

**DRAFT FINDINGS
MINOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT
RENOVATION & REUSE OF AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
105 POMEROY STREET, UKIAH, CA; APN 002-247-02 | FILE NO. PA25-000007**

Approved Project Description: The Applicant requests a Minor Site Development Permit to renovate and repurpose an existing commercial structure and utilize its previously approved signage allowance for continued restaurant use. The project includes the integration of a drive-through component, as permitted under Ukiah City Code (UCC) §9081, and in compliance with the off-street parking requirements of UCC §9198(D). File No. PA25-000007.

SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FINDINGS

Pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 9261(b), staff has determined that a Minor Site Development Permit is the appropriate level of review. The required findings for approval, along with analysis of consistency, are provided below.

The proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the City General Plan.

The proposed renovation and reuse of the existing restaurant structure at 105 Pomeroy Street, including the addition of a drive-through, is consistent with the 2040 Ukiah General Plan. The site's Highway Commercial designation supports restaurants and drive-through uses to serve both local and regional populations. Furthermore, the project aligns with Land Use Policy LU-8.4: *Reuse of Underutilized Property*, which encourages revitalization of abandoned or underutilized sites. By repurposing degrading and vacant commercial space, the project supports economic development and provides an appropriately zoned location for a quick-service restaurant along a major transportation corridor.

The project site is designated Highway Commercial (HC) under the 2040 Ukiah General Plan, which is intended for commercial development along major transportation corridors. This designation supports uses like large-format retail, shopping centers, restaurants, lodging, and visitor services such as fueling stations and EV charging hubs. Given its location near U.S. Highway 101 and existing commercial infrastructure, the site is well-suited for continued restaurant use and aligns with the economic and land use goals of the 2040 General Plan.

The location, size, and intensity of the proposed project will not create a hazardous or inconvenient vehicular or pedestrian traffic pattern.

The project site operated as a full-service restaurant for over 50 years, likely generating more peak-hour traffic than the proposed restaurant, which will have fewer seats and parking spaces. The new drive-through will be located in an underused area of the existing parking lot and includes a 13-car queue to avoid spillover onto Pomeroy Street. Pedestrian access will remain via existing sidewalks, and both short- and long-term bicycle parking will be provided in accordance with Ukiah City Code for projects within the Community Commercial (C-1) zoning district.

Planned onsite changes, including removal of the bi-directional lanes and north-side parallel parking, will improve circulation near the Perkins/Pomeroy intersection. Subsequently, converting onsite traffic to one-way will further enhance both flow and safety. As detailed in the draft site plan

submitted April 2, 2025, the Applicant will increase the separation from the Perkins Street intersection and ensure ADA compliance, subject to City Engineer review. Directional signage will also be conditioned to prevent entry conflicts and support safe vehicle circulation.

The accessibility of off-street parking areas and the relation of parking areas with respect to traffic on adjacent streets will not create a hazardous or inconvenient condition to adjacent or surrounding uses.

The proposed project is not expected to create conditions more hazardous than those during the former restaurant's operation. The existing configuration allows for bidirectional traffic flow into both encroachments and lacks internal pedestrian safety features. In contrast, the proposed project introduces a controlled circulation pattern from Pomeroy Street, and shifts entry away from the Perkins Street intersection, reducing potential onsite vehicle/pedestrian conflicts and improving on-site traffic efficiency.

Additionally, internal pedestrian improvements, including striped crosswalks and designated pathways, are being added to clearly separate foot traffic from vehicle movement, significantly improving site safety.

While the original parking lot accommodated approximately 72 vehicles at full capacity, the revised site plan substantially reduces parking to 43 spaces allowing for improved on-site circulation and pedestrian safety.

Sufficient landscaped areas have been reserved for purposes of separating or screening the proposed structure(s) from the street and adjoining building sites and breaking up and screening large expanses of paved areas.

The project includes new perimeter landscaping that introduces parking lot landscaping and on-site shade considerations for the first time, enhancing screening from adjacent roadways and properties. The addition of a drive-through and landscaping will help break up the visual expanse of the parking lot, which has remained largely unchanged for over 50 years. As proposed, the site would meet the objective landscaping requirements, and with applied conditions of approval, additional landscaping will be added. Regular maintenance will be necessary to ensure long-term effectiveness. As recommended by the Community Services Director, the applicant is encouraged to use native or regionally appropriate plant species where feasible to reflect the natural character of the Ukiah Valley.

The proposed development will not restrict or cut out light and air on the property, or on the property in the neighborhood; nor will it hinder the development or use of buildings in the neighborhood or impair the value thereof.

The proposed development does not restrict or cut off light and air to the property or surrounding neighborhood, as it is adjacent to the US 101 and other commercial undertakings featuring substantial setbacks from all associated property lines. The project involves renovation of an existing building with no substantial modifications to its footprint. Given the current state of disrepair following the previous tenant's departure, the improvements will enhance—not hinder—the surrounding area.

The improvement of any commercial or industrial structure will not have a substantial detrimental impact on the character or value of an adjacent residential zoning district.

The proposed improvements to the existing commercial structure and project site will not negatively impact the character or value of any adjacent residential zoning district, as there are none in proximity. This site has long been developed for commercial use, and the proposed renovation will help revitalize the property rather than detract from surrounding areas. Given the current state of disrepair, investment in the site will only serve to enhance its compatibility with the broader community.

The proposed development will not excessively damage or destroy natural features, including trees, shrubs, creeks, and the natural grade of the site.

This finding is not particularly applicable, as the site is already developed and contains no significant natural features to preserve. There are no creeks, significant tree stands, or undisturbed natural grades that would be impacted by the project. Any removal of existing landscaping will only improve the site's appearance and consistency with the finalized landscape plan. No substantial grading or earthwork is required or requested within Attachment 3.

There is sufficient variety, creativity, and articulation to the architecture and design of the structure(s) and grounds to avoid monotony and/or a box-like uninteresting external appearance.

The refreshed commercial façade will enhance the structure's appearance with an updated and visually appealing design. The elevations in Attachment 3 illustrate a well-articulated design that avoids a box-like or monotonous appearance, ensuring the site remains an attractive and functional part of the commercial corridor. The proposed improvements incorporate a mix of colors, materials, and textures and also transfers thematic angles associated with the previous restaurant.

CEQA FINDINGS

The proposed project at 105 Pomeroy Street is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Class 1, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) (a), which applies to minor interior or exterior alterations of existing structures within an urbanized area.

The project involves renovations to an existing 3,100-square-foot commercial structure previously occupied by a sit-down restaurant, for reuse as a quick-service restaurant with a drive-through. The building's footprint will remain unchanged, with proposed improvements including interior remodeling, exterior façade upgrades, and the addition of a drive-through lane. No major site grading or disturbance to natural features is proposed with the exception.

The project is consistent with the site's Highway Commercial land use designation, community commercial zoning district, the 2040 Ukiah General Plan, and all relevant local planning policies. Staff has determined that the project will not impact sensitive environmental resources, including habitats for endangered species, geologically sensitive areas, or sites of historical or archaeological significance, nor will it result in a substantial change from the previous long-term restaurant operator.

PUBLIC NOTICE

- Notice of the Public Hearing was provided in the following manner, in accordance with UCC §9263:
- Published in the Ukiah Daily Journal on April 5, 2025; and
- Posted on the Project site on April 5, 2025; and
- Posted at the Civic Center (glass case) on April 5, 2025; and
- Mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the Project parcels on April 5, 2025; and
- Emailed to all agencies having jurisdiction: April 5, 2025.

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