



**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT
January 28, 2025**

Prepared by: Lucy Rollins, Senior Planner

DATA SUMMARY

Application Number: 24PLN-54
Subject: Sign Exception Permit for 128 square foot wall sign
Location/APN: 2269 La Barr Meadows Rd / APN 022-230-083
Applicant: Matthew Gross, MEC Builds Inc, property owner
Zoning/General Plan: General Industrial – Southeast Industrial District (M-2 – SEID) / Manufacturing-Industrial (M-I)
Entitlement: Sign Exception Permit
Environmental Status: Categorical Exemption

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Development Review Committee recommend that the Planning Commission approve the “MEC Builds Inc” sign as presented, or as modified at the public meeting, which includes the following actions:
 - a. Determine the project Categorical Exempt pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines, as detailed in the staff report;
 - b. Adopt Findings of Fact for approval of the Development Review Permit as presented in the Staff Report; and,
 - c. Approve the Sign Exception Permit for the “MEC Builds Inc” sign in accordance with the Conditions of Approval, attached to the Staff Report.

BACKGROUND:

In 2024, MEC Builds, Inc. constructed a 7,200 square foot warehouse for storage of equipment for the roofing and siding business. In January 2024, the applicant applied for a building permit to install at street side monument sign near the driveway entrance for the business, but ultimately did not pursue this sign beyond submitting for plan check review. Upon completion of the building construction, the applicant installed a 128 square foot wall sign on the street-facing side of the structure. When conducting sign inspections for the Certificate of Occupancy, staff noted that this sign would require a Sign Exception Permit due to its size, as well as a Building Permit as it was not included in the original building permit for the warehouse. The applicant subsequently submitted this Sign Exception Permit application.

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

This Sign Exception Permit is for review of the installed “MEC Builds Inc” wall sign. The sign measures 16 feet wide and 8 feet tall, for a total of 128 square feet. The sign is mounted to the west-facing, street-facing side of the structure at 2269 La Barr Meadows Road. The sign is mounted 36 inches below the top of the wall, and 62 inches from the finished grade below. The sign is mounted with ½ inch lag and carriage bolts. The sign features a black frame with black, blue, and white lettering on a white background.



Sign Location

Regulatory Authority: The proposed sign is considered a “Wall Sign,” the standards for which are outlined in Section 17.72.030 (L) GVMC, and include the following provision:

1. One wall sign may be located on a primary structure frontage, and on one secondary structure frontage.
2. The area of a wall sign shall not exceed one square foot for each linear foot of primary tenant frontage and one-half additional square foot for each linear foot of secondary tenant frontage or ten percent of the area of the building facade on which the sign is mounted or painted, including the area of windows, doors, and recesses, whichever is less. The total area of all signs on a primary frontage shall not exceed one hundred square feet and the total area of all signs on a secondary frontage shall not exceed fifty square feet.
3. A wall sign shall not project more than twelve inches from the surface to which it is attached.

Pursuant to Table 3-9 GVMC, a sign exception permit may be granted by the planning commission, with a recommendation by the Development Review Committee, when a sign

“exceeds standards specified in the sign ordinance.” In this case, the sign exceeds the 100-square foot sign area limit on the primary frontage of a structure, so a Development Review Committee recommendation, followed by Planning Commission is the appropriate review process.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING:

General Plan: The Grass Valley 2020 General Plan identifies the site as Manufacturing-Industrial (M-I). The intent of the M-I General Plan designation is to accommodate a variety of industrial and service commercial uses.

Zoning: The M-1 zone is applied to areas appropriate for a range of light industrial uses. The M-1 zone implements and is consistent with the manufacturing-industrial designation of the general plan.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

The site is built-out with a 7,200 sq ft industrial warehouse building and associated parking, with a graded, gravel lot between the structure and the roadway.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines. A Class 1 Categorical Exemption consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alternation of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency’s determination. The proposed sign is intended to aid in navigation to the business. Therefore, the proposed sign will not result in an expansion of use of the commercial property on which it will be located.

FINDINGS:

1. The City received a complete application for Sign Exception Application 24PLN-54.
2. The Grass Valley Development Review Committee reviewed Sign Exception Application 24PLN-54 at their regular meeting on January 28, 2025.
3. The Grass Valley Planning Commission reviewed Sign Exception Application 24PLN-54 at their meeting on _____.
4. The Grass Valley Planning Commission reviewed the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and concluded that the project qualifies for a Class 1, Categorical Exemption in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and CEQA Guidelines.
5. This project is consistent with City’s General Plan.

6. The project is consistent with the applicable sections and development standards in the Development Code.
7. The project, as conditioned, complies with the City of Grass Valley Community Design Guidelines, including that “signage should be designed as an integral architectural element of the project and site to which it relates.
8. The proposed use is allowed within the applicable zone and complies with all other applicable provisions of this Development Code and the Municipal Code.
9. The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed activity are compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity.
10. The site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, and operating characteristics. It ensures that the density, intensity, and type of use being proposed would not endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the public convenience, health, interest, safety, or welfare, or be materially injurious to the improvements, persons, property, or uses in the vicinity and zone in which the property is located.

A. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

1. The approval date for Planning Commission review of the proposed sign is _____, with an effective date of Thursday, _____, pursuant to Section 17.74.020 GVMC. This project is approved for a period of one year and shall expire on _____, unless the project has been effectuated or the applicant requests a time extension that is approved by the Development Review Committee pursuant to the Development Code.
2. The final design shall be consistent with the Development Review application and plans provided by the applicant and approved by the Planning Commission (24PLN-54). The project is approved subject to plans on file with the Community Development Department. The Community Development Director may approve minor changes as determined appropriate.
3. Prior to any work occurring, building permits shall be obtained from the Community Development Department, Building Division.
4. The sign shall be maintained in good repair and functioning properly at all times.
5. The applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Grass Valley in any action or proceeding brought against the City of Grass Valley to void or annul this discretionary land use approval.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Aerial Map
2. Vicinity Map
3. Universal Application
4. Sign Exception Permit Application
5. Sign Proposal