

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION  
**MARCH 22, 2018**

**PROJECT TITLE**

Starbucks Drive-through

**APPLICANT**

Clement Balser, Blackpoint Properties,  
LLC.

**ADDRESS/LOCATION**

1385 Santa Rosa Avenue

**PROPERTY OWNER**

Gerald Lang

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER**

037-171-018, -019, -021

**FILE NUMBER**

PRJ17-071

**APPLICATION DATE**

November 21, 2017

**APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE**

February 15, 2018

**REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS**

Conditional Use Permit

**FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Design Review

**PROJECT SITE ZONING**

CG (General Commercial)

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION**

Retail and Business Services

**PROJECT PLANNER**

Patrick Streeter

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval

Agenda Item #9.1  
For Planning Commission Meeting of: March 22, 2018

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR EDMONDSON AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION  
FROM: PATRICK STREETER, SENIOR PLANNER  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SUBJECT: STARBUCKS DRIVE-THROUGH

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

---

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Planning Commission, by resolution, approve a Conditional Use Permit for a drive-through facility and grant a 24% parking reduction for the proposed Starbucks cafe at 1385 Santa Rosa Avenue.

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackpoint Properties, LLC. proposes construction and operation of a 2,500 square-foot café with drive-through on the vacant parcel at 1385 Santa Rosa Avenue. Starbucks is the prospective tenant of the space. The café is permitted by right, however a Conditional Use Permit is required for the drive-through use. The Zoning Code parking standard for a café with counter ordering is one space per 75 square-feet, or 33 spaces for the facility. In the interest of reducing hardscape on the project site and supported by the addition of the drive-through service window and a focused traffic and parking study, the applicant is requesting a parking reduction to allow 25 on-site spaces (a total reduction of 8 spaces). The project demonstrates consistency with the City's standards for drive-throughs and the applicant has worked closely with staff to refine the design of the project, including the addition of a public bus shelter pad to the site plan.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The project involves the construction of a new 2,500 square-foot Starbucks café on a presently vacant parcel on Santa Rosa Avenue near the Baker Avenue overcrossing and freeway ramp. The café would include drive-through service in addition to counter service. The interior of the café would have space for approximately 60 customers and 25 parking spaces, including two Americans

with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible parking spaces. The new building and the site would be fully ADA compliant. The northernmost portion of the L-shaped project parcel would be kept as open space and an outdoor patio area would be provided adjacent to the café.

Hours of operation for the drive-through would match those of the café: 5 am to 10 pm and there would be approximately three to five employees per shift. The drive-through aisle would accommodate stacking of eight to nine vehicles before the service window and an additional two or three after. In addition to the café building, parking areas, and paths of travel, a new bus shelter pad will be installed on the parcel's Santa Rosa Avenue frontage.

## 2. Surrounding Land Uses

North:	Auto-oriented retail and service
South:	Retail shopping center
East:	Auto-oriented retail and service, gas station
West:	Highway 101 corridor

The project site is located approximately 200 feet north of the Baker Avenue overcrossing and freeway ramp and situated between the US 101 corridor and Santa Rosa Avenue, a major arterial road. Land uses to the north and east of the project site include automobile parts and maintenance, vehicles sales, and a service station. The commercial shopping center immediately south of the project site includes three buildings with several tenant spaces.

## 3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The project site consists of three adjoining parcels that will be merged as a part of the project. Only one of the three parcels has access to the public right of way on Santa Rosa Avenue, with the other two being landlocked and adjacent to the US 101 right-of-way. The project site is presently vacant and unpaved, though it was previously graded and has been used for vehicle storage in the past. The parcels are mostly devoid of vegetation excepting some patches of grass and trees and shrubs along the perimeter. The Santa Rosa Avenue frontage is improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalk and includes an empty tree well and two curb cuts.

## 4. Project History

On August 15, 2017, a pre-application meeting between City staff and the applicant team was held to discuss the proposed project and identify potential issues and considerations.

On November 21, 2017, applications for a Conditional Use Permit for a drive-through and Design Review for the café were submitted to Planning and

Economic Development (PED).

On February 27, 2018, the signed and stamped final version of the traffic and parking study and revised drawings showing installation of a bus shelter pad were submitted to PED.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

#### ANALYSIS

##### 1. General Plan

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Retail & Business Services. This land use designation envisions retail and service enterprises, offices, and restaurants.

The following General Plan goals and policies are applicable to the project:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| LUL-I-1 | Provide a range of commercial services that are easily accessible and attractive, that satisfies the needs of people who live and work in Santa Rosa and that also attracts a regional clientele. |
| LUL-J-1 | Maintain an adequate supply of employment centers in a variety of locations and settings to ensure the city's continued economic vitality.  |
| UD-D-4  | Provide continuous sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of major regional/arterial streets.  |
| UD-F-4  | Provide visual interest in building, site, and landscape design that avoids the sense of a monotonous tract development.  |
| T-K-3   | Orient building plans to allow for easy pedestrian access from street sidewalks, transit stops, and other pedestrian facilities, in addition to access from parking lots.                         |
| EV-B    | Facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses and provide sufficient land for business expansion and attraction of new employers that utilize the area's existing labor pool.     |
| EV-C    | Promote new retail and higher density uses along the City's regional and arterial corridors.  |

As identified above, several General Plan policies call for neighborhood serving commercial uses that satisfy the needs of people who live and work in Santa Rosa, as well as attract a regional clientele. Being located along a regional

corridor and in proximity to a US Highway 101 on-ramp, the proposed café drive-through will serve local employees and residents as well as customers from elsewhere in the region.

2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The existing Class II bike lane along Santa Rosa Avenue is consistent with the Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP). The project would maintain this bike lane and will install bicycle parking.

3. Zoning

The proposed project is located within the CG (General Commercial) zoning district. This type of district supports a broad range of retail and service uses serving businesses and residents throughout the City and region.

*Conditional Use Permit*

Zoning Code Section 20-52.050 identifies required findings to be made by the review authority in approving a Conditional Use Permit. The findings are as follows:

1. The proposed use is allowed within the applicable zoning district and complies with all other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code and the City Code;
2. The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;
3. The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed activity would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity;
4. The site is physically suitable for the type, density, and intensity of use being proposed, including access, utilities, and the absence of physical constraints;
5. Granting the permit would not constitute a nuisance or be injurious or detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare, or materially injurious to persons, property, or improvements in the vicinity and zoning district in which the property is located; and
6. The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The café is permitted by right and the drive-through component permitted with a use permit and the zoning district, CG, implements the General Plan land use designation. The project is surrounded on all sides by established urban, commercial development and the Project has been conditioned to minimize

spillover impacts, such as noise or light pollution, particularly those relating to drive-through retail and service. As is discussed in the Environmental Impact section below, the project has been reviewed pursuant to CEQA and found exempt.

#### *Drive-through Retail and Service Facilities*

Santa Rosa Zoning Code (Code) section 20-42.064 discusses the standards for drive-through retail and service facilities. In addition to setting dimensional standards, site planning requirements, and wayfinding requirements, the Code mandates that the driveway be appropriately screened to prevent headlight glare from impacting adjacent streets and parking facilities. The adequacy of queuing capacity and location of transaction facilities is left to the discretion of the review authority. The specific standards are as follows:

- A. Drive-through aisles shall have a minimum 20 foot radius at curves and a minimum width of 12 feet.
- B. Each entrance to an aisle and the direction of traffic flow shall be clearly designated by signs and pavement markings.
- C. Each drive-through aisle shall be separated from the circulation routes necessary for ingress or egress from the property, or access to a parking space.
- D. The adequacy of vehicle queuing capacity of the drive-through facility and the design and location of the ordering and pickup facilities shall be determined by the review authority
- E. Each drive-through aisle shall be appropriately screened with a combination of landscaping, low walls, and/or berms to prevent headlight glare from impacting adjacent streets and parking facilities.

The proposed drive-through facility is located along the west and south sides of the new building and separated from the sidewalk and street by the front parking lot. None of the queuing is expected to reach the ingress/egress curb cut of Santa Rosa Avenue. The drive-through aisle is set back from the property lines, and the setback area is planted with flowering trees and evergreen shrubs. Landscaping along the street frontage as well as the front parking lot will provide additional screening. Dimensions and striping are shown on the site plan, and have been found consistent with the above standards by staff. The drive-through is situated so as not to interfere with the on-site circulation pattern and to allow adequate automobile stacking.

#### *Parking*

Per Table 3-4 of the Zoning Code, the café requires one space for every 75 square-feet of floor area. By these parking standards, the project would be prescribed 33 parking spaces. Zoning Code Section 20-36.050(C)(1) permits a

decrease in required on-site parking as a condition of project approval provided that the review authority can find that:

(1) Due to special circumstances associated with the operation of the use at its location, the proposed use will generate a parking demand different from the standards specified in Table 3-4;

(2) The number of parking spaces approved will be sufficient for its safe, convenient, and efficient operation of the use.

The project is proposing to install 25 on-site spaces with the parking reduction supported by the drive-through service window, the auto-centric nature of the area, the desire to limit construction of hardscape, and a focused traffic and parking study.

#### 4. Design Guidelines

The following is a summary of the most appropriate City of Santa Rosa Design Goals and Guidelines which apply to the proposed project:

##### *Neighborhood Design:*

- 1.1 I.C To encourage neighborhood design that supports pedestrians, bicyclists, and use of public transit as well as automobile use.

##### *Building Design*

- 3.2 III A 1 Break up the mass of larger structures with articulation of the form, use of color and the use of multiple materials, including: horizontal wood, cement fiber and composite siding, vertical wood siding, stucco, wood shingles, real and cultured masonry.
- 3.2 III A 4 Avoid dressing up fronts of building with higher quality materials and switching to less expensive siding material on the sides and back. Design all four sides of buildings.
- 3.2 III C 2 Avoid buildings with a massive appearance. Divide buildings into segments that break down the scale.

##### *Landscaping:*

- 4.1.II.1 Integrate landscaping into all site development.
- 4.1.II.2 Provide special attention to incorporation of trees in all landscape design.
- 4.1.II.8 Utilize planting areas to break up large expanses of paving, to visually separate masses of parked cars, and to provide a shady canopy. These planting areas within paved areas should be a minimum of 5' wide.

*Infill Development*

- 4.3 I A To provide for continuity of design between existing and new development.
- 4.3 I B To ensure that projects are designed in such a way as to reduce to a minimum possible negative consequences, such as: loss of privacy, noise, increased traffic and lighting overspill that infill development may have on existing neighbors.
- 4.3 II 1 Integrate new development carefully into existing neighborhoods with respect to scale, level of detailing, use of materials, landscaping, and other characteristics of the neighborhood.

Because the café will involve new construction, the project requires Design Review approval. Although designed to accommodate customers in vehicles, the project site will connect with the outdoor environment through the installation of patio seating, maintenance of open space, landscaping, and pedestrian circulation.

5. Neighborhood Comments

As of this writing, no comments have been received by staff from neighbors of the proposed project.

6. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

In addition to the new café, the drive-through, and parking facilities, the project will include landscaping, ADA-compliant paths of travel, outdoor patio seating, and installation of a bus shelter pad on Santa Rosa Avenue. An area on the north end of the site, beyond the parking lot, will be maintained as open space.

FISCAL IMPACT

While approval or denial of the proposed drive-through use will not have a direct fiscal impact on the General Fund, the proposed project will create 2,500 square-feet of new commercial floor area and employment opportunities on a currently vacant, underdeveloped site.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, in that the project is consistent with existing zoning and the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035, for which an environmental impact report was certified and there no project-specific impacts which are peculiar to the project or its site.



Additionally, the project qualifies for a Class 3 exemption, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, as it involves construction of a new commercial building under 10,000 square-feet, in an urbanized area zoned for such uses, where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive, and the use will not entail the use of significant amounts of hazardous materials.

The project also qualifies for a Class 32 exemption, per Section 15332, as it involves an infill development on a site of less than five acres, within City limits, substantially surrounded by urban uses, with no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, adequately served by necessary utilities and public services, and the project has no foreseeable significant adverse impacts.

Staff has reviewed the exceptions to the categorical exemptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 and has concluded that no exceptions are applicable and there is no reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The project is a stand-alone development, on a site that has not been identified to have potential for an environmental impact of hazardous or critical concern. The project site is not adjacent to scenic highways and no historic resources have been identified which could be affected by this project.

#### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

#### NOTIFICATION

The project was noticed as a public hearing per the requirements of Chapter 20-66 of the City Code. Notification of this public hearing was provided by posting an on-site sign, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, mailed notice to surrounding property owners, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place in this geographic area of Santa Rosa, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City website. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65091, where necessary, the City has incorporated notice procedures to the blind, aged, and disabled communities. These procedures include audio amplifier/assistive listening device support at public meetings, closed captioning, and optical character recognition conversion of electronic notices.

#### ISSUES

Staff has no issues with the project as conditioned. During review of the project, a traffic impact analysis was requested in order to ensure that no negative impacts to area traffic would result from approval of the project. The traffic study concluded that, although the Institute of Transportation Engineers manual estimates a peak demand of 26 parking spaces for the land use type, a review of customer data specific to Starbucks indicates that 25 spaces will be adequate. Additionally, to prevent potential conflict

between parking spaces and drive-through overflow, the traffic study recommends that employees park in the spaces on the site's northern lot. To improve site distances, the traffic study suggests conversion of the two on-street parking spaces north of the project driveway into a loading zone. City staff has reviewed these recommendations and finds them acceptable.

Additionally, the applicant team worked closely with City staff on the appropriate design of a bus shelter pad to be installed. The shelter pad, which is identified on the project site plan would be sized in such a way as to allow future installation of a bus shelter without blocking an accessible path of travel to the café or along the Santa Rosa Avenue sidewalk.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2 - Location Map
- Attachment 3 - General Plan and Zoning Map
- Attachment 4 - Design Concept Narrative, dated Received November 21, 2017
- Attachment 5 - Project plan set, dated received February 27, 2018
- Attachment 6 - Focused Traffic and Parking Study for 1385 Santa Rosa Avenue, prepared by W-Trans, February 16, 2018

### CONTACT

Patrick Streeter, Senior Planner  
Planning and Economic Development  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3  
(707) 543-4323  
[PStreeter@SRCity.org](mailto:PStreeter@SRCity.org)