



# CITY OF ATASCADERO

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Final Action Report**

**ITEM # 1**

**FROM:** Mariah Gasch, Associate Planner

**MEETING DATE:** 11/7/2022

**FILE NUMBER:** USE22-0089

**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 8200 El Camino Real

### **SITUATION:**

The applicant requests a modification to the Master Sign Program for the Smart & Final Shopping Center to allow an area previously designated for a future tenant to be utilized by Smart & Final's subtenant, Bank of the Sierra, pursuant to Atascadero Municipal Code (AMC) 9-15.005 and 9-15.006. The applicant is also requesting the maximum sign size to be expanded from the current 40 square feet allowed to 52 square feet.

### **EVALUATION:**

Smart & Final opened their Atascadero location in April of 2016. Tenant improvements for the business divided 57,513 square feet of floor area into two commercial spaces. The grocery store occupies 39,088 square feet of the space, leaving 18,425 square feet for a future tenant. Planet Fitness was approved in the vacant space in 2020. Construction of the tenant improvements is under way but has not yet been completed.

The original Master Sign Program for the "Albertson's Center" was adopted by Administrative Use Permit 99-01. The program was amended in 2016 to allow for a larger wall sign for Smart & Final. (PLN 2016-592) This amendment denoted Smart & Final's bank sign location (US Bank) as well as the location for the future tenant. Bank of the Sierra is replacing US Bank and is requesting to utilize the sign space previously designated for "future tenant sign". This sign location was designated for the tenant in Smart & Final's demised space that was approved for Planet Fitness. Planet Fitness's sign was approved through their Conditional Use Permit (USE20-0045) in a different location and will not interfere with the proposed sign. The Smart & Final sign is 237 square feet. The maximum sign size designated the future tenant was approved as 40 square feet in the amendment from 2016. The proposed sign is 52 square feet when all elements are calculated together (text and logo). (See Attachment 2) Bank of the Sierra will not have a place on the multi-tenant monument side along El Camino Real. The subject building is located approximately 300 feet off El Camino Real. Therefore, the sign size and location provides visibility to the banking service within the grocery retailer.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Administrative Hearing Officer approve USE22-0089 to allow the signage as proposed.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

- Categorical Exemption CEQA – Guidelines Section 15311
- Statutory Exemption §§ 21000, et seq & \_\_\_\_\_
- No Project – Ministerial Project

**Findings**

AMC 9-15.011 requires the Hearing Officer to make the following 4 findings:

1. *The sign is consistent with the purposes set forth in Section 9-15.002;*

The proposed sign helps meet needs that are based in the following purposes outlined in section 9-15.002 of the AMC. Section 9-15.002(a) intends to “Maintain and improve the aesthetic environment and overall community appearance to foster the City’s ability to attract sources of economic development and growth.” Section 9-15.002(c) intends to “implement quality sign design standards that are consistent with the City’s General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Appearance Review Guidelines;” and Section 9-15.002(e) intends to “minimize possible adverse impacts of signs on private and public property in order to maintain property values and to maintain a positive City image.” Finally, Section 9-15.002(h) intends to “limit the size and number of signs to levels that reasonably allow for the identification of a residential, public or commercial location and the nature of any such commercial business.”

2. *The opportunity to combine signs for more than one (1) use on a single sign structure has been considered;*

The proposed sign is centered above the existing leased storefront and is large enough to be visible to advertise the subtenant’s services. There is an existing monument sign for the center however, the sub tenant is not eligible for use of this sign as it is reserved for major tenants.

3. *For freeway-oriented signs, the sign area and height are the minimum needed to achieve adequate visibility along the freeway due to highway ramp locations and grade differences; and*

The proposed sign is not freeway-oriented.

4. *Conformance with all other applicable codes and ordinances of the City, including, but not limited to, the Zoning Ordinance, General Plan and its several elements, and the appearance review guidelines. (Ord. 604 § 2, 2016)*

The sign conforms with applicable codes and ordinances of the City, including Framework Principles of the General Plan that call for improving the appearance and character of Atascadero through signage. General Plan Policy 1.3 states: “Enhance the rural character and appearance of the City, including commercial corridors, gateways and public facilities.” The proposed sign helps promote the El Camino Real commercial corridor. Additionally, the proposed sign complies with the City’s appearance review manual guidelines related to signs. Specifically, the sign is in scale and proportion in its visual relationship to the building and surrounding structures, and can be considered

harmonious with the building.

**Conditions**

1. The design and location of the sign shall be consistent with Attachment 2.
2. The sign must remain horizontal and centered on the building wall.

**Code Requirements**

1. AMC 9-15 (Sign Ordinance)
2. AMC 9-1.112 Administrative Use Permit

**Attachments**

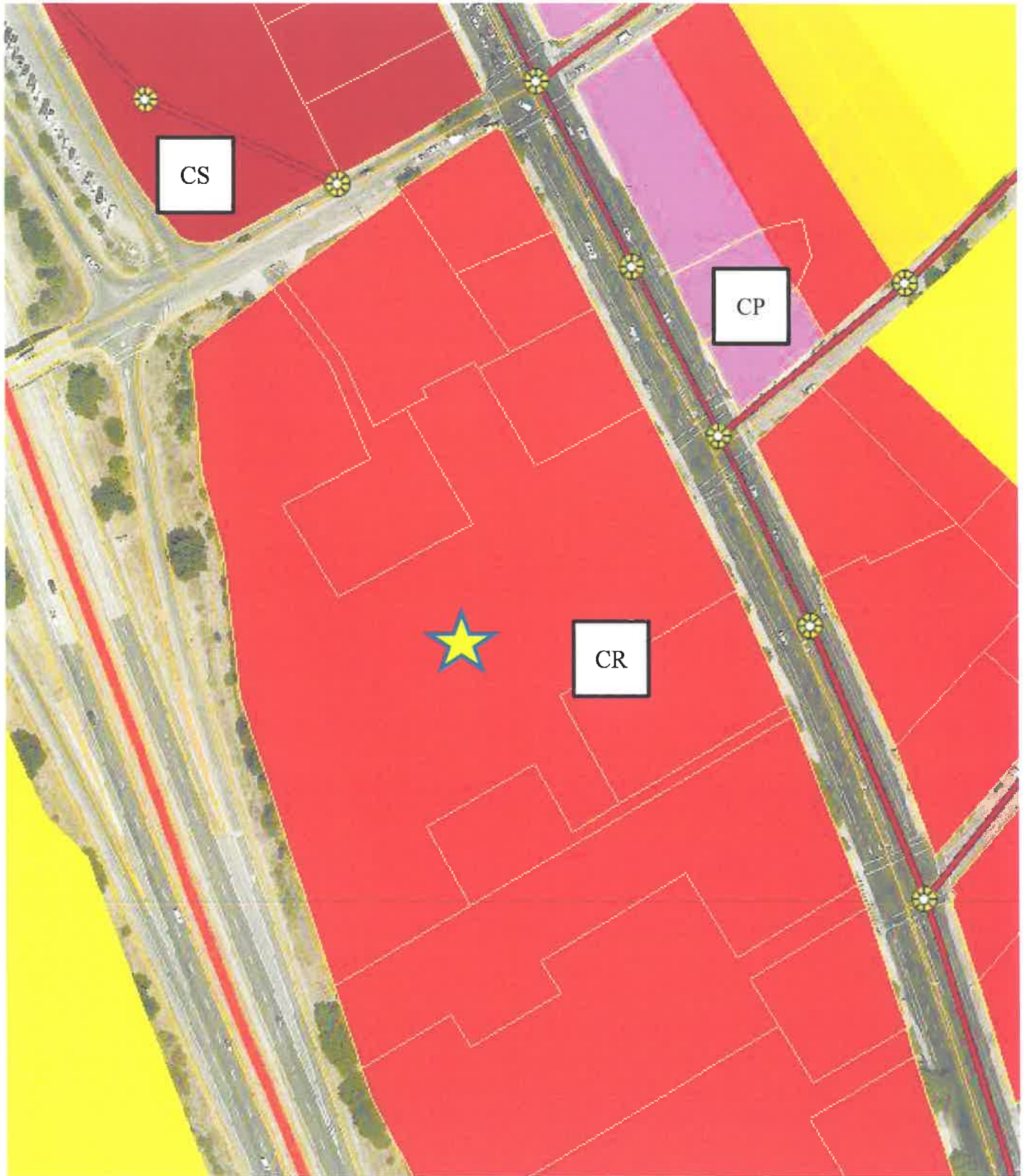
Attachment 1 - Location Map  
Attachment 2 - Proposed Elevation

**Action:**

- Approve
  - Approve as modified
  - Deny
  - Continue to: \_\_\_\_\_ to allow \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Continue indefinitely to allow: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phil Dunsmore, Hearing Officer

**Attachment 1: Location Map and Zoning  
USE22-0089**

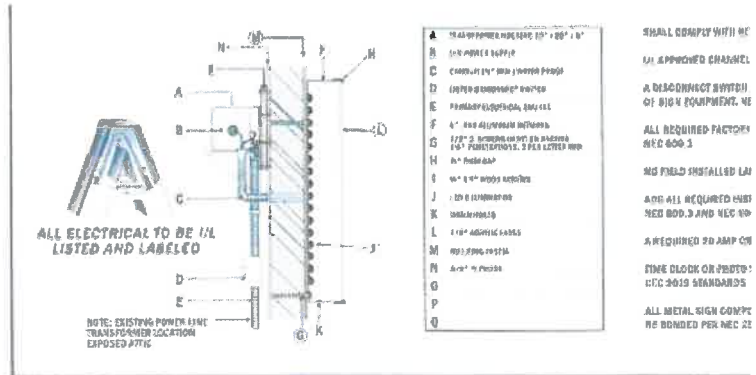


**Attachment 2: Existing Elevation**  
**USE22-0089**

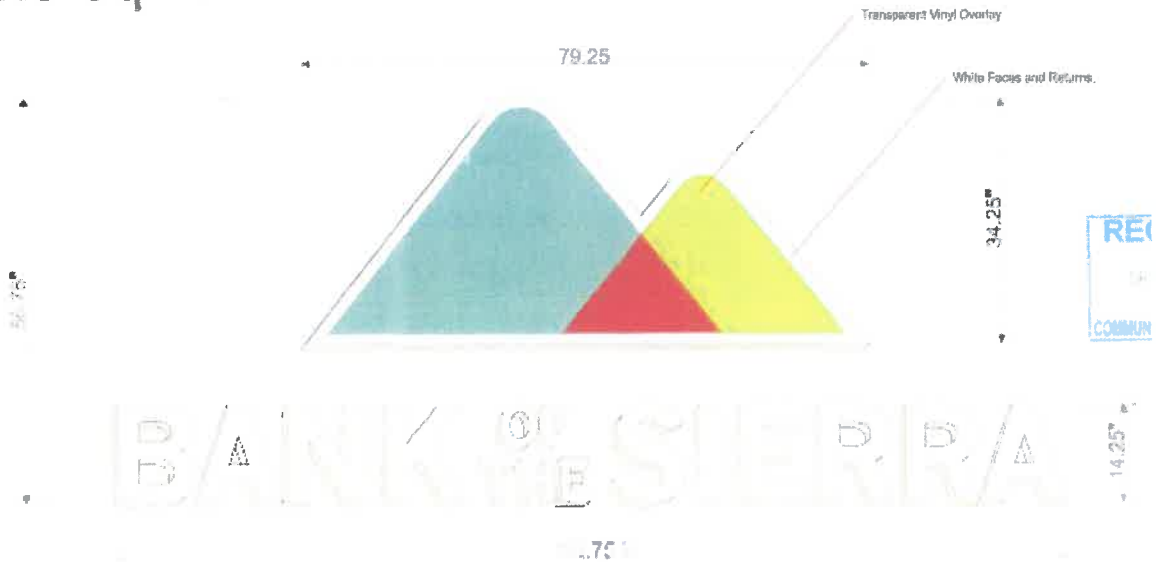


Proposed Sign Location

**Attachment 2: Proposed Elevations and Sign  
USE22-0089**



21.5 Sq Ft



52 SF total