



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 05/14/2024
PL23-0183 – 1919 Auto Park Way

PROJECT NUMBER / NAME: PL23-0183 – Master Plan Modification and Precise Development Plan

REQUEST: A request for a Modification to a Master Development Plan to increase the maximum allowed square footage of building area permitted on-site and allow for changes to on-site circulation. A request for a new Precise Development Plan for the demolition of an existing 3,187 square foot auto showroom building and construction of a new 12,728 square foot, 29'-8" tall dealership building with an upper mezzanine level (8,095 square foot first floor; 3,158 square foot upper mezzanine level; 1,475 square foot service canopy). The new Precise Development Plan would also include minor site changes, including demolition and construction of an on-site trash enclosure and fencing, and new electric vehicle chargers. The subject site includes two existing detached storage buildings/open repair bays which would remain on-site (7,135 and 4,097 square feet, respectively). The proposal also includes adoption of the environmental determination for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: 1.95 acres located on the southwest corner of Auto Park Way and Andreasen Drive, addressed at 1919 Auto Park Way (APN: 232-541-03-00)

APPLICANT: Mag 1919 APW, LLC (Mossy Volkswagen)

GENERAL PLAN / ZONING: Planned Commercial (PC) / Planned Development-Commercial (PD-C)

PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE: Darrold Davis (CCBG Architects)

DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS REQUESTED: Master Plan Modification and Precise Development Plan

PREVIOUS ACTIONS: 80-173-PD - Master Development Plan that established the Escondido Auto Park.

86-04-PD - Master Plan revisions to construct the Heller Suzuki dealership.

88-24-PD - Precise Development Plan modification to add parts and service area to existing Heller Suzuki dealership.

PHG14-0032 - Master Plan Modification and Precise Plan for Hyundai of Escondido to demolish the showroom building and construct new, 6,687 square foot Hyundai showroom building.

CEQA RECOMMENDATION: The project qualifies for an exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines sections 15301 ("Existing Facilities"), 15302 ("Replacement and Reconstruction"), and 15303 ("New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures").

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

REQUESTED ACTION: Approve Planning Commission Resolution No. 2024-09

CITY COUNCIL HEARING REQUIRED: ☐ YES ☒ NO

REPORT APPROVALS: ☒ Dare DeLano, Senior Deputy City Attorney

☒ Veronica Morones, City Planner



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BACKGROUND

The project site is a 1.95-acre parcel within the Escondido Auto Park Master Plan established in the early 1980s (Case No. 80-173-PD), in the Planned Development-Commercial Zone (PD-C) and maintains a Planned Commercial (PC) land use designation (Attachment 1). The City approved a Precise Development Plan in 1986 (Case No 86-04-PD) for the development of the subject site with an auto dealership building. The site is developed with an automotive dealership consisting of a 3,187 square foot showroom building, two accessory repair/storage buildings with open service bays, and on-site parking for vehicle sales. The property fronts onto Auto Parkway Way on the east, and Andreasen Drive to the north. Automotive dealerships are located to the north, south and east, and an industrial development to the west. A modification to the Master Plan is necessary to allow for the proposed increase in building square footage from the previous Master Plan approval and allow for on-site circulation modifications. A Precise Development Plan is required for the design of the new showroom building and associated site improvements.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Mossy Volkswagen (VW) ("Applicant") submitted a request to demolish the existing 3,187 square foot, single-story dealership building and construct a new 12,728 square foot, 29'-8" tall dealership building with an upper mezzanine level (8,095 square foot ground floor, 3,158 square foot upper level (i.e., mezzanine), 1,475 square foot service canopy and entry gate). The two existing detached storage buildings/open repair bays would remain (7,135 square feet and 4,097 square feet). Minor site changes proposed include modifications to site circulation due to the new building, demolition and construction of a new trash enclosure, and new electric vehicle chargers. Existing parking areas, display spaces, and landscape features would remain, except for certain parking and display spaces that would be removed to accommodate a required emergency vehicle turnaround area (i.e., modified hammerhead) included under Attachment 2. Project plans for the Precise Development Plan are included under Attachment 3.

Chapter 33 (Zoning), Article 19 (Planned Development P-D Zone) allows for modifications to Master Plans through decision by the Planning Commission (instead of City Council) when consistent with the purpose of the Master Plan and the proposed modification does not affect the boundaries of the subject zone. Further, such modification may not change land uses, or the location/amounts of land devoted to specific land uses. Article 19 also permits for the Planning Commission to take action on new Precise Development Plans when consistent with the Master Plan (Art. 19, section 33-410). The proposed project would permit for an existing and permitted land use of auto sales and ancillary auto servicing to continue on a site within the Auto Park Master Plan. The proposed project does not entail any changes to the boundaries of the subject zone, nor does it seek to change any land uses or locations/amounts of such land devoted to such uses.

A. SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS OF REQUEST:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Property Size: | 1.95 acres (1 parcel) |
| 2. Existing Buildings: | 3,187 SF single-story dealership building (to be replaced)
7,135 SF repair/storage building (to remain)
<u>4,097 SF repair building (to remain)</u>
14,419 SF total |
| 3. Proposed New Buildings: | 11,253 SF dealership building
(8,095 SF first floor, 3,185 SF 2 nd floor area) |



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1,475 attached open service canopy

12,728 SF total new structures (net increase in building area 9,541 SF)

4. Building Height: 29'-8"

	<u>Required</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
5. Parking:	41 spaces	42 spaces

6. Inventory/Display Spaces: 7 designated circular concrete pads along Auto Park Way frontage
22 striped dedicated inventory spaces
29 total display/inventory spaces

7. Landscaping: The site is currently landscaped. The proposed on-site landscaping will be modified along the new entry gate/screen wall located along Andreasen Drive to include a new planter area. All other existing landscaping would remain.

8. Signage: Signage indicated on the plans is conceptual only. All wall signage to be consistent with the Auto Park sign program and City's Sign Ordinance. The existing corner freestanding monument sign to be modified to include the VW identification. One new directional sign at driveway consistent with Auto Park design theme and sign program.

B. PROJECT ANALYSIS:

1. General Plan and Zoning Conformance:

The General Plan land-use designation for the site is Planned Commercial (PC), which allows for a variety of commercial activities within a self-contained, comprehensively planned commercial center. The Auto Park Master Plan is a comprehensively planned regional commercial land use specializing in the sale, lease and maintenance of automobiles with established permitted uses and development standards. The proposed use and modifications to the site are in conformance with the Auto Park Master Plan and principles and objectives of the General Plan.

Article 19 (Planned Development P-D Zone) authorizes the Master and Precise Development Plan process, which is intended for encouraging comprehensive site planning and design while providing for more flexibility in the regulatory process for specific parcels. The Planned Development process allows for creative approaches to the use of land through appropriate mixing of land uses and facility designs, which includes site-specific standards adopted as part of the zone. The proposed project requests to modify the Master Plan that sets such site-specific standards, specifically to allow for an increase in total building area allowed for the specific site and for circulation changes. The Precise Plan captures the detailed plan proposed that would conform to the Master Plan should the modification be approved. The general intent of the P-D zone is exemplified by the proposed project as it seeks to enhance this individual parcel in conformance with the overall Auto Park Master Plan's land use and overall purpose.



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2. Climate Action Plan Consistency:

The project is screened out of additional Greenhouse Gas Analysis based on the project type and size, and also due to the project qualifying for a CEQA Categorical Exemption. Projects screened out by the CAP Checklist are assumed to have a less than significant impact on GHG emissions. The project proposes the development of 12,728 square feet of new building/structures for a net increase of 9,541 SF of commercial building area. As such, the project has been determined to be consistent with the Climate Action Plan.

3. Site Characteristics and Building Design

The proposed new showroom building incorporates a modern/contemporary theme similar to the other dealerships throughout the auto park. Exterior building elements include large glass curtain walls with two, white aluminum-clad wall pop-out features along the front elevation, and a white block entry ramp. A light gray roof parapet is stepped back along the front elevation, providing for visual interest in the front facade. The northern elevation and attached service bay would include a white stucco finish with metal-clad column features. The rear elevation would utilize the white decorative block (ground face block), and the southern elevation would include a combination of window elements, decorative white block, and aluminum cladding. Accent colors include white and light/medium gray. The existing repair buildings located to the rear of the site would be painted white to match the new dealership building, as conditioned. Access to the repair areas would be through the new covered canopy and/or a gated entry adjacent to the service canopy. The new building, along with a short wall extension, would block most public views from the street (Auto Park Way) into the rear repair bay areas. The Escondido Auto Park Association has reviewed the proposal and recommended approval of the project design and architecture.

The existing auto dealership and new repair buildings would require a minimum of 41 parking spaces for employees and customers, whereas up to 42 parking spaces (consisting of employee, customer and in-service spaces) would be available on site. Of such spaces, 22 striped spaces would be used for inventory-auto display, in addition to 7 circular vehicle pad display areas along the Auto Park Way frontage. Existing freestanding project signage would be modified to include the new VW dealership information in conformance with the Auto Park sign theme.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The Applicant will be responsible for payment of all applicable Development Impact Fees as adopted by the City Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guideline's list classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and as a result are exempt from further environmental review under CEQA. The project qualifies for an exemption under the CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 ("Existing Facilities"), 15302 ("Replacement and Reconstruction"), and 15303 ("New Construction or Conversion of Small Structure"). Staff prepared a Notice of Exemption for the project (Attachment 4). The project qualifies for the exemption as described further in the Findings of Fact, attached as Exhibit "C" to Resolution 2024-07 (Attachment 5).



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PUBLIC INPUT

The Planning Division noticed the proposed project consistent with the requirements of both the Escondido Zoning Code (Article 61, Division 6) and state law. Staff has not received any comments from the public regarding the project as of the preparation of this report.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Project complies with the requirements of CEQA, it was found that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment as demonstrated in the Categorical Exemptions 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15302 (Replacement and Reconstruction), and 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structure) prepared in conformance with CEQA Guidelines.

The location and design of the proposed development is consistent with the goals and policies of the Escondido General Plan relating to Planned Developments, which states the Auto Park area is to be developed with comprehensively planned automobile dealerships, automotive/commercial related uses, and a variety of commercial and office facilities. The new auto dealership building incorporates a high quality of design and materials, and would be in conformance with the contemporary design of the other auto dealerships throughout the Escondido Auto Park. Sufficient on-site parking for customer, employees and service will be provided to serve the auto dealership. Appropriate frontage landscaping would be provided and maintained.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2024-09 to approve the proposed modification to the Master Plan and new Precise Development Plan, as described in this staff report and as detailed in Exhibits "A" through "D" to Draft Planning Commission Resolution No. 2024-09.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map, General Plan Map, and Zoning Map
2. Fire Turnaround Exhibit
3. Project Plans
4. CEQA Notice of Exemption
5. Draft Planning Commission Resolution No. 2024- 09 including Exhibits A, B, C and D