

## Planning Commission Staff Report

July 23, 2014  
Item 6.a.

- SUBJECT:** Work Session for P14-0924 (Specific Plan Amendment) and PUD-106
- APPLICANT:** John Gutknecht, Habitec Architecture
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Alameda County Surplus Property Authority
- PURPOSE:** Work Session to review and receive comments on applications for: (1) an amendment to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (P14-0924) to allow vehicular ingress to the subject site from El Charro Road; and (2) a PUD Development Plan (PUD-106) for construction of an automobile dealership consisting of an approximately 31,792-square-foot building with a 2,175-square-foot service canopy and 1,250-square-foot car wash, and related site improvements on the Auto Mall site at Staples Ranch.
- GENERAL PLAN:** Retail/Highway/Service Commercial/Business and Professional Offices, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, and Parks and Recreation
- SPECIFIC PLAN:** Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch
- ZONING:** Planned Unit Development – Commercial (PUD-C) District
- LOCATION:** Approximately 16 acres of the Auto Mall Site at Staples Ranch
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Planning Commission Work Session Topics](#)
  - B. [Project Plans and Project Description](#)
  - C. [Location Map and Noticing Map](#)

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### I. BACKGROUND

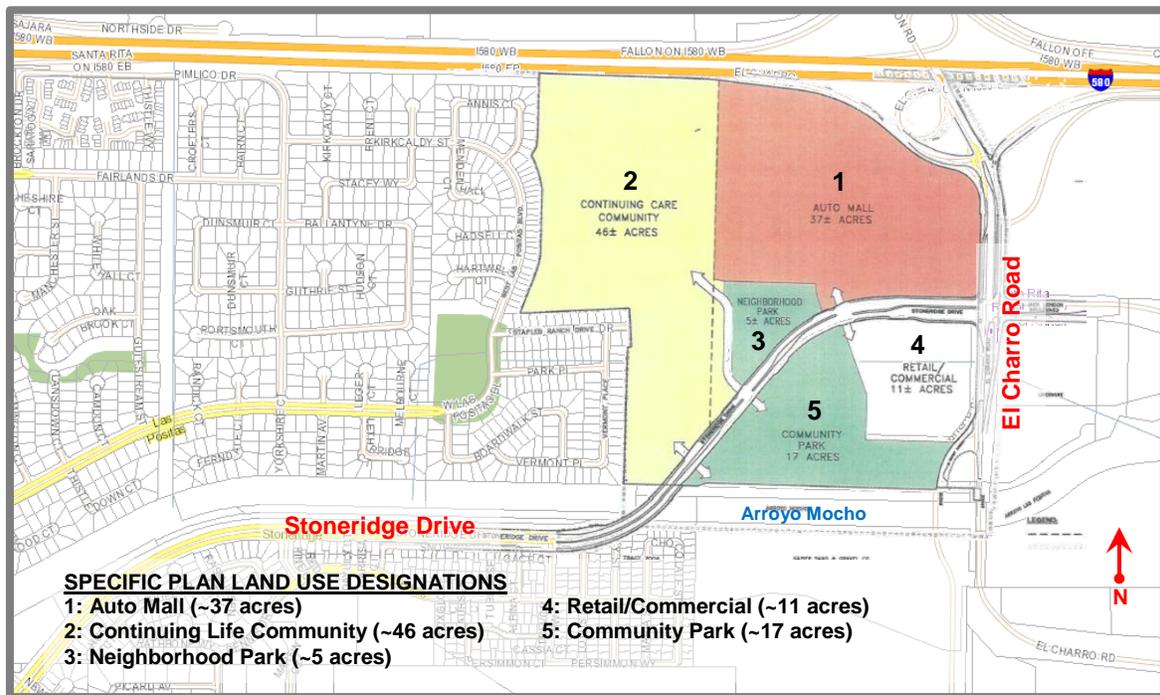
Habitec Architecture, on behalf of Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge, has submitted applications for a Specific Plan Amendment and a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the construction of an automobile dealership at the Auto Mall site at Staples Ranch.

The Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (Specific Plan) was adopted by City Council on August 24, 2010, and is applicable to the subject site. The Specific Plan contains design standards for properties subject to the Specific Plan, and includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

The purpose of the workshop is to receive comments from the Commission and public regarding the project. No action on the project will be made at the work session. The project will, however, ultimately require Planning Commission action and final decision by City Council. A list of discussion topics and questions are included as Exhibit A to this report.

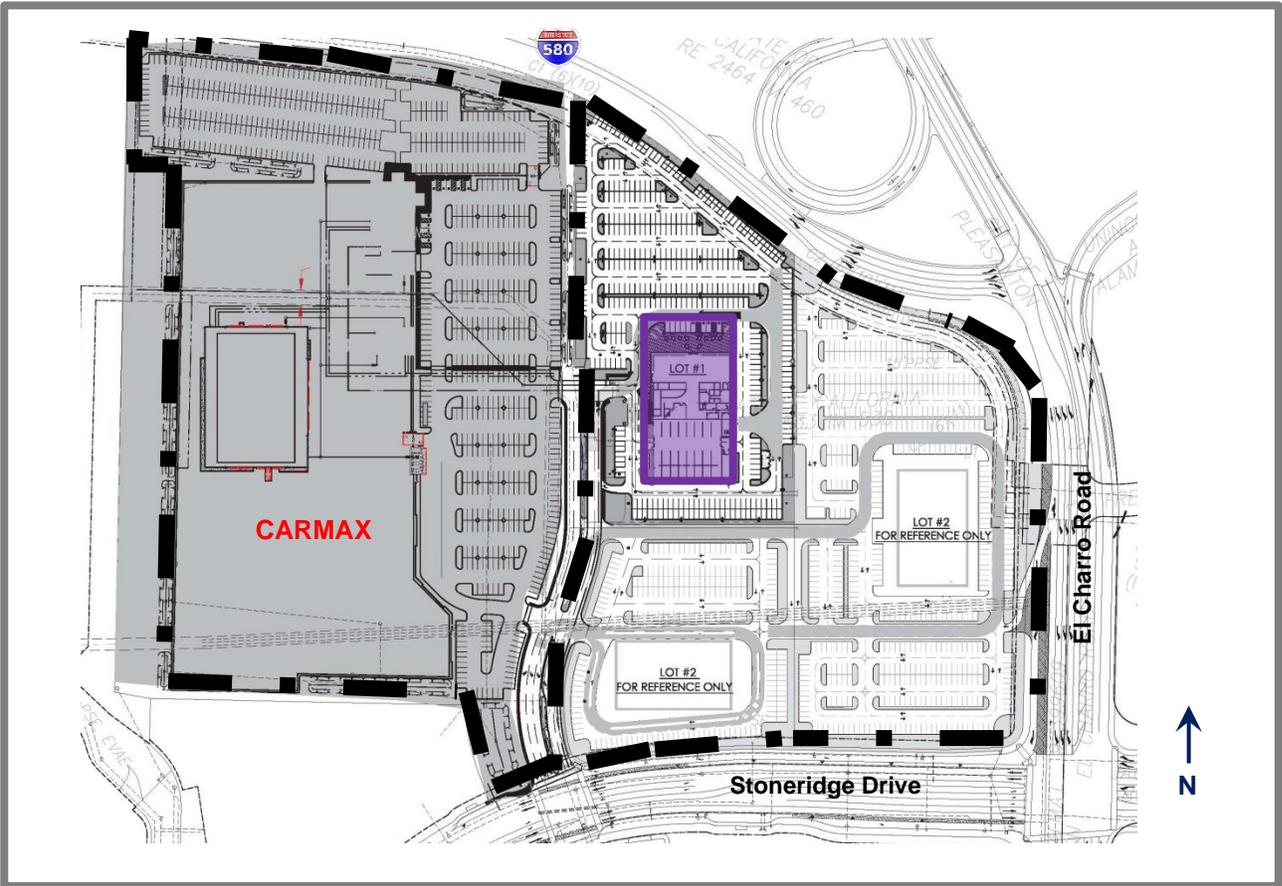
## II. SITE DESCRIPTION

The approximately 37-acre Auto Mall site is located north of Stoneridge Drive and the Neighborhood Park, south of Interstate 580, east of the Continuing Life Communities (CLC) site, and west of El Charro Road. Of the 37 acres, the applicant proposes to acquire approximately 16 acres located west of El Charro Road (5 of the total 16 acres would be developed with construction of the Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge dealership). Figure 1 provides a vicinity map of the area.



**Figure 1: Vicinity Map**

As noted in Figure 1, the Auto Mall site is one of five designations within the Staples Ranch area. Other land use designations within the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch include the Continuing Life Community, Neighborhood Park, Retail/Commercial, and Community Park.



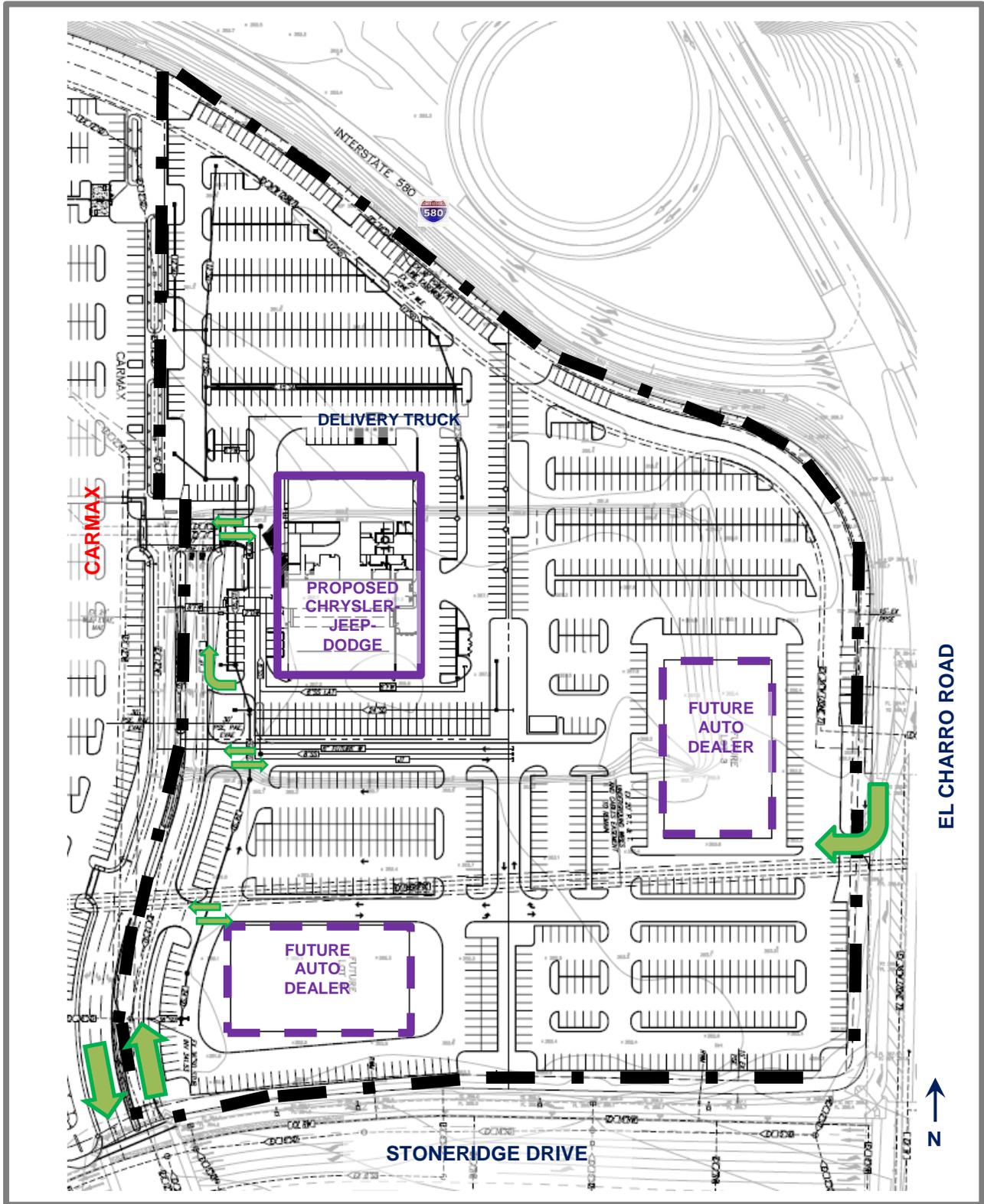
**Figure 2: Staples Ranch Auto Mall Site**

Figure 2 shows the Auto Mall site at Staples Ranch. The recently approved CarMax Auto Superstores project is located on the western 20 acres of the Auto Mall site, and is shown in gray shading. The remaining 16-acre site is located east of the CarMax Auto Superstore site, west of El Charro Road, and north of Stoneridge Drive. The proposed Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge dealership is proposed in the northwestern area of the 16-acre site (the footprint of the proposed building is highlighted in purple in Figure 2).

The 16-acre site is vacant and relatively flat, with elevations ranging from approximately 351 feet near the northwestern corner to 354 feet near the southeastern corner. No driveways or entry drives currently provide access to the site, and no mature trees are located on the site.

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a new and used automobile dealership consisting of an approximately 31,792-square-foot building with a 2,175-square-foot service canopy and 1,250-square-foot car wash, and related site improvements on approximately 5 acres of the Auto Mall site (Site 1 in Figure 1). The project characteristics are identified below Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan**

A. **Site Plan and Project Layout:** The applicant has the option to acquire the entire 16-acre site, but immediate plans are to develop only 5 acres for the proposed Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge dealership. However, staff is requiring an accurate and detailed site plan that includes the entire 16-acre site to ensure that the on-site circulation system, including areas for unloading of vehicles, and other related items, are designed comprehensively in a way that is acceptable to the City.

- a. **Site Access:** The 16-acre project site is accessed from Stoneridge Drive via a shared entry drive (shared with CarMax Auto Superstores). The entry drive has two lanes to enter the project site and three lanes for exiting. The access drive continues further north and ends at a proposed stop sign intersection where incoming visitors would make a right turn into the subject site (or a left turn from the subject site to exit). Three additional access points are proposed from the private entry drive: two for ingress/egress and one for egress only. Vehicular ingress is also proposed from El Charro Road, which requires the proposed Specific Plan Amendment (the Specific Plan expressly prohibits access to the site from El Charro Road).

As mentioned above, the proposed 5-acre Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge site would be accessed by a right-turn from the shared entry drive. As currently shown, no cross access is proposed between the proposed 5-acre site and the remaining 11 acres, except for an egress-only aisle between the subject site and the future lot to the south (Lot 2). However, staff is requesting an additional access point between Lots 1 and 2, and an egress-only access aisle to be constructed with the project.

- b. **Parking Areas and Delivery Truck Location for 5-acre Site:** For the 5-acre site, a total of 400 parking spaces are proposed, including: 22 visitor stalls, 259 display stalls, 79 service vehicle stalls, and 40 employee stalls. Generally, the visitor parking stalls are located in close vicinity to the proposed building, north and west of the pedestrian entrance. The display spaces are clustered in the northern area of the property. Employee and service parking stalls (the majority of service parking stalls are tandem spaces) are located to the east and south of the proposed building, respectively.

A delivery area for trucks is proposed near the northeastern corner of the proposed building, in the drive aisle separating the visitor parking from the display parking area, and is noted in Figure 3.

The dimensions of parking stalls within the employee and visitor parking areas are 9 feet wide by 19 feet deep, with a 25-foot drive aisle. The dimensions of parking stalls within the display and service areas are 9 feet wide by 18 feet deep, with drive aisles that vary between 20 feet and 24 feet.

B. **Operations:** The operating hours for vehicle sales are anticipated to be 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday – Saturday, and 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. The service department is expected to be open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, and

from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. New and used vehicles to be sold at the Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge dealership are expected to be delivered 3 times a week via a transport carrier. The project description included with this staff report as part of Exhibit B provides details on the operation of the auto dealership.

- C. **Proposed Building:** The proposed Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge building consolidates the sales, parts storage, and service function of the dealership. Elevation drawings are provided in the materials for this workshop.

The approximately 31,792-square-foot building consists of the following areas: 15,680-square-foot first floor for showroom and sales, 2,912-square-foot second floor containing office space, and a 13,200-square-foot area on the first floor for vehicle servicing. A canopy where customers would drop off their vehicles for servicing is located on the western side of the building, and an approximately 1,250-square-foot car wash is located on the eastern side of the building. An approximately 400-square-foot detached trash enclosure is proposed within the parking area to the east of the building.

A total of three customer entry-ways are proposed (at the northern, western, and eastern facades); all three entries lead to the showroom. The western and northern pedestrian entries are located where a portion of the building projects out from the main wall and where the base encloses the pedestrian doors on either side. The roof of these “entry elements” is higher than the main roofline of the building (the entry elements are proposed to be 32-feet-8-inches tall; the main roofline is proposed to be 26-feet-1-inch tall; and the roof screen for roof-top mechanical equipment will be 31-foot tall). The customer service lanes are proposed on the western side of the building, and are accessible from the shared entry drive. Figures 4 and 5 show elevations of the proposed building.



**Figure 4: West and North Elevations**



**Figure 5: East and South Elevations**

The exterior of the building consists primarily of aluminum composite material (ACM), and two colors of tex-cote over the concrete tilt-up facade. The ACM is proposed in a “Silver Metallic” color and the tex-cote is proposed in Benjamin Moore “Rock Gray” and Benjamin Moore “Pelican Gray” colors. Storefront glass tinted gray (color as “Solargray”) is also proposed.

- D. **Landscaping:** Conceptual landscaping plans inclusive of a plant palette are on Sheets L1.0 – L5.0, and show the 16-acre site and a more detailed plan for the 5-acre site. The view perspectives shown on the cover sheet of the plans show the landscaping at initial planting and with 10 years of growth.

Proposed tree species include (all are proposed to be 24-inch box size): Sawleaf zelkova, Deodar cedar, Lavender crape myrtle, Flowering pear, Coast live oak, and Mexican palo verde. The trees are located around the perimeter of the 16-acre site and around the anticipated boundary of the 5-acre site. Staff has asked the applicant to modify some of the proposed tree species to be better integrated with the existing landscaping on Stoneridge Drive and El Charro Road, and with the tree species along the shared entry drive approved for the CarMax Auto Superstores application.

A variety of shrubs and ground cover are proposed in various planter and bio-retention areas. Landscaping has been incorporated in planter boxes (approximately 3 feet high) directly in front of the dealership’s northern façade, and around the northern, eastern, and western building perimeters (the southern façade consists of roll-up doors for vehicular access to the service area). Figure 6 shows the proposed landscaping plan.



**Figure 6: Proposed Landscaping Plan**

- E. **Lighting:** The proposed lighting plan for the 5-acre Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge site is included on the last sheet of the project plans (the remainder of the site does not have a lighting plan at this time). Pole-mounted lighting at a height of 25 feet above finished grade is proposed in the parking lot areas, wall-mounted fixtures 10 feet above finished grade are proposed for the building, and canopy-mounted fixtures are proposed 16-foot-6-inches above finished grade. A separate plan for lighting during *non-operational hours* has not been shown, but in accordance with the MMRP, all exterior parking lot lighting levels during non-operational hours must be designed such that they do not exceed 10 footcandles. The maximum height for pole lighting as required by the

MMRP within the sales and service lot is 25 feet. Table 1 identifies the proposed lighting levels during operational hours.

**Table 1:** Proposed Lighting Levels, in Footcandles

	<b>Proposed Average</b>	<b>Proposed Maximum</b>	<b>Proposed Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum Permitted</b>
Customer, Employee, and Service Areas	10	33	3	<b>10</b>
Sales and Display Area, Interior	23	38	9	<b>30<sup>1</sup></b>
Sales and Display Area Adjacent to Freeway	30	51	11	<b>30<sup>1, 2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Designated display areas where merchandise is presented to customers is permitted to be a maximum of 30 footcandles, and the location of such designated display areas is required to be identified on the lighting plan (other areas are limited to a maximum of 10 footcandles).

<sup>2</sup> The first row of lighting by the northern property line is allowed a maximum level of 50 footcandles.

As shown in Table 1, the proposed lighting plan distinguishes between three different areas of the 5-acre site:

1. The *proposed* maximum lighting level in the “customer, employee, and service” area is 33 footcandles, where the *permitted* maximum level is 10 footcandles;
2. The “sales and display area” farther from the freeway (and thus described on the lighting plan as “interior”) is proposed to be a maximum level of 38 footcandles, where the *permitted* maximum level is 30 footcandles in approved designated display areas; and
3. Similarly, the “sales and display area adjacent to the freeway” is permitted to be a maximum level of 30 footcandles in approved designated display areas (however, the MMRP allows the first row of lighting by the northern property line to be a maximum level of 50 footcandles).

Staff expects a modified lighting plan that shows proposed designated display areas, and has requested that the applicant modify the lighting plan to adhere to the maximum illumination levels listed in the MMRP.

- F. **Signage:** Conceptual signage is shown on the plans, but a formal application would be required for any decision related to signage. The applicant would be required to incorporate any freeway-oriented signage onto the pylon sign approved with the CarMax Auto Superstores application.
- G. **Parcel Map and Easements:** CarMax Auto Superstores, developer of the approximately western 20 acres of the Auto Mall site, has applied to subdivide the entire Auto Mall site into two parcels (lots consisting of approximately 19.66 acres and the subject site, approximately 16 acres). Subsequent to PUD review by City Council, the Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge applicant has indicated that the 16-acre site would be further subdivided into 2 or 3 lots. In either case (whether the parcel map proposed to create 2

or 3 lots), the 5-acre site would be independent of the remainder of the parcel. The plans indicate that all existing easements would remain.

- H. **Grading and Drainage**: Sheet C-4.0 shows the preliminary grading and drainage plan for the 5-acre Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge project site. The site would be graded such that finished grades would vary between 352 feet and 354 feet. Minimal grading is expected to create proper drainage for the site; however any existing stockpiled dirt on the site would be redistributed to the entire 16-acre site.

#### **IV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WORK SESSION**

The following section aims to provide discussion topics and analysis of key issues related to the project. This work session will allow the Planning Commission to provide direction to the applicant and staff regarding any issues it wishes to be addressed before the project formally returns to the Planning Commission for a recommendation to the City Council. The areas noted below are where staff would find the Commission's input most helpful. A list of these discussion topics and specific questions regarding the proposal are attached to this report as Exhibit A for the Planning Commission's consideration and discussion.

##### **A. Site Plan**

The site plan has been designed to provide access and circulation to and from a single shared access drive at Stoneridge Drive, and to provide vehicular ingress from El Charro Road. The Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge dealership showroom and service building would be accessible from the shared access drive of Stoneridge Drive. Customers would access the showroom from the northern façade, and the southern areas of the building would be limited to access by employees since they are focused on service activities. The service areas would face Stoneridge Drive and would be visible until the landscaping to the south of the building matures, and until another dealership is developed on the property to the south.

The parking space dimensions within visitor parking areas would adhere to Pleasanton Municipal Code requirements (19 feet deep by 9 feet wide). However, other areas of the site will consist of display or service vehicle parking. Since these areas are accessible to employees only, parking stalls and aisle widths in these areas will not meet minimum code requirements, but will be required to meet requirements from the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department.

The visitor and employee parking areas will have trees and shrubs in landscape fingers and diamond planters. Due to concerns regarding leaf and fruit litter, no landscape diamonds with trees are proposed within the parking stalls in the display area. Staff has requested the applicant incorporate trees within the planters located at the end of the drive aisles in the display area.

##### **Discussion Point**

Are the on-site circulation, parking layout, and positioning of the building acceptable?

**B. Specific Plan Amendment for Vehicular Ingress from El Charro Road**

The access from El Charro Road requires an amendment to the Specific Plan. In addition, the proposed access requires an amendment to the Pre-Development and Cooperation Agreement (Agreement) entered by the Cities of Pleasanton and Livermore, the Surplus Property Authority/Alameda County, and Vulcan Materials Company. The Agreement was executed in 2007 to, among other things, specify the improvements to El Charro Road to make it available for public use while maintaining safe access and maneuverability for truck traffic heading to the quarry use further to the south. In part due to this Agreement, the Specific Plan does not permit vehicular access from the Auto Mall site to El Charro Road.

All parties that are subject to the Agreement would need to consent to the proposed access from El Charro Road. As part of the request, the applicant is responsible for funding a Traffic Impact Analysis under the direction of the City Traffic Engineer to determine the potential impacts of the proposed access. Staff plans to contact the parties in the Agreement upon receiving the Traffic Impact Analysis and additional details from the applicant.

Discussion Point

Does the Planning Commission support the Specific Plan Amendment to allow vehicular ingress from El Charro Road, subject to agreement by parties of the Pre-Development and Cooperation Agreement?

**C. Dealership Building Design**

The subject site is in a visible location, particularly as viewed from Interstate 580, and will be particularly prominent from Stoneridge Drive, especially before the other buildings are developed on the remainder of the Auto Mall site. The building as proposed incorporates corporate standards of the Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge franchise.

As noted in the “Project Description” section of this report, the exterior materials consist mainly of tex-cote in two different colors over the concrete tilt up panels and ACM. The color palette consists mainly of gray colors, and the applicant has incorporated vertical trellises with vines on the building exterior to assist in adding architectural interest.

In specific areas, such as part of the façade facing El Charro Road, staff has asked the applicant to incorporate recessed panels, landscaping, or alternative features to soften the appearance and lessen the appearance of large, blank walls.

Discussion Point

Are the building design, colors and materials, and height acceptable?

**V. PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of this workshop was sent to all property owners in Pleasanton within 1,000 feet of the Auto Mall site. Staff has not received any comments as of the publication of this report, and will forward to the Commission any public comments received after publication of this report.

## **VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Since the Planning Commission will take no formal action on the project at the work session, no environmental document accompanies this work session report. Since the project is within the parameters of the previous approval at the Auto Mall site, and within the scope of the existing Environmental Impact Report (EIR), staff is supportive of utilizing the existing EIR for this project.

## **VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the attached material, take public testimony, and make suggestions/comments to the applicant and staff regarding the development of the site.

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