



Agenda Item

Design Review Committee

Item #: 4.2.

9/4/2024

File #: 24-0500

TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Chad Ortlieb, Principal Planner

FROM: Arlen Beck, Associate Planner

1. SUBJECT

A request to construct a two-story 12,190-square-foot addition to the existing Toyota of Orange dealership building at 1400 N. Tustin Street (Design Review No. 5126-23).

2. SUMMARY

The applicant proposes a two-story, 12,190 sq ft addition to the existing dealership building for additional offices and file storage. The project also includes revised site circulation, a new security kiosk, additional vehicle storage, the addition of new shade canopies for customer waiting areas, and a dedicated new car delivery area.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend approval to the Planning Commission.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant: Casey Griffin

Owner: Wilson Automotive

Property Location: 1400 N. Tustin Street

General Plan Designation: General Commercial (GC)

Zoning Classification: Limited Business-Tustin Redevelopment Project Area (C-TR)

Existing Development: The site is occupied by an existing Toyota of Orange Dealership.

Associated Application: Major Site Plan No. 1148-23, and Conditional Use Permit No. 3206-23

Previous DRC Project Review: None

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Toyota of Orange, a new and used auto sales and service business located at 1400 N. Tustin Street, is proposing to update its existing service advisor center to provide additional customer service at intake, expand office facilities (on the second floor), dedicate a new car delivery area under a new shade canopy structure, modify current site circulation, and reconfigure the back service vehicle storage and inventory lot with new CMU screen walls. The project includes a two-story, 12,190 sq ft addition to the existing 44,000 sq ft dealership building for additional offices and file storage, which

will result in a 56,190 sq ft building, measuring a maximum of 27 feet in height, and resulting in a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.23.

The proposed two-story, 12,190 sq ft addition will add 5,710 sq ft on the first floor providing approximately 20 offices for service advisors. The second floor addition of 6,480 sq ft provides 2,750 sq ft for file storage, and 3,730 sq ft for administrative offices.

The proposed project meets all development standards and is consistent with the existing GC General Plan Land Use Element designation and C-TR zoning designation.

The existing dealership is located within Thematic District #4 of the Tustin Street Design Standards and has been a part of the visual fabric of North Tustin Street for the past 50 years. All vehicles shall be serviced inside the building in keeping with the district requirements for automotive services. The project screens all service vehicles behind a 6' high CMU side yard wall from the visibility of the neighbors at the back of the site, and from North Tustin Street. Some additional low planted landscaping will assist in softening the transition from the sidewalk to the vehicles displayed for sale from Tustin Street.

New side yard walls will be used to define the protected service and inventory stalls. Other site improvements include a new outdoor customer waiting area in front of the service intake outfitted with a similar shade structure to the existing vehicle covers, outdoor patio seating, protective side walls, and interlocking pavers. The new car delivery area will have the same improved interlocking pavers for vehicle display and a shade structure for vehicle coverage.

Functional Design of Onsite Circulation

Primary vehicle traffic will be through Toyota Way as has existed for the past 50 years. The inclusion of the northern drive is for added traffic relief on-site to allow service vehicle testing and return, customer test drives, and general customer and employee departure to relieve the outgoing vehicle flow at Toyota Way.

New cars will continue to be delivered across the street at 1485 N. Tustin Street and then shuttled to the dealership by staff on an as needed basis. Customer test drives will exit through the northern drive and return at Toyota Way. Customer departure will be through the northern drive past the proposed security kiosk.

Service vehicle intake and return occurs at the six drive lanes provided as part of the remodel. Directional control (with overhead electronic lane markers) of those lanes will vary throughout the day based on incoming and outgoing volume. Service vehicles are staged onsite at the dealership or transferred by staff to the site at 1485 N. Tustin Street, depending on type and length of service. Serviced vehicles returned to customers will be brought up for customer pick up in the two southern-most lanes for easy departure through Toyota Way or customers will be valet shuttled directly to their vehicle at the 1485 N. Tustin Street site.

Architecture

The building addition generally continues the rectilinear form and appearance of the existing building with understory gaps to facilitate vehicular movement. The materials and colors are consistent with the corporate material selection identifying the Toyota brand across the nation. The new construction finishes will match the existing building exterior continuing the silver metallic ACM paneling, exterior cement plaster with a fine grain sand texture that matches the existing finish and color along with new low-e exterior storefront glazing. It will also unify the color scheme with the satellite service center across N Tustin Street.

Landscaping

The existing Queen Palms and Mexican Fan palms on site are to be protected in place, cleaned and trimmed. The existing turf area and accent planting design adjacent to the existing building are to remain. The existing screen shrubs and vines along the east and west property line shall be protected in place. New landscaping improvements are proposed along the street Frontage of North Tustin Street and will replace existing turf at the back side of the sidewalk with new decorative rock, decomposed granite, or mulch in combination with spotted boulders and drought tolerant accent succulents and shrubs. The new drought tolerant succulents and shrub material will be irrigated with new drip irrigation and a new smart irrigation controller will be installed. Ther existing irrigation meter and backflow unit shall remain.

The overall site area landscaping is approx. 6,815 sq ft (4% of the overall property) with a parking area landscaping of approximately 5,020 sq ft (4% of parking areas.)

Fencing and Walls

The existing masonry block walls are to remain with new areas to be secured with new walls and gates. A new 6’ high metal tube fence is proposed to be installed at the north driveway. Additionally, a security lot control kiosk is proposed to be finished with materials to match the new service advisor construction.

6. EXISTING SITE

The project site is 4.15 acres and consists of two rectangular parcels currently used by Toyota of Orange. The existing Toyota of Orange Dealership consists of a two-story, 44,000 sq ft building for auto sales and includes 37 automotive service bays at the south end of the site. The remaining portion of the site is paved and used to display and store vehicles and provide customer parking. The site is predominantly paved over with display area, drive aisles, and driveways with minor landscaping filling in the remainder. Photographs of the existing site are provided in Attachment 2.

7. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The Project site is an urban infill site located within a developed commercial area. The surrounding land uses are described in the following table.

| | Existing Land Use | General Plan Designation | Zoning |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|------------|
| North | Retail Landscape Nursery (Upland Nursery). | OS | C-TR |
| West | Single family houses and mobile homes. | LDR; LMDR | R 1-7; M-H |
| South | The Tuskatella shopping center. | GC | C-TR |
| East | Tustin Street is located directly east and across Tustin Street is the Toyota of Orange Service Center and car storage parking lot. | GC | C-TR |

8. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

The project site is located in an urbanized area of the City surrounded by commercial and residential uses. The project's architectural design is compatible with the surrounding uses and would not result in alteration or modification of the existing public street or sidewalk systems and patterns in the area. The simple contemporary architectural design of the proposed addition would be compatible with the existing dealership building. The proposed project would be consistent with the City of Orange General Plan goals by integrating the proposed project and existing development with nearby existing transit corridors, and commercial and residential uses in the surrounding area.

Overall, development of the proposed project would enhance and strengthen the character of the site and its surroundings through new landscaping, hardscape, and other improvements on-site. The proposed architectural and landscape elements and design would ensure that development of the proposed project is not detrimental to the surrounding area or uses.

Staff believes the proposed architecture, materials, and scale of development are appropriate for the site and improve the visual quality of the project environs.

Issue 1: Tustin Street Design Standards

The property is identified within the Tustin Street Design Standards (TSDS) as Thematic District 4. There is no established design theme in this area. The project design is vehicle oriented due to the use of the property, and hence does not provide any human scale elements for the proposed addition to the existing building. The proposed addition to the existing building is not intended to attract people to it. Both are recommended features of the thematic district.

However, staff does not have issue with the lack of human scale elements for the project for the following reasons:

- The TSDS contain standards specific to automotive establishments for keeping service areas away from primary frontage and screening auto storage areas. The proposed addition to the existing building meets both of those requirements.
- The TSDS Design Standards did not anticipate an auto dealership on this site.
- The proposed building addition is on the second story of the existing building where it is less prominent.

Issue 2: Landscaping

The proposed project will keep the existing landscaping which provides a variety of trees, shrubs, and ground cover along the North Tustin Street frontage, and in landscape planters placed throughout the site. Based on the City's benchmark calculation for tree quantity, 108 trees are required for the project. Planning staff concluded that the benchmark number of trees would overwhelm the site, due to the need to dedicate much of the site for buildings and car display and storage. The project retains 26 existing trees and removes two trees (one queen palm and one carrotwood tree). Staff believes the frontage landscaping is appropriate for the site and has provided Condition 19 related to tree maintenance.

9. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The City's inter-departmental Staff Review Committee (SRC) conducted reviews of the project on August 30, 2023, November 29, 2023, and March 20, 2024. On July 17, 2024, SRC recommended that the project proceed to the Design Review Committee (DRC).

10. PUBLIC NOTICE

A notice of public hearing was posted at the project site and sent on August 22, 2024, to all property owners and tenants within a 400-foot radius of the project site.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 (Class 32 - In-fill Development), because (a) the project is consistent with the General Commercial General Plan Designation and all applicable General Plan policies and all the project complies with the development standards of the C-TR zoning designation, (b) the project site is 4.15 acres surrounded by urban uses, (c) the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, (d) the project would not result in any significant effects related to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality, and (e) the project site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. Further analysis finding the proposed project is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 can be found in Attachment 6.

12. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the DRC recommend approval to the Planning Commission (PC) with included conditions of approval and any conditions of approval added by the DRC.

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (or OEDS)

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC recommend approval of the project to the Planning Commission with recommended conditions.

- The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.G.3).

The project site is designated General Commercial in the City of Orange General Plan. The General Commercial designation "provides for a wide range of retail and service commercial uses and professional offices". The General Commercial designation is found along many of the City's most highly traveled roadway corridors, including Katella Avenue, Chapman Avenue, and Tustin Street. The proposed project is an expansion of an existing automotive dealership along the highly traveled roadway corridor of Tustin Street which is in compliance with the General Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project is consistent with the existing GC General Plan Land Use Designation applicable to the Project Site.

The project is found to be in compliance with Thematic District #4 of the Tustin Street Design

Standards in that it has been a part of the visual fabric of Tustin Street for the past 50 years. All vehicles shall be serviced inside the building in keeping with the district requirements for automotive services. The project screens all service vehicles behind a 6' high CMU side yard wall from the visibility of the neighbors at the back of the site, and from Tustin Street, which is in compliance with the Thematic District requirements.

The exterior design, including colors and materials, and landscape palette provides an internally consistent and integrated design theme that upholds community aesthetics. The project as proposed will generally provide positive improvements to the existing site conditions. The proposed development meets and/or exceeds the development standards for the C-TR Zoning District

13. CONDITIONS

The recommendation for approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. All construction shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with plans and exhibits date labeled as September 4, 2024, in the staff report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee.
2. Except as otherwise provided herein, this project is approved as a precise plan. After any application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approval action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plot plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan administratively.
3. Subsequent modifications to the approved architecture and color scheme shall be submitted for review and approval to the Community Development Director or designee. Should the modifications be considered substantial, the modifications shall be reviewed by the Design Review Committee.
4. The applicant agrees, as a condition of City's approval of Design Review No. 5126-23, Major Site Plan Review No. 1148-23, and Conditional Use Permit 3206-23, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless, at applicant's expense, the City, its officers, agents, and employees ("City") from and against any claim, action or proceeding brought against the City, including, but not limited to, any claim, action or proceeding commenced within the time period provided in Government Code Section 66499.37 to attack, review, set aside, void or annul the City's approval, to challenge the determination made by the City under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") or to challenge the reasonableness, legality or validity of any condition attached hereto. City shall promptly notify applicant of any such claim, action or proceeding to which the City receives notice and to cooperate fully with the applicant in the defense thereof. Applicant shall reimburse the City for any and all costs and expenses, including, but not limited to, court costs and attorney's fees that the City may be required to pay, including any expenses ordered by a court or expenses incurred through the Office of the City Attorney in connection with said claim, action or proceeding. City may, in its sole discretion, participate in the defense of any claim, action or proceeding but such participation shall not relieve applicant of the obligations of this condition. In the event the applicant is required to defend City in connection with such claim, action or proceeding, City shall have the right to approve counsel to so defend the City, approve all significant decisions concerning the manner in which the defense is conducted and approve any all settlements, which approval(s) shall not be unreasonably withheld. The obligations set forth herein remain in full force and effect

- throughout all stages of litigation including any and all appeals of any lower court judgment rendered in the proceeding. Further, applicant agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the City for all costs and expenses incurred in enforcing this provision.
5. The applicant shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, including all City regulations. Violation of any of those laws in connection with the use will be cause for revocation of this permit.
 6. Building permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Community Development Department's Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
 7. Final sign plans shall be approved by the Community Development Director prior to building permit issuance.
 8. If not utilized, project approval expires twenty-four months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted, if requested in writing in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060. The Planning entitlements expire unless Building Permits are pulled within two years of the original approval.
 9. In conjunction with construction, all activity will be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. No construction activity will be permitted on Sundays and Federal holidays.
 10. These conditions shall be reprinted on the second page of the construction documents when submitted to the Building Division for the plan check process.
 11. Any graffiti shall be removed within 72 hours from the time the City of Orange Notice of Violation is received by the applicant/property owner.
 12. Any new lighting on the premise shall be installed in such a way to direct, control, and screen the lighting to prevent off site light spillage onto adjoining properties and shall not be a nuisance to any point beyond the exterior boundaries of the property.
 13. Prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall schedule a light reading inspection with the Crime Prevention Bureau. The lighting shall be tested and confirmed to determine if the lighting meets or exceeds the exterior boundary standards. The applicant shall use shielding so as to ensure that the light standards meet the requirements of OMC Section 17.12.030 for areas beyond the property's exterior boundaries; light spillage or pollution to surrounding residential areas shall not exceed a maintained minimum of 0.5 foot-candle.
 14. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director that all mechanical and air conditioning equipment shall be shielded and screened from view from adjacent streets and properties. The screening shall be integrated architecturally with the building and painted to match the walls of the building.
 15. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall obtain approval from the Planning Division for any and all signage associated with the proposed project and/or business.
 16. Plans submitted for Building Plan Check shall comply with the California Fire Code as amended by the City and as frequently amended and in effect at the time of application for Building Permit.
 17. Prior to building permit issuance, final landscaping plans for the project shall be designed to comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Guidelines as described in Section IX et al of the City of Orange Landscape Standards and Specifications.
 18. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall prepare a final landscaping and irrigation plan consistent with the grading plans, site plans, and the conceptual landscaping plan as proposed for the project for the review and approval of the Director of Community Development and Community Services Director.
 19. Landscape maintenance shall be performed in such a manner as to allow all trees to retain

their full canopy height for screening and full canopy breadth for shade at point of maturity, except as required for public safety purposes

14. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1- Project Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 - Existing Site Photographs
- Attachment 3 - Development Standards Reference Table
- Attachment 4 - Applicant Project Justification Letter
- Attachment 5 - Development Plans
- Attachment 6 - Environmental Analysis
- Attachment 7 - Color and Material Board (photograph provided, actual board to be provided at meeting)