



Item Number: 1

Planning Commission

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Meeting of: May 14, 2025

Submitted By:

Travis Clark, Senior Planner

Case:

PLAN25-00006

Subject:

An Amendment to the Civic Center Specific Plan to redesignate approximately 20-acres of the Specific Plan from Office Campus to Civic Commercial on property generally located south of Lorene Drive, east of Valley Center Drive and west of Atstar Drive; an Amendment to the land use table of the Civic Center Specific Plan to conditionally permit new vehicle sales within the Civic Commercial zone district; and a Conditional Use Permit with an Environmental Exemption to allow for new vehicle sales on property located at 14444 Atstar Drive.

Applicant:

Omega Design Group (Del Amo Motorsports)

Location:

Generally located south of Lorene Drive, east of Valley Center Drive and west of Atstar Drive.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing, receive testimony regarding the proposed project and take the following actions:

- 1. Environmental Assessment** – Find the Specific Plan Amendment portion of the project previously assessed in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15070; and find the Conditional Use Permit portion of the project Categoricaly exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15301 – Existing Facilities; and
- 2. Specific Plan Amendment** – Adopt Resolution No. P-25-011, recommending City Council approval of the Specific Plan Amendment portion of Case No. PLAN25-00006 to redesignate approximately 20-acres of the Civic Center Community Sustainability

Specific Plan from Office Campus to Civic Commercial and to conditionally permit new vehicle sales within the Civic Commercial land use district; and

- 3. Conditional Use Permit** – Adopt Resolution No P-25-012, recommending City Council approval of the Conditional Use Permit portion of Case No. PLAN25-00006, subject to the attached conditions of approval.

Summary:

The applicant is requesting approval of this proposal to allow for the establishment of a new approximately 89,000 square foot powersports sales, parts and service facility, Del Amo Motorsports, within an existing commercial building located at 14444 Atstar Drive, previously home to various home appliance retailers. Del Amo Motorsports specializes in the sales and service of on and off highway vehicles and watercraft, with five locations throughout Southern California. To facilitate this new business, the proposal includes a Specific Plan Amendment to redesignate the current land use district from Office Campus to a suitable commercial retail land use district, Civic Commercial, in addition to amending the land use table to conditionally permit new vehicle sales in the Civic Commercial land use district. In conjunction with the proposed amendment, the applicant has also requested the subsequent Conditional Use Permit to establish the proposed powersports business as noted. As proposed and conditioned, the proposal complies with the development standards outlined in the Development Code and the Civic Center Community Sustainability Specific Plan (Civic Center Specific Plan) and Staff recommends approval of the proposal and its various components as discussed in the following Staff Analysis.

Discussion/Analysis:

1. Environmental Assessment.

Specific Plan Amendment

A previous Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) were prepared and adopted for the current Specific Plan in accordance with Section 15070 of the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment F). Given that the proposed amendment is limited in scope by redesignating Office Campus to Civic Commercial and allowing new vehicles sales as a discretionary use within the Civic Commercial land use district, Staff finds that the previous environmental review adequately addressed potential impacts of updated land use allowances and redesignations as proposed. Additionally, prior to the adoption of the Civic Center Specific Plan, the subject area was designated as C-2 (General Commercial) which has historically allowed vehicle sales as a Conditional Use. Therefore, based upon the previous analysis performed, Staff finds that the proposed Specific Plan Amendment is within the scope of this adopted MND and is therefore found previously assessed due to the minor amendments proposed.

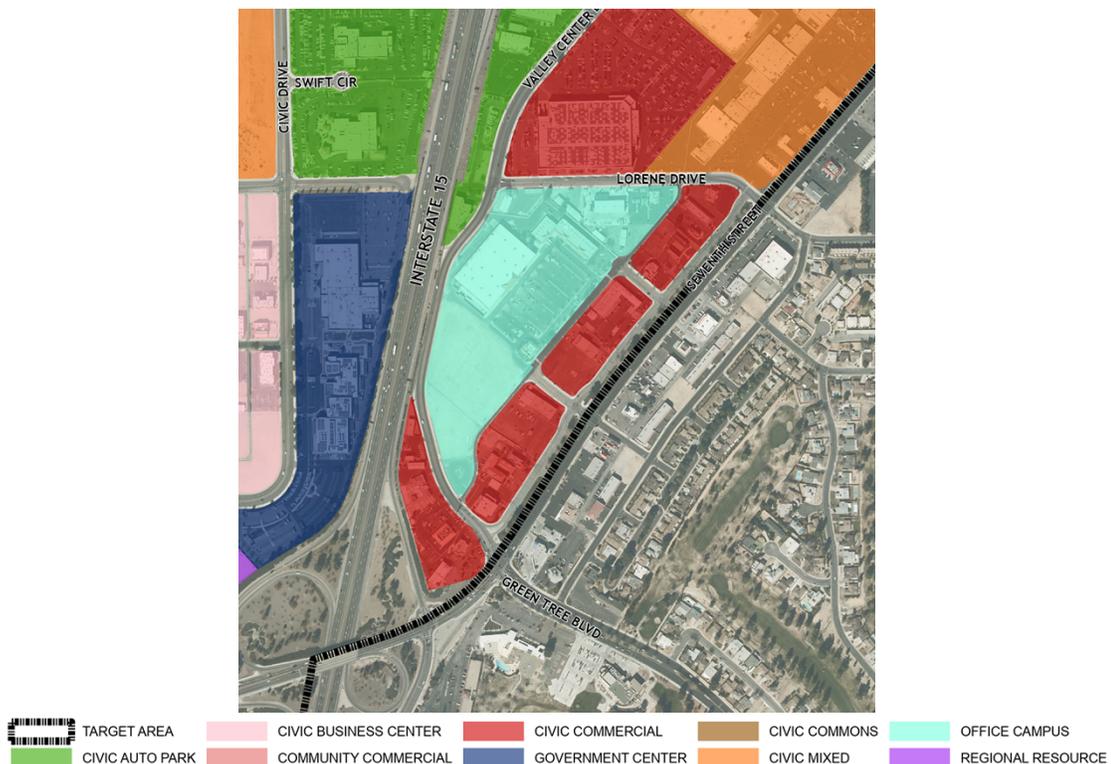
Conditional Use Permit

The Conditional Use Permit portion of the proposal is exempt pursuant to Section 15301 which allows a categorical exemption for the permitting of private structures that involve negligible or no expansion of use. Since the location was developed as and has historically operated as a commercial retail building, and because the proposed vehicle sales are proposed to be conducted completely indoors as have previous retail sales on-site, Staff finds that the proposal does not constitute an expansion of use and is therefore exempt from CEQA.

2. Specific Plan Amendment.

Specific Plan Background

The Civic Center Community Sustainability Specific Plan (Attachment E), adopted by the City Council in 2016, encompasses 473 acres located in the central portion of the City. The purpose of the Specific Plan has been to revitalize the plan area in a sustainable manner through in-fill development, land use criteria, development standards and improved vehicle and pedestrian circulation. The land use structure of the Specific Plan contains four district types: Commercial, Business, Government/Service, and Mixed-Use. Being considered as a part of this proposal is an amendment to the land use plan to redesignate a portion of the Office Campus (OC) district to Civic Commercial (CC-2) to accommodate the proposed use as well as provide for broader land use opportunities in an area of the Specific Plan that has historically struggled to meet the intent of the land use district.



The Specific Plan envisioned the Office Campus district would provide development opportunities for large scale medical, office and/or educational complexes with accessory uses on-site or within walking distance. In the years since the Specific Plans adoption, portions of this land use district, specifically the area east of Interstate 15 (identified in the preceding graphic), have struggled to attract suitable businesses that meet the intent and vision of the district. Compounded by the expansion of online education, the decreased demand for large office campuses since the Specific Plans inception, and the current development patterns in the area, the Office Campus designation in this location has had limited success meeting the goals of the land use district.

Amendment Proposal

As discussed in the following analysis, the proposed changes to the Specific Plan include the following main components:

- Redesignation of approximately 20 acres of Office Campus designated area to Civic Commercial; and
- Addition of new vehicles sales as a conditional use within the Civic Commercial land use designation.

The full text and graphic depiction of the proposed changes (including existing and deleted text) is located in the attached Resolution (Attachment A), while the following analysis discusses the basis for the proposed change as well as its compliance with the Civic Center Specific Plan and land use patterns in the vicinity.

Amendment Analysis

Del Amo Motorsports is proposing to locate in the existing Office Campus (OC) area, and while the applicant has limited their request to the redesignation of the subject building and site to CC-2, Staff has expanded the amendment proposal to include the entire Office Campus area identified in the preceding image and the project aerial (Attachment G), which encompasses approximately 20 acres in size. Given the present development pattern of commercial retail, restaurant, and auto service uses, as well as with future development proposals anticipated to be commercial retail in nature, the current and future development pattern is more indicative of the CC-2 land use designation. Additionally, the proposed CC-2 land use designation allows for a greater variety of retail and commercial type uses compared to the OC district, which is defined by the Civic Center Specific Plan as being intended to:

“...provide for large medical, office and/or educational complexes with accessory uses on-site or within walking distance.”

The intent of the proposed amendment also includes an adjustment to the land use table is to accommodate for new vehicle sales within the (CC-2) district on a minimum four-acre project site, in line with current allowances for used vehicle sales. As adopted, the specific plan only allows new vehicle sales within the Auto Park (AP)

district, while used vehicle sales are conditionally permitted in the Community Commercial (CC-1) and (CC-2). While the CC-2 land use designation does not permit new vehicle sales as a permitted or conditionally permitted use, the applicant has proposed to amend the Specific Plan to afford the option for new vehicle sales to be conditionally permitted within the proposed CC-2 land use district. As proposed, new vehicle sales would be required to be located on a minimum 4 acre project site in order to ensure adequate area to allow for a full suite of sales and associated service options from a large scale establishment, in accordance with the in the intent of the CC-2 land use category which aims to:

“...provide for large scale commercial development...and other tax generating complementary uses...”

Based on the intent of the Civic Center Specific Plan and development patterns since its adoption, as well as the potential for an expansion of allowable land uses in the subject area, Staff supports the proposed Specific Plan Amendment as presented.

3. Conditional Use Permit.

Business Operations / Site History

Del Amo Motorsports has proposed to establish an approximately 89,000 square foot powersports sales and service facility within an existing commercial building located at 14444 Atstar Drive, previously home to various appliance retailers. Del Amo Motorsports specializes in the sale and service of on and off highway vehicles, watercraft, and parts and accessories. The proposed operation will be comprised of an approximately 22,000 sq. ft. of showroom and sales area, 6,300 sq. ft. parts and accessories, 8,600 sq. ft. of service area, and 41,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space with the remainder of the building dedicated to offices, storage and restrooms.

The proposed operation will conduct all sales and service within the enclosed building with the large warehouse space to be utilized for the unboxing of new arrivals, preparation of vehicles for the showroom floor and the storage of overstock vehicles. The applicant has stated the business, including sales and service, will operate from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday – Friday and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. with the business closed Sundays and Mondays. Staff finds the business hours are common for uses in the area and the proposed operations are not anticipated to cause any parking or access deficiencies on-site.

Development Code Requirements

Parking

The Specific Plan requires vehicle sales and repair facilities to provide one off-street parking space for every 450 square feet of building floor area. Based on this standard, 198 off-street parking spaces are required for customers and employees (89,275/450=198). Previously developed for retail sales, the building is developed as

a part of a larger retail center with the subject building providing 272 off-street parking stalls for customers and employees, providing 74 excess spaces to be shared with the remainder of the center, also independently parked.

Site Condition

The site is fully developed, and as noted previously is a part of a larger commercial center that has maintained landscaping and a shared parking lot. However, given delayed repairs to the property, the building needs minor refurbishment including exterior paint, windows and doors as well as parking lot repairs including slurry coat, seal and restriping. Additionally, while a trash enclosure exists at the rear of the building, it does not comply with current code standards in terms of appropriate roof, gates and security requirements. Lastly, the outdoor storage yard fencing is currently chain-link, which is in poor condition, is a prohibited fencing material in commercial zones and requires replacement to current standards. While the applicant has indicated these improvements will be completed with the establishment of the business, the applicant may necessitate a phased completion of the improvements. Consequently, Staff has included Conditions #13 thru #16 to ensure the improvements are completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or alternatively, as a part of a separate Minor Site Plan approval, may be phased with the approval of an installation schedule subject to the Zoning Administrators review and approval.

Conditional uses require special appraisal by the Planning Commission to determine whether the use will adversely affect the health or safety of persons living or working in the vicinity or be materially detrimental to the public welfare:

Required Findings

The Specific Plan defers to Title 16 for Conditional Use Permits. Therefore, as required by Section 16-3.02.050 of the Development Code, prior to approval of a Conditional Use Permit, the hearing body shall make the following findings:

- *The proposed location of the conditional use is in accord with the objectives and requirements of the Development Code.*

Comment: The CC-2 (Civic Commercial) district of the Civic Center Community Sustainability Specific Plan land use district would conditionally permit new vehicle sales contingent upon the associated Specific Plan Amendment adoption. Therefore, the use would be in accord with the objectives and requirements of the Development Code and Specific Plan.

- *The proposed location of the conditional use and the conditions under which it will be operated is consistent with the General Plan and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare or materially injurious to uses, properties or improvements in the vicinity.*

Comment: If approved, the use would be consistent with the Specific Plan designation of the General Plan and is consistent and complementary to other

similar uses within the vicinity which include new and used vehicle sales. The site is in a commercial center with no residential uses in the vicinity.

- *The traffic generated by the proposed conditional use will not overload the capacity of the surrounding street system and will not create a hazard to public safety.*

Comment: Since the proposed use will utilize hours of operation which are similar to existing uses in the area and consistent with previous retail uses which have occupied the building and have operated without overloading the capacity of the roadways, the proposal is not anticipated to overload the surrounding street system or include impacts greater than those that similar uses would generate during peak hours.

- *The proposed conditional use will comply with each of the applicable provisions of the “Zoning and Land Use Requirements” chapter of Title 16.*

Comment: The existing site is fully developed, including sufficient parking for the proposed use in accordance with current Specific Plan requirements. Additionally, the proposed use, if amended as noted above, will conditionally permit the proposed use within the proposed CC-2 district. Therefore, Staff finds that the proposal will comply with each of the applicable provisions of the “Zoning and Land Use Requirements” chapter of Title 16 of the Development Code and the Specific Plan.

Site Characteristics:

	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning	Specific Plan
Site	Commercial Center	Specific Plan	SP	Civic Center
North	Equipment Sales and Rental	Specific Plan	SP	Civic Center
South	Vacant Land	Specific Plan	SP	Civic Center
East	Restaurant and Fuel Station	Specific Plan	SP	Civic Center
West	Off-Road Parts and Service	Specific Plan	SP	Civic Center

Number of Radius Letters Mailed: 404 *(All property owners within the Specific Plan area were provided direct notice via U.S. Mail and a 1/8th page legal advertisement was published.)*

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Specific Plan Amendment Resolution No. P-25-011
- Attachment B – Conditional Use Permit Resolution No. P-25-012
- Attachment C – Site Plan Graphics
- Attachment D – Specific Plan Land Use Map
- Attachment E – Civic Center Community Sustainability Specific Plan
- Attachment F – Civic Center Specific Plan Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Attachment G – Aerial Image