

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No.: H.1  
Date: August 9, 2011

**CASE NUMBER:** PHG 11-0020

**APPLICANT:** Bruce Steingraber, Architect

**LOCATION:** The 2.13-acre site is located on the northern side of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue between I-15 and La Terraza Boulevard, addressed as 855 La Terraza Boulevard.

**TYPE OF PROJECT:** Modification to Precise Development Plan

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** A modification to the Precise Development Plan (99-25-PD) for the Escondido Infiniti automobile dealership to add a decorative glass feature wall on the eastern side of the building that results in an additional 26 square feet of floor area for the dealership sales area. The project also includes a 1,557 SF expansion of the auto service bays on the northern side of the building.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION/TIER:** PC (Planned Commercial) Tier 1 – Central Subarea

**ZONING:** PD-C (Planned Development-Commercial)

**BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF ISSUES:** The City Council approved a modification to the La Terraza Master Plan on August 18, 1999, for the construction of a new 14,000 SF, one-story Infiniti automobile dealership on 2.13 acres. The proposal also included modifications to the La Terraza Design Guidelines to allow the split-face block architecture and gray color scheme, as well as a Grading Exemption for the construction of a Keystone retaining wall ranging up to 25 feet in height adjacent to I-15 and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The dealership was constructed in accordance with the approvals later that year.

On June 10, 2008, the Planning Commission approved a modification to the Infiniti Precise Development Plan for a proposal that included the same extension of the service bays as currently proposed, and a much larger glass feature wall that covered the entire eastern end of the building and extended above the existing roof line. That proposal would have added 768 SF of floor area on the eastern end of the building for sales and a customer lounge. No building permits were issued and the Precise Development Plan expired the following year.

The dealership has since been sold to new owners. The new ownership desires to upgrade the facility to be consistent with Nissan Corporation's nationwide branding campaign. Part of the strategy involves updating existing dealerships to provide a fresh, modern entry element consisting of a translucent glass curtain wall with thin vertical lines. The current proposal utilizes the same glass material as previously approved, but on a smaller scale that only increases the floor area by a marginal amount. Customer service at the dealership would also be enhanced by the proposed expansion of the auto service area on the other side of the building as previously approved.

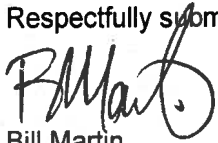
Staff feels that the issue is as follows:

1. Whether the architecture for the proposed expansion is consistent with the existing building design.

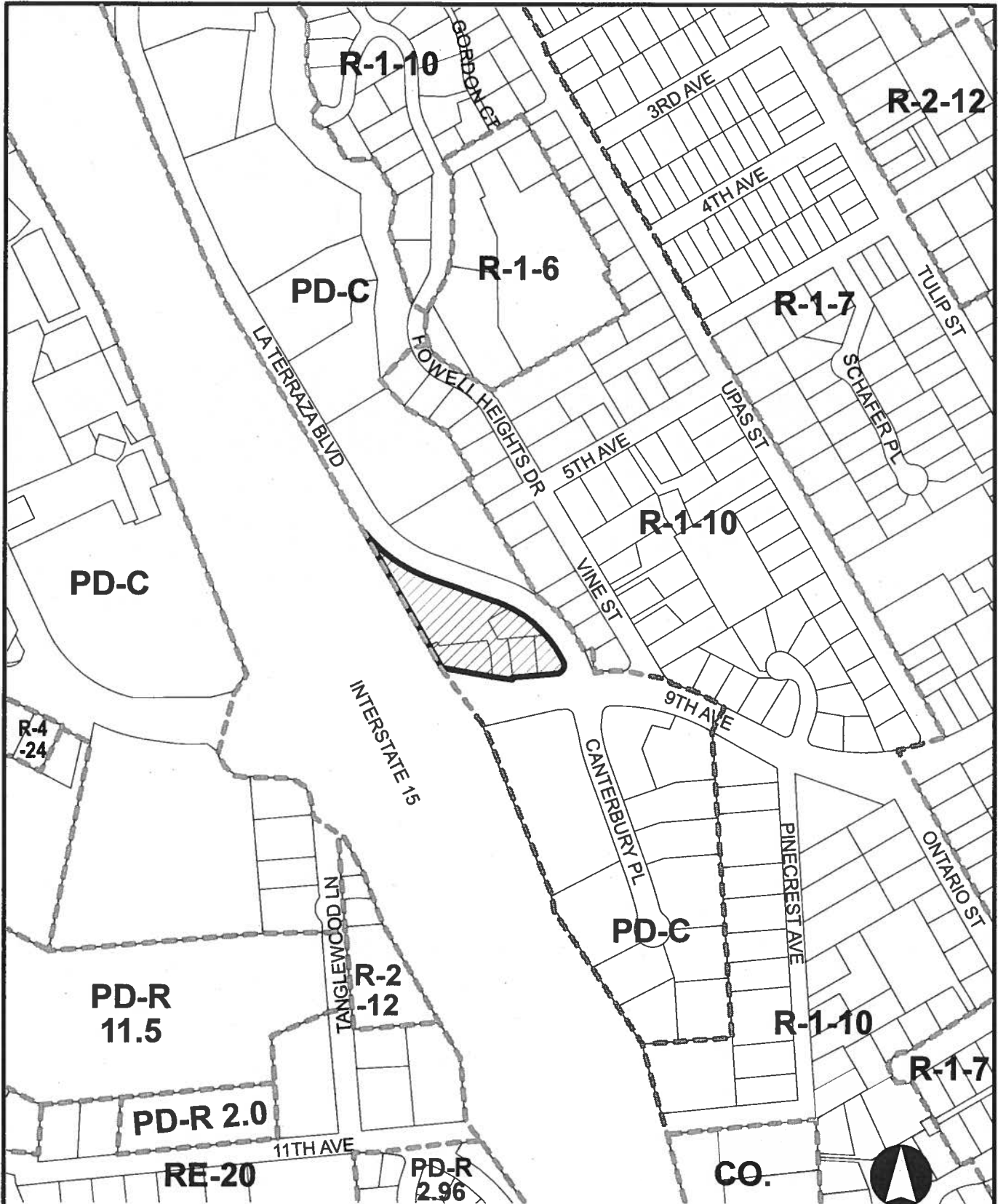
**REASONS FOR STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Staff feels the proposed expansion is appropriate because the proposed curtain wall entry feature presents a clean, modern facade that will facilitate brand identity while creating visual interest. The proposed expansion to the service area will utilize the same split-face block to appear virtually identical to the existing building. Both expansion areas will match or be slightly lower than existing building heights.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Martin  
Principal Planner

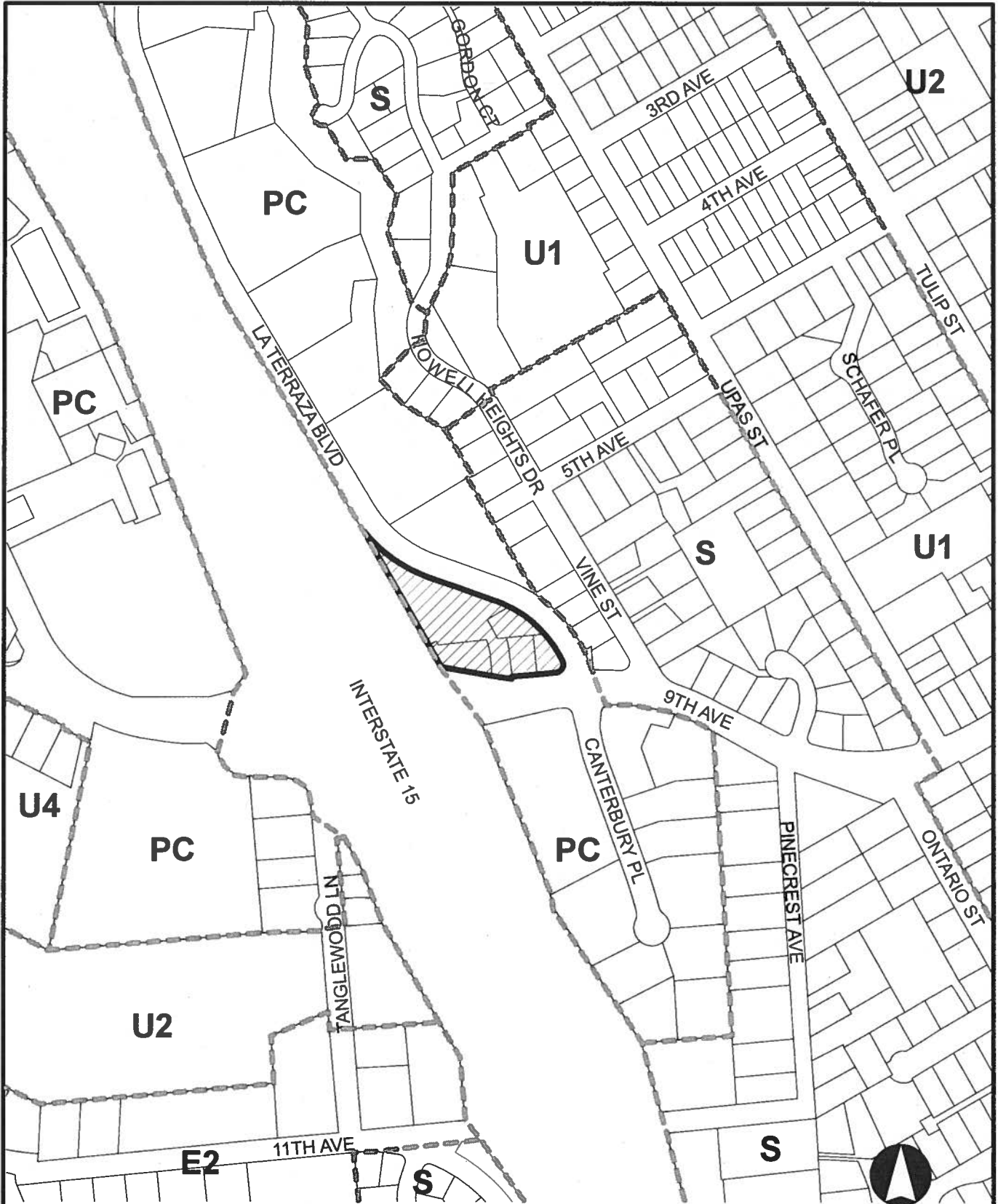


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**PROPOSED PROJECT  
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LOCATION/ZONING

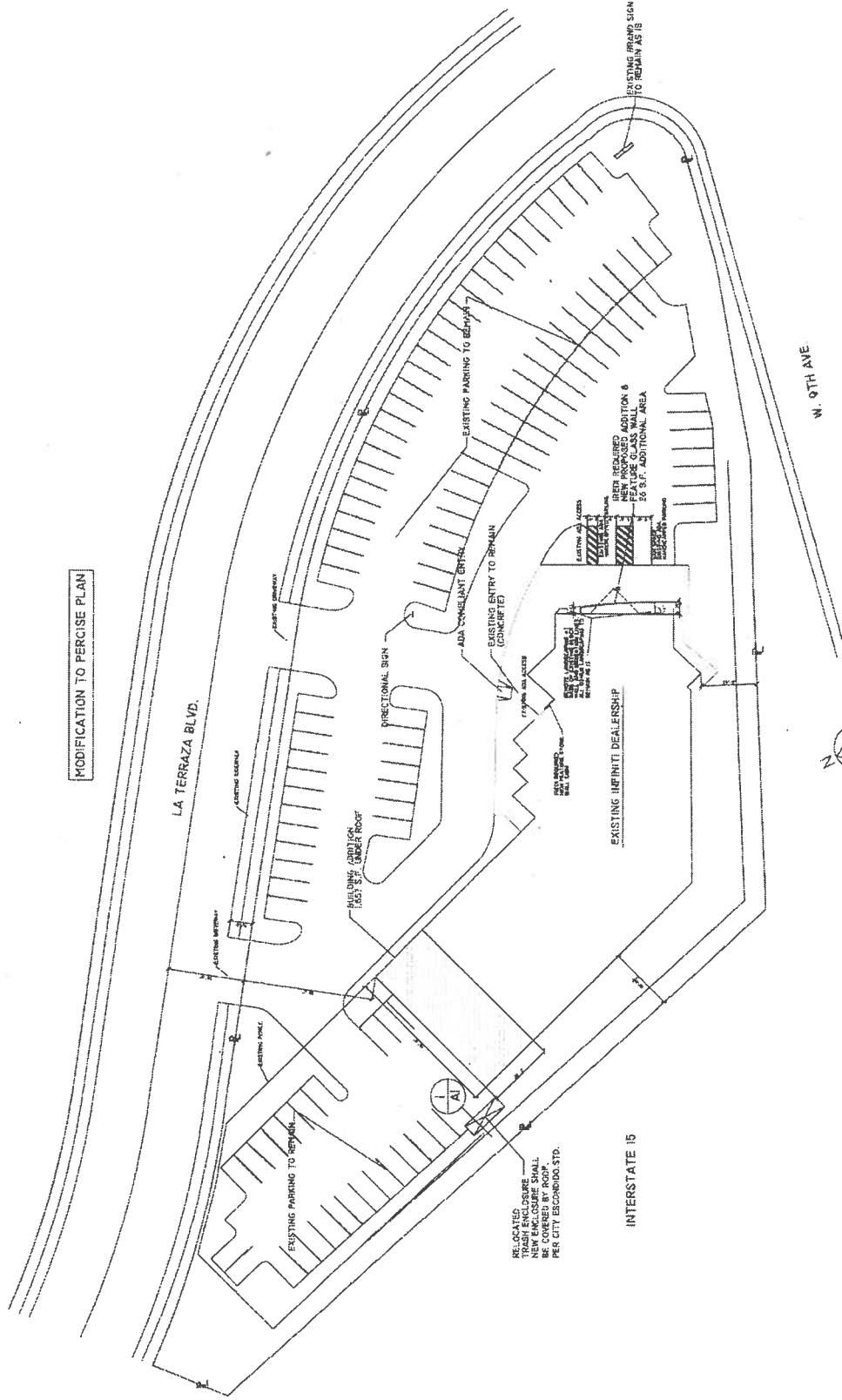


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**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 11-0020**



MODIFICATION TO PERCISE PLAN



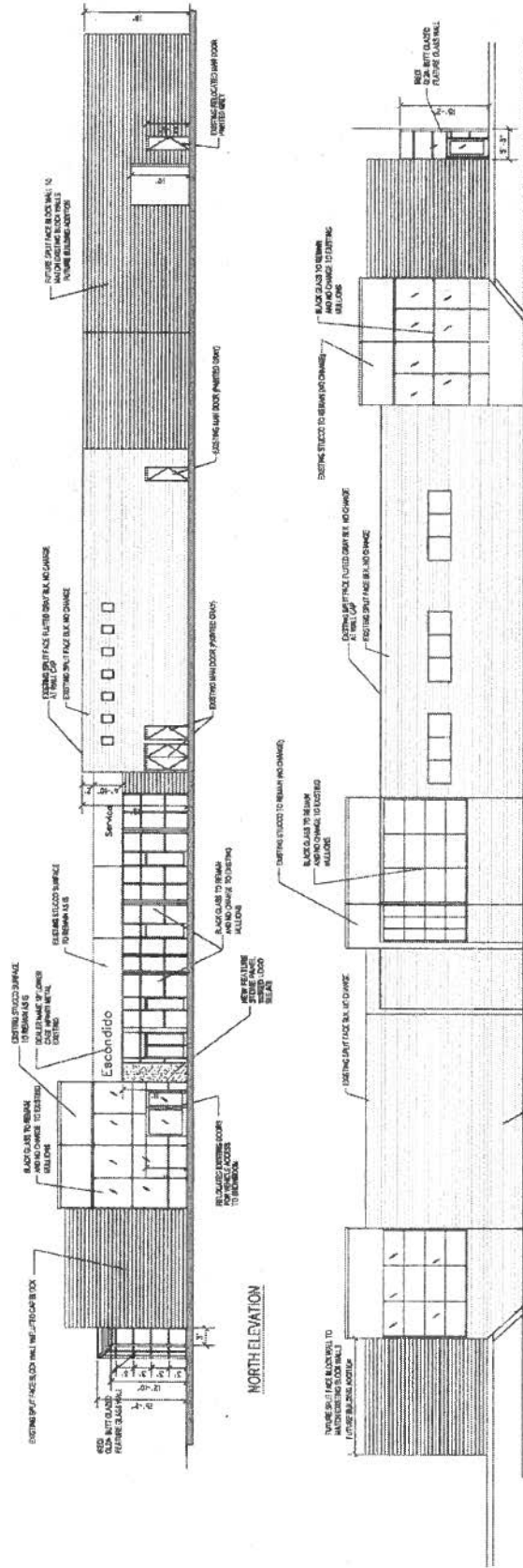
SITE PLAN

**PROPOSED PROJECT  
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SITE PLAN

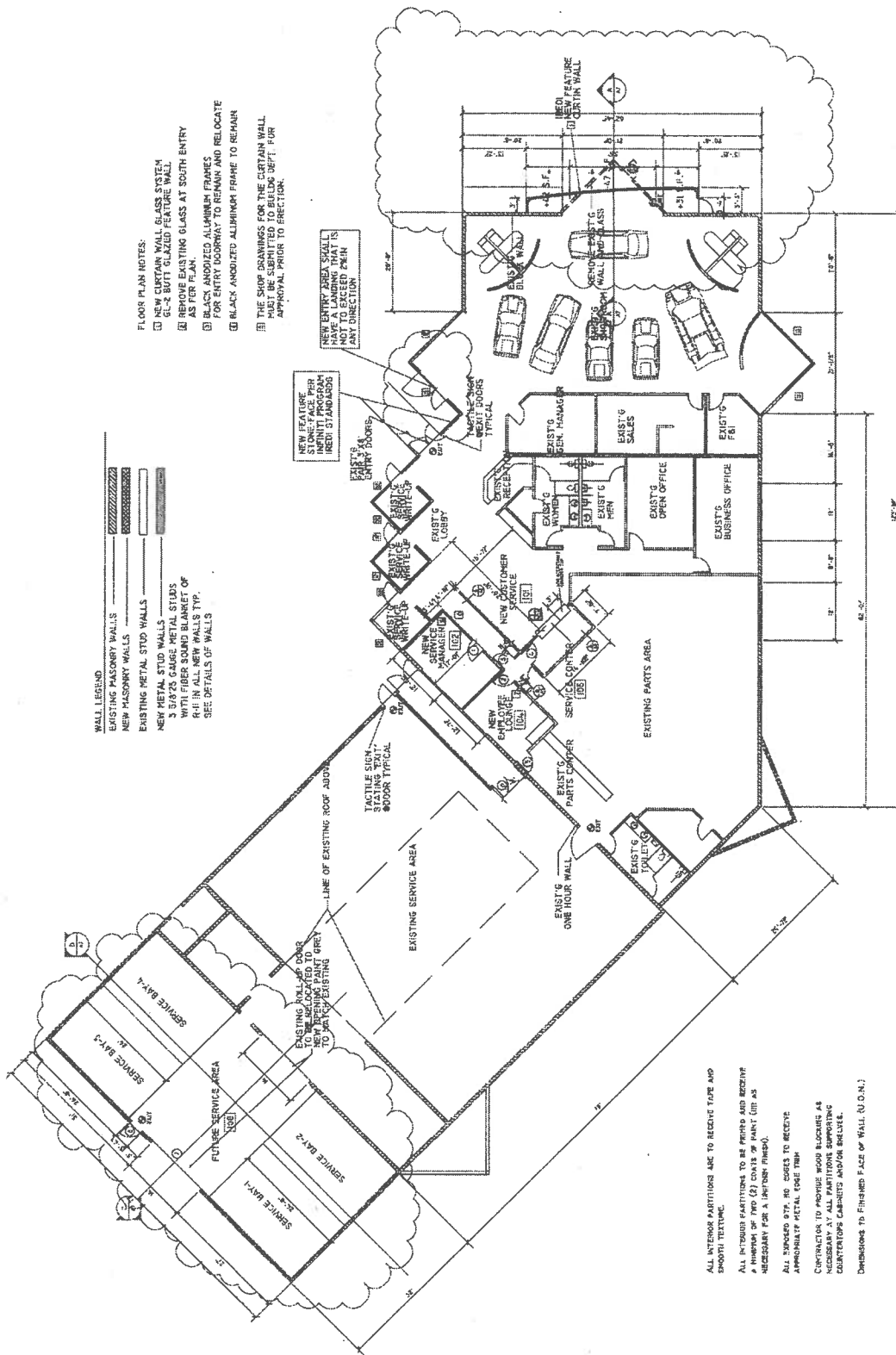




**PROPOSED PROJECT  
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# PROPOSED PROJECT PHG 11-0020



- WALL LEGEND**
- EXISTING MASONRY WALLS
  - NEW MASONRY WALLS
  - EXISTING METAL STUD WALLS
  - NEW METAL STUD WALLS
  - EXISTING GLAZED WALLS
  - NEW GLAZED WALLS
  - REMOVE EXISTING GLASS AT SOUTH ENTRY
  - REMOVE EXISTING GLASS AT SOUTH ENTRY AS PER PLAN
  - BLACK ANODIZED ALUMINUM FRAMES FOR ENTRY DOORWAY TO REMAIN AND RELOCATE
  - BLACK ANODIZED ALUMINUM FRAME TO REMAIN

- FLOOR PLAN NOTES:**
- NEW CURTAIN WALL GLASS SYSTEM GL-2 BUTT GLAZED FEATURE WALL
  - REMOVE EXISTING GLASS AT SOUTH ENTRY AS PER PLAN
  - BLACK ANODIZED ALUMINUM FRAMES FOR ENTRY DOORWAY TO REMAIN AND RELOCATE
  - BLACK ANODIZED ALUMINUM FRAME TO REMAIN
  - THE SHOP DRAWINGS FOR THE CURTAIN WALL MUST BE SUBMITTED TO BUILDING DEPT. FOR APPROVAL PRIOR TO ERECTION.

NEW FEATURE: NEW ENTRY DOORWAY WITH GLASS PARTITION PROGRAM TO MEET ADA STANDARDS

NEW ENTRY DOORWAY SHALL HAVE A LANDING THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 6" IN ANY DIRECTION

ALL INTERIOR PARTITIONS ARE TO RECEIVE TAPE AND SMOOTH TEXTURE.

ALL INTERIOR PARTITIONS TO BE FINISH AND RECEIVE A MINIMUM OF TWO (2) COATS OF PAINT (UP AS NECESSARY FOR A UNIFORM FINISH).

ALL EXPOSED ST. W. COLES TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE METAL COLE TRIM.

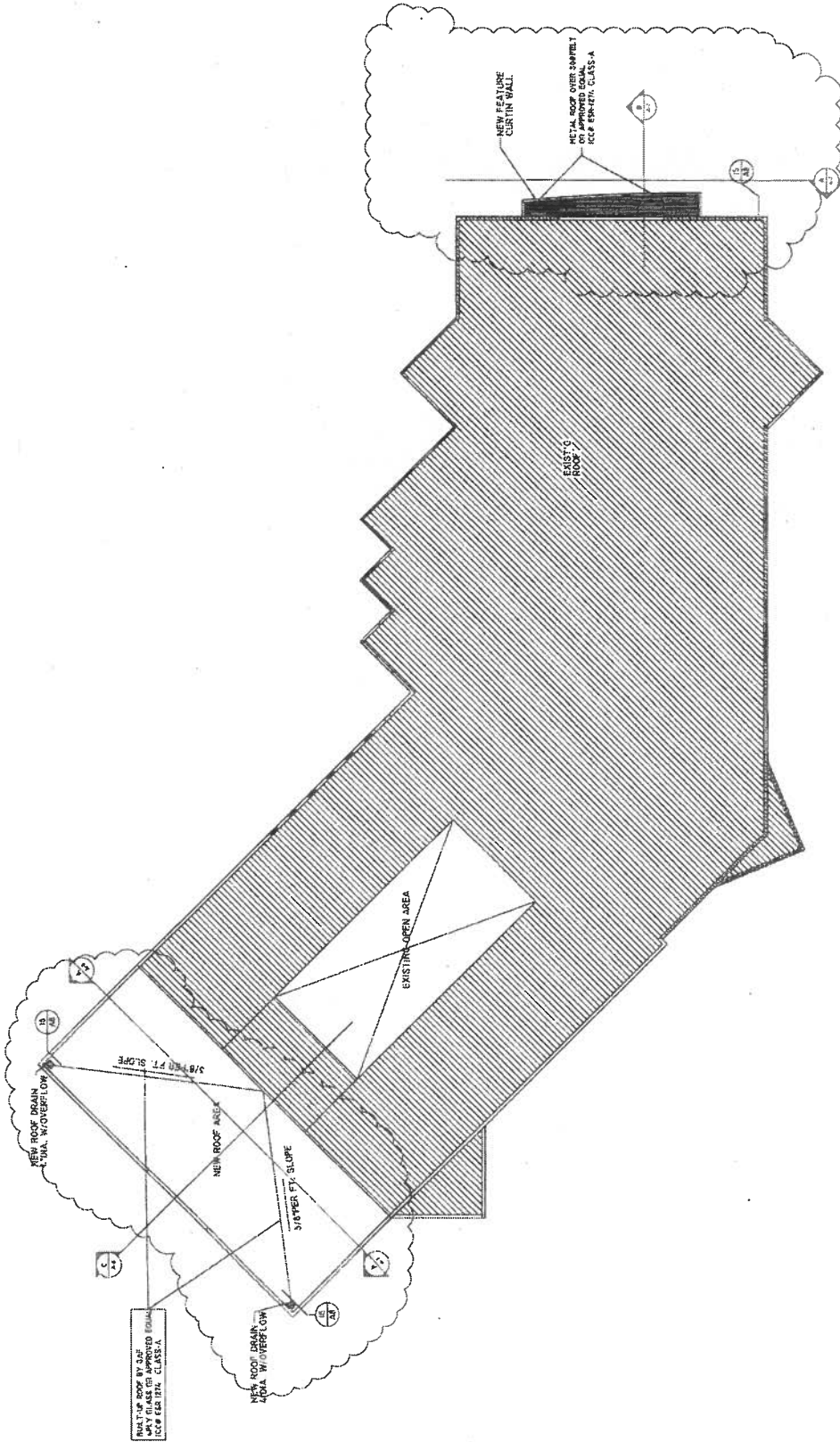
CONTRACTOR TO PROVIDE WOOD BLOCKING AS NECESSARY AT ALL PARTITIONS SUPPORTING COUNTERTOPS CABINETS AND/OR SHELVES.

DIMENSIONS TO FINISHED FACE OF WALL (U.O.M.)

22 S.F., NEW FEATURE WALL  
1,577 S.F., FUTURE SERVICE BAYS

## FLOOR PLAN EXISTING BUILDING W/ FUTURE ADDITION



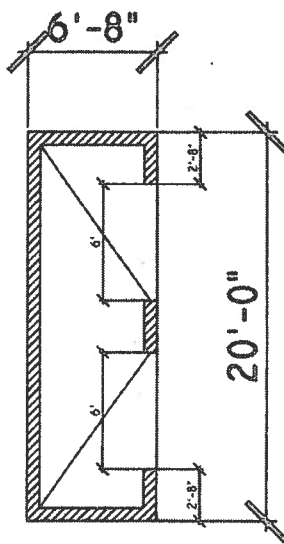


ROOF PLAN EXISTING BUILDING W/ ADDITION

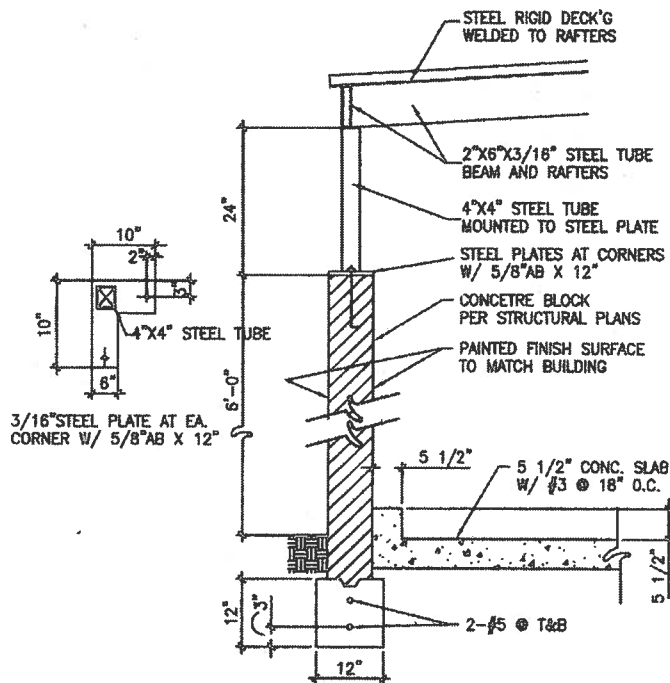
**PROPOSED PROJECT  
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ROOF PLAN



PLAN VIEW



WALL SECTION @ TRASH ENCLOSURE

PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 11-0020



SECTION

**ANALYSIS**

**A. LAND USE COMPATIBILITY/SURROUNDING ZONING**

**NORTH** - PD-C (Planned Development – Commercial)/ Subareas 6 and 7 of La Terraza consisting of a 49,000 SF office building (AAA) and associated parking. Subarea 7 is approved for an additional 18,000 SF of office space.

**SOUTH** - PD-C/ Across Ninth Avenue is an existing Mercedes dealership (Escondido Motors) and a multi-building office development.

**EAST** - R-1-10 (Single-family Residential – 10,000 SF minimum lot sizes)/ Single-family residences with some elevated above the project site.

**WEST** - Interstate 15, beyond is the PD-C-zoned Escondido Promenade Commercial Center.

**B. AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES**

1. **Effect on Police Service** – The Police Department has expressed no concern regarding their ability to provide service to the site.
2. **Effect on Fire Service** – The site is served by Fire Station No. 1 (310 North Quince Street), which is within the seven and one-half minute response time specified for urbanized areas in the General Plan. Development of the site would contribute incremental increases in demand for fire services. Comments received from the Escondido Fire Department note that fire sprinklers will be required in the new repair bays. The Fire Department has indicated that adequate services can be provided to the site and the proposed project would not impact levels of service.
3. **Traffic** – The project will take access from La Terraza Boulevard, which is classified as a Local Collector Road on the City's Circulation Element. Existing traffic volumes on La Terraza Boulevard are approximately 7,500 ADT, which operates at a Level of Service B under existing improvement conditions. Based on the San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG) traffic generation rates for the San Diego region, the proposed expansion of the existing automobile dealership will generate approximately 84 additional ADTs (50 ADT per 1,000 SF/auto sales and repair) over current conditions. The proposed modification results in a net decrease of 32 ADTs on Subarea 8 due to the reduction in floor area from the previously approved plan. Ultimate build-out traffic volumes on La Terraza Boulevard are well within the capacity of the street.

The proposed changes to the Precise Plan will not change the level of service on nearby streets from the levels anticipated by the approved project since the total ADTs (Average Daily Trips) generated by the development will be slightly reduced from the cap of 13,950 ADTs established in the Environmental Impact Report for La Terraza.

The revised ADT calculations for the entire development by each subarea are shown below:

<u>Subarea</u>	<u>Proposed or Exist Use</u>	<u>ADTs per Previous Master Plan</u>	<u>ADTs Proposed for Revised Precise Plan</u>
Subarea 1	Gas Station/Office	1,903	1,903
Subarea 2	Restaurant/Retail	3,050	3,050
Subareas 3	Hotel/Office	1,562	1,562
Subarea 4	Health Club	1,138	1,138
Subarea 5	Office	2,982	2,982
Subarea 6	Office	980	980
Subarea 7	Office	360	360
<u>Subarea 8</u>	Auto Dealer	<u>816</u>	<u>784</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>12,791 ADTs</b>	<b>12,759 ADTs</b>

The proposed modification would result in 1,191 unallocated ADTs from the overall cap of 13,950 ADTs that could potentially be used by one or more subareas without exceeding the EIR threshold for traffic generation by the development.

4. Utilities – City sewer and water mains with sufficient capacity to serve the project are available within the adjoining street or easement. The project does not materially degrade the levels of service of the public sewer and water system.
5. Drainage – The project site is not located within a 100-year Flood Zone as indicated on current FEMA maps. There are no significant drainage courses within or adjoining the property. Runoff from the project will be directed into a series of BMP treatment swales and/or detention basins and/or inlet filter systems to separate targeted pollutants from the runoff before it leaves the site. The project does not materially degrade the levels of service of the existing drainage facilities.

### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS**

1. A Notice of Exemption was issued on July 26, 2011, in accordance with CEQA Section 15301(e) "Additions to Existing Structures."
2. In staff's opinion, no significant issues remain unresolved through compliance with code requirements and the recommended conditions of approval.
3. The project will have no impact on fish and wildlife resources as no sensitive or protected habitat occurs on-site or will be impacted by the proposed development.

### **D. CONFORMANCE WITH CITY POLICY/ANALYSIS**

#### General Plan

The proposed development is consistent with the existing Planned Commercial designation of the General Plan which permits the development of office, hotel, restaurant and commercial land uses in the La Terraza development.

#### Whether the Architecture for the Proposed Expansion is Consistent with the Existing Building Design

The existing Infiniti dealership is contained within a 14,000 SF building that includes a showroom, sales area, parts counter and storage, and eight service bays. The building has been constructed primarily of gray and beige split-face block with several beige stucco parapets and black glass. There are two entrances to the showroom and sales area with one being on the northern elevation and the other on the eastern elevation.

The applicant is proposing to modify the eastern building entry by removing the existing glass and stucco point feature and constructing a new translucent, glass curtain wall element. Emergency access would still be provided, but this elevation would no longer function as a customer entry. The three-sided glass element would be 36-feet wide and extend out approximately 5'-3" from the existing split-face wall that would remain as part of the building. This expansion would result in the addition of approximately 26 SF of floor area in the showroom vehicle display area. The top of the new glass feature wall would slightly curve and would range in height from 12'-10" to 15'-2" against the existing 18-foot-high masonry wall. All customers would enter at the existing entry on the northern elevation. Identification of this entry would be enhanced by a new pedestrian-sized limestone panel installed adjacent to the storefront.

The proposal also includes an expansion of the auto service bays on the other side of the building. The existing eight-bay auto service area would be extended 32 feet into the staging and service parking lot to allow the addition of four more service bays. This 1,557 SF building extension would match the existing gray and beige split-face design as well as the existing building height. This part of the proposal is unchanged from the previous approval that expired.

The eastern elevation is most visible to motorists on Ninth Avenue. The applicant is proposing to modify the eastern elevation to incorporate the new translucent, glass curtain wall element that is part of Infiniti's national re-branding and luxury identification strategy. Staff feels the proposed addition presents a fresh, modern look that provides an identifiable feature that the building has been lacking. The feature wall addition only extends out approximately five feet from the existing wall surface and is lower than the adjacent masonry parapet wall. This ensures the change will not substantially interfere with existing views from the residences to the east.

Staff feels the service bay expansion is appropriate since it has been designed to match that part of the building. The two parking spaces that are lost in the service area are not considered to be an issue since the project was originally designed with 12 excess customer and employee parking spaces. That excess number has now been reduced to four due to the additional parking demand created by the building additions and the loss of the two spaces.

On June 23, 2011, the Design Review Board voted 5-0 to approve the proposed building additions. The DRB generally concurred with staff that the new glass entry feature enhanced the visual appeal of the building. Several board members commented positively on the curved curtain wall element and the use of vertical, etched white lines on the glass material.

**SUPPLEMENT TO STAFF REPORT/DETAILS OF REQUEST**

**A. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The site has been completely developed with the existing Infiniti automobile dealership including a sales/service building, parking and vehicle display areas and landscaping.

**B. SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS OF REQUEST**

	<u>Existing Master/Precise Plan</u>	<u>Proposed Precise Plan</u>
1. Site Area:	2.13 acres	Same
2. Building Size:	14,000 SF	15,583 SF
3. Landscaping:	36"-box Queen palms and Magnolia, and smaller Brisbane box and eucalyptus trees.	Same
4. Building Materials and Colors:	Light gray and beige split-face block with stucco accent bands and smoked gray glass with black aluminum mullions.	Same with the addition of white, translucent glass curtain wall with vertical lines at eastern building entry.
5. Hours of Operation:	Monday thru Friday 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	

**C. CODE COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS**

	<u>Previous Master/Precise Plan</u>	<u>Proposed Precise Plan</u>
1. Setbacks:		
Front (Ninth Avenue):	20 feet (parking may encroach within 15 feet of front prop. line)	Same
Street Side (La Terraza Blvd):	Same (parking may encroach within five feet of La Terraza Blvd.)	Same
Street Side (I-15):	Same	Same
2. Parking Required:	23 spaces	29 spaces
Total Parking Provided:	35 spaces (plus 83 vehicle display spaces) 118 TOTAL SPACES	33 spaces (plus 83 vehicle display spaces) 116 TOTAL SPACES
3. Building Height:	21 feet	Building expansion areas match existing building heights. Curving feature glass parapet wall up to 15'-2" high on one side and 12'-10" high on the other side.

4. Signage:

Per site signage plan to include 13-foot high solid pole sign with 30 SF signage. Wall signs include two logo signs (83 SF and 30 SF) and dealer ID over entrance (38 SF).

Same

**FINDINGS OF FACT  
PHG 11-0020  
EXHIBIT "A"**

**Modification to Precise Development Plan**

1. The proximity and orientation of the site to the I-15 corridor in conjunction with the use established on the property is consistent with the goals and policies of the Escondido General Plan which specifically states that the property can be utilized for the development of office, hotel, restaurant, and commercial land uses.
2. Extensive off-site and on-site circulation improvements, including the widening of Valley Parkway and Ninth Avenue, as well as the alignment and signalization of intersections have been completed and will help to accommodate the nominal amount of additional traffic generated by this project.
3. The proposed location allows the established commercial use to be adequately serviced by existing public facilities or services since La Terraza Boulevard has already been constructed and all utilities are currently provided to the site.
4. The overall design of the proposed building expansion is consistent with the existing architecture and building materials and will produce an attractive, efficient development that utilizes quality building materials and ample landscaping with adequate parking on the site.
5. The proposed expansion will be well integrated with its setting and the surrounding area since the property has already been developed and established as an automobile dealership, adequate parking will continue to be provided and the building expansion areas match existing building heights and include a feature wall that adds architectural interest to the structure.
6. The proposed modification to the Precise Plan shall have a beneficial effect by providing services needed by city residents and the business community.



**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL  
PHG 11-0020  
EXHIBIT "B"**

**Planning Division Conditions**

1. The developer shall be required to pay all development fees of the City then in effect at the time and in such amounts as may prevail when building permits are issued, including any applicable City-Wide Facilities fees.
2. All construction and grading shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Escondido Zoning Code and requirements of the Planning Division, Engineering Division, Building Division, and Fire Department.
3. The legal description attached to the application has been provided by the applicant and neither the City of Escondido nor any of its employees assume responsibility for the accuracy of said legal description.
4. All requirements of the Public Art Partnership Program, Ordinance No. 86-70, shall be satisfied prior to building permit issuance. The ordinance requires that a public art fee be added at the time of the building permit issuance for the purpose of participating in the City Public Art Program.
5. All exterior lighting shall conform to the requirements of Article 35 (Outdoor Lighting) of the Escondido Zoning Code. All outdoor lighting shall be provided with appropriate shields to prevent light from adversely affecting adjacent properties. Automatic timers shall be used to turn off vehicle display lighting at 11:00 p.m. and activate low pressure sodium fixtures for the remaining nighttime hours.
6. As proposed, a minimum of 29 striped parking spaces shall be provided in addition to the spaces provided for vehicle display. Said parking spaces shall be double-striped and dimensioned per City standards. The striping shall be drawn on the plan or a note shall be included on the plan indicating the intent to double-stripe per City standards
7. Parking for disabled persons shall be provided (including "Van Accessible" spaces) in full compliance with Section 1129B (Accessible Parking Required) of the California Building Code, including signage. All parking stalls shall be provided with six-inch curbing or concrete wheel stops in areas where a vehicle could reduce minimum required planter, driveway or sidewalk widths.
8. Trash enclosures must be designed and built per City standards, and permanently maintained. The new trash enclosure (and any existing trash enclosures) shall meet current engineering requirements for storm water quality, which includes the installation of a decorative roof structure. Solid metal doors shall be incorporated into the trash enclosure. A decorative exterior finish shall be used. All trash enclosures must be screened by landscaping as specified in the Landscape Ordinance. All trash enclosures shall be of sufficient size to allow for the appropriate number of trash and recyclable receptacles as determined by the Planning Division and Escondido Disposal, Inc.
9. Colors, materials and design of the project shall be in substantial conformance with the plans/exhibits approved by the Design Review Board on June 23, 2011, and the exhibits and details in the staff report to the satisfaction of the Planning Division.
10. All proposed signage associated with the project must comply with the approved Master Plan (99-25-PD) standards and exhibits and the City of Escondido Sign Ordinance (Ord. 92-47). The standards and exhibits of the Master Plan shall take precedence if there is a conflict with the provisions of the Sign Ordinance.
11. All new utilities shall be underground.
12. All rooftop equipment must be fully screened from all public view, particularly from the residences to the east, utilizing materials and colors which match the building. No reflective equipment or materials will be permitted on rooftops.

13. The City of Escondido hereby notifies the applicant that the County Clerk's office requires a documentary handling fee of \$50.00 in order to file a Notice of Exemption for the project (environmental determination for the project). In order to file the Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15062, the applicant should remit to the City of Escondido Planning Division, within two working days of the final approval of the project (the final approval being the hearing date of the Planning Commission or City Council, if applicable), a certified check payable to the "County Clerk" in the amount of \$50.00. The filing of a Notice of Exemption and the posting with the County Clerk starts a 35 day statute of limitations period on legal challenges to the agency's decision that the project is exempt from CEQA. Failure to submit the required fee within the specific time noted above will result in the Notice of Exemption not being filed with the County Clerk, and a 180 day statute of limitations will apply.
14. All project generated noise shall comply with the City's Noise Ordinance (Ord. 90-08) to the satisfaction of the Planning Division.
15. No signs shall be placed on the Keystone retaining wall adjacent to the freeway.
16. The pole sign for Subarea 8 shall be designed per Master Plan 99-25-PD and shall be on an automatic timer set to turn off at 11:00 p.m..
17. Exterior sound systems for broadcasting music or paging purposes shall be prohibited.

**Landscaping Conditions**

1. All vegetation shall be maintained in a flourishing manner, and kept free of all foreign matter, weeds and plant materials not approved as part of the landscape plan. All irrigation shall be maintained in fully operational condition.
2. Street trees shall be maintained along every frontage within, or adjacent to this development in conformance with the Landscape Ordinance and the City of Escondido Street Tree List.

**Building Division Conditions**

1. The applicant shall be required to verify an existing disabled accessible path of travel from the public sidewalk.

**Fire Department Conditions**

1. The applicant shall install fire sprinklers in the new repair bays to the satisfaction of the Fire Department.



CITY OF ESCONDIDO  
PLANNING DIVISION  
201 NORTH BROADWAY  
ESCONDIDO, CA 92025-2798  
(760) 839-4671

**Notice of Exemption**

To: San Diego County Recorder's Office  
Attn: Linda Kesian  
P.O. Box 121750  
San Diego, CA 92112-1750

From: City of Escondido  
201 North Broadway  
Escondido, CA 92025

**Project Title/Case No.:** Escondido Infiniti Expansion – PHG 11-0009

**Project Location - Specific:** The site is located on the northern side of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue between I-15 and La Terraza Boulevard, addressed as 855 La Terraza Boulevard.

**Project Location - City:** Escondido **Project Location - County:** San Diego

**Description of Project:**

A modification to the Precise Development Plan (99-25-PD) for the Escondido Infiniti automobile dealership to add a decorative glass feature wall on the eastern side of the building that results in an additional 26 square feet of floor area for the dealership sales area. The project also includes a 1,557 SF expansion of the auto service bays on the northern side of the building.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** City of Escondido

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Name: Bruce Steingraber, Architect

Telephone (760) 789-3269

Address: 24665 Rancho Santa Teresa, Ramona, CA 92065

Private entity     School district     Local public agency     State agency     Other special district

**Exempt Status:**

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Sections 15301(e) (Additions to Existing Structures)

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

1. The proposed building expansion is located within an urban commercial area on a site that is less than five acres in size. The proposed addition is well within the 10,000 SF threshold for an urbanized area.
2. The project site has been completely disturbed and has no value as habitat for endangered, threatened or rare species.
3. The project would not result in any significant effects related to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality; and the site is adequately served by all required utilities and public services.
4. In staff's opinion the proposed development would not have the potential to cause an adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, the proposal is not subject to further CEQA review.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Bill Martin

Area Code/Telephone/Extension (760) 839-4557

Signature:   
Bill Martin, Principal Planner

7/26/11  
Date

Signed by Lead Agency

Date received for filing at OPR:

Signed by Applicant