



STAFF REPORT

CATHEDRAL CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING DATE: August 7, 2024

CASE NO.: Specific Plan Amendment 99-58A (Uptown Village Specific Plan)
Design Review 23-003 - Rosemount Storage Project

APPLICANT: Three Mile Hollow, Jason Borg

LOCATION: East side of Date Palm Drive, between McCallum Way and
Rosemount Road

REQUEST: Consideration of a Specific Plan Amendment 99-58A and Design Review 23-003 to amend the Uptown Village Specific Plan to create a new Planning Unit 4 within a 7.16-acre area of the Specific Plan and provide corresponding development standards for buildout of Planning Unit 4, and Design Review 23-003 to develop a mix of commercial uses, including a self-storage, and future restaurants and retail uses on the 7.16 acre Planning Unit 4 site.

STAFF PLANNER: Sandra Molina, Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council take the following actions:

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Measure Reporting Plan prepared for the project based on the findings contained in the staff report; and
 2. Adopt an Ordinance approving Specific Plan Amendment 99-58D to the Uptown Village Specific Plan, based on the findings and conclusions contained in the staff report; and
 3. Approve Design Review 23-003, based on the findings and conclusions contained in the staff report and subject to the attached conditions of approval.
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FINDINGS:

RECOMMEND that the City Council adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration based on the following findings and attached Mitigated Negative Declaration:

1. The record as a whole, including the initial study and any comments received,
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demonstrates that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment with the implementation of the mitigation measures; and

2. The Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the Lead Agency's independent judgment and analysis; and

3. In accordance with Section 15074, Chapter 3, Title 14, of the California Code of Regulations (State CEQA Guidelines), the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program contained in Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, dated June 2024, shall serve as the City's reporting program for monitoring the mitigation measures specified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

RECOMMEND that the City Council adopt an ordinance approving Specific Plan Amendment 99-58D of the Uptown Village Specific Plan based on the following findings:

1. The Planning Commission considered all of the evidence submitted into the administrative record, which includes, but is not limited to: a) the Staff Report prepared for the Project; b) the staff presentation; c) public comments, both oral and written, received and/or submitted at, or prior to, the public hearing supporting and/or opposing the staff recommendation; and d) testimony and/or comments from the applicant and its representatives submitted to the City in both written and oral form at, or prior to, the public hearing; and

2. The proposed SPA to establish Planning Unit 4 with identified permitted uses, development standards, architectural standards, sign and landscaping standards is consistent with the General Commercial (GC) land use designation. The GC designation provides for the development of commercial centers that serve the entire community and the larger regional market, including supermarket anchors and big box retailers. The SPA is consistent with General Land Use Policy 4 to encourage in-fill development and lot consolidation shall be encouraged as means of enhancing existing development and as a means of optimizing the use of existing roadways and utility infrastructure; Commercial Policy 1 Ensure that neighborhood-serving commercial development is strategically sited within or in proximity of residents and complementary businesses to maximize multi-modal access and minimize the need for vehicle travel to meet daily shopping and other commercial needs and 6 to encourage lot consolidation and the submission and processing of integrated development plans along major arterials and other roadways where strip commercial may develop, including East Palm Canyon Drive, Date Palm Drive, East Ramon Road, and other locations; and Community Design Element Goal 1 that calls for a high quality of life through careful, meticulous planning, and sustainable community design and development that balances aesthetic, economic, social and environmental needs and goals, while ensuring a highly livable urban and natural environment for future generations.

RECOMMEND that the City Council approve Design Review 23-003

1. The Project is consistent with General Commercial (GC) designation of the General Plan, which provides for provides for the development of commercial centers that serve the entire community and the larger regional market, including supermarket anchors and big box retailers. It is also consistent with the General Plan land use and community design element goals and policies. The project is consistent with the development standards of the underlying Planning Community Commercial (PCC) zone district. It is also consistent with the standards proposed for Planning Unit 4 under the SPA; and

2. The Project is desirable for the development of the community in that it will benefit the community by consolidation and development of vacant urban parcels and attracting people to the area who will also likely patronize various commercial uses located in the vicinity; and
3. The site for the Project is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed use inclusive of yards, setbacks, walls, landscaping, parking, and other features as proposed in the SPA; and
4. The site for the Project relates to Date Palm Drive designed and improved to carry the type and quantity of traffic generated or to be generated by the Project. The site plan including: traffic circulation, on-site and off-site safety considerations, pedestrian circulation and safety, arrangement of off-street parking and loading facilities, and provision of municipal and public services; and
5. In accordance with Section 15074, Chapter 3, Title 14, of the California Code of Regulations (State CEQA Guidelines), a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared which considered potential environmental impacts of the project and incorporated mitigation measures mitigating potential significant impacts to levels of insignificance; and; and
6. The applicant agrees to comply with any and all conditions imposed by the Planning Commission.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

The Applicant, Jason Borg, submitted Specific Plan Amendment 98-55-A (SPA) and Design Review 23-003 (DR) on December 28, 2023, for the development of a two-story, 115,000 square foot self-storage facility and future commercial uses on a 7.16-acre site located on the east side of Date Palm Drive, between McCallum Way and Rosemount Road (Assessor Parcel Numbers 670-110-048-, 670-110-049, 670-110-050, 670-110-051, 670-110-052, 670-110-053, 670-110-056). The self-storage facility will provide up to 842 storage units ranging in size from twenty-five (25) square feet to two-hundred and fifty (250) square feet.

The site is relatively flat, with a few low trees and shrubs scattered across the site. Surrounding land uses include vacant commercial land to the north (proposed WREN development), single-family and multi-family residential uses to the east, commercial uses to the west and south. The Project site is designated General Commercial and Planned Community Commercial (PCC) on the City's 2040 General Plan Land Use Map and Zoning Map, respectively.

The Project site is part of the Uptown Village Specific Plan (UVSP), which was originally adopted by the Cathedral City City Council on November 25, 1996 and was amended on July 7, 1999 (Attachment 3). The intent of the UVSP was to create a development which provides a transition from the high-speed, automobile orientation of the Date Palm Drive frontage to an internal character of a low-speed, pedestrian scale "village" which adjoins, and is compatible with, neighboring conventional single family suburban subdivisions.

The UVSP is divided into three "planning units", as shown in Attachment 4, an excerpt from the UVSP, including Village Commercial (Planning Unit 1), High Density Residential-Senior Housing (Planning Unit 2) and Low-Density Residential (Planning Unit 3).

The UVSP area is partially built out with two commercial buildings (Aaron Brothers (currently vacant) and Dollar Tree) at the northeast corner of Date Palm Drive and McCallum Way,

multi-family residential (Heritage Park Senior Apartments) and single-family residential to the east between McCallum Way and Rosemount Avenue.

The Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) proposes to modify the existing UVSP to create a new Planning Unit 4. Planning Unit 4 would build out the remaining of the commercial area. The SPA establishes modern development, architectural and landscape guidelines standards, and establishes permitted land uses, conditional land uses, prohibited land uses consistent with the Cathedral City General Plan. The proposed SPA is attached as Attachment 5.

This SPA intends to provide flexibility for future developers to design projects that respond to market demand. This SPA will supersede the development guidelines and regulations of the UVSP to allow for a fresh, contemporary development strategy for the remaining 7.16-acres. Uses allowed in Planning Unit 4 allow various commercial uses, which include small scale retail and big-box commercial uses. The purpose of the SPA is to provide maximum flexibility with commercial development while maintaining architectural and open space standards that contribute to safe and attractive commercial center.

The SPA includes conceptual development of the 7.16-acre site in two phases and under two different buildout scenarios and demonstrates the two future development scenarios could evolve. Refer to Attachments 6 and 7, excerpts from the SPA.

Scenario 1 includes:

- a. two-story self-storage ($\pm 115,000$ sq. ft.), retail space, office and loading areas.
- b. two drive-through restaurants ($\pm 2,413$ sq. ft and $4,617$ sq. ft.).
- c. three retail buildings (2 @ $3,217$ sq. ft. each, 1 @ $\pm 4,725$ sq. ft.).
- d. associated parking, trash enclosures, landscaping, internal circulation system and on-site landscaping ($\pm 68,666$ sq. ft. or 21% of the site).
- e. monument sign for the overall facility at the main entry on Date Palm Drive.

Scenario 2 includes:

- a. two-story self-storage ($\pm 115,000$ sq. ft.), retail space, office and loading areas.
- b. big-box retail ($\pm 50,000$ sq. ft.).
- c. one retail building ($\pm 4,725$ sq. ft.).
- d. associated parking, trash enclosures, landscaping, internal circulation system.
- e. monument sign for the overall facility at the main entry on Date Palm Drive.

The conceptual site plan scenarios are solely included in this SPA as examples of possible site development. Planning Area 4 may be built-out with any of the identified uses in the SPA. Each future development proposal will require its own Design Review, per Section 9.78.050 of the Cathedral City Municipal Code, which permits the Architectural Review Committee to take final action of future architectural and landscape plans for Planning Area 4. In addition, all future development proposals are anticipated to be processed administratively by City staff.

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The SPA proposes to:

- Establish development and architectural standards which will have materials that harmonize with, and enhance, surrounding architecture;
- Establish diversity in building materials to create visual interest;
- provide flexibility for future developers to design projects that respond to market demand, while maintaining architectural and open space standards that contribute to a safe and attractive commercial center; and
- Establish that both scenarios would be the most intense use and cover two development options. Future development proposals would be able to make a Finding of Consistency per Section 15162 of CEQA.
- Establish sign standards to serve as the master sign program for Planning Unit 4.

Along with the proposed Specific Plan Amendment, the applicant is requesting approval of Design Review 23-003 for Phase 1 the development of a two-story, 115,000 sq. ft. indoor self-storage facility and future 4,725 sq. ft. retail commercial use. As such time as Phase 2 development is proposed, it will be reviewed on an administrative level, so long as it is consistent with the SPA for Planning Unit 4.

Architectural Review Committee

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) reviewed the project on July 17, 2024, and unanimously recommended that the project move forward to the Planning Commission for approval as proposed. No revisions were requested.

ANALYSIS

General Plan and Zoning Consistency

The Project site is designated as General Commercial (GC) on the City's General Plan Land Use Map, which supports the zoning designation of Planned Community Commercial (PCC) assigned to the Project site. This designation provides for a variety of commercial uses, ranging from restaurants, retail and service establishments.

DR 23-003 is consistent with the proposed SPA, which is being amended to allow for personal storage facility uses and a variety of commercial/retail uses and provides for modernized development standards. The site plan and preliminary grading plans included as Attachments 8 and 0.

Development Standards

Standard	SPA Required	SPA Proposed
Building Height	36 feet max.	36 feet max.
Minimum Lot Size	60% of site.	19% of site.
Parking Setbacks	Date Palm: 15 feet. Rosemount Rd.: 10 feet.	Date Palm: 15 feet min. (10 feet shall be landscaped if there is a sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk the entire area shall be landscaped). Rosemount: 10 feet min. (5' landscape and 5' foot sidewalk)
Building Setbacks	Date Palm: 20 feet.	Date Palm: 20 feet.

	Rosemount Rd.: 10 feet.	Rosemount Rd.: 10 feet.
Parking	Storage: 115 spaces (1:1,000 sq. ft.) General Commercial: 16 spaces (1:300 sq. ft.)	Storage: 12 spaces (1:10,000 sq. ft.) -Based on parking analysis General Commercial: 19 spaces (1:250 sq. ft.)

Phasing Plan

As discussed above, the SPA proposes to develop the 7.16-acre site in phases under two different buildout scenarios. Phase 1 will only include a two-story self-storage (±115,000 sq. ft.), retail space, office and loading areas and monument signs. Other phases of the project site will develop based on market demand and be developed under future development applications. Development of the remainder of the site could vary based on the development scenarios discussed earlier above but would include a combination of restaurants, retail and commercial uses as listed in the SPA document.

Conditions of approval have been incorporated for the two phases, which includes an administrative approval process for buildout of Development Unit 4.

Architecture

The self-storage facility is proposed to be thirty-two (32) feet in height to the top of the parapet wall and 25 feet to the second story roof plate. The proposed height is well below the maximum allowed by the PCC zoning District of thirty-six (36) feet and consistent with the SPA. The building will have a contemporary architecture style with sleek urban aesthetics. Features include metal canopies, corrugated metal roll-up doors, perforated metal panels, metal coping, textured metal panels, stone veneer, medium and fine sand stucco finishes, and a flat roof. The building will mainly consist of a neutral color scheme with dark metal accents that gives the building a warm appearance and depth. The windows will be double pane, tinted glass, with aluminum moldings. The architectural elevations, floor plans and materials and color board are included as Attachments 10 through 12.

An existing six-foot block wall is constructed along the entire eastern boundary of the project site to separate existing residential uses from the commercial area of the site. Low block walls are proposed along Date Palm Drive to add aesthetics and block views of vehicles in the parking lot from the roadway.

As for the remainder of Planning Unit 4, it is anticipated that architectural styles will have materials and finishes that harmonize with, and enhance, the surrounding architecture within the project. The selection of materials, colors, and finishes should align with the intended architectural style of the building. Emphasis is placed on the use of high-quality materials suited for the desert environment. Diversity in materials, including but not limited to smooth stucco, wood, metals, wrought iron, stone veneer, finished concrete, and plaster textures, is encouraged to create visual interest.

The Planning Unit 4 Architectural Character is not intended to promote any particular architectural style but rather depict design features (such as massing, form, materials, etc.) representative of the types of developments that would be comparable within the allowed uses for Planning Unit 4.

Building Form and Massing - Building and Massing shall include the following:

- Include varying roof lines for enhanced building form and architectural interest.
- Varying architectural massing and forms to create opportunities for material and

- color changes.
- Massing techniques may include varying roof lines, overhangs, building pop-outs, as well as recessed glass in thickened walls.
- Articulate building massing and enhanced architectural treatment to denote primary building entries.

Open Spaces and Shade - Open Space and Shade shall consider the following:

- Public gathering spaces such as outdoor plazas and patios shall be encouraged in commercial retail or restaurant buildings.
- Trees, planting, and comfortable site furnishings contribute to enhanced enjoyment of these spaces.
- Metal and fabric awnings and shade structures enhance human comfort and shall be used for outdoor seating areas.

Façade Articulation - Façade Articulation shall consider the following:

- Varied details around openings such as arches, moldings, columns, and wrought ironwork add visual interest to facades.
- Articulated architectural form to create shadow lines, opportunities to change color and materials, and to comfort human scale design.
- Building facades and design concepts should be reflective of building, structure, and scale.

Pedestrian Pathways - Pedestrian Pathways will include the following:

- Promote safe pedestrian movement through highly visible pathways and walkways.
- Encourage sidewalk pavers or stamped concrete at building entries and high traffic pedestrian areas.
- Pedestrian and plaza spaces shall be thoughtfully separated from parking lots and vehicular movement through creative landscaping and built structures.

Parking

The parking requirements for the project require one space for each 1,000 sq. ft., which totals 115 spaces. However, this seems excessive. Self-storage facilities are characterized by very low levels of traffic and thus need relatively few parking spaces. The parking spaces are used by customers, typically occupying these spaces for very short durations, to obtain information and rent storage units. Subsequently, storage unit customers statistically access their unit one time per 60-day period (although higher access rates can occur, they are not the norm.) On average, customers spend about 15 minutes parked near their space and then exit the facility.

The applicant has provided some data to justify a reduction in the parking requirements. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineer's, parking requirements for storage facilities are 0.1/1,000 sf on weekdays and 0.09/1,000 sf on weekends, totaling twelve (12) parking spaces and ten (10) parking spaces, respectively.

In addition, the applicant, in coordination with City staff, has researched other local cities in relation to parking requirements for storage facilities and found that the City of Palm Springs requires a minimum of 6 parking spaces per self-storage complex and the City of Palm Desert requires six (6) spaces plus two (2) spaces for each caretaker unit.

A reduction in parking requirements, as contemplated in the SPA is appropriate since customers using the storage facility will use the loading/unloading areas to access the

storage facilities. In addition, for those storage units that have roll-up doors, access will be provided at the unit itself. Therefore, based on this information, the city supports a reduction in the parking requirements, at a standard of one space per 10,000 square feet, making the total required parking to be twelve (12) parking spaces, including 2 ADA parking spaces. This will provide less asphalt that can create an eyesore by having a large parking lot. As other uses develop on the remainder of the site, reciprocal parking agreements will allow flexibility in parking requirements so as not to have expansive parking areas and allow for more commercial building coverage.

Landscaping

Desert landscaping will be provided throughout the project site (Attachment 13). A variety of drought tolerant trees, shrubs and ground covers will provide an aesthetic enhancement to the site. A combination of California Fan Palms and Palo Verde trees are proposed along Date Palm Drive frontage. Additional trees include Australian Willows, African Sumac and Southern Live Oak will be provided in the parking lot to provide shade. Other trees include Shoestring Acacia, Desert Willow, Crape Myrtle, Fruitless Olive, Desert Ironwood, Thornless Mesquite, Purple Leaf Plum.

Accent plants include, but not limited to, lemon bottlebrush, Italian cypress, bay laurel, yellow wood, agave, bougainvillea species, red bird of paradise, desert spoon, ocotillo, red yucca, lantana, Texas ranger, Mexican sage and yucca.

The Final Landscape Plan will be reviewed and approved by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) to ensure compliance with water efficiency requirements.

Signs

The SPA establishes the sign standards for Planning Unit 4, which serves as the sign program for the project. City of Cathedral City's sign ordinance includes a provision under Section 9.62.030(E) that authorizes the Planning Commission to consider modifications to the City's sign regulations relating to sign area, number of signs, height and location. A proposed monument sign, shown in the landscape plans, ensures high quality in the design for the project. Additional tenant signage will be approved administratively by Staff, ensuring design consistency amongst tenants while optimizing creativity, size, scale and lighting appropriate to the project and area.

Airport Land Use Commission

The proposed project requires review of and approval by the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). The meeting for the ALUC is set for Wednesday, August 8, 2024, one day after the Planning Commission meeting. The ALUC agenda has already been released and ALUC staff is proposing to find the proposed project consistent with the 2005 Palm Springs International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Should the ALUC approve the proposed project, any recommended conditions will be added to the Conditions of Approval prior to taking the project to the City Council for final approval.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) along with special studies was prepared for the Project, pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), by the Applicant and peer reviewed by MNS Engineers, the City's environmental consultant. The IS/MND analyzed the highest intensity of development for the two proposed development scenarios discussed above. This was done so that future land uses will not have to repeat the environmental review process and can rely on the IS/MND, pursuant

CEQA. The City released the IS/MND, and supporting documents, for a 20-day public review period commencing on July 2, 2024, and ending on July 22, 2024.

The IS/MND determined potentially significant impacts for Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources; however, mitigation measures included in the IS/MND reduce all impacts to a less than significant level.

Comments received during this review period are included and responded to in the attached Final IS/MND (Attachments 14 and 15).

Based on the IS/MND and comments received during the public comment period, the mitigation measures were revised, as shown in the attached Response to Comments (Attachment 16) and Mitigation Measure Reporting Plan (Attachment 17). In addition, the revised mitigation measures are also reflected in the Final IS/MND attached to the report.

NOTE: The City of Cathedral City Planning Department is custodian of the documents or other material which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

This project and the environmental determination were noticed in accordance with the City Municipal Code and CEQA for the Planning Commission public hearing (Attachment 18).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planning Commission Resolution
2. Conditions of Approval
3. SP 99-58 Uptown Village Specific Plan (UVSP)
4. Extracted from UVSP - Planning Units
5. Proposed Uptown Village Specific Plan Amendment Planning Unit 4
6. Conceptual Site Plan Scenario 1
7. Conceptual Site Plan Scenario 2
8. Title Sheet and Site Plan
9. Preliminary Grading Plan and Civil Site Plan
10. Architectural Elevations and Building Sections
11. Floor Plans
12. Colors and Materials and Color Palette
13. Conceptual Landscape Plans/Monument Sign
14. Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
15. Initial Study/MND Appendices
16. Response to Comments
17. Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Plan
18. Public Hearing Notice