



Agenda Item

Design Review Committee

Item #: 4.4.

5/20/2026

File #: 26-0293

TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

FROM: Alyssa Jurkevics, Planning Technician

1. SUBJECT

A request for the adaptive reuse of two existing vacant buildings designated as contributors within the Old Towne Historic District to accommodate a new restaurant with walk-up window service and full bar, known as The Win~Dow (Design Review No. 25-0025).

2. SUMMARY

A request for the adaptive reuse of two existing vacant buildings designated as contributors within the Old Towne Historic District to accommodate a new restaurant with walk-up window service and full bar, known as The Win~Dow. Building A, located in the northeast portion of the site, will house the kitchen, and restrooms. Building B, located on the western side of the property, will house the bar with food service. Outdoor dining will be available throughout the remainder of the property. In total, the restaurant will provide 225 dining seats and 16 bar seats, which are all located outdoors, and an activity/play area for patrons.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve Design Review No. 25-0025 with staff recommended conditions.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant: Candice Jordan

Owner: Sixth & Pine Development LLC

Property Location: 237 W. Chapman Avenue

General Plan Designation: Old Towne Mixed Use 15 (OTMIX15)

Zoning Classification: Old Towne Mixed Use 15

Existing Development: Contemporary post-war development commercial building

Associated Application: None

Previous DRC Project Review: None

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project request is to rehabilitate and adaptively reuse a historic property as a full-service outdoor restaurant and bar, including a new kitchen and restrooms. The property consists of two one-story utilitarian buildings (Buildings A and B) arranged around a surface parking lot. The site was previously operated as an automotive fuel filling station with related services.

To accommodate the proposed use, exterior alterations are proposed to both Buildings A and B. These improvements are limited to selective fenestration modifications to provide new building access, ventilation, and walk-up counter service, as well as branding signage, landscaping, and other site improvements.

6. EXISTING SITE

The project site located at 237 West Chapman Avenue occupies a flat rectangular parcel at the northeast corner of West Chapman Avenue and North Lemon Street totaling an area of 10,887 square feet. It was improved with a superstation built in 1924 by the Standard Oil Company. The superstation is composed of two freestanding utilitarian buildings arranged around an irregularly-shaped asphaltic surface parking lot. Building A located at the rear (northeastern corner) served as the auto services building with an attached canopy. While Building B located at the front (southwest corner) of the property served as the filling station with two attached canopies.

Building A has an L-shaped plan and has a concrete foundation, concrete block perimeter walls finished with smooth cement plaster and shallow flat parapet adorned with a Streamline Moderne stepped metal cornice. Fenestration consists of fully glazed fixed metal windows, divided-lite fixed metal transom windows, divided-lite metal hopper windows, partially glazed paired wood entry doors, and two partially glazed wood single service doors. Similarly, Building B has an L-shaped plan with a concrete foundation and metal panel perimeter walls along with a shallow flat parapet.

There is an existing pole sign located at the southeast corner with a metal box with applied vinyl lettering reading "Hoffman Radiator Service". Other site features includes a metal fence along the street frontage with driveway gates, mature street trees, a brick planter, and a brick monument sign with applied metal lettering of "Orange Plaza Historic District".

7. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The project site occupies lots 19 and 20, block D, Town of Orange Tract in the City of Orange. The property is a block away from the Old Towne Plaza and the surrounding zone is Old Towne Mixed Use-15 and Old Towne Mixed Use-24 (SP). The project is also within the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan area. There are two adjacent buildings abutting the north and east sides of the property; one-story commercial building built in 1926 (223 W. Chapman Avenue) and one-story commercial building built in 1940 (121 N. Lemon Street).

8. ANALYSIS OF THE PROJECT

Building A (Auto Services Building and Attached Canopy)

The project proposes the adaptive reuse of Building A as a kitchen with walk-up counter service, along with the construction of new restrooms within the footprint of an existing canopy, which will be enclosed. Exterior alterations include infilling the existing garage bays on the west façade with new wood windows and a door, finished in cement plaster to match the existing building, as well as

infilling an existing door to accommodate the new restrooms, which will be constructed above the canopy slab and remain structurally independent. Additional improvements include a cantilevered wrap-around service counter along the south and west façades, new wood windows on the south façade, rooftop mechanical equipment screened from public view, cabinet signage on the south and west façades, and a rotating pole sign mounted on the roof.

Building B (Filling Station and Two Attached Canopies)

Building B would be adaptively reused as a bar with walk-up counter service that includes exterior alterations along the south and west façades. On the south and west façades, the project will retain the existing metal window and transom frames while removing the original glazing and install new tempered glazing within the existing openings. Existing door openings, including a double door on the south façade and service doors on the west façade, will be modified with new metal windows and panels designed to match the building. These updates are complemented by the addition of a cantilevered wrap-around service counter along both façades, supporting the building's new walk-up service use. Additionally, the existing concrete slab beneath the east canopy will be removed and replaced with new pavers within the same footprint, while the slab beneath the south canopy will be replaced with a new concrete slab designed to meet accessibility requirements and accommodate a new queue railing. The non-original metal security doors at the existing vehicle entrances on the east canopy will also be removed and replaced with new glazed metal roll-up doors, creating an indoor/outdoor seating area.

Landscape and Site Improvements

As part of the property's adaptive reuse, the project includes landscape and site improvements while retaining the existing street trees, pole sign, and brick monument sign. The proposal incorporates decomposed granite (DG) over the existing non-original asphalt surface, along with new in-ground planters, in-ground lighting, and movable potted plants and furniture within the former parking lot area.

However, staff has concerns regarding the durability of DG in high-traffic areas and therefore recommends a condition requiring the use of concrete or another more stable surface along primary pathways and at service and entry points, allowing DG to remain in lower-traffic areas where it is less likely to be disturbed.

Additional site improvements include installation of a new perimeter fence along West Chapman Avenue and North Lemon Street, as well as a new trash enclosure located at the northwest corner of the parcel.

9. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

None.

10. PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice was provided to owners and tenants within 300 feet of the project on or before May 7, 2026, and the site was posted with a notice on or before that date.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15301 (Class 1 - Existing Facilities) because the

project involves the restoration and rehabilitation of an existing, deteriorated structures to meet current standards of public health and safety. Additionally, the project is also exempt under Section 15331 (Class 31 - Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation), as it includes the rehabilitation of a historic resource in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer. There is no environmental public review required for a Categorical Exemption.

12. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC make a final determination on the proposed project with recommended conditions (Orange Municipal Code 17.10.070.G).

1. In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.G.1).

The proposed project is in conformance with the HPDS as the adaptive reuse of the existing vacant superstation would retain sufficient integrity to remain a contributing property within the Old Towne Historic District and the Old Towne Orange Local Historic District. The Project would retain and repair in-kind the majority of historic materials on Buildings A and B. Materials determined to be deteriorated beyond repair would be replaced in-kind.

2. In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.G.2).

Projects found to be in conformance with the HPDS are generally considered to be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. As conditioned, the proposed adaptive reuse of the superstation as a restaurant and bar is compatible with the building in its size, design, and materials, and will not negatively impact the streetscape of the Old Towne Historic District.

3. 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 proposed project conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria set fourth in the HPDS for Old Towne and Orange Municipal Code Section 17.17, as the proposed adaptive reuse embodies elements of design, detail, and materials that represent architectural innovation of an underutilized vacant historic property.

13. CONDITIONS

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

1. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans (date stamped approved May 20, 2026, and in the project case file), including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. After the 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 plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan without requiring a new public meeting. If the Community Development Director determines that any proposed change is substantial, he may refer the plans to the Design Review Committee for subsequent review and determination.

2. The applicant agrees, as a condition of City's approval of Design Review No. 25-0025, 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.
3. Prior to issuance of building permits, the project plans shall be revised to reduce the areas of decomposed granite (DG) to the maximum extent feasible, allowed only in areas of low pedestrian traffic and not to include entry or exit paths on or off the site. High traffic areas, such as pathways to service areas and entrances shall be decorative hardscape such as pavers, concrete, or similar material.
4. 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 may be cause for revocation of this permit.

5. The final approved conditions of approval shall be reprinted on the first or second page of the construction documents when submitting to the Building Division for the plan check process.
6. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit. An encroachment permit from Public Works Department is required if any work during the construction of the sign will obstruct the public right-of-way.
7. If not utilized, project approval expires 24 months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060.

14. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 DPR Form
- Attachment 3 Project Plans
- Attachment 4 Historic Assessment Report
- Attachment 5 Project Narrative
- Attachment 6 Historic Site Photo Texaco Station 1935
- Attachment 7 Trip Generator
- Attachment 8 HRA Mechanical Screen Memo
- Attachment 9 Phase-1 Environmental Site Assessment