

# Planning Commission Agenda Report

February 14, 2018  
Item 6.a.

- SUBJECT:** P17-0278 and P17-0280
- APPLICANT:** BKF Engineers, Brock Roby
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Surf Thru, Inc., Scott Howry
- PURPOSE:** Applications for Design Review and Conditional Use Permit approvals to construct and operate a semi-automated car wash and related site improvements.
- LOCATIONS:** 3598 Stanley Boulevard
- GENERAL PLAN:** Retail, Highway, and Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices
- ZONING:** PUD-C (Planned Unit Development – Commercial)
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Draft Planning Commission Resolution](#) with [Conditions of Approval](#)
  - B. [Project Plans dated "Received February 7, 2018"](#)
  - C. [Noise Assessment](#)
  - D. [Location and Notification Map](#)

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission make the Conditional Use Permit findings within Exhibit A and adopt the resolution approving Case Nos. P17-0278 and P17-0280, subject to the conditions of approval listed as Attachment 1 in Exhibit A. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission...

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of Surf Thru Inc., Brock Roby, BKF Engineers, is requesting Design Review and Conditional Use Permit approvals to construct and operate a Surf-Thru Express Car Wash with an attached pay station building totaling approximately 5,412 square feet in area, two freestanding vacuum satiation canopies, and related site improvements on an approximately 1.5 acre site at 3598 Stanley Blvd. Concerns associated with self- or full-service car wash facilities are typically noise, queuing, and water usage. To ensure the project is suitably designed and operated, various City staff analyzed the project for compatibility with applicable polices, regulations and guidelines and is recommending support of the project, as conditioned. The applications are before the Planning Commission for consideration.

## **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

The subject lot (3598 Stanley Blvd.) has been used seasonally throughout the years as a Christmas tree sales lot. In 2007, the Planning Commission approved a Design Review application (PDR-563) to develop a retail center containing four separate buildings totaling approximately 31,326 square feet on the subject site and the adjacent parcel to the south. Consistent with the Municipal Code, two extensions were granted, in 2008 and 2009, but since no building permits were obtained, the Design Review approval expired in 2010.

In January 2011, the Planning Commission approved a new Design Review application (PDR-928) for the same retail project. Since no building permits were obtained, and no Design Review extensions were requested, the subsequent Design Review approval expired in January 2012.

The current Design Review (P17-0280) and Conditional Use Permit applications (P17-0278) are the first standalone development applications for 3598 Stanley Boulevard.

## **SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION**

The subject site is an approximately 1.5-acre vacant parcel located in Stanley Business Park at the southeast intersection of Washington Street (which parallels Stanley Boulevard) and Wyoming Street (please refer to the location map in Exhibit D, and Images 1 and 2 in this report). The relatively flat site does not contain trees or established landscaping.

Image 1: Aerial Photo



Note: A secondary address, 3590 Stanley Boulevard, was assigned to the same vacant lot in 2007 in anticipation of the previously approved commercial development. The second address will be removed if the car wash is approved and constructed.

**Image 2: Street View of the Subject Site from Wyoming and Washing streets**



The property is bordered on the north, across Stanley Boulevard, by Central Self Storage, on the east by a multi-tenant building and McDonald's restaurant; on the southeast by a gas station with convenience market and drive-through car wash; on the south by a vacant lot; and on the west, across Washington Street, by a vacant lot that will soon have a multi-tenant commercial building. Stanley Business Park includes a mix of uses including a gas station, restaurants, automotive-related and service-oriented businesses.

The site can currently be accessed from Stanley Boulevard by a drive aisle extending south to Utah Street that is shared with the adjacent parcels via an access easement. The shared driveway was constructed when the adjacent parcels were developed, as shown in Image 1. The closed off street located at the northern portion of the site, as shown in Image 2, was city-owned for public right-of-way. In 1988, the City Council approved the vacation of the closed off portion of the street as the excess right-of-way was not required for street or pedestrian purposes and the right-of-way area was granted to the subject property.

## **PROPOSED PROJECT**

### Business Operation

A full-service car wash facility has the car wash employee(s) manually vacuum the vehicle and clean it through an enclosed building tunnel to be manually and/or automatically washed, dried and/or waxed, and taken to a final area for finishing. A vehicle that is manually vacuumed, cleaned, washed and/or waxed by the vehicle operator in a stationary spot is self-service car wash. Surf-Thru car wash is a hybrid of a full- and self-service car wash. The proposed facility is considered to be a semi-automated, full-service car wash since the vehicle operator drives up, pays, drives into the enclosed building tunnel for the vehicle to be automatically washed, waxed, and dried, after which the driver can park to self-vacuum the vehicle, or leave.

The car wash would be open seven days a week with the hours of operation dependent on the season: during spring/summer (March to November), the facility would operate from 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; during fall/winter (November to February) it would operate from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. The facility would employ a total of seven to eight full-time staff, and seven to eight part-time staff, with four to five employees on-site at any given time.

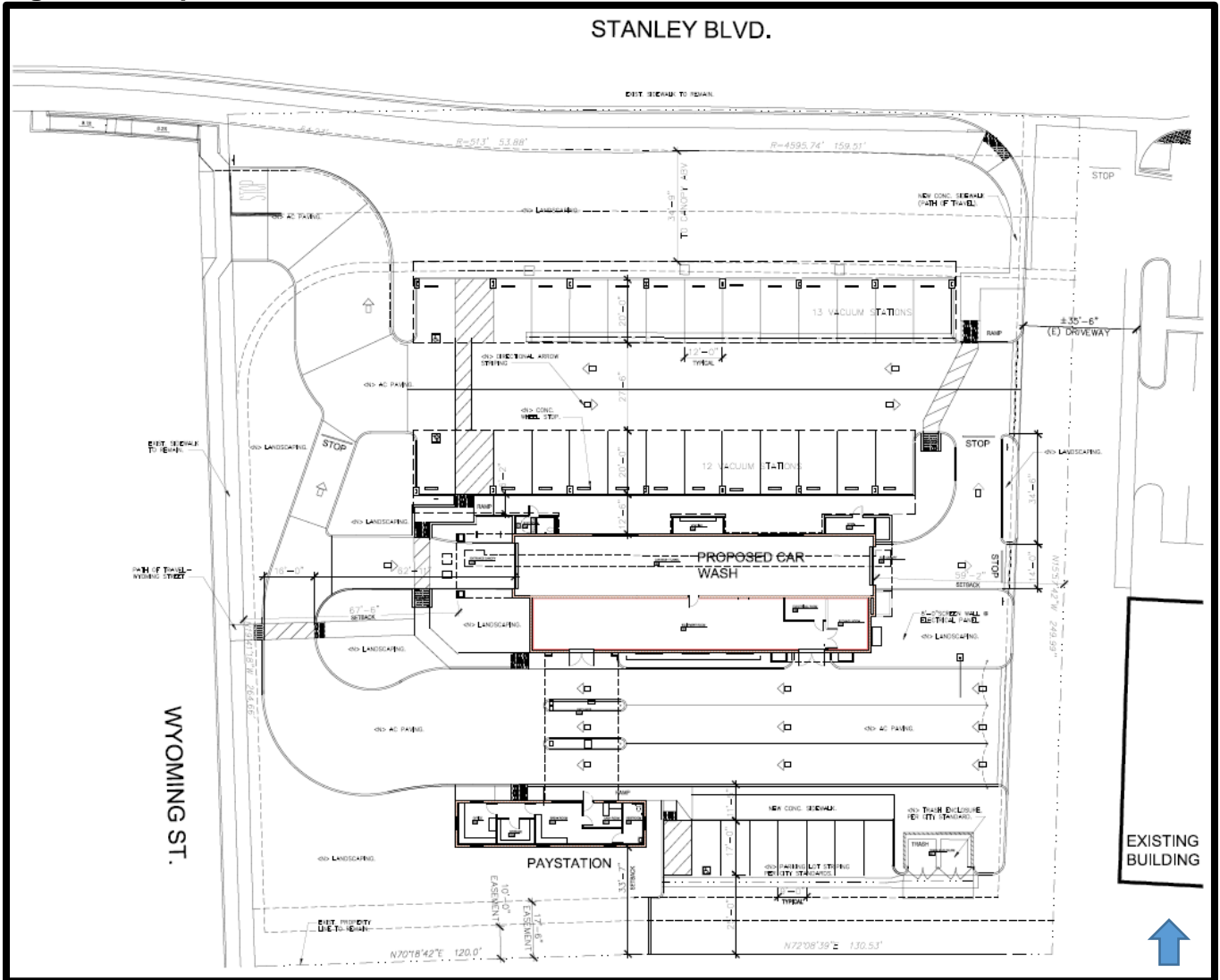
### Water Usage

Water used to wash the vehicles at the proposed location would be recycled and would use less than 17 gallons of water per car. For reference, car wash facilities that do not recycle their water can use 40-100 gallons of water per car and a person washing their car at home can use 70-100 gallons of water per car.

### Site layout

The applicant is proposing to construct an approximately 5,412-square-foot automated semi-automated, full-service car wash facility with a breezeway that connects to an approximately 880-square-foot pay station building. Two freestanding vacuum canopies will house 25 vacuum stations (12 under the southern canopy and 13 under the northern canopy). Vehicular access to the site would be provided from a new driveway at the intersection of Wyoming Street and Washington Street and the existing shared driveway south of Stanley Boulevard. A total of 32 parking stalls are proposed including 29 standard-sized spaces (23 spaces for the vacuum station and six spaces for employee parking) and three accessible stalls (two stalls in each of the vacuum station canopies and one for employee parking). Please refer to Figure 1 for the proposed site plan layout and Image 3 for a plan overlay of the site. In addition to the installation of low-water use landscaping, a total of 45 trees are proposed to be planted throughout the site.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan





with the remaining portions of the car wash building being 17- or 22-feet tall, measured from finished grade to the top of the parapet.

A smaller, secondary building housing the pay station/pay booth would be located behind the car wash building near the main access drive. This building would have the same materials and design elements as the car wash building including a stone base with stucco walls that feature accent score line details to break up the stucco wall planes.

A 17-foot, 6-inch tall breezeway, matching the stucco material and colors of the car wash building, would connect the pay station building to the car wash building. A new 10-foot tall covered trash enclosure, matching the materials and colors of the car wash building, would be located on the southeast side of the property.

A canopy structure would cover the two rows of vacuum station spaces; color and materials would match those of the car wash building (stone and stucco with trim detailing). The vacuum station canopy on the north side of the car wash building would have a maximum height of 12-feet, 6-inches tall and the northernmost canopy is 15-feet tall and is proposed to have roof-mounted photovoltaic panels.

## **ANALYSIS**

### General Plan

The subject property has a General Plan Land Use designation of Retail/Highway/Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices, which allows a variety of commercial uses. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan land use designation because the site would be developed with a car wash facility, a commercial use that is a semi-automated car wash with full- and self-service aspects. The project is also consistent with the following General Plan Land Use policies and program:

Policy 4: Allow development consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map.

Policy 13: Ensure that neighborhood, community, and regional commercial centers provide goods and services needed by residents and businesses of Pleasanton and its market area.

Program 15.2: Promote the location of business services in Pleasanton to support industrial, commercial, and office complexes.

### Zoning and Stanley Business Park PUD Development Plan

The City Council approved the Stanley Business Park PUD on December 8, 1981, under PUD-81-25. The PUD approval references the development standards of the city's C-S (Service-Commercial) zoning district for building height, setbacks, floor area ratio, and parking. The project has been reviewed with respect to the PUD development standards for the business park. Table 1 summarizes these standards and compares them to those proposed as part of the project.



**Table 1: Site Development Standards**

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<i>Setbacks</i>		
Front	10 ft.	34 ft., 9 in. (canopy) 133 ft. (car wash)
Interior Side (eastern)	0 ft.	36 ft., 8 in. (canopy) 56 ft. (car wash)
Street Side (western)	10 ft.	55 ft. (canopy) 64 ft. 2 in. (car wash)
Rear	10 ft.	33 ft., 7 in. (pay booth) 92 ft. (car wash)
<i>Height</i>		
	40 ft. max.	12 – 15 ft. (canopies) 29 ft., 9 in. (car wash)
<i>Floor area ratio</i>		
	100% max.	26.5%
<i>Parking</i>		
Number of spaces: 2 parking spaces for every 3 employees on the max. shift.	4 (based on 5 employees on a max. shift)	32 (25 vacuum spaces and 7 employee spaces)

The proposed layout provides setbacks well in excess of those required, and the project complies with all of the other PUD and C-S zoning district development standards.

Stanley Business Park is subject to the permitted and conditionally permitted uses of the city's C-S district with a full-service car wash classified as a conditionally permitted use. The car wash requires a Conditional Use Permit and associated new construction and site modifications require Design Review, both of which are before the Planning Commission for consideration.

One of the primary concerns in reviewing a CUP application is the effect of a proposed use on surrounding uses. As discussed later in this report, the proposed project would provide adequate on-site parking and drive-through lane queueing capacity, and would be compatible with the surrounding businesses in that all activities associated with the use would be contained on-site and would not spillover onto adjacent parcels or into the public right-of-way. The car wash facility has similar operating hours with other uses in the immediate vicinity, sizable setbacks and building separation from adjacent off-site buildings all of which assist with limiting impacts such as noise (discussed later in the analysis) to sensitive receptors .

Should future problems arise with the use, the City would have the ability to bring the CUP back to the Planning Commission for additional mitigation, or possible permit revocation, if necessary. Based on past experience with similar uses, staff believes the use is compatible for this area. Staff has included conditions of approval that will ensure the use would not generate noise, traffic/circulation, or parking shortages such that surrounding uses would be adversely affected. Therefore, from a land use perspective, staff finds the use to be appropriate for the subject property, as conditioned.

## Traffic

Vehicle impacts from permitted and conditionally permitted uses at this site were anticipated and addressed when Stanley Business Park was originally approved and the City's Traffic Division did not require the applicant to prepare a traffic or queuing analysis for the project. Rather, the City's Traffic Division compared the proposed operation to existing self- and full-service car wash facilities in Pleasanton (Wash Time Car Wash at 4257 Vervais Ave. and Pleasanton Hand Car Wash at 4005 Pimlico Dr.) and assessed queuing analyses for similarly-operated car wash facilities in Oxnard, California and Bend, Oregon. Based on this information, the City's Traffic Division found that the queuing analysis was adequate and determined that the proposed site layout is sufficient for queuing capacity and would not impact ingress and egress to the site or spill out onto the public right-of-way. Furthermore, the Traffic Engineer determined the proposed car wash would not generate significant AM/PM trips and thus did not warrant a traffic analysis. Therefore, the proposed site layout is not anticipated to create any traffic or circulation problems. As condition, the City can require a traffic/queuing analysis and/or modifications to the site and/or operation should problems arise. The applicant would be required to pay the City- and Tri-Valley-required traffic fees as part of the project.

## Parking

A total of 32 parking spaces are proposed for the car wash, which includes 25 vacuum station spaces, and seven employee spaces. The Pleasanton Municipal Code (PMC) requires two parking spaces for every three employees on the maximum shift for full-service car washes. The proposed use is a semi-automated car wash, similar to a full-service car wash. Therefore, with a maximum of five employees per shift, four parking spaces would be required for the proposed car wash. The applicant is proposing seven employee parking spaces (six standard and one accessible stall) and 25 vacuum parking stalls (23 standard size spaces and two accessible spaces), which staff believes would provide adequate parking for the car wash.

## Noise

With respect to potential noise impacts generated by the proposed project, the city's Noise Ordinance (Chapter 9.04 of Pleasanton Municipal Code) does not allow any person to produce any noise or allow any noise to be produced by any machine, animal, device, or any combination of the same, on commercial property, in excess of 70 dBA at any point outside of the property plane.

The applicant provided a Noise Assessment report for an existing car wash facility that is similar in function, site design, and size as the proposed Surf-Thru facility (please refer to Exhibit C). The noise level measurement data of the existing facility represents noise sources associated with the existing car wash, including cars idling and moving in the drive lane, power washers used by attendants at the tunnel entrance (staff notes this is not a part of Surf-Thru's proposed operation at the subject site), car wash scrubber equipment, car wash dryer equipment (with noise control systems), and minor contribution from vacuum stations. The noise measurements showed a maximum noise level of 71 dBA at the property line of the study property, which was approximately 25 feet from the car wash entrance. The maximum noise level allowed at the proposed Surf-Thru property plane, per the PMC, is 70 dBA.

The proposed Surf-Thru car wash exit is located considerably further from the property line in the comparison study, at 56 feet from the eastern property line, 64 feet, two inches from the western property line; the northernmost vacuum canopy is located 34 feet, 9 inches from the

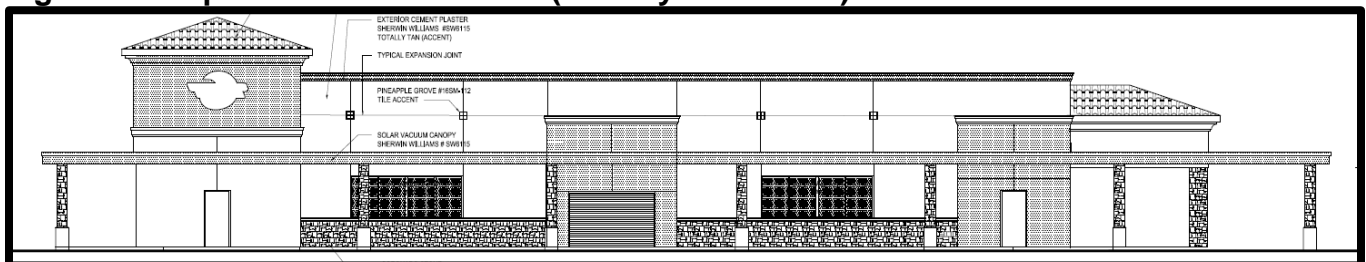
front property line. The proposed project has greater setbacks than the existing car wash facility that was used in the Noise Assessment report. Staff believes the proposed car wash and related equipment would meet the city’s Noise Ordinance because the proposed car wash entrance is close to twice the distance from the nearest property line as the study site, allowing at least a one decibel drop in noise levels, if not more, to meet the 70 dBA limit. To further ensure that the facility and equipment adhere to the city’s noise standards, staff has included a condition of approval requiring written certification by an acoustic consultant prior to operation to verify the drive-through car wash facility and the vacuums are operating in compliance with the city’s Noise Ordinance.

**Architectural Design**

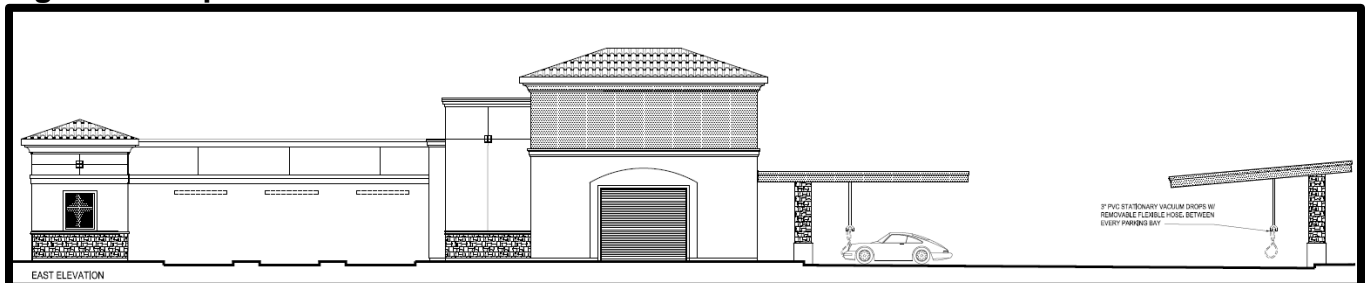
The car wash facility would be highly visible from Stanley Boulevard. Staff believes the use of stone and stucco, incorporation of windows and architectural features (score lines), earthtone colors, and landscape trellises breakup and offer variation in the wall planes. An eight-foot-tall screen wall is proposed around the electrical panel on the east side of the building. Staff does not typically support the use of tall walls to screen cabinets and equipment, such as the one proposed. Staff’s recommendation, as conditioned, is to paint the cabinet/electrical panel such that it matches the building and install landscaping around it to soften and screen the enclosure.

Please refer to Figures 2 and 3 and Image 4 for north and east elevations and Exhibit B for color elevation drawings. Staff believes the building is well designed, functional and attractive and finds the design appropriate and complementary to the buildings within Stanley Business Park.

**Figure 2: Proposed North Elevation (Stanley Boulevard)**



**Figure 3: Proposed East Elevation**



**Image 4: East Elevation Photo Simulation**



### Grading and Drainage

Grading for the proposed project would be limited to preparation of the building pads, hardscape areas, and the installation of any below-ground utilities, such as electrical conduits, sewer, and water infrastructure. There are bio-retention areas that will treat the site's stormwater. As conditioned, the project would meet the city's grading, drainage and stormwater requirements.

### Landscaping and Trees

A landscape plan has been provided which includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcover for the site. The landscape plan would assist in screening and softening the appearance of the structure and provide an attractive streetscape. To further enhance the streetscape, staff recommends that the landscape plan be modified in a few areas: (1) additional rosemary plants and two oak trees installed in the planter area west of the southern vacuum canopy; (2) installing six London plane trees along the project frontage, south of the sidewalk; (3) adding one oak tree northeast of the trash enclosure; and (4) installing additional shrubs in the south, east, and north planter areas. As conditioned, staff believes that the proposed landscape plan is appropriate for the area and the project location.

### Signs

Signage is not proposed with this Design Review application. A comprehensive sign program for the project will be reviewed by staff as a Sign Design Review application at a future date.

**USE PERMIT FINDINGS**

Conditional uses are those uses which, by their nature, require special consideration so they may be located properly with respect to the objectives of the Municipal Code and with respect to their effects on surrounding properties. In order to achieve these purposes, the Planning Commission is empowered to approve, conditionally approve, or deny applications for CUPs. Based on the above analysis, and as detailed in the Draft Resolution in Exhibit A, staff believes all of the required findings can be made.

**PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

The subject parcel is a legally created lot zoned for commercial-services uses. The proposed building would meet the intent of the underlying zoning and prior PUD development plan approval for Stanley Business Park. Alternatives for the site could include:

1. An alternative commercial use and/or site layout, including one or more buildings with different shape(s), size(s), and/or layout(s). For example, constructing one or more single or multi-story commercial buildings; or
2. Undertaking no project, under which the site would not be developed in the near-term.

The outcomes of the first alternative are difficult to evaluate or quantify, absent a specific project proposal. However, a more intensive or larger scale multi-building project could create a project that has more massing, require more on-site parking or generate more off-site traffic or parking impacts. Alternatively, such a project could provide an opportunity for alternative site design(s) that could place buildings towards the front of the site and parking areas at the rear, and contribute to a more positive street presence.

The second alternative would leave the site undeveloped, which would not be beneficial in the long-term because it would not allow for development and upgrade of the site in a manner anticipated by the PUD and General Plan.

Therefore, staff believes the proposed project represents a reasonable development scenario.

**PROS AND CONS**

Pros	Con
Building design is architecturally compatible with the other buildings in Stanley Business Park.	Incrementally increases demand on City services, including water, sewer, and roadway infrastructure, and would increase demand for other public services.
Consistent with the PUD and City regulations.	
Allows development and improvement of a long-vacant site, providing an opportunity for an automated car wash in the City and adding vitality to Stanley Business Park.	
Allows for green opportunities through the use of solar panels on the northernmost vacuum canopy and utilizing recycled water in the car wash.	

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of this application was sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing map as Exhibit D for reference. At the time this report was published, staff had not received any public comment.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Infill development projects on sites of five acres or less that have no habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species, that can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services, that are consistent with the General Plan and zoning regulations, and would have no significant effects on traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality are categorically exempt (In-fill Development: 15332(32)(a-e)) from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

## **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

Staff has reviewed the subject proposal and believes the subject proposal is consistent with the applicable PUD and city regulations. The project is well designed and the building design and site layout are appropriate for Stanley Business Park, and would not generate any unacceptable traffic, parking or noise conditions that would adversely affect neighboring uses.

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