Planning Commission

Item # 3 (25-223)

2455 Lawrence Expressway

March 19, 2025

2455 Lawrence Expressway

Request

- **Variance**: To allow reduced rear setbacks, reduced landscaping planter depth along the street frontages, reduced required landscape screening depth, and reduced required tree planter depth in connection with a proposed expansion of an existing service station
- **Conditional Use Permit:** allow expansion of an existing service station for removing a portion of fuel canopy and two fuel dispensers, and adding a 1,605 square foot convenience store and a self-service carwash within the rear setbacks

2455 Lawrence Expressway

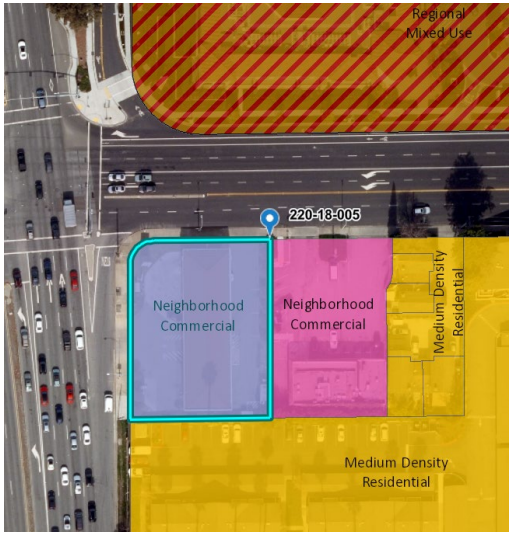
Background

- On 1/15/2025, Planning Commission heard the project, and at the conclusion, voted to reopen the public hearing and continue the project to the March 19, 2025, Planning Commission hearing to allow for the applicant to work with staff to resolve issues related to **noise, landscaping/screening, setbacks,** and **hours of operations**
- On 1/30/2025, the Applicant met with Staff to work on the issues discussed at the previous meeting
- On 2/11/2025, the applicant submitted updated plans that worked towards resolving those issues brought up at the prior meeting.

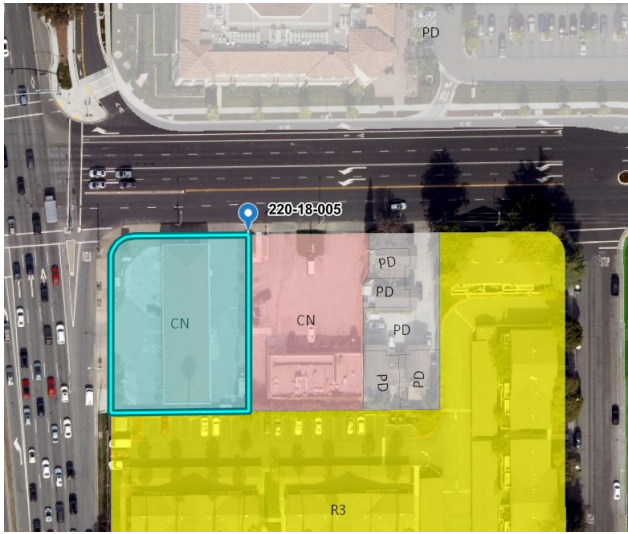
2455 Lawrence Expressway

Project Site

- **Site Area: .42** acres
- **General Plan:** Neighborhood Commercial
- **Classic Zoning:** CN - Neighborhood Commercial
- **Updated Zoning**: C-N - Commercial-Neighborhood
- **Site:** Service station with six fuel dispensers and sales kiosk



General Plan Map

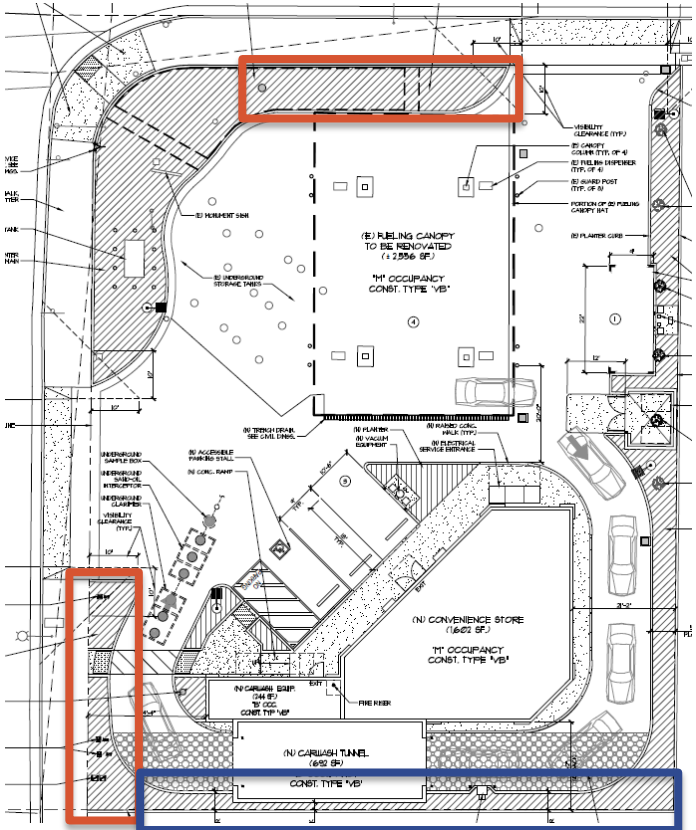


Zoning Map

2455 Lawrence Expressway

Variances

1. Reduced rear setbacks
   - 20-feet setback required - reduced to 1’ 7”
2. Reduced landscaping planter depth along street frontages
   - 15-feet required – reduced to 10-feet
3. Reduced required landscape screening depth
   - 5-feet depth required – reduced to 3’ 11”
4. Reduced required tree planter depth
   - 5-10-feet depth required – reduced to 3’ 11”



City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

2455 Lawrence Expressway

Use Permit

A. The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;

B. The proposed use is allowed within the subject zone and complies with all other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code and the City Code;

C. The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed use are compatible with the allowed uses in the vicinity;

D. Operation of the use at the location proposed would not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the City, or endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the public convenience, health, interest, safety, or general welfare; and

E. The subject site is:

1. Physically suitable in terms of design, location, operating characteristics, shape, size, topography, and the provision of public and emergency vehicle (e.g., fire and medical) access and public services and utilities; and

2. Served by highways and streets adequate in width and improvement to carry the type and quantity of traffic the proposed use would likely generate.

2455 Lawrence Expressway

- Mitigation Measures
  - To reduce the potential impacts, the follow issues related to noise, landscaping/screening, setbacks, and hours of operation were reviewed
    - Noise: A noise study was performed, the carwash tunnel would exceed the Code stated maximum levels, the applicant has applied to install noise insulation in the carwash to reduce noise levels.
    - Landscaping/Screening: Increased planter depth and installation of pervious pavers at the rear of the parcel will help with landscaping and screening viability and maintenance
    - Setbacks: Applicant has applied to increase rear setbacks by one-foot
    - Hours of Operation: Car wash operating hours to be 6 am to 10 pm

2455 Lawrence Expressway

Staff Recommendation

- Deny a Variance to allow reduced rear setbacks, reduced landscaping planter depth along the street frontages, reduced required landscape screening depth, and reduced required tree planter depth in connection with a proposed expansion of an existing service station
- Deny a Conditional Use Permit to allow expansion of an existing service station for removing a portion of fuel canopy and two fuel dispensers and adding a 1,605 square foot convenience store and a self-service carwash within the rear setbacks

Planning Commission

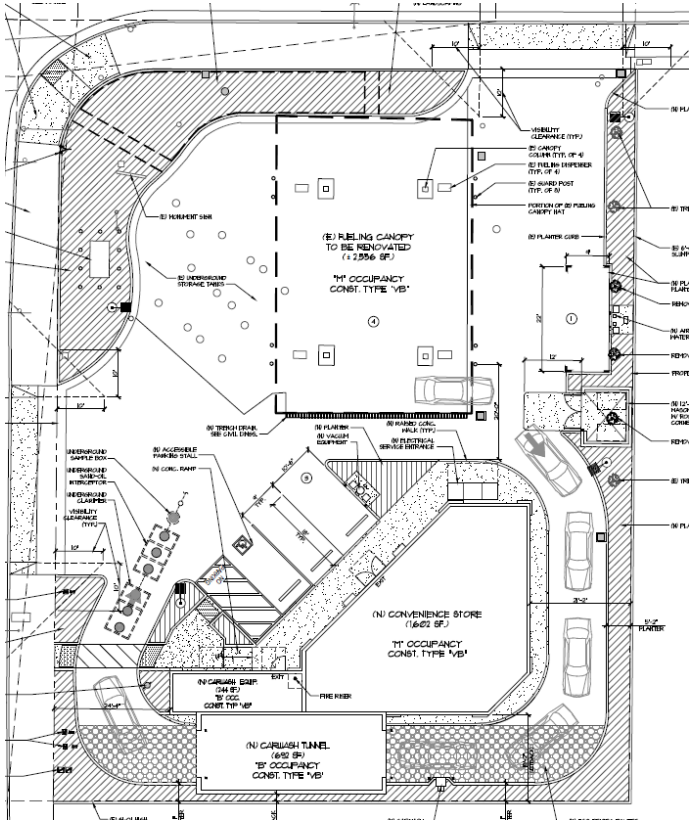
Item # 3 (25-223)

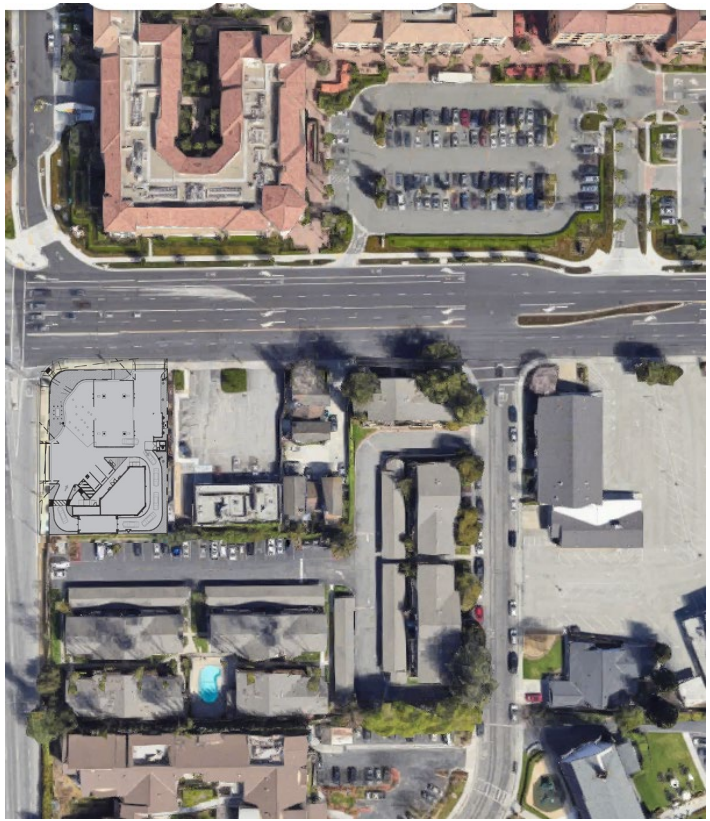
2455 Lawrence Expressway

March 19, 2025

City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

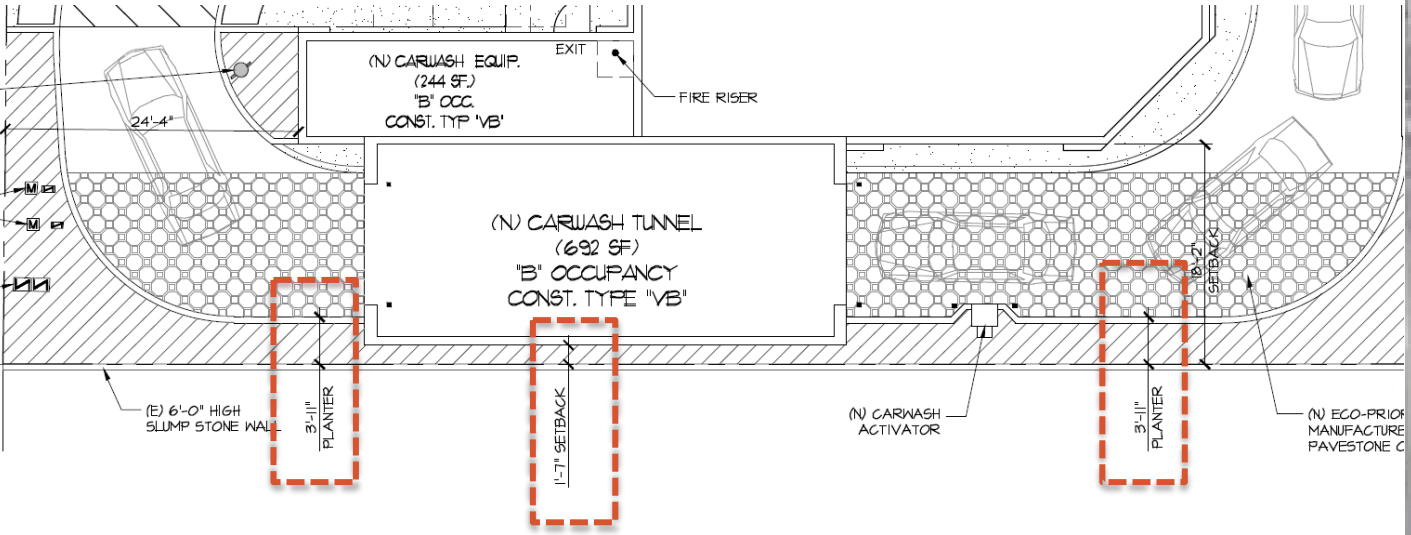
2455 Lawrence Expressway

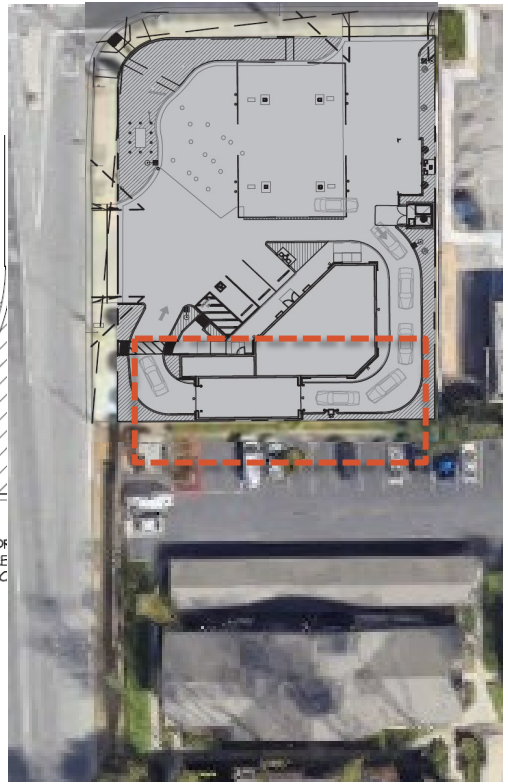




2455 Lawrence Expressway

Rear setback variance:



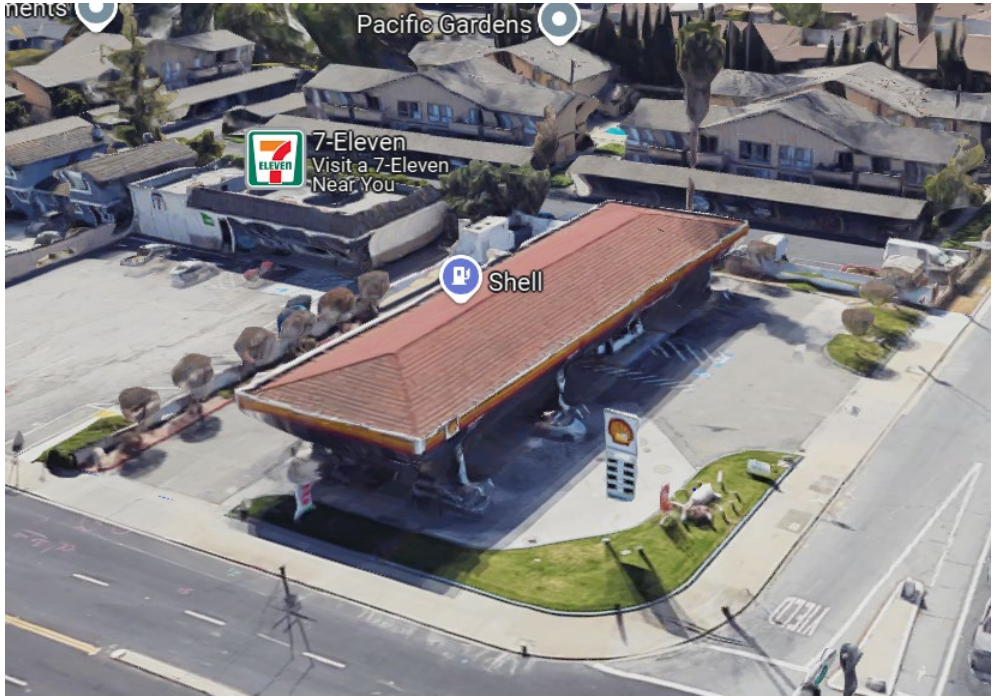


City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

2455 Lawrence Expressway

Zoning:

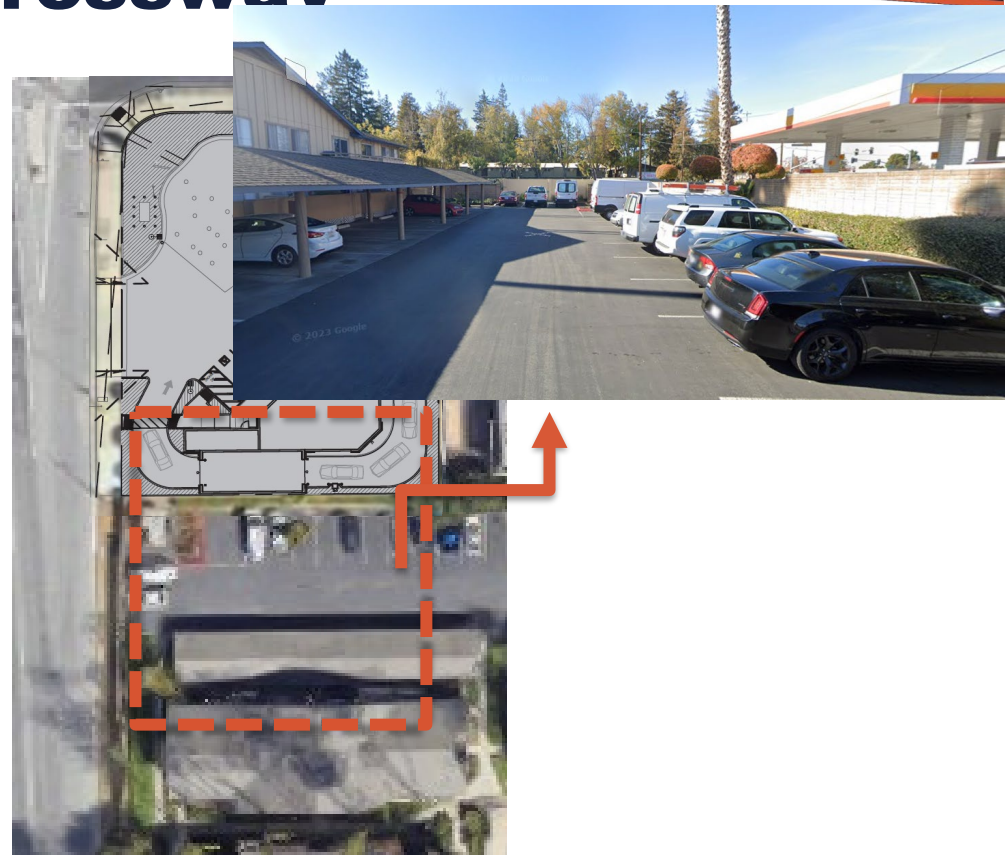
- C-N Commercial-Neighborhood - provide areas for a broad range of neighborhood-serving commercial uses such as grocery stores, coffee shops, cafes, local-serving offices, and drug stores.
  - Updated Zoning Code: C-N zoning district prohibits service stations and drive-through services
  - Classic Code: CN allows service stations with a Conditional Use Permit



2455 Lawrence Expressway

Rear setback variance:

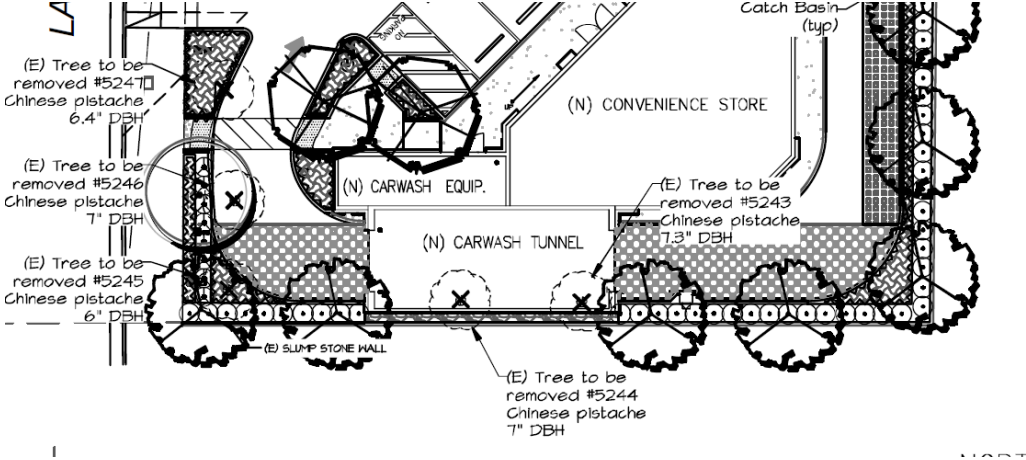
- Classic Code
  - CN Requires a 20-foot rear setback adjacent to residential properties
- Proposed Setbacks Requiring Variances
  - Car Wash – 7 – inches
  - Convenience Store – 17-feet
  - Carwash Equipment Building – 17-feet



2455 Lawrence Expressway

Landscaping variances:

1. Reduced landscaping planter depth along the street frontages
2. Reduced required landscape screening depth
3. Reduced required tree planter depth



2455 Lawrence Expressway

Zoning and General Plan Compatibility

- The proposed project is not consistent with the Zoning Code, the applicant has applied for four variances

- The proposed project is not consistent with the General Plan, namely policies that reduce land use conflicts:
  - General Plan Policies; 5.3.3-G4, 5.3.3-P7, 5.3.3-P15, 5.5.2-P4