



ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT HEARING

The Administrative Use Permit Meeting will not be physically open to the public and Staff will be teleconferencing into the meeting.

HOW TO OBSERVE THE MEETING:

To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, you may join the Zoom webinar from your computer, tablet, or smartphone by visiting:

To join the virtual hearing: (No passcode required)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84567568854?pwd=UytsbTU1OVb3N2JYQVVJQmlMT1FaZz09>

Webinar ID: 845 6756 8854

HOW TO SUBMIT PUBLIC COMMENT:

Members of the public are highly encouraged to participate in live public comment through the Zoom platform using the link above or by calling the number below to listen and provide public comment via phone.

US: +1 (669) 900-6833 (and use *9 to raise your hand to speak)

If you wish to provide written public comment, please email your comments to aup-comments@atascadero.org by 5:00 pm the day before the meeting. Such email **comments must identify the Agenda Item Number in the subject line of the email**. The comments will be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator and made a part of the administrative record. If a comment is received after the deadline for submission but before the close of the meeting, the comment will still be included as a part of the administrative record of the meeting but will be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator the next business day. ***Please note, email comments will not be read into the record.***

AMERICAN DISABILITY ACT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Any member of the public who needs accommodations should contact the City Clerk's Office at cityclerk@atascadero.org or by calling (805) 470-3400 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting or time when services are needed. The City will use their best efforts to provide reasonable accommodations to afford as much accessibility as possible while also maintaining public safety in accordance with the City procedure for resolving reasonable accommodation requests.

Administrative Use Permit agendas and staff reports may be viewed on the City's website: www.atascadero.org. Final Action Reports will be available after the meeting, and upon request from the Community Development Department.

Copies of the staff reports or other documentation relating to each item of business referred to on the Agenda are on file in the Community Development Department and are available for public inspection on our website, www.atascadero.org. All documents submitted by the public during AUP meetings that are either read into the record or referred to in their statement will be noted in the audio recording and available for review by contacting the Community Development Department. All documents will be available for public inspection during City Hall business hours by appointment request.



CITY OF ATASCADERO

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Administrative Use Permit Hearing **A G E N D A**

MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY

The City of Atascadero's Zoning Hearing Officer will hold a VIRTUAL public hearing at **11:00 a.m.** on **Tuesday, July 18, 2023** at City Hall to consider the following project:

1. 6910 EL CAMINO REAL (USE23-0054)

The application is to allow for signage over the maximum by-right square footage limit on APN 030-201-026. The proposed signage is 190 square feet in total, where 50 square feet is the maximum allowable without use permit approval in the DC zone. The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Categorical Exemption §15301, Class 1: existing facilities. Staff recommendation is to approve the project, subject to conditions. (*Sam Mountain, Assistant Planner*)

PLEASE NOTE: Any court challenge to the actions taken at the public hearing may be limited to considering only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence to the City of Atascadero at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Any decision of the Hearing Officer is final unless appealed to the Planning Commission within 14 days of the action. Any person aggrieved by the decision may file an appeal. Appeal forms are available in the Community Development Department or on the City's website (www.atascadero.org). The fee for filing an appeal is \$1,530 (fee as of 8-15-22) and must accompany the appeal documentation.



CITY OF ATASCADERO

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Administrative Hearing Agenda Report

ITEM # 1

FROM: Sam Mountain, Assistant Planner

MEETING DATE: 7/18/23

FILE NUMBER: USE23-0054

PROJECT ADDRESS: 6910 El Camino Real

SITUATION:

The applicant is proposing four new signs for the upcoming Huckleberry's restaurant in the DC (Downtown Commercial) zoning district. These include a wall sign, a wall mural, and the installation of Huckleberry's branding on a monument sign and freeway-facing pylon sign. The square footage of the proposed wall sign is 60 square feet, the square footage of the monument sign is 33 square feet, the square footage of the freeway-facing sign is 64 square feet, and the square footage of the wall mural is 33 SF. In total, the aggregate sign area is 190 square feet, exceeding code allowances in the DC zone by 140 square feet.

EVALUATION:

The signs are for the upcoming Huckleberry's restaurant at 6910 El Camino Real and will take the place of the previous tenant's signage (Denny's). The building is located roughly 200 feet north of Highway 101 and has a northeast frontage on El Camino Real. The proposal includes a wall sign and wall mural on the southeast facade, a monument sign in a planter on the eastern end of the property, and a freeway-facing pylon sign on the southwest end of the property, as detailed below.

The proposed wall sign includes illuminated acrylic pan-channel lettering with aluminum halo-lit backing. It will be adorned with the Huckleberry's logo on a ribbon design with a berry graphic behind the ribbon, and is proposed to be located above the main restaurant entrance facing the southeast parking lot. This sign is 140" in length and 60" in height, totaling just under 60SF.

The proposed wall mural will consist of a digital print on vinyl overlaid atop a 0.5" plywood board. This print will show a painting of a bayou-style home or dock building with trees, a river, and a boat (see next page). It will be 84" in length by 56" in height for a total of 33 SF. It is proposed to be located on the southeast side of the building, a few feet past the windows to the left of the main entrance.

The monument sign is located inside of a landscaped area on the eastern end of the property, abutting El Camino Real. This sign is pre-existing and will be refaced; it originally displayed the logo of the previous tenant. The design of this sign will be similar to that of the wall sign, simply showing the Huckleberry's logo on a solid-color white background. The faces of this sign measure 89" in length by 53" in height for a total of 33 SF on either face.

The freeway-facing pylon sign is located on the far southern end of the property, abutting Highway 101. It is currently existing; the scope of this project consists of replacing the existing copy with Huckleberry's signage. This sign is roughly perpendicular to the highway and faces SE/NW. It will not be illuminated.

Atascadero Municipal Code Section 9-15.007 limits total aggregate sign area to 50 SF in the Downtown Commercial (DC) zone unless an exception is granted through the approval of an Administrative Use Permit. The following four signs are proposed:

Sign Type	Location	Size (Square Feet)	Image
Wall Sign	SE mansard roof, facing parking lot	60 SF	
Monument Sign	Landscape planter in parking lot abutting ECR	33 SF	
Freeway-facing sign	SW side of parking lot abutting Hwy 101	64 SF	
Wall Mural	SE elevation wall, left of windows	33 SF	
Total		190 SF	

The signs will help identify and promote this business and increase visibility from Highway 101 and El Camino Real. The signs as proposed are proportional to building elevations in both size and quantity.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Administrative Hearing Officer approve USE23-0052 to allow the signage as proposed.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exemption CEQA – Guidelines Section 15311 and 15301(g)
<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Exemption §§ 21000, et seq & _____
<input type="checkbox"/> No Project – Ministerial Project

Findings

AMC 9-15.011 requires the Hearing Officer to make the following 4 findings:

1. *The sign is consistent with the purposes set forth in Section 9-15.002;*

The proposed signs meets the listed purposes for signage outlined in section 9-15.002 of the Atascadero Municipal Code. Section 9-15.002(a) intends to “Maintain and improve the aesthetic environment and overall community appearance to foster the City’s ability to attract sources of economic development and growth.” The proposed signage will help promote a new business on El Camino Real near downtown. Section 9-15.002(c) intends to “implement quality sign design standards that are consistent with the City’s General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Appearance Review Guidelines;” The signage is well-designed, aesthetically-pleasing, and will improve a building façade on a commercial corridor. Section 9-15.002(g) intends to “generally limit commercial signage to on-site locations in order to protect the aesthetic environment from the visual clutter associated with the unrestricted proliferation of signs, while providing channels of communication to the public.” The signage is limited to what is necessary for communication and visual balance and does not create additional visual clutter. Finally, Section 9-15.002(h) intends to “limit the size and number of signs to levels that reasonably allow for the identification of a residential, public or commercial location and the nature of any such commercial business.” The proposed signs are not excessive and in fact rather modest – for example, there is only one proposed wall/roof sign where three would be hypothetically possible (reflecting the three building elevations visible from El Camino Real). The signage is generally limited to what is necessary to draw in customers from north- and southbound El Camino Real as well as Highway 101.

2. *The opportunity to combine signs for more than one (1) use on a single sign structure has been considered;*

The proposed wall sign is considered appropriate by staff in order to communicate the tenant’s location and services to potential customers. Huckleberry’s will be the only building tenant; thus, there is no opportunity to combine uses on the wall sign or monument sign. The freeway-facing sign was previously used by the prior tenant (Denny’s) as a single-tenant sign and this use will continue with Huckleberry’s.

3. *For freeway-oriented signs, the sign area and height are the minimum needed to achieve adequate visibility along the freeway due to highway ramp locations and grade differences; and*

The freeway-oriented sign is existing and will simply be refaced as part of this project; the applicant is not proposing any additional freeway-oriented signage. Its pole is screened by trees and its height and face area are modest and well-sized.

4. *Conformance with all other applicable codes and ordinances of the City, including, but not limited to, the Zoning Ordinance, General Plan and its several elements, and the appearance review guidelines. (Ord. 604 § 2, 2016)*

The sign conforms with applicable codes and ordinances of the City, including Framework Principles of the General Plan that call for improving the appearance and character of Atascadero through signage. General Plan Policy 1.3 notes that projects should “[e]nhance the rural character and appearance of the City, including commercial corridors, gateways and public facilities.” The proposed signage helps promote the downtown El Camino Real commercial corridor by providing signage to identify a major tenant on a newly-revitalized property near Highway 101. General Plan Policy 13.3 urges the City to “[e]xpand tourist commercial nodes to serve the traveling public at freeway interchanges and develop tourist destinations based on the Atascadero’s rural character.” While it is not a tourist destination, Huckleberry’s is a draw for Highway 101 commuters, and the freeway sign in particular will draw the business of those who may otherwise drive past the City.

The proposed signage also conforms substantially with the City’s Appearance Review Manual. Guideline 5C notes that “the colors, materials, and lighting of every sign shall be restrained and harmonious with the building and site to which it principally relates,” and Guideline 5A elaborates: “every sign shall have good scale and proportion in its design and in its visual relationship to buildings and surroundings.” The proposed signs are restrained in size and visual elements, consisting of a modestly-sized mural and various sizes of the Huckleberry’s logo which fit the respective scale of the structure the signs are placed upon. While the logo and mural have many details, there are no separate or extraneous design elements that create visual clutter.

Conditions

1. The design and location of signs shall be consistent with the attached project exhibits.

Code Requirements

1. AMC 9-15 (Sign Ordinance)
2. AMC 9-1.112 Administrative Use Permit

Attachments

Attachment 1 - Location Map

Attachment 2 - Zoning Map

Attachment 3 - Proposed Elevations

Action:

☐ Approve

☐ Approve as modified

☐ Deny

☐ Continue to: _____ to allow _____

☐ Continue indefinitely to allow: _____

Kelly Gleason, Hearing Officer

Attachment 1: Location Map
USE23-0054



Attachment 2: Zoning Map
USE23-0054



Attachment 3: Proposed Elevations
USE23-0054

Front Elevation (from SE), Wall Sign



Rear Elevation (from NW), Monument Sign



Front Elevation (from SE), Monument Sign



Front Elevation (from SE), Wall Mural



Front Elevation (unknown angle), Freeway Si



