

**CITY OF MERCED**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Resolution #4130**

Appeal approved by City Council  
on June 17, 2024, with  
AMMENDMENTS – See note on  
Exhibit B

**WHEREAS**, the Merced City Planning Commission at its regular meeting of April 3, 2024, held a public hearing and considered **Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review Permit #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02** initiated by Unite Security Company, LLC, on behalf of Nicholas Mary Lee, Trustee, property owner for the property located at 470 E. Olive Avenue. The Site Plan Review Permit would allow the development of a self-storage facility (approximately 681 storage units) with long-term boat and recreational vehicle parking spaces (approximately 74 parking spaces). The Conditional Use Permit would allow a live/work unit for an onsite manager for the self-storage facility. The Minor Use Permit would be for interface review to allow commercial development adjacent to or across from a Low Density Residential (R-1-6) Zone. The approximate 3.50-acre subject site is generally located on the south side of Olive Avenue, approximately 500 feet west of Oleander Avenue. The subject site is more particularly described as “Parcel 1” as shown on the map entitled “Parcel Map for Fred Walker, JR.” recorded in Book 29, Page 40, in Merced County Records; also known as a portion of Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 007-050-009; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Merced City Planning Commission concurs with Findings/Considerations A through L of Staff Report #24-256 as modified and additional Finding M (Modified Exhibit B of Planning Commission Resolution #4130); and,

**WHEREAS**, the Merced City Planning Commission concurs with the Findings as modified for Conditional Use and Minor Use Permits in Merced Municipal Code Section 20.68.020 (E), and Site Plan Review Permits in Merced Municipal Code Section 20.68.050 (F) as outlined in Modified Exhibit B; and,

**NOW THEREFORE**, after reviewing the City’s Initial Study and Draft Environmental Determination, and fully discussing all the issues, the Merced City Planning Commission does resolve to hereby deny a Mitigated Negative Declaration regarding Environmental Review #23-45, and deny Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review Permit #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02.

Upon motion by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Ochoa, and carried by the following vote:

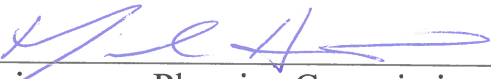
AYES: Commissioners Delgadillo, Camper, Gonzalez,  
Thao, Smith, Ochoa, and Chairperson Harris  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION #4130

Page 2

April 3, 2024

Adopted this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of April 2024

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Planning Commission of  
the City of Merced, California

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Exhibits:

Exhibit A – Conditions of Approval--~~Deleted~~

Exhibit B – Findings/Considerations--Modified

Exhibit C – Mitigation Monitoring Program--~~Deleted~~

Amended  
June 17, 2024

Appeal approved by City Council  
on June 17, 2024, with the addition  
of this Exhibit (A)

**Proposed Conditions**  
**Conditional Use Permit #1276**  
**Site Plan Review Permit #538**  
**Minor Use Permit #24-02**

1. The proposed project shall be constructed/designed as shown on Exhibit 1 (Site Plan at Attachment 1 of Planning Commission Staff Report #23-534), Exhibit 2 (Floor Plans at Attachment F of Planning Commission Staff Report #23-534), Exhibit 3 (Elevation at Attachment G of Planning Commission Staff Report #23-534), and as modified by the conditions of approval within this resolution.
2. The Project shall comply with all applicable conditions set forth in the resolutions for Annexation No. 131 (Christian Life Center Annexation) previously approved for this site.
3. All other applicable codes, ordinances, policies, etc., adopted by the City of Merced shall apply.
4. The developer/owner is required to finance the annual operating costs for police and fire services as well as storm drainage, public landscaping, street trees, streetlights, parks and open space, which may include a financing mechanism such as a Community Facilities District (CFD) or, assessment district. Procedures for financing these services and on-going maintenance shall be initiated before final map approval or issuance of a certificate of occupancy for any building, whichever comes first. Developer/Owner shall submit a request agreeing to such a procedure, waiving right to protest and post deposit as determined by the City Engineer to be sufficient to cover procedure costs and maintenance costs expected prior to first assessments being received.
5. The developer/applicant shall indemnify, protect, defend (with counsel selected by the City), and hold harmless the City, and any agency or instrumentality thereof, and any officers, officials, employees, or agents thereof, from any and all claims, actions, suits, proceedings, or judgments against the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, and any officers, officials, employees, or agents thereof to attack, set aside, void, or annul, an approval of the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, advisory

agency, appeal board, or legislative body, including actions approved by the voters of the City, concerning the project and the approvals granted herein. Furthermore, developer/applicant shall indemnify, protect, defend, and hold harmless the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, against any and all claims, actions, suits, proceedings, or judgments against any governmental entity in which developer/applicant's project is subject to that other governmental entity's approval and a condition of such approval is that the City indemnify and defend (with counsel selected by the City) such governmental entity. City shall promptly notify the developer/applicant of any claim, action, suits, or proceeding. Developer/applicant shall be responsible to immediately prefund the litigation cost of the City including, but not limited to, City's attorney's fees and costs. If any claim, action, suits, or proceeding is filed challenging this approval, the developer/applicant shall be required to execute a separate and formal defense, indemnification, and deposit agreement that meets the approval of the City Attorney and to provide all required deposits to fully fund the City's defense immediately but in no event later than five (5) days from that date of a demand to do so from City. In addition, the developer/applicant shall be required to satisfy any monetary obligations imposed on City by any order or judgment.

6. The developer/applicant shall construct and operate the project in strict compliance with the approvals granted herein, City standards, laws, and ordinances, and in compliance with all State and Federal laws, regulations, and standards. In the event of a conflict between City laws and standards and a State or Federal law, regulation, or standard, the stricter or higher standard shall control.
7. The project shall comply with all requirements of the California Building Code and all flood requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as the requirements for the California Urban Level of Flood Protection (CA 200-year flood).
8. All landscaping in the public right-of-way shall comply with State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 2015-0032 "To Adopt an Emergency Regulation for Statewide Urban Water Conservation" and the City's Water Conservation Ordinance (Merced Municipal Code Section 15.42). Xeriscape or artificial turf shall be used in place of natural sod or other living ground cover. If turf is proposed to be installed in park-strips or on-site, high quality artificial turf (approved by the City Engineer and Development Services Director) shall be installed. All irrigation provided to street trees, parking lot trees, or other landscaping shall be provided with a

- drip irrigation or micro-spray system. All landscaping shall comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MMC Section 20.36.030).
9. All landscaping shall be kept healthy and maintained in good condition and any damaged or missing landscaping shall be replaced immediately.
  10. Trees and or fast-growing vines or other plants shall be planted on or near the block wall along Olive Avenue to deter graffiti and/or a graffiti resistant coating applied to the wall. Details to be worked out with Planning staff during the building permit stage.
  11. Full public improvements shall be installed/repared if the permit value of the project exceeds \$100,000.00. Public improvements may include, but not be limited to, repairing/replacing the sidewalk, curb, gutter, and street corner ramp(s), so that they comply with ADA standards and other relevant City of Merced/State/Federal standards and regulations.
  12. The developer shall work with a traffic engineer to determine the sufficient distance for vehicle stacking space to enter the site to prevent vehicles from stacking on Olive Avenue. Details to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer
  13. Any missing or damaged improvements along the property frontage shall be installed/repared to meet City Standards. Any improvements that don't meet current City Standards shall be replaced to meet all applicable standards.
  14. The applicant shall work with the City's Refuse Department to determine the proper location for a trash enclosure and if a recycling container will be required to comply with AB 341. The container(s) shall be enclosed within a refuse enclosure built to City Standards.
  15. All mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view.
  16. The parking lot layout shall comply with all applicable City Standards. Parking lot trees shall be provided at a ratio of one tree for every six parking spaces provided for customers (this does not apply to the long-term parking spaces). These trees shall be installed per the City's Parking Lot Landscape Standards, shall be a minimum of 15-gallons, and be of a type that provides a 30-foot minimum canopy at maturity (trees shall be selected from the City's approved tree list).
  17. The driving aisles shall be paved with an impervious surface, as approved by the City Engineer. This includes the driving aisles for the long-term parking lot for boats and recreational vehicles.

18. The driving aisles shall be designed to meet all Fire Department requirements, including those pertaining to turning radius.
19. The parking spaces for boats and recreational vehicles may be surfaced with gravel or similar material, as approved by the Director of Development Services.
20. All vehicular gates shall be provided with a “click-to-enter” access and remote controls shall be provided to the City of Merced Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments. The device used shall be approved by the City prior to installation.
21. All gates shall be provided with a knox box, as required by the Fire Department.
22. All service drives including the access and egress gates shall be posted as Fire Lanes. All signs and markings shall be as required by the Fire Department.
23. The developer shall use proper dust control procedures during site development in accordance with San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District rules.
24. Parking lot lights and building lights shall be shielded or oriented in a way that does not allow “spill-over” onto adjacent lots or be a nuisance to adjacent residential properties. This shall be done in compliance with the California Energy Code requirements. Any lighting on the building shall be oriented to shine downward and not spill-over onto adjacent parcels.
25. The project shall comply with all the Post Construction Standards required to comply with State requirements for the City’s Phase II MS-4 Permit (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) and include onsite stormwater retention capacity for a 50-year, 24 hour storm. The graveled surface for the boat and recreational vehicle parking area shall be designed in a manner that prevents boat and vehicle fluids from contaminating Black Rascal Creek.
26. The self-storage, and boat and recreational vehicle parking lot may operate daily between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Hours of operation may be adjusted at the discretion of the Director of Development Services.
27. Residency or dwelling is not allowed within any storage facility or within any recreational vehicles or boats parked onsite.
28. Minor modifications to the site plan, floor plan, or elevations may be reviewed and approved by the Director of Development Services as allowed by Merced Municipal Code Section 20.20.020 (O).

29. The proposal shall comply with the Mitigation Monitoring Table at Attachment K of Planning Commission Staff Report #23-534.
30. This resolution for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP #1264), Site Plan Review Permit (SP #538), and Minor Use Permit (MUP #24-02) does not become effective until the General Plan Amendment (GPA #23-02), Zone Change (ZC #434) and Establishment of Planned Development (Est. of P-D #81) are approved by the City Council and the Ordinance for the Establishment of Planned Development becomes effective.
31. All drainage from the site shall be retained on the project site. No drainage shall run-off onto adjacent properties. This includes drainage from buildings.
32. The applicant shall work with the Engineering Department to determine if the driveway along E. Olive Avenue needs to be widened for this development (including the turning radius for large trucks hauling boats). Details to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer during the building permit stage.
33. The use of gravel for driving or parking purposes is prohibited. The boat/RV parking pads shall be finished with an impervious surface as approved by the City Engineer.
34. The exterior of the 2-story storage structure at the center of the site shall be finished with a stucco exterior that matches the proposed office. Details to be reviewed and approved by Planning staff during the building permit state.

**Modified Findings and Considerations Per Planning Commission Action (4/3/24)**  
**Planning Commission Resolution #4130**  
**Conditional Use Permit #1276**  
**Site Plan Review Permit #538**  
**Minor Use Permit #24-02**

May 20, 2024: After holding a duly noticed public hearing, the City Council voted to direct staff to prepare a resolution approving the appeal of Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review Permit #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02, with the conditions found at Exhibit A of this resolution. During their discussion the Council acknowledge that there is a need for self-storage facilities in the City, and that many jobs would be created during construction and operation of the self-storage facility. The Council also noted that with the pending annexation applications around the University of California Merced, and other parts of the City, there will soon be more land for housing projects to make up for the residential land lost with this land use change (Ayes – 4, Noes – 1)

June 17, 2024: After holding a duly noticed public hearing, the City Council considered and approved the appeal of Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review Permit #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02, and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration regarding Environmental Review #23-45. This includes modifying findings in Planning Commission Resolution #4130 and adding Exhibit A to include conditions of approval, and Exhibit C to include Mitigation Measures. Amendments are called-out with the amendment date of June 17, 2024 (new language underlined, deleted language “stikethrough”)

**FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS:**

**General Plan Compliance and Policies Related to This Application**

- A) If the General Plan Amendment is approved, the proposed project would comply with the General Plan land use designation of Business Park (BP) which allows parking facilities as a principally permitted use and self-storage facilities with a site plan review permit. The project would also comply with the Zoning classification of Planned Development (P-D) #81 if the change in land use designation is approved from Low Medium Density Residential to Self-Storage.

**MODIFIED EXHIBIT B PER PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION (4/3/24)**  
**OF PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION #4130**

The proposed project, with conditions of approval, will help achieve the following General Plan land use policies:

Policy L-3.2: Encourage Infill Development and a Compact Urban Form

The proposed project would develop an approximate 3.50-acre site that has been vacant for decades. Developing this site addresses some maintenance issues associated with undeveloped parcels such as overgrown weeds (fire hazard), vandalism, and loitering which could impact neighboring parcels. In addition, infill development is an efficient use of development that utilizes existing infrastructure within City limits as opposed to annexing land that requires expanding City infrastructure and services.

**Traffic/Circulation**

- B) The proposed development includes a self-storage facility with approximately 681 storage units, and a long-term boat and recreational vehicle parking facility with approximately 74 spaces on an approximately 3.50-acre vacant parcel located in at 470 E. Olive Avenue. The project site fronts an arterial road (E. Olive Avenue). Vehicle access would be available from a driveway along E. Olive Avenue. The nearest major north-south roads being G Street (arterial road) and Parsons Avenue (arterial road) are designed to carry large volumes of traffic traveling throughout the community. G Street provides access to Highway 99 that connects Merced with other regional communities throughout the State.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

The Office of Planning and Research (OPR) advisory suggests that the Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) contribution of small projects would not be considered significant. OPR suggests that agencies can find projects generating fewer than 110 vehicles trips a day to be less than significant. The proposed mini-storage project is comprised of land uses estimated to generate 90 vehicle trips per day. As this trip generation estimate falls below the 110 daily trip threshold identified by OPR, the proposed project qualifies as a “small project” that can be assumed to have a less than significant impact on regional VMT.

Improvements

The development does not require the construction of any streets. Staff is of the opinion that the existing streets can adequately serve the development. Given the loading/unloading of storage facilities and the long-term boat and recreational vehicle parking spaces, staff anticipates that large trucks and vehicles will be entering and existing the site. To prevent these large vehicles from stacking onto E. Olive Avenue and creating traffic congestion, staff is requiring that developer work with a traffic engineer to determine the sufficient distance for vehicle stacking space to enter the site (Condition #12 of Planning Commission Resolution #4130 – Attachment B of Planning Commission Staff Report #24-256). This may require making minor modifications to the site plan that would need to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Development Services. ~~However, the Planning Commission expressed concerns about the increase in commercial traffic, especially large vehicles, in this residential neighborhood.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

### **Public Improvements/City Services**

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

C) Any damaged or missing public improvements shall be repaired if the permit value of the project exceeds \$100,000.00. The need for repairs or replacement of any missing improvements would be evaluated at the building permit stage by the City's Engineering Department (Condition #~~13~~11).

### **Parking**

D) Per Merced Municipal Code Table 20.38 -1- Off Street Parking Requirements, the parking requirements for Public/Mini Storage is 1 parking stall per 50 storage units or 5 spaces, whichever is greater. Based on the proposed 681 storage units, the site is required to have at least 14 parking stalls. With the office and work/live unit the site should have a minimum of 20 parking spaces. The proposed parking spaces do not satisfy standard parking requirements, the developer is proposing the planned development parking standards for this site require at least 5 parking stalls. This is justified by the peak hour trips of all vehicles during the busiest time of the day based on the traffic study prepared for the Initial Study found at Attachment J of Planning Commission Staff Report #24-256.

## **Site Design**

- E) The proposed development includes a self-storage facility with approximately 681 storage units, and a long-term boat and recreational vehicle storage facility with approximately 74 parking spaces (Attachment E). The northern portion of the development along E. Olive Avenue would be reserved for the self-storage component of the business and would be accessible through a driveway along E. Olive Avenue. The storage units would range in dimensions between 5 feet by 10 feet, and 10 feet by 30 feet. The applicant is proposing a zero-lot line development (no side, or rear yard setbacks) with storage units on portions of the east and west property lines. In these areas, the back of the storage buildings would be made out of concrete blocks and be between 12 and 14 feet tall. Other portions of the south, west, and east property lines would be secured with a wrought iron perimeter fence (only along the segment for boat and recreational vehicle parking only). The entrance to the project site would be secured with gates that would be equipped with electronic opening devices to restrict access (about 65 feet from the entry drive aisle).

At the center of the site would be a 2-story storage building that is approximately 27 feet tall. The building exterior finish would consist of vertical and horizontal ribbed metal panels. In addition, there would be several windows along all four elevations to allow natural light, and metal awnings about the ground floor entrance to protect against weather elements. However, given the subject site is surrounded by residential zones, staff is including a condition requiring the elevations of the 2-story storage facility be finished with stucco to blend in with the neighborhood (Condition #34).

The southern portion of the subject site (approximately 1 acre) would be dedicated for long-term boat and recreational vehicle storage with approximately 74 parking stalls with spaces ranging in size between 10 feet by 28 feet, and 12 feet by 40 feet. The long-term parking stalls are proposed to consist of gravel or other similar surface, but the drive aisles to these stalls would be paved with an impervious surface. However, given concerns with gravel and dust pollution and oil contamination, staff is including Condition #33 prohibiting the use of gravel and requiring an impervious surface as approved by the City Engineer.

## **Elevations**

- F) The elevations shown at Attachment G illustrate the proposed structures for this project. The ground floor leasing office would be approximately 1,200 square feet large with a live-work unit for the on-site manager on the second floor (2 bed/1 bath). This structure would be approximately 26 feet tall with the exterior consisting of terracotta tile roofing, stucco, stone veneer accents, and storefront windows.

The storage units along the east and west property lines would be about approximately 10 feet tall and range in dimensions between 10 feet by 15 feet, and 10 feet by 20 feet. The storage units would have a metal finish, and some buildings would have roll-up garage doors. A portion of the northern, western, and eastern property lines would be screened with the back of the storage units which would be made out of decorative concrete blocks with a base height of 12 feet that jets up to approximately 14 feet. The block building wall would be an off-white color with grey ribbon accents along the top of the building wall. Cultured stones would be used throughout the wall to add architectural interest. As required by Condition #10 of Planning Commission Resolution #4130, landscaping or trees would be installed along the northern property line (along E. Olive Avenue) to soften the visibility of the site and discourage graffiti along the block building wall.

## **Landscaping**

- G) The proposal does not include a landscape plan, but all future landscaping for mulch, shrubs, turf, or trees should be drought tolerant and all irrigation systems must comply with the latest requirements for water conservation (Condition #8). In addition, parking lot trees shall be installed as required by the City's Parking Lot Landscape Standards at a minimum ratio of one tree for every six parking spaces. Parking lot trees shall be selected from the City's approved tree list, providing a 30-foot minimum canopy at maturity (Condition #16). If needed, street trees would be installed along E. Olive Avenue as required by City standards. All trees shall be planted away from the City's 10-foot visual corner triangle area.

## **Neighborhood Impact**

- H) The uses surrounding the subject site include Burbank Park to the west, Luther Burbank Elementary School to the south, Christian Life Center to the east, and single-family homes to the north across E. Olive Avenue. The subject site is designated Low Medium Residential (LMD) as a lower impact land use designation that is compatible with the surrounding uses. Even though the applicant is proposing a General Plan designation of Business Park, the proposed use of self-storage and boat/RV parking is expected produce less traffic than the existing surrounding uses of a school, park, and religious facility; thus, would not significantly alter the traffic patterns throughout the neighborhood.

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

Even though the subject site is surrounded by residential zones, there are no actual single or multi-family homes adjacent to the subject site. There is buffer of approximately 175-feet between the subject site and the homes to the west (with a park in between), and approximately 375 feet between the subject site and the homes to the east (with a church in between). To create additional compatibility with the surrounding sites to help reduces concerns regarding noise, lighting, and privacy, there are conditions requiring the parking lot lights and building lights be shielded so that lighting does not “spill-over” to adjacent parcels (Conditions #24); controlled hours of operation only allowing operation between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. (Condition #26), and prohibit dwelling within storage facilities or within any recreational vehicle or boats parked onsite (Condition #27). In addition, the 12 to 14-foot-tall block walls along the eastern and western property lines should reduce noise and privacy concerns.

Public hearing notices were sent to all property owners within 300 feet of the project site. At the time that this report was prepared, the City had not received any comments regarding this project. However, one resident spoke in opposition to the project at the Planning Commission public hearing on April 3, 2024.

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

The Planning Commission voted to recommend denial of the project due to concerns about increased commercial traffic with large vehicles in a residential area and the loss of land available for housing. Overall, the Planning Commission indicated that the site was better suited for housing (even higher density) than a self-storage facility.

## **Conditional Use Permit and Minor Use Permit Findings**

- I) In order for the Planning Commission to approve or deny a conditional use permit or minor use permit, they must consider the following criteria and make findings to support or deny each criteria per MMC 20.68.020 (E) – Findings for Approval. —~~The Planning Commission voted to deny the applications.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

1. *The proposed use is consistent with the purpose and standards of zoning district, the general plan, and any adopted area or neighborhood plan, specific plan, or community plan.*

As shown under Finding A, if the General Plan Amendment is approved, the proposed project would comply with the General Plan land use designation of Business Park (BP) which allows parking facilities as a principally permitted use and self-storage facilities with a site plan review permit. The project would also comply with the Zoning classification of Planned Development (P-D) #81 if the Establishment of Planned Development is approved.

2. *The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use will be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity of the subject property.*

~~As shown under Finding E – Site Design, Finding F – Elevations, and Finding H – Neighborhood Impact, staff believes that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposal would be compatible with existing and future land uses in the vicinity. The proposed operation is relatively quiet and generates low traffic counts. In addition, Condition #26 limits the business hours of operation between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. daily. As shown under Finding E – Site Design, Finding F – Elevations, and Finding H – Neighborhood Impact, staff believes that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposal would be compatible with existing and future land uses in the vicinity. The proposed operation is relatively quiet and generates low traffic counts. In addition, Condition #26 limits the business hours of operation between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. daily. The Planning Commission did not believe that the self-storage facility was compatible with the surrounding uses and neighborhood and voted to deny the project.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

3. *The proposed use will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the city.*

This proposal will require building permits with compliance with the California Building Code. During plan check staff will review the proposal

for matters concerning health and safety. With approval of the conditions within this resolution, staff does not anticipate that the approval of this request would adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare of the City.

4. *The proposed use is properly located within the City and adequately served by existing or planned services and infrastructure.*

The proposed development is considered in-fill development which is properly located within the City and adequately served by existing services and infrastructure such as street access, sewer connections, water connections, and other utilities.

### **Site Plan Review Findings**

- J) A Site Plan Review Permit is required for this project for two reasons: 1) to develop a project within a Planned Development Zone; and, 2) because a public/mini storage is listed as a use that requires site plan review under the Land Use Table 20.10-1 – Permitted Land Uses in the Commercial Zoning Districts. This section applies to Planned Development Zones with General Plan designations of Business Park, unless specific land uses are identified by the Site Utilization Plan. Therefore, in order for the Planning Commission to approve or deny a site plan review permit, they must consider the following criteria and make findings to support or deny each criteria. The Findings required by MMC Section 20.68.050 (F) “Findings for Approval for Site Plan Review Permits” are provided below, along with recommended reasons to support each finding. The Planning Commission voted to deny the project.

1. *The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan, and any adopted area or neighborhood plan, specific plan, or community plan.*

As described in Finding A above, the project meets the requirements of the General Plan if the proposed General Plan Amendment for this development is approved. There are no other area, specific, or neighborhood plans for this area.

2. *The proposed project complies with all applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and Municipal Code.*

Approval of the proposed Site Plan Review Permit and implementation of the conditions of approval for CUP #1276, Site Plan Review #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02 would bring the project into compliance with the applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and Municipal

Code.

3. *The design and layout of the proposed project will not interfere with the use and enjoyment of existing and future neighboring properties and structures.*

There may be some temporary impacts such as vibration, noise, and dust during construction, ~~but as shown under Finding E—Site Design, Finding F—Elevations, and Finding H—Neighborhood Impact, staff believes that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposal would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity. Therefore, with the implementation of the conditions of approval, the proposed project would not interfere with the enjoyment of the existing and future land uses in the vicinity.~~ but as shown under Finding E -Site Design, Finding F - Elevations, and Finding H – Neighborhood Impact, staff believes that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposal would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity. Therefore, with the implementation of the conditions of approval, the proposed project would not interfere with the enjoyment of the existing and future land uses in the vicinity. The Planning Commission did not believe that the self-storage facility was compatible with the neighborhood and that the site was better suited to housing.

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

4. *The proposed architectural design makes use of appropriate materials, texture, and color, and will remain aesthetically appealing and appropriately maintained.*

As shown under Finding F – Elevations, the applicant is proposing a typical design for a mini storage with a mixture of materials, colors, and textures. The building exterior would consist of a stucco finish with stone veneers. A decorative block wall would be installed along the north elevation (E. Olive Avenue) with a variety of colors and materials. All structures onsite would generally consist of a uniform design and aesthetic. Staff believes that the proposed architectural design makes use of appropriate materials, texture, and color.

5. *Any proposed landscaping design, including color, location, size, texture, type, and coverage of plan materials, as well as provisions for irrigation, maintenance, and protection of landscaping elements, will complement structures and provide an attractive environment.*

The proposal does not include a landscape plan at the moment.

Landscaping would be reviewed at the building permit stage. Trees would be planted throughout the parking lot and along street frontages (if required by Public Works). Parking lot trees would have to conform with minimum City Standards regarding quantity (1 tree per 6 required parking stalls), gallon size (15 gallons), and branch width (30-foot canopy). Parking lot trees shall be from the City's list of approved tree species found within City Engineering Standards. Street trees shall be reviewed by the Engineering and Public Works Departments to ensure conformance with City Standards in regard to species type, irrigation plan, and tree spacing. All landscaping must comply with local regulations and State regulations regarding water conservation, as found under Merced Municipal Code Section 20.36 – Landscaping, and affiliated sections found under the WELO Act (MMC 17.60).

6. *The proposed design will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or be injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity of the proposed project.*

The proposed project does not include any uses that would be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the City with implementation of the conditions of approval for the Conditional Use Permit, Site Plan Review Permit, and Minor Use Permit. Implementation of the conditions of approval and adherence to all Building and Fire Codes, and City Standards would prevent the project from having any detrimental effect on the health safety, and welfare of the City. ~~However, the Planning Commission felt the site was better suited to housing than a self-storage facility.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

### **Housing Opportunity**

- ~~K) — As noted under Finding A, the subject site is currently zoned Low Medium Density Residential (R-2). As such, zoning at this location currently allows for single-family homes and duplexes at a density of 6-12 residential units per acre. Thus, by changing the land use designation to Business Park, the site loses the potential of having up to 40 residential units constructed at its current designation.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

~~The subject site is not part of the City's current Housing Element Cycle, but it has been identified in the Draft Multi-Jurisdiction Housing Element as a site that could potentially be rezoned for higher density in order to meet the City's Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) obligations for the 2024 Housing Element cycle. If the site were to be rezoned to High Density Residential (R-~~

**MODIFIED EXHIBIT B PER PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION (4/3/24)**  
**OF PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION #4130**

~~4), it would qualify for 24 to 36 dwelling units per acre, allowing a maximum of 126 dwelling units. The City's RHNA plan has a built-in contingency to provide more units than the City's RHNA requirement, so the City should still be able to meet its housing obligation without this site; but since the other required rezones have not yet been considered, that cannot be guaranteed.~~

~~Should the rezone not be approved, staff believes this site would be a good site for upzoning to high-density residential given that the site fronts a major arterial road (E. Olive Avenue), and its close proximity to multiple shopping centers within 750 feet of the site, along with the adjacent park, and school. The Planning Commission believed that the site was better suited for housing than a self-storage facility.~~

### **Environmental Clearance**

~~L)K)~~ Infill projects over 5 acres or projects that don't comply with Zoning/General Plan designations require an Initial Study, per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In this case, the project is under 5 acres (at 3.50 acres), but the site is not consistent with Zoning or the General Plan requiring an Initial Study. An Initial Study includes a wide range of analysis required by the State covering an array of subjects including, but not limited to, impacts on vehicle miles traveled, air quality, biological resource, public services, cultural resources, and City utilities. Planning staff has conducted an environmental review of the project in accordance with the requirements of CEQA, and concluded that Environmental Review #23-45 results in a Mitigated Negative Declaration as the proposal would have an effect on the environment, but could be mitigated with certain measures (Attachments J and K of Planning Commission Staff Report #24-256) and does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. A copy of the Initial Study with a Mitigated Negative Declaration can be found at Attachment J of Planning Commission Staff Report #24-256.

~~M) Added Finding M: On April 3, 2024, after holding a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to deny the Conditional Use Permit, Site Plan Review Permit, and Minor Use Permit due to concerns about the loss of land available for housing; traffic concerns, especially with large vehicles; neighborhood compatibility; and the site being better suited for housing than a self-storage facility.~~

Amended  
June 17,  
2024.

Appeal approved by City Council  
on June 17, 2024, with AMMENDMENTS –  
See note on Exhibit B

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW #23-45**

### **Mitigation Monitoring Program**

#### **MITIGATION MONITORING CONTENTS**

This mitigation monitoring program includes a brief discussion of the legal basis and purpose of the mitigation monitoring program, a key to understanding the monitoring matrix, a discussion of noncompliance complaints, and the mitigation monitoring matrix itself.

#### **LEGAL BASIS AND PURPOSE OF THE MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM**

Public Resource Code (PRC) 21081.6 requires public agencies to adopt mitigation monitoring or reporting programs whenever certifying an environmental impact report or mitigated negative declaration. This requirement facilitates implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process.

The City of Merced has adopted its own “Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program” (MMC 19.28). The City’s program was developed in accordance with the advisory publication, *Tracking CEQA Mitigation Measures*, from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research.

As required by MMC 19.28.050, the following findings are made:

- 1) The requirements of the adopted mitigation monitoring program for the General Plan Amendment #23-05, Zone Change #434, Establishment of Planned Development (P-D) #81, Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02 shall run with the real property. Successive owners, heirs, and assigns of this real property are bound to comply with all of the requirements of the adopted program.
- 2) Prior to any lease, sale, transfer, or conveyance of any portion of the subject real property, the applicant shall provide a copy of the adopted program to the prospective lessee, buyer, transferee, or one to whom the conveyance is made.

#### **MITIGATION MONITORING PROCEDURES**

In most cases, mitigation measures can be monitored through the City’s construction plan approval/plan check process. When the approved project plans and specifications, with mitigation measures, are submitted to the City Development Services Department, a copy of the monitoring checklist will be attached to the submittal. The Mitigation Monitoring Checklist will be filled out upon project approval with mitigation measures required. As project plans and specifications are checked, compliance with each mitigation measure can be reviewed.

In instances where mitigation requires on-going monitoring, the Mitigation Monitoring Checklist will be used until monitoring is no longer necessary. The Development Services Department will be required to file periodic reports on how the implementation of various mitigation measures is progressing or is being maintained. Department staff may be required to conduct periodic inspections

to assure compliance. In some instances, outside agencies and/or consultants may be required to conduct necessary periodic inspections as part of the mitigation monitoring program. Fees may be imposed per MMC 19.28.070 for the cost of implementing the monitoring program.

#### **GENERAL PLAN MITIGATION MEASURES**

As a second-tier environmental document, Initial Study #23-45 incorporates some mitigation measures adopted as part of the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report* (SCH# 2008071069), as mitigation for potential impacts of the Project.

#### **NONCOMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS**

Any person or agency may file a complaint asserting noncompliance with the mitigation measures associated with the project. The complaint shall be directed to the Director of Development Services in written form providing specific information on the asserted violation. The Director of Development Services shall cause an investigation and determine the validity of the complaint. If noncompliance with a mitigation measure has occurred, the Director of Development Services shall cause appropriate actions to remedy any violation. The complainant shall receive written confirmation indicating the results of the investigation or the final action corresponding to the particular noncompliance issue. Merced Municipal Code (MMC) Sections 19.28.080 and 19.28.090 outline the criminal penalties and civil and administrative remedies which may be incurred in the event of noncompliance. MMC 19.28.100 spells out the appeals procedures.

#### **MONITORING MATRIX**

**The following pages provide a series of tables identifying the mitigation measures proposed specifically for General Plan Amendment #23-05, Zone Change #434, Establishment of Planned Development (P-D) #81, Conditional Use Permit #1276, Site Plan Review #538, and Minor Use Permit #24-02. The columns within the tables are defined as follows:**

<b>Mitigation Measure:</b>	Describes the Mitigation Measure (referenced by number).
<b>Timing:</b>	Identifies at what point in time or phase of the project that the mitigation measure will be completed.
<b>Agency/Department Consultation:</b>	This column references any public agency or City department with which coordination is required to satisfy the identified mitigation measure.
<b>Verification:</b>	These columns will be initialed and dated by the individual designated to verify adherence to the project specific mitigation.

**General Plan Amendment #23-05/Zone Change #434/ Establishment of Planned Development (P-D)  
#81/Conditional Use Permit #1276/  
Site Plan Review Permit #538/Minor Use Permit #24-02  
Mitigation Monitoring Checklist**

Project Name:	_____	File Number:	_____
Approval Date:	_____	Project Location	_____
Brief Project Description	_____		

The following environmental mitigation measures were incorporated into the Conditions of Approval for this project in order to mitigate identified environmental impacts to a level of insignificance. A completed and signed checklist for each mitigation measure indicates that this mitigation measure has been complied with and implemented, and fulfills the City of Merced’s Mitigation Monitoring Requirements (MMC 19.28) with respect to Assembly Bill 3180 (Public Resources Code Section 21081.6).

1) Greenhouse Gas Emissions				
<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Agency or Department</i>	<i>City Verification (date and initials)</i>
<i>a</i>	GHG- 1)	Building Permit	Planning Department	

a	<p>GHG-1) The project applicant shall demonstrate compliance with the applicable BPS strategies to the Planning Division prior to the issuance of a building permit. The following BPS strategies are considered to be applicable, feasible, and effective in reducing GHG emissions generated by the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Class II bike lane, as defined in the Caltrans <i>Highway Design Manual</i> (California Department of Transportation 2022), is present along the south side of E. Olive Avenue immediately west of the project site. The eastern terminus of the bike lane is at the western edge of the project site. The SJVAPCD <i>Climate Change Action Plan</i> document notes that Measure #4 is applicable if the entire project is located within one-half mile of an existing Class I or Class II bike lane and project design includes a comparable network that connects the project uses to the existing offsite facility. Existing facilities are defined as those facilities that are physically constructed and ready for use prior to the first 20% of the project occupancy permits being granted. Project design includes a designated bicycle route connecting all units, on-site bicycle parking facilities, offsite bicycle facilities, site entrances, and primary building entrances to existing Class I or Class II bike lane(s) within one-half mile. Contingent on the design being approved by the City of Merced, the project will extend the bike lane on the south side of E. Olive Avenue from the existing</li> </ul>	Building Permit/Grading Permit	Building / Engineering Departments	
---	---	--------------------------------	------------------------------------	--

	<p>terminus on the western edge of the project site to the eastern edge of the project site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project will provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to existing external streets and pedestrian facilities. Existing facilities are defined as those facilities that are physically constructed and ready for use prior to the first 20% of the project's occupancy permits being granted.</li> <li>• Site design and building placement will minimize barriers to pedestrian access and interconnectivity. Physical barriers such as walls, berms, landscaping, and slopes between residential and nonresidential uses that impede bicycle or pedestrian circulation will be eliminated. Barriers to pedestrian access of neighboring facilities and sites will be minimized. This measure is not meant to prevent the limited use of barriers to ensure public safety by prohibiting access to hazardous areas. This measure is not meant to prevent features needed to securely operate a mini-storage facility.</li> <li>• The Bus, Merced's Regional Transit System is operated by the Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County. The Bus Route M6 - Merced North - provides service along E. Olive Avenue between G Street and Parsons Avenue, and along G Street south of E. Olive Avenue. Route M6 provides bus service with 45 minute headways. The route map for Route M6 shows a bus stop on G Street south of E. Olive Avenue, west of the</li> </ul>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>project site (The Bus 2023). Contingent on approval by the Transit Joint Powers Authority and the City, the project will provide safe and convenient access to the bus stop, or a new bus stop, and provide essential transit stop improvements (i.e., shelters, route information, benches, and lighting).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project will install light-colored/high/albedo roof materials on the portion of the project containing climate-controlled units. Light-colored/high/albedo roof materials reflect more of the sun's rays, decreasing the amount of heat transferred into a building.</li> <li>• The project will provide shade (within 5 years) and/or use light-colored/high-albedo materials (reflectance of at least 0.3) and/or open grid pavement for at least 30% of the site's non-roof impervious surfaces, including parking lots, walkways, plazas, etc.; OR use an open-grid pavement system (less than 50% impervious) for a minimum of 50% of the parking lot area. Unshaded parking lot areas, driveways, fire lanes, and other paved areas will have a minimum albedo of 0.3 or greater.</li> </ul>			

**Certificate of Completion:**

By signing below, the environmental coordinator confirms that the required mitigation measures have been implemented as evidenced by the Schedule of Tasks and Sign-Off Checklist, and that all direct and indirect costs have been paid. This act constitutes the issuance of a *Certificate of Completion*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Environmental Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date