



Town of Johnstown

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION STAFF ANALYSIS REPORT

ITEM:	Site Development Plan for Buc-ee's Travel Center
PROJECT NO:	DEV21-0018
DESCRIPTION:	Proposed 74,000 SF Retail Commercial "Travel Center" with 116 fueling stations, on approximately 24.5 acres.
LOCATION:	South of Weld CR 48 and West of I-25
APPLICANT:	Buc-ee's, Ltd.
STAFF:	Kim Meyer, Planning & Development Director
HEARING DATE:	April 27, 2022

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Site Development Plan – Site, Architecture, Landscape
3. 2022 Traffic Study – Welty Ridge with Buc-ee's

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Applicant is requesting consideration of a Site Development Plan for a project called the "Buc-ee's Travel Center." The project site is the SW corner of I-25 and CR 48, just west of the I-25 right of way. The center will include a 74,000 square foot retail store and 116 fuel pump spaces under a canopy structure. The site would also provide bicycle parking on-site as well as electric vehicle parking areas, presumably for electric vehicle charging stations, and serves only passenger-type vehicles. Large semi-trucks and trailers are generally on-site for store and fuel deliveries only.

Zoning: PUD-MU – Welty Ridge PUD

ADJACENT ZONING & LAND USE

North	G – Gateway & PUD – I-25 Gateway – Retail and light industrial uses
East	I-25
South	Weld County 'A' – Agricultural and rural residential
West	Weld County 'A' – Agricultural and rural residential

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PROPERTY LAND USE HISTORY

This property was annexed into the Town with the Veeman Annexation in 2008, and zoned PUD-MU (Mixed Use) at that time. It has historically been agricultural use with some minor oil and gas facilities on-site, all of which appear as “plugged and abandoned” on the current COGCC website.

The Welty Ridge Outline Development Plan (ODP) (ZON19-0003) was approved in 2019 and amended in 2021 (ZON21-0005) with minor modifications. That was followed by the initial subdivision of the property, Welty Ridge Subdivision (SUB21-0018), which included creation of two buildable lots, and dedication of the street rights-of-way for Weld CR 48 as well as the internal streets that are shown on the proposed site plan for the extension of Commerce Dr. and Nugget Rd. This project is proposed for Lot 1 of that subdivision.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice for the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing was published in the Johnstown Breeze, on Thursday, April 7, 2022. This notice provided the date, time, and location of the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, as well as a description of the project. Notices were mailed to all property owners within 500 feet of the property in question, as well as emailed to interested parties in the Gateway subdivision to the north. This notice included a vicinity map and the proposed site plan.

No neighborhood meeting was required. Staff and the Applicant have meet with the interested Gateway parties several times to discuss the 2021 Welty Ridge subdivision and roadway improvements proposed with that project. No public comments have been received by Staff as of the date of publication of this report.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

Per Johnstown Municipal Code §16-145(e)(1)c, this project is not currently governed by a set of detailed design guidelines for the PUD, and therefore subject to Full Review by the Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Council. The standards and elements for review within the Code (JMC §16-145(j)), include:

- Zoning and land use
- Height, bulk, yard setbacks, building coverage, & other site considerations
- PUD / ODP Design Guidelines
- Utilities
- Stormwater and drainage
- Parking
- Loading
- Stacking
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Signs
- Circulation – vehicular
- Circulation – pedestrian
- Town plans and design guidelines

The code further states that the final reviewing body “shall approve a proposed development plan application if... it conforms” to all of the appropriate and applicable standards.

Johnstown Review Committee (JRC)

The JRC has reviewed these development plans, as well as the accompanying engineering and construction drawings, and worked with the Applicant to institute appropriate revisions to ensure compliance with Town standards, guidelines, and specifications, as they relate to this property and Site Development Plan. All JRC members have indicated the site substantially conforms to town standards and prior master development plans and reports, and, with final requested revisions of engineering plans, is anticipated to meet all applicable codes, standards and regulations. This review, and that of the prior

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subdivision, included coordinating referrals with CDOT, Weld County, Front Range Fire, Traffic engineer, Water engineer, Public Works, and Utilities, as well as the contracted Town engineer. Final approved and accepted plans and reports are required prior to construction on-site, with the exception of some early grading work.

Overall Site Development Plan

The proposed site plan conforms to the Town design guidelines and the Welty Ridge ODP, as amended. There are considerable setbacks from each property line to the building and to allow landscaping and screening of parking areas. Landscape plans indicate appropriate plant types and quantities to satisfy the town's requirements, and open areas to meet the ODP requirement. The proposed signage meets existing town codes, with the planned interstate signature "pylon" sign meeting the approved Welty Ridge ODP requirements. The building provides a deep pedestrian walkway that surrounds the building on three sides, where public entrances are located, with easily-identified entryways.

The architecture provides 360-degree treatment of the facades with similar materials, using a substantial amount of masonry on all facades. Additional treatments include reasonable screening of loading areas and enclosures for dumpsters and the proposed generator and compactor. The southwest elevation shows the more "functional" side of the structure, with screening walls to screen the loading docks, and four overhead doors that will be reasonably screened from the adjacent roadway with parking lot perimeter landscaping further to the south. Height of the building is shown at 38'-5" to the top of the highest parapet, with most of the parapet roofline sitting at 28'. The ODP permits heights up to 75'.

The site, as an interstate travel center, is very oriented towards vehicles, with substantial parking and drive areas to accommodate the range of customer vehicles likely to visit the site. Staff has worked with the Applicant to create several defined pedestrian crossings through the site. All minimum standards are met; the town does not have maximum parking or drive aisle standards. Site lighting and fixtures, shown on a photometric plan in the technical drawings, also conforms to town standards. Overall, the various site elements have been found to be in substantial compliance with the ODP and Town standards, specifications, and design guidelines.

Traffic

This project would be a large retail project, that will generate up to 23,084 trips per weekday. Peak hour trips are anticipated at 1,220 in the AM and 1,692 in the PM. The roundabout that was proposed with the Welty Ridge Subdivision was sized and designed specifically to accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic with this proposed use, and is intended to keep vehicles moving through the soon-to-be I-25 diverging diamond interchange. This site plan indicates direct access to the site via this roundabout, as well as from Nugget Road via Commerce Drive. Leaving the site, vehicles may use Nugget Road, or a series of three "arms" of this roundabout that will help guide vehicles to the proper lane to enter the diverging diamond interchange traffic flows, depending on their intent to access I-25 north or south, or continue east on Hwy 60.

The Public Works department and the town's traffic engineering firm, FHU, spent considerable time reviewing the provided traffic study, discussing issues and questions with the Applicant, and analyzing this stretch of road to ensure long term success for the overall transportation network. They have both

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approved of that roundabout as part of the proposed Welty Ridge improvements to CR 48; as well as the accesses proposed from this site into that improved street network.

Utilities

Water and sewer service are proposed to extend south from Gateway Drive, with the water looping back out to Nugget Rd. Stormwater and required detention will be managed privately, on-site in the northeast corner of the property.

In keeping with municipal code, raw water shares will be dedicated, based on engineer-approved use estimates, prior to building permit issuance.

Home Supply Ditch Co.

This site and adjoining road and utility work along CR 48 do impact the Home Supply ditch that runs along the north side of this site. The Applicant has been working directly with the ditch company to ensure continued operations of their ditch, as well as any improvements that are needed to the ditch or ditch access that may be impacted by this project. Access will be modified to be pulled from the NE corner of the drive/parking area, replacing the current CR 48 drive access, which would become quite challenging to use with the roadway improvements.

Conclusion

After considerable coordination with the Applicant in conjunction with our review partners, Staff has no outstanding concerns and believes this site development plan meets the requirements indicated within the municipal and associated design standards and specifications.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FINDINGS AND MOTIONS

Recommended Findings

It is recommended that Planning and Zoning Commission send a recommendation for Approval with Conditions to Town Council that the requested Buc-ee's Travel Center Site Development Plan be approved based upon the following findings:

1. The proposed development is consistent with the Johnstown Area Comprehensive Plan, and the approved Welty Ridge Outline Development Plan, as amended.
2. The proposed development is in substantial compliance with the Town's municipal code, regulations, and requirements.

Recommended Motion

Based on the application received, associated submittal materials, and the preceding analysis, I move that the Planning & Zoning Commission Recommend Approval of the Buc-ee's Travel Center Site Development Plan to the Town Council based upon the findings as stated above, and with the following conditions:

1. Final documents and reports shall be revised, as needed, to address any and all outstanding redlines and comments, to the satisfaction of the Town prior to commencing construction.

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2. Final civil engineering construction plans and reports related to the Welty Ridge Subdivision be finalized and approved by the Town prior to commencing construction.
3. The Applicant shall enter into all appropriate agreements related to development activities and water and sewer service prior to construction of public improvements and issuance of any building permits.

Alternate Motion

Motion to Deny: "I move that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommend Denial of Buc-ee's Travel Center Site Development Plan to the Town Council, based upon the following findings..."

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