

# AGENDA REPORT

## Meeting of the San Marcos Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: January 7, 2013  
SUBJECT: Sonic Drive-In Conditional Use Permit  
CASE: P12-0005

### Recommendation

Conditionally approve a Conditional Use Permit and lot consolidation Boundary Adjustment to allow the construction of a drive-in/thru restaurant.

### Introduction

The project proposes a 1,795 square-foot drive-in restaurant with an 899 square-foot covered dining area on a 0.9-acre lot. The drive-in will include a drive-thru lane and twenty-four (24) parking spaces for employees and visitors. In addition, the project includes a lot consolidation of the existing two (2) parcels into a single parcel.

### Discussion

The proposed drive-in restaurant will be located on a property currently developed with an asphalt paved parking lot. The site is zoned Commercial (C), and designated "Commercial" in the General Plan. The project site is surrounded by a commercial center (Grand Plaza) to the west, a fleet fueling station to the south, a veterinarian office to the east, and State Route 78 to the north.

The project proposes an enhanced architectural style by incorporating a tower structure, a standing seam metal roof, corniced parapets, staggered building planes and varied roofline, and an exterior consisting of stucco and stone veneer materials. The proposal is architecturally compatible with the existing retail buildings of Grand Plaza to the west. Because it is a drive-in, customers will be served by car-hops at their vehicles within the drive-in spaces. Customers will order their meals while parked in the drive-in spaces and the food is delivered by car-hops on roller skates. Car canopies are proposed for the drive-in spaces, and are conditioned to incorporate the same architectural enhancements as the building, such as a curved standing seam metal roof and columns with stone veneer. Customers can also dine within the covered outdoor dining area under the tower structure or by the fountain at the northwest corner of the site. No dining is provided within the building. The drive-in parking spaces



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along Grand Avenue will be screened from view by landscaping and a fence with vines, and the drive-thru lane will be located internal to the site away from the street frontages. The project is conditioned for additional landscaping adjacent to the drive-thru lane. In addition, the trash enclosure will be architecturally compatible with the building and have a solid cover, and roof equipment will be required to be screened from view from State Route 78 and adjacent streets and properties.

A traffic study was prepared for the proposal which indicated a trip generation rate of 1,697 Average Daily Trips. The study analyzed four (4) surrounding intersections and three (3) road segments which all currently operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS D or better). The traffic analysis considered potential traffic impacts by the proposed project plus cumulative project volumes from nearby approved and pending projects in 2014 conditions when the proposal is projected to be completed and operating. The cumulative conditions analysis determined that surrounding intersection and road segments are forecast to operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS D or better) with or without the proposed drive-in restaurant. Because the Levels of Service fall within acceptable City standards, there are no significant impacts anticipated for direct or cumulative conditions of surrounding intersections and road segments. However, the project will contribute toward City-wide traffic resulting in potential cumulative impacts to State Route (SR-78) which currently operates at below-satisfactorily Levels of Service. In order to mitigate for SR-78 cumulative impacts, the proposed project shall annex into the Congestion Management Community Facilities District (CFD) 2011-01 for a planned intra-City shuttle system which will assist in the reduction of City-wide traffic congestion and impacts to SR-78. The project will also be required to pay full Public Facilities Fees which include an SR-78 improvement component.

The proposed drive-in restaurant will have driveway access off of Via Vera Cruz and Grand Avenue. The Via Vera Cruz driveway access will be restricted to right-in and right-out turns only. The project is conditioned to extend the center median on Via Vera Cruz approximately twenty-five (25) feet in order to prevent left-in or left-out turns to avoid conflicts with the Grand Plaza driveway entry on the west side of Via Vera Cruz. On Grand Avenue, the driveway access will be shared with the adjacent property to the east. This driveway access will have full turning movements, except that the left-out turn will be restricted to allow vehicles only into the left turn lane to southbound Via Vera Cruz. The project is conditioned to construct a median along Grand Avenue to prevent those left-out vehicles from crossing four (4) lanes of traffic to the right lane onto the eastbound State Route 78 on-ramp, which would create potential collisions.

The project site will be served by a one-way circulation system that operates in a counter clockwise direction, and is consistent with the direction of the drive-thru. The drive-thru lane will provide adequate stacking of approximately nine (9) vehicles for customers to order at the menu board. No pick-up window is proposed for the drive-thru, and meals will be delivered directly to vehicles within



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the queue by "car-hops". After ordering at the menu board, there is space for four (4) vehicles within the drive-thru lane to wait for meal delivery by the "car-hops". Within this section of the drive-thru lane, vehicles are not restricted by a curb or median; therefore, the vehicle can exit the drive-thru lane once the customer's order is received which allows for a quicker queue-time through the drive-thru.

The project proposes twenty-four (24) parking spaces on site. Sixteen (16) of those spaces will be used for drive-in parking for customers eating in their vehicles or at the outdoor dining tables. The remaining eight (8) parking spaces will be used for employee parking. The proposed drive-in restaurant is a unique type of use in that it includes a drive-thru feature. Per the Parking Ordinance, a drive-in facility requires a minimum of one (1) parking space for every four (4) seats of dining area plus one (1) space for every employee on the largest shift. This translates to a total of sixteen (16) parking spaces for a drive-in. For a drive-thru facility, a minimum of twenty (20) parking spaces plus one (1) space for every employee is required. This calculates to twenty-eight (28) parking spaces for a drive-thru. Therefore, the required parking ranges from sixteen (16) to twenty-eight (28) spaces for a drive-in and drive-thru establishment, respectively. As a comparison, the City reviewed several other Sonic Drive-Ins in other cities, and found that similar size facilities fell within this range and some required less parking spaces than what is proposed for the subject site. Due to the unique operation of the restaurant as a drive-in and drive-thru, the City has determined that the proposed twenty-four (24) spaces will provide adequate parking for the site.

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#### **Attachment(s)**

Adopting Resolution

- A- Vicinity Map
- B- Aerial Photo
- C- Requested Entitlement
- D- Site & Project Characteristics
- E- Negative Declaration

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Pedersen".

Norm Pedersen  
Associate Planner

**AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_**



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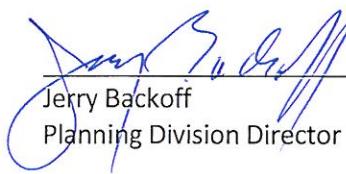
Reviewed by:



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Mike Edwards  
Public Works Director/City Engineer

Approved/Submitted by:



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Jerry Backoff  
Planning Division Director

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_



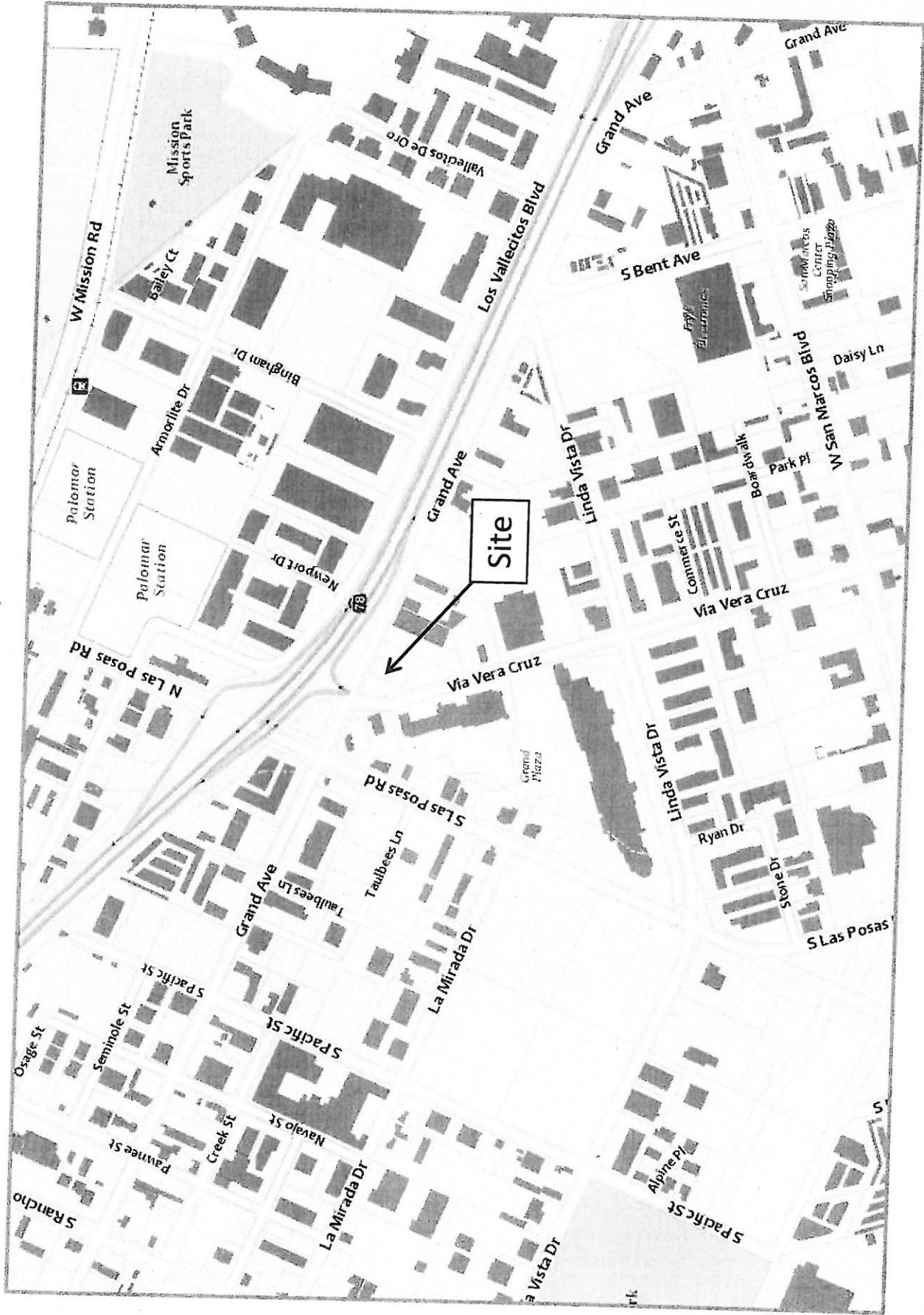
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## ATTACHMENT A

### Vicinity Map

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

# Vicinity Map





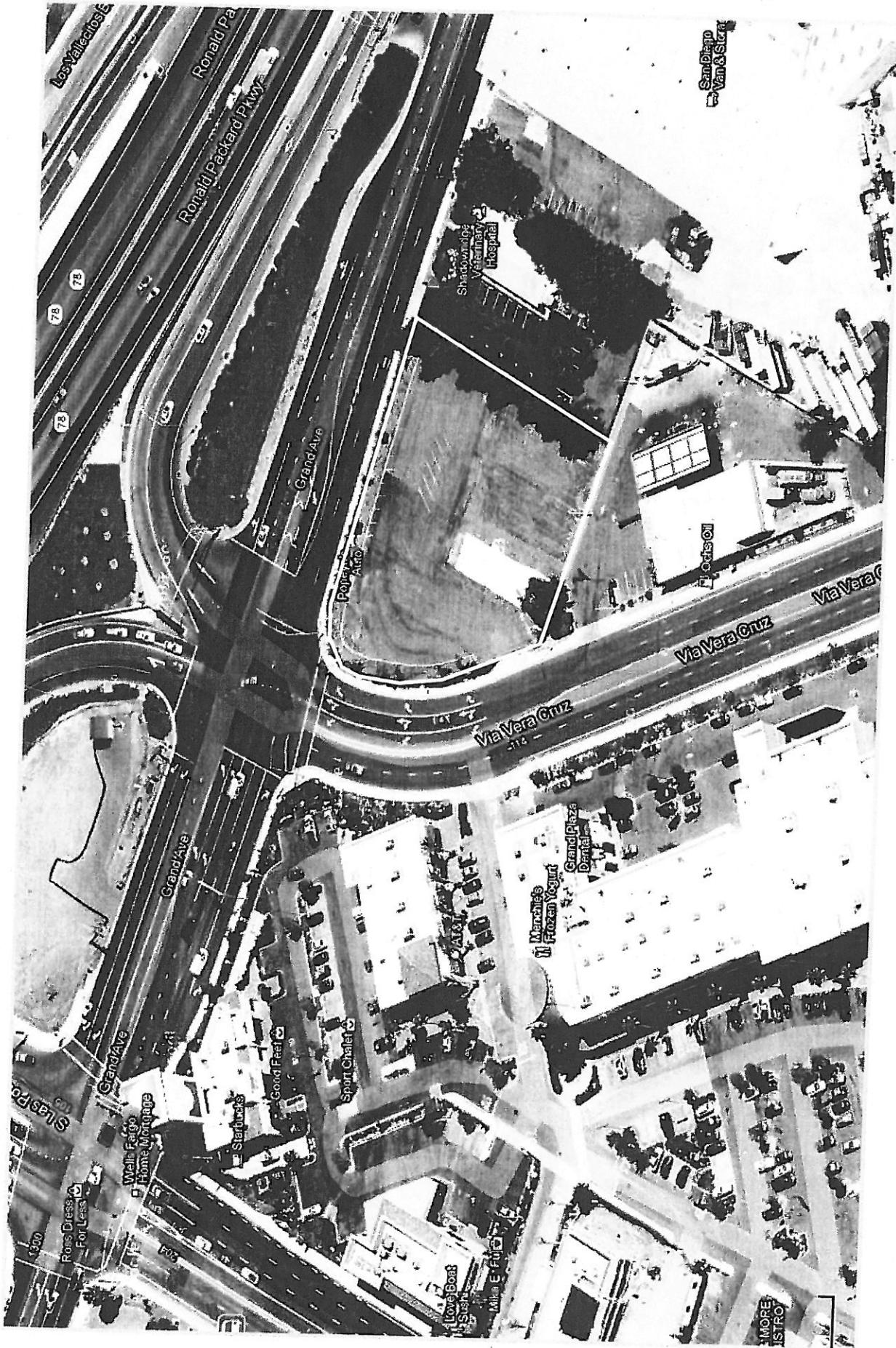
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ATTACHMENT B

Aerial Photo

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

# Aerial Photo





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ATTACHMENT C  
Requested Entitlements

- Major Conditional Use Permit to allow for the construction of a drive-in restaurant within the Commercial (C) Zone.

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_



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## ATTACHMENT D

### Site & Project Characteristics

<u>Property</u>	Existing <u>Land use</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	General Plan <u>Designation</u>
Subject	Parking lot	C	Commercial
North	State Route 78	-	-
South	Fuel station	C	Commercial
East	Office	C	Commercial
West	Retail	C	Commercial
Flood Hazard Zone	<u>      </u> yes	<u>x</u> no	
Resource Conserv. Area	<u>      </u> yes	<u>x</u> no	
Sewers	<u>x</u> yes	<u>      </u> no	
Septic	<u>      </u> yes	<u>x</u> no	
Water	<u>x</u> yes	<u>      </u> no	
Gen. Plan Conformance	<u>x*</u> yes	<u>      </u> no	
Land Use Compatibility	<u>x*</u> yes	<u>      </u> no	

\* with approval of CUP

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_



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ATTACHMENT E  
Negative Declaration 12-002

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2