

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: August 3, 2022  
ITEM: No. 2 – At or after 1:35  
FROM: Blake Hillegas, Project Planner

SUBJECT: File No.: **DRH22-0008/PLP98-0050**; Final Design Review for Bus Parking Lot  
Applicant: Steve Petcavich  
Owner: Chad Barksdale, West County Transportation  
Architect: David Zaro, Glass Architects  
Engineer: Mathew Machi, EBA  
Address: 3300 Juniper Avenue  
APN(s): 134-074-022

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Request

Final Design Review of proposed site plan, parking design, landscaping/irrigation, lighting, and fencing for West County Transportation bus storage yard with employee parking on 5.27 acres (Phase II of the approved West County Transportation Facility).

Background

1999 – Board of Supervisors adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approved a General Plan Amendment, South Santa Rosa Area Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and Use Permit for a bus storage yard and maintenance and administrative facilities on three parcels totaling 9.14 acres. The project was approved to be built in two phases. Phase I was approved as an administrative and maintenance facility, including storage for 30 buses and administrative/employee parking on a 3.87-acre site on the east side of Juniper Avenue and within the Industry West Business Park. Phase II was approved for the storage of 80 buses with no more than 80 vehicles at one time on 5.27 acres located on the west side of Juniper Avenue and outside of the business park and urban service area.

The Phase I plans were approved by the Design Review Committee in August 2000 and constructed in 2002. The phase I plans included conceptual plans for Phase II, including 80 full size bus spaces (Attachment 1).

The grading and site improvement plans for Phase II was submitted in 2020 and issued in error earlier this year. The Phase II grading plans had not received Final Design Review Approval and the plans were not in full compliance with the design requirements of the Use Permit conditions of approval. Building plans for site lighting and fencing have not been issued. The Board of Supervisors approval included several key conditions of approval relevant to the design of Phase II (bus storage yard) which are responded to in the Analysis Section below.

It is also noted that one adjoining neighbor has written a letter (attached) expressing concern regarding the proposed intensity of use and many design details addressing land use compatibility.

In summary the letter expresses concern with the proposed employee parking, berm design and drainage, extent of landscape screening, perimeter fencing, site lighting and wetland fill.

### Project Description

In response to staff concerns regarding condition compliance the applicant has modified the plans intended to address the Conditions of Approval in the following areas:

1. Increased the berm height on both berms paralleling the north and west property lines to a minimum of 6 feet on the parking lot side.
2. Scaled back proposed employee parking area by 16 spaces to a maximum of 80 spaces by eliminating striping from proposed paved area.
3. Scaled back proposed bus parking by 10 spaces to a maximum of 80 spaces by eliminating striping from driveway aisle.

The applicant has not responded to staff's recommendation to increase landscape screening at the northwest corner of the site, where several redwood trees were recently removed.

### Environmental Review

Mitigated Negative Declaration previously adopted. Relevant Mitigation measures are included in draft Design Review Conditions of Approval. No new significant impacts have been identified.

### Analysis:

The following lists the Board of Supervisors Conditions of Approval relevant to the Phase II design, followed by a staff response.

31. The use permit is approved as requested for:
  - a) On APNs 134-072-025 & 048, a school bus storage, maintenance, and administrative facility.
  - b) On APN 134-074-022, a school bus storage yard. No employees shall be stationed on this parcel, no work shall occur on vehicles/equipment on this parcel, no hazardous materials shall be stored on this parcel, and no refueling activities shall occur on this parcel. All buses parked on this parcel shall be positioned so as to avoid the need for backing up when departing in the morning. Horn checks and backup beeper checks may not occur on this parcel.

**Staff Comment:** The circulation pattern for buses on the plans has been clarified such that buses would back into the stalls at the end of the day and depart moving forward in the morning to avoid beeper noise during the more sensitive morning hours. While the extent of paving now proposed is



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not substantially different than shown on the approved plans from 2002, the proposed plans include parking for up to 80 buses and 80 employee bus driver spaces. This was achieved by reducing the number of large buses from 80 to 28 and reconfiguring circulation.

32. The western lot (APN 134-074-022) shall be restricted to a maximum of 80 vehicles on it at any one time. The total site (APN's 134-074-022 and 134-072-025 & 048) shall be restricted to a maximum of 110 buses on it at any one time.

Staff Response: As noted in Condition b. above the approval on the phase II site was for a bus storage yard for 80 buses. The design drawing provided for Phase 1 showed parking spaces for 80 large bus spaces, but did not show employee parking. While the description of the approval does not capture bus driver employee parking, Condition 32 limits parking on the Phase II site to 80 vehicles at one time, while explicitly limiting buses for the entire project to 110. Employee parking was not explicitly approved or prohibited, and from a practical standpoint is necessary, as most bus drivers arrive in personal vehicles to depart in a bus and there was never sufficient employee parking on the Phase I site to accommodate a total of 110 busses as approved.

The approved grading permit, issued in error had over 90 bus parking spaces and 96 employee parking spaces, but has since been scaled back to 80 bus spaces and 80 employee parking spaces. The applicant believes this proposal is in conformance with the Use Permit because as employees arrive on site in the morning, they then leave in a bus, with the flow reversed in the afternoon. Sixteen striped employee parking have been removed from the northwest corner of the site and 10 striped parallel bus spaces have been removed from one of the driveway aisles. The hardscape footprint of the parking lot is substantially the same as that shown in the original project approval. Because the foot print of the proposed parking lot is substantially the same as originally approved and the limits of the Phase II development requirement of no more than 80 vehicles at one time can be met, a finding of substantial conformance could be made. Nonetheless, staff recommends that the proposed pavement be eliminated from the area where 16 striped employee parking spaces were previously proposed, but where striping was eliminated.

40. The westerly portion (one acre) of APN 134-074-022 shall be permanently set aside for wetlands mitigation and an open space easement shall be recorded over it. If an alternative wetlands mitigation site is found at a later date that is recommended by the State Department of Fish and Game and approved by the County Permit and Resource Management Department, the applicant may apply to rescind the open space easement over APN 134-074-022 after a new open space easement has been applied over the alternative site. Wetland areas to be disturbed on the eastern portion of the parcel shall be mitigated through creation of at least an equal amount of new wetland area in the set aside area. Alternately, the applicant shall purchase an equal value of Wetlands Mitigation Bank Credits. All applicable U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Fish and Game permits shall be obtained prior to disturbance of any wetland area.



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Staff Comment: The applicant has purchased wetland mitigation and tiger salamander credits and received all agency approvals to develop the site.

42. The Final Development Plan(s) shall be reviewed by the Design Review Committee. The plans shall include a berm at least 6 feet high parallel to the north and west property lines of the western lot (APN 134-074-022), with the berm center setback a minimum of 50 feet from the north property line. The berm and setback area shall contain a dense evergreen landscape screening which shall shield the buses from view in those directions. A chain link fence with slats or other view blocking fence design at least 6 feet in height shall surround all other areas that are not shielded by the berm. Other perimeter and front yard areas shall also be fully landscaped and irrigated. All required berms, landscaping and fencing on each individual lot shall be fully installed prior to any use of that lot.

Staff Comment: The required berms paralleling the north and west property lines, as depicted on the approved grading permit, were over 6 feet in height from the exterior side of the property, but not from the interior grade of the berm and parking pad, where park would occur. The applicant has submitted plans to increase the height of the berms, such that the height differential from the parking lot is at least six feet. With the increase in berm height, the slope of the berm on the west side has increased from 2.5:1 to 2:1. The center line of the berm to the north is setback 50 feet from the property line as required by condition of approval.

Several redwood trees were removed along the westerly boundary at the north portion of the property. Staff recommends the applicant replace the trees removed and increase the density of landscaping in this area, and along the north property line as necessary to provide a dense evergreen landscape screen to shield buses from view as required by conditions of approval.

46. An exterior security lighting plan shall be submitted to the Permit and Resource Management Department for review and approval. Exterior lighting shall be internal only and not "wash out" onto adjacent properties nor be a source of glare onto adjacent streets. Generally, fixtures should accept sodium vapor lamps and lighting should be located at the periphery of the property and not as flood lights. The lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved lighting plan during the construction phase.

Staff Comment:

The proposed lighting plans includes 30 pole mounted fixtures throughout the site. Overall the lighting levels provided on the photometric sheet seem reasonably compatible with urban residential uses, but should be carefully evaluated based on the rural character of adjoining properties. As proposed, the lighting would not wash out on to adjacent properties, but could be a source of glare. It appears there are reasonable measures to improve compatibility and the applicant should demonstrate whether the proposed lighting is necessary for the proposed employee parking area that would be empty at night and is limited in operation to 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.



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If employee parking and associated lighting is authorized, the proposed 24-foot tall fixtures should be lowered in height to improve compatibility. Backshielding shall be provided and/or lighting should be cut off for lighting fixtures located along the north side of the employee parking areas.

Another key consideration is noted as follows:

#### Fencing

An 8-foot tall perimeter cyclone wire fence is proposed around the entire perimeter of the site. The fence would be setback at the front of the property.

Staff Comment: Staff recommends that vines to be planted within the cyclone fence proposed in proximity to residential uses. Alternatively, perimeter fencing located near residential uses could be relocated to the internal side of the berm.

#### Recommendation

- Remove asphalt paving in location where striping for 16 employee parking has been removed.
- Add landscaping at the north west corner of the property, where redwoods were removed and along the north property line to provide dense evergreen screening.
- Modify lighting to improve design compatibility
- Modify fencing to improve design compatibility

#### Attachments

1. Phase I Approved Plans/Phase II Concept
2. Application with Proposal
3. Proposed Phase II Design Review Committee Plan Set
4. Irrigation Plan
5. Fence Specifications
6. Lighting Cut Sheets
7. Public Comments
8. PLP98-0050 BOS Approval Resolution with Conditions of Approval
9. DRH22-0008 Draft Resolution with Draft Conditions of Approval

