revival design or as provided in plan check.
3. No window and door recesses as shown in original design or per conditions of approval.
4. No substantial rear pop-out arches that extend to the floor.
5. No bull nose building corners.

Staff is not supportive of the proposed design changes as these were specific conditions of approval placed by the Planning Commission. Staff welcomes additional comments and recommendations by the Planning Commission. Staff recommends alternative #3.

Attachments:

1. PC Resolution No. 2024-12 for AR No. 21-13 Modification

Exhibit A - Conditions of Approval for AR No. 21-13

2. PC Resolution No. 2022-01 for AR No. 21-13
3. Vicinity Map
4. Site Plan and Civil Plan
5. Transit Hub Architectural Renderings
6. Pueblo Viejo Design Guidelines
7. Plan Check comments on Breakroom building design
8. Applicant Justification for Breakroom Building design modifications