

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION  
**AUGUST 8, 2019**

**PROJECT TITLE**

Recess Self-Storage (a Mixed-Use Development)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION**

4200 & 4224 Sonoma Highway

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER**

032-010-023 and 032-010-005

**APPLICATION DATE**

September 4, 2018

**REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS**

Recommendation to Prezone for Annexation, Tentative Map, Hillside Development Permit and Minor Conditional Use Permit

**PROJECT SITE ZONING**

CG (General Commercial) - Proposed

**PROJECT PLANNER**

Susie Murray

**APPLICANT**

Larry Thom, on behalf of American Recess LLC

**PROPERTY OWNER**

RC Amore Realtors, LLC and Mark Calleri (respectively)

**FILE NUMBER**

PRJ18-050

**APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE**

January 17, 2019

**FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Prezoning for Annexation (Council) and Design Review (Design Review Board)

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION**

Retail and Business Services

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval

Agenda Item #10.1  
For Planning Commission Meeting of: August 8, 2019

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR CISCO AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

FROM: SUSIE MURRAY, SENIOR PLANNER  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: RECESS SELF-STORAGE (A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT)

AGENDA ACTION: FIVE RESOLUTIONS

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Planning Commission (Commission), by five resolutions, adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration; make a recommendation to City Council (Council) to Prezone 4200 and 4224 Sonoma Highway into the CG (General Commercial) zoning district; and approve a Tentative Map, Hillside Development Permit and minor Conditional Use Permit for Recess Self-Storage (a Mixed-Use Development), located at 4200 and 4224 Sonoma Highway.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Recess Self-Storage (a Mixed-Use Development) project (Project) is a proposal to annex a two-parcel County island located at 4200 and 4224 Sonoma Highway into the City of Santa Rosa. Once annexed, the Project proposes to subdivide 4224 Sonoma Highway into three separate parcels and to construct a self-storage facility and two multi-family housing structures. No additional development is proposed at 4200 Sonoma Highway.

The Project requires the following actions:

- Mitigated Negative Declaration (Commission);
- Prezoning for Annexation into the CG (General Commercial) zoning district (recommendation by Planning Commission and final action by Council);
- Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide a 2.68-acre lot into three separate parcels (Commission);

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- Hillside Development Permit (HDP) to develop on a slope greater than ten percent (Commission);
- Minor Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to operate a self-storage facility and multi-family housing (Commission); and
- Design Review (Design Review Board)

### BACKGROUND

#### 1. Project Description

The Project site is located on the south side of Sonoma Highway between Streamside Drive and Mission Boulevard and is adjacent to the Santa Rosa Creek Trail. The site is currently developed with a single-family residence and several accessory structures.



The Project proposes to subdivide the 2.68-acre parcel located at 4224 Sonoma Highway into three individual properties. Parcel 1, located in the northeast corner of the development site, will be constructed with a four-story, 124,000-square foot self-storage facility; Parcel 2, on the south side overlooking the Santa Rosa Creek Trail, will be constructed with an eight-unit multi-family housing

structure; and Parcel 3, on the west side adjacent to the homes along Calloway Drive, will be constructed with another six-unit multi-family housing structure. The applicant has provided conceptual elevations; however, the Design Review will be conducted by the DRB.

Primary access to the site for eastbound traffic will be taken from Sonoma Highway, and westbound traffic will likely access from Streamside Drive. The site plan includes the extension of Streamside Drive to Sonoma Highway, and will provide pedestrian access from the creek trail to Sonoma Highway. The site plan also dedicates easements for a City well site that will provide an emergency water source and a sanitary sewer easement for construction of a new trunk line.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

North: Medium Density Residential (8-18 units per acre); currently developed with multi-family residential uses.

South: Low Density Residential (2-8 units per acre)/Open Space; adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek and Flat Rock Park, developed with recreational uses.

East: Retail and Business Services; currently developed with retail uses.

West: Retail and Business Services, Medium Density Residential and Low Density Residential (2-8 units per acre)/Open Space; currently developed with commercial uses and multi-family residential.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The site is currently developed with an unoccupied residential structure and several accessory structures. The site is vegetated with a variety of trees, shrubs and native grasses. As evidenced by debris on the site and comments from nearby neighbors, the property is also subject to homeless activities despite property line fencing and “No Trespassing” signs.

4. Project History

On November 15, 2016, a Pre-application Meeting was held with City staff, which is designed to offer applicants an interdepartmental staff review of preliminary or conceptual design applications.

On April 24, 2018, a second Pre-application Meeting was held with City staff because the project was changed significantly.

On July 19, 2018, the DRB reviewed the Project as a concept item.

On August 13, 2018, a Neighborhood Meeting was held to introduce the proposed Project to surrounding neighbors. Two people attended.

On September 4, 2018, the Rezoning, HDP, CUP and Design Review applications were submitted to Planning and Economic Development.

On January 17, 2019, the Tentative Parcel Map application was submitted to Planning and Economic Development.

On April 10, 2019, the Waterways Advisory Committee (WAC) reviewed the Project. WAC comments are discussed in the Committee Review and Recommendations section of this report.

On July 2, 2019, the 30-day public review period for the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) commenced (State Clearinghouse No. 20198079002).

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

#### ANALYSIS

##### 1. General Plan

The General Plan land use designation for the Project boundary is Retail and Business Services which allows retail and service enterprises, offices and restaurants. Housing is also permitted.

#### **LAND USE AND LIVABILITY**

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| LUL-E   | Promote livable neighborhoods. Ensure that everyday shopping is within walking distance of most residents.  |
| LUL-E-6 | Allow residential or mixed-use development in the Retail and Business Services or Office designations.  |
| LUL-F-3 | Maintain a balance of various housing types in each neighborhood and ensure that new development does not result in undue concentration of a single housing type in any one neighborhood.   |
| LUL-A   | Foster a compact rather than a scattered development pattern to reduce travel, energy, land, and material consumption while promoting greenhouse gas emission reductions citywide.  |
| LUL-A-2 | Annex unincorporated land adjacent to city limits and within the Urban Growth Boundary, when the proposal is timely and only if adequate services are available. Ensure that lands proposed for annexation provide a rational expansion and are contiguous to existing urban development. |
| LUL-G-2 | Require design of mixed-use projects to focus residential uses in the upper stories or toward the back of parcels, with retail and office activities fronting the regional/arterial street.   |
| 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.

## **HOUSING**

- H-A Meet the housing needs of all Santa Rosa residents.
- H-C-11 Provide opportunities for higher density and affordable housing development on regional/arterial streets and for convenient access to transit.
- H-F-5 Utilize the design review checklist to expedite affordable housing developments through the Design Review process.
- H-G Develop energy efficient residential units.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- T-K-1 Link the various citywide pedestrian paths, including street sidewalks, downtown walkways, pedestrian areas in shopping centers and work complexes, park pathways, and other creek side and open space pathways.

## **URBAN DESIGN**

- UD-C-6 Require that buildings, sound walls, and other structures highly visible from Highway 101 or Highway 12 and adjoining neighborhoods be designed to enhance and improve scenic character.
- UD-F-2 Protect natural topographic features such as hillsides, ridgelines and mature trees and stands of trees. Minimize grading of natural contours in new development.
- UD-G-2 Locate higher density residential uses adjacent to transit facilities, shopping and employment centers, and link these areas with bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- UD-G-4 Provide through-connections for pedestrians and bicyclists in new developments. Avoid cul-de-sac streets, unless public pedestrian/bikeways interconnect them.
- UD-I-2 Encourage architectural design that reflects the undulating forms of the hillside setting, such as breaking building masses and rooflines into several smaller components.

## **GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

- GM-B-4 Direct growth to areas where services and infrastructure can be provided efficiently.



## NOISE AND SAFETY

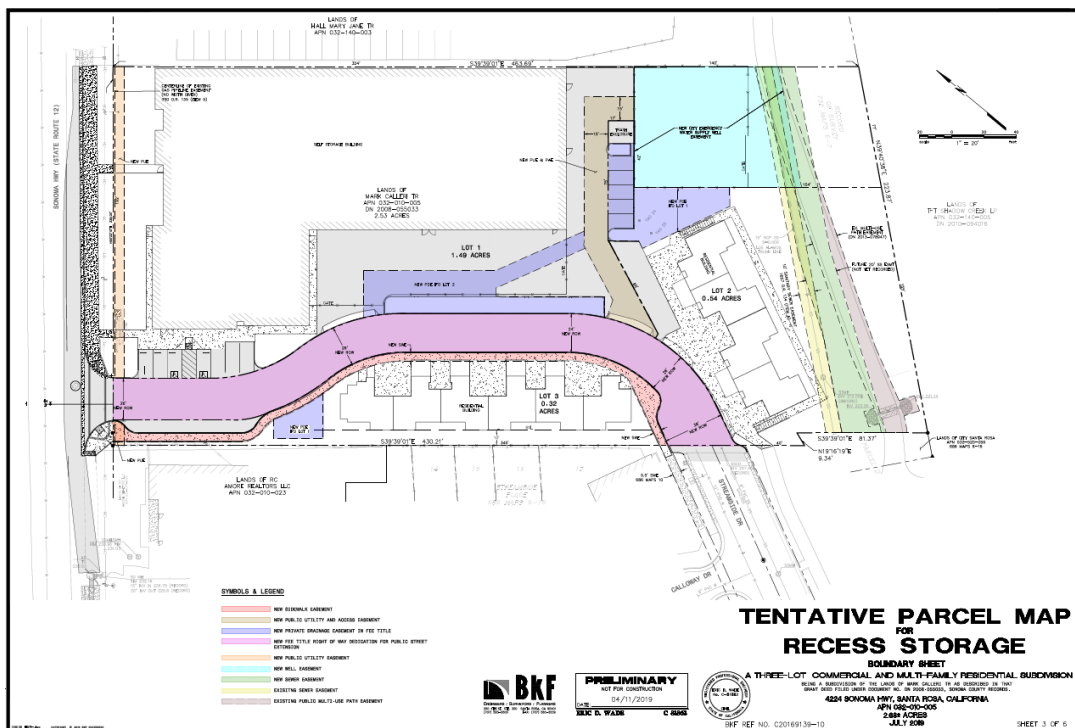
NS-B-1 Do not locate noise-sensitive uses in proximity to major noise sources.

The project furthers several goals of the General Plan. The Project site is one of two contiguous parcels that make up a County island. Because State law prohibits the creation of a new County island through annexation, both parcels will be annexed into the City. No other development is proposed at 4200 Sonoma Highway.

The development proposed at 4224 Sonoma Highway is less than one thousand feet from many commercial, retail and restaurant establishments. The site is located in a developed area where all utilities and emergency services are available.

The mixed-use development is thoughtfully designed placing the commercial use at the front of the property along the Sonoma Highway corridor and housing adjacent to an existing residential neighborhood and more housing overlooking the Santa Rosa Creek Trail making its use safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The self-storage facility will provide a buffer from traffic noise typically associated with regional/arterial streets for the residential structures behind it.

Site circulation includes a public street that will connect Streamside Drive to Sonoma Highway, parking, and a looped private driveway for the self-storage facility.



2. Tentative Map

City Code, Title 19, sets forth the regulations pertaining to Tentative Maps. Pursuant to City Code Chapter 19-24, the Planning Commission must make the following findings before approving a Tentative Map:

1. The proposed map is consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plans as specified in [Government Code](#) Sections 65451 and 66474.5.
2. The proposed subdivision meets the housing needs of the City and the public service needs of the subdivision's residents are within the available fiscal and environmental resources of the City.
3. The design of the proposed subdivision has, to the extent feasible, provided for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities in the subdivision; and
4. The proposed subdivision would not discharge waste into the City's sewer system that would result in violation of the requirements prescribed by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.

City Code Chapter 19-04 discusses the subdivision of property outside City limits and provides that Tentative Maps for proposed subdivisions of land outside the City boundaries may be reviewed and approved according to procedures and subject to standards contained in this title, provided such approval is, among other conditions, subject to annexation of the property prior to filing the final map. The project involves a Prezoning application, which is the first step to annexation. Once prezoned, the Sonoma Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will consider annexation of the two-parcel County island into the City. Pursuant to City Code Section 19-04.100, the Recess Self-Storage Final Map cannot be recorded, nor may any project-related improvements be constructed, prior to completion of the annexation.

The proposed map is consistent with the General Plan. The land use designation is Retail and Business Services; the project includes an application to prezone both properties into the CG zoning district consistent with the General Plan for annexation; and self-storage and multi-family housing are permitted with the approval of a CUP. Staff has reviewed the Project plans and determined that the service needs of the subdivision's residents will be met. As discussed in the General Plan section of this report, all services are available at this location and Project specific services, such as circulation and stormwater management, have been addressed during staff's review and the project conditioned appropriately.

3. Other Applicable Plans

Not applicable.



4. Zoning

The Project applications include a request to Prezone two properties, 4200 & 4224 Sonoma Highway, to the CG (General Commercial) zoning district, which is consistent with the General Plan land use designation.

Zoning for surrounding properties:

North: R-3-18 (Multi-family Residential) and PD (Planned Development – Multi-family Residential) zoning district

South: PD zoning district

East: CG and RR-40 (Rural Residential) zoning districts

West: PD zoning district

The following Zoning Code sections and tables are applicable to the project:

[Table 2-6](#) provides allowable land uses for commercial zoning districts and specifies permit requirements. Both Multi-family and Personal Storage (mini-storage) facilities require a minor CUP. The Project includes a request for a CUP and all findings can be met as shown on the attached draft resolution.

Table 2-6 also provides that a business providing service in the CG zoning district may operate between 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and require a CUP for extended hours of operation between 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The hours proposed by the self-storage facility are from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and are allowed by right.

[Table 2-7](#) provides development standards for commercial zoning districts.

Setbacks – Determined by Design Review

Lot Coverage – 100 Percent

Maximum Height – 55 Feet

[Table 3-4](#) provides parking requirements. The project provides the required parking offering a total of 36 parking spaces, of which 14 will be covered and three will be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

[Chapter 20-32](#) discusses development on hillsides with slopes greater than ten percent. While most of the subject site is generally flat, the eight-unit multi-family structure overlooking the creek path is placed on a slope that exceeds ten percent. As such, the Project requires a HDP. The project materials include a visual analysis and topography for the site, which indicate that the Project minimizes the alteration of topography and does not propose large areas of flat pads in the sloped area. The Project includes the removal of several trees and is conditioned to provide landscaping in compliance with both the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) and the City's Tree Ordinance (City Code

Chapter 17-24). The conceptual architecture, landscape plan and renderings provided indicate that the project blends well with surrounding properties, most notably the creek path. Staff's review concluded that all required findings can be met as shown on the draft HDP resolution attached to this report.

[Section 20-30.040](#) discusses creek-side development. All proposed structures are respectful of the required 50-foot creek setback. The project plans were referred to the WAC and comments are discussed under the Committee Review and Recommendations section of this report.

[Section 20-42.180](#) discusses self-storage facilities, which are only allowed along regional streets as designed by the General Plan. The Project meets development standards specific to self-storage facilities in that it provides a required 25-foot setback from Sonoma Highway and a street that separates it from residential uses. There is no caretaker unit proposed.

5. Other Applicable City Code Sections

[Chapter 21-08](#) discusses public art requirements. Pursuant to Zoning Code Table 2-6, a self-storage facility falls under the heading of "Industry, Manufacturing, Processing, Wholesaling", exempting it from the requirement of public art.

[Chapter 17-24](#) discusses trees. As mentioned previously in the discussion of Hillside Development, the Project plans have demonstrated that all tree replacement will be done in compliance with the Tree Ordinance. The Project will remove 58 of 60 trees that are subject to this ordinance and, through the upsizing of trees, will meet mitigation requirements onsite.

6. Design Guidelines

All proposed structures require Design Review, which will be considered by the DRB.

7. Neighborhood Comments

Two neighbors attended the Neighborhood Meeting held on August 13, 2018. Both were there representing the property located at 4200 Sonoma Highway, and were in favor of being included in the annexation into Santa Rosa.

During a site visit, a Calloway Drive neighbor indicated support of "any" development at 4224 Sonoma Highway to minimize homeless activities in the area.

Staff has received one phone call regarding the project. The caller expressed several concerns, including a four-story structure at a gateway, Traffic and homelessness activities along the creek trail. The caller was encouraged to attend the meeting or deliver comments in writing.

8. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

Improvement highlights include:

- The extension of Streamside Drive to Sonoma Highway including curb, gutter, parking and aerial fire apparatus access;
- The project has been conditioned to provide an easement for new sewer trunk line.
- While not required, the applicant has also agreed to providing an easement for a City well site that will provide an emergency water source.

Engineering Development Services has provided a comprehensive list of required improvements which are detailed in the attached Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Report, dated July 23, 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action will not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Project has been found in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Initial Study (IS) was prepared which resulted in a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The draft MND was circulated for a 30-day public comment period commencing July 2, 2019. To date, not comments have been received.

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On April 10, 2019, the WAC reviewed the Project plans and provided the following comments:

- Provide elevations of the residential structure overlooking the creek;
- Provide details on interface between the Project and the creek;
- The building facing the Santa Rosa Creek Trail should be designed to ensure safety and provide eyes on the creek and path;
- Fencing should be transparent;
- Provide perspective of berm at back of property and how it relates to the residential units; and
- Too many trees being removed.

The plan sets provided for the Commission include conceptual elevations for the structure overlooking the Santa Rosa Creek Trail and elevations that show the relationship of the hillside structure as it relates to the slope. The Project proposes six-foot rear yard fences for the residential units facing the creek path. The design of the fence is similar to a fence constructed on a nearby property located just east of the site along the creek path and will provide both security and transparency. Because this development is on a commercial property, the fence is in the purview of the DRB.

### NOTIFICATION

- On November 8, 2018, a Notice of Application was mailed to property owners within 400 feet of the Project boundary (both properties).
- On July 1, 2019, in compliance with CEQA, two onsite signs were posted announcing the public-review period for the draft MND.
- Pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-66 (amended by Council Ordinance No. CC-ORD-2019-003, dated April 9, 2019), all required public noticing was done, including the installation of two public hearing signs at the Project site, a mailed Notice of Public Hearing to property owners and occupants within 600 feet of the Project site, and a Notice of Public Hearing published in the Press Democrat.

### ISSUES

During staff's review of the project, several issues were raised involving site circulation, fire apparatus access, parking, street lighting, fire hydrant placement and drainage. The Fire Department, Traffic Engineering, Engineering Development Services and Planning worked closely with the Project engineer to determine a workable solution to the innovative site plan.

There are no unresolved issues.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2: Location Map
- Attachment 3: Neighborhood Context Map
- Attachment 4: Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, prepared by Arcadis, dated June 2019
- Attachment 5: Tentative Parcel Map, prepared by BkF Engineers, dated July 18, 2019
- Attachment 6: Renderings, provided by applicant
- Attachment 7: Elevations, prepared by Recess, dated October 17, 2018, Rev. May 30, 2019

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Attachment 8: Conceptual Landscape Plan, prepared by HWA

Attachment 9: Arborist Report, prepared by Arcadis, dated May 10, 2019

Attachment 10: Biological Resource and Habitat Assessment, prepared by Arcadis, dated March 31, 2019

Resolution 1: Mitigated Negative Declaration (with MND)

Resolution 2: Rezoning (Recommendation to Council)

Resolution 3: Tentative Parcel Map (with Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Report and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP))

Resolution 4: Hillside Development Permit

Resolution 5: Conditional Use Permit

### CONTACT

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