Splash Brothers Carwash Castro Valley Project

CEQA Exemption Class 3

Lead Agency:

Alameda County Planning Department
224 West Winton Avenue, Room 111
Hayward, CA 94544

SEPTEMBER 2024

Prepared by:
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General Project Information

1. Project Title: Splash Brothers Carwash Castro Valley Project

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:
Alameda County
Planning Department
224 West Winton Avenue
Hayward, CA 94544

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:
William Chin, Planner
(510) 670-6519
William.Chin@acgov.org

4. Project Location:
2495 Castro Valley Boulevard
Castro Valley, CA 94546
Accessor's Parcel Number: 084A-007-006

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:
Splash Brothers Carwash
Michael Mansouria
15018 Hesperian Boulevard, San Leandro, CA 94578

6. Existing General Plan Designation: Central Business District Regional Retail and Entertainment

7. Existing Zoning: Castro Valley Central Business District Specific Plan Subarea 02 (CVCBD SP-S02)

8. Project Description:

The applicant proposes to develop an automated carwash with self-service vacuum stations.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The project site is located in a commercial area in Castro Valley's Central Business District, on the corner of Castro Valley Boulevard and Stanton Avenue. The project site is surrounded by commercial and retail uses.

10. Other Agencies Whose Approval is required*:*

Discretionary approvals from other agencies are not anticipated to be required.

Project Description

Existing Conditions

The project site is a long, narrow 1.35-acre lot at the corner of Castro Valley Boulevard and Stanton Avenue. The site has been used as a lumberyard since approximately 1939. The project site contains a building that functions as a hardware store and office, as well as lumber storage areas and sheds. Most of the site is unimproved and consists of dirt and gravel surfaces. Access to the site includes the main driveway on Castro Valley Boulevard, and a delivery driveway at the southern end of the site off of Norbridge Avenue. The project site location and existing conditions are shown in **Figures 1** and **2**.

Adjacent Uses

The project is bordered by Stanton Avenue on the west, which connects Castro Valley Boulevard to I-580 and Norbridge Avenue, which wraps to the east and becomes a frontage road along I-580. Beyond Stanton Avenue are two fast food restaurants with drive-thrus. On the east is a long driveway leading to the AT&T corporation yard to the southeast, a small vacant commercial property, then the Golfland miniature golf course. Across Castro Valley Boulevard to the north are various commercial buildings, restaurants, and auto-related businesses. The closest residences are approximately 230 feet from the project, behind the businesses that line the northern side of Castro Valley Boulevard.

Description of the Project

Project Overview

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing buildings and construct a 4,307 square foot carwash with incorporated office space and self-service vacuum stations. The carwash would have 3 entrance pay lanes, 9 parking spaces at the building and 19 spaces along the eastern border of the project site each with a vacuum station. The carwash tunnel would be approximately 130 feet long and all equipment would be housed within the building, with a secondary vacuum enclosure on the eastern side of the project site near the 19 parking spaces. The carwash would operate from 7 AM to 7 PM seven days a week and employ 3 to 8 employees. The carwash would use environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Other site improvements would include landscaping, bioretention areas for stormwater management, walkways, a bike rack, and trash enclosure. The project site plan is shown in **Figures 3a and 3b**.

Water Recycling

The carwash system would include a PurWater Water Recovery System, which would enable the carwash to recycle between 60 to 85% of the water used for each wash. Water used in the carwash would be collected in the drain system in the tunnel. The drain system would settle out any large solids, then circulate the water through a series of reclaim tanks, which would remove any oil and grease, as well as any remaining floatable or settleable materials. The PurWater reclaim system takes water from the last compartment of the reclaim tank and treats it further to be re-used as wash water, including treatment to prevent odor and biological growth. Any overflow water would be discharged to the sewer system. The project is estimated to have a water usage of 3,500 gallons per day.

Circulation

Vehicles would enter the project site via a driveway on Castro Valley Boulevard. Vehicles would loop around the one-way internal circulation to enter the pay lanes at the rear of the building before entering the carwash tunnel. Once exiting the carwash tunnel near Castro Valley Boulevard, the vehicles would loop around again, past the vacuum stations, and exit onto Norbridge Avenue. The circulation plan is shown in **Figure 4**.

Project Construction

Construction activities are anticipated to occur for a total of 9-12 months, with the intent to begin construction around March 2025.

Relationship to the Castro Valley General Plan Environmental Analysis

The project site is within the planning area and consistent with development assumptions of the Castro Valley General Plan and its associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR).[1]

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, an environmental analysis may incorporate by reference all or portions of another document which is a matter of public record or is generally available to the public. Information from the documents that have been incorporated by reference have been briefly summarized in the appropriate sections of this document. The following document is hereby incorporated by reference:

> Alameda County, Castro Valley General Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH Number 2006032036), November 2011, available at: https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/4_Revisions_to_the_Draft_EIRrevNov2011forStaff.pdf. Physical copies of the General Plan and EIR are available for review at the Alameda County Planning Department, 224 West Winton Avenue, Room 111, Hayward, CA 94544.

[1] Alameda County, Castro Valley General Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH Number 2006032036), November 2011, available at: https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/4_Revisions_to_the_Draft_EIRrevNov2011forStaff.pdf.

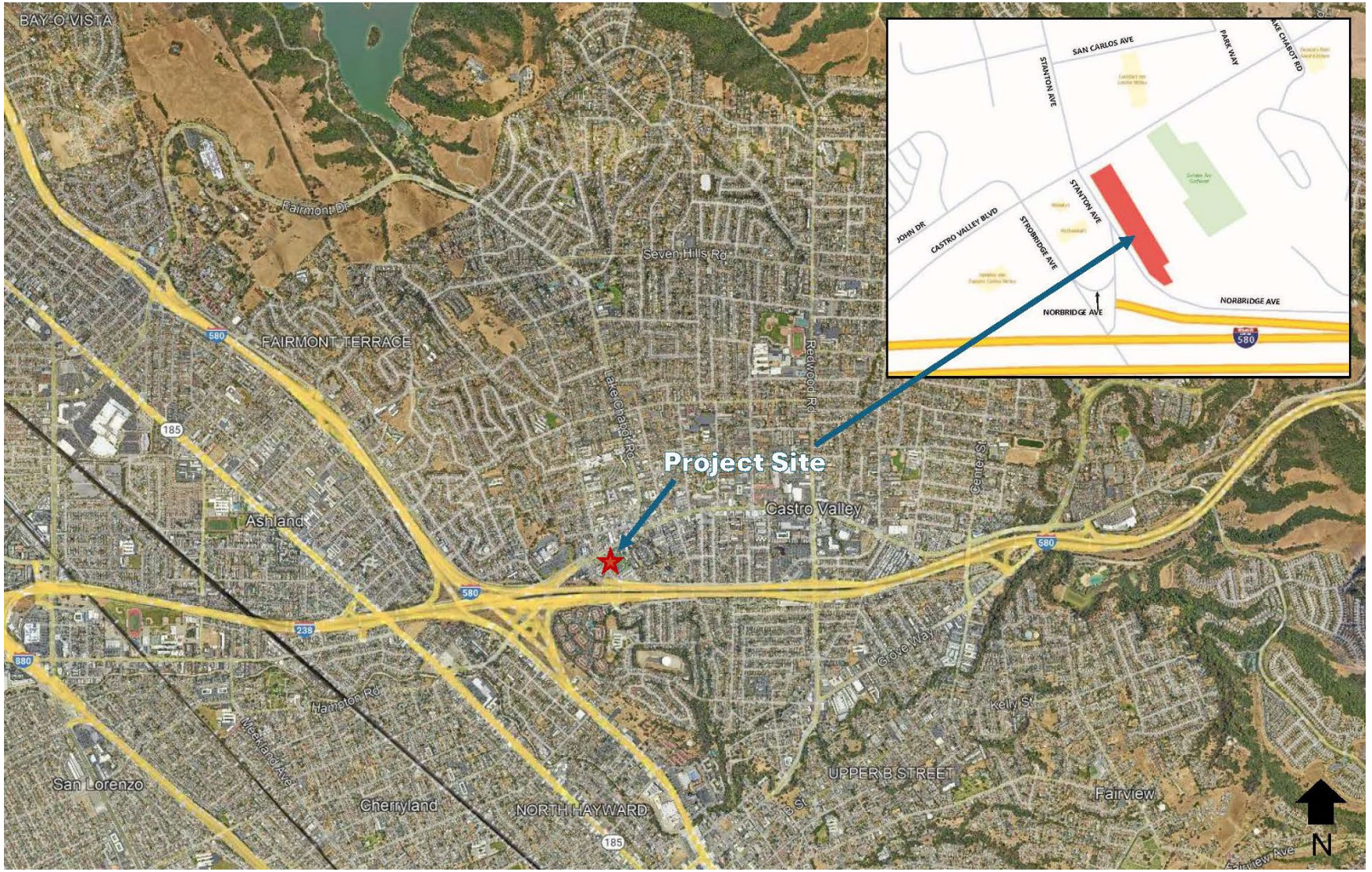

Figure 1: Project Location
Source: Google Earth, modified; insert from TJKM Transportation Assessment March 2024

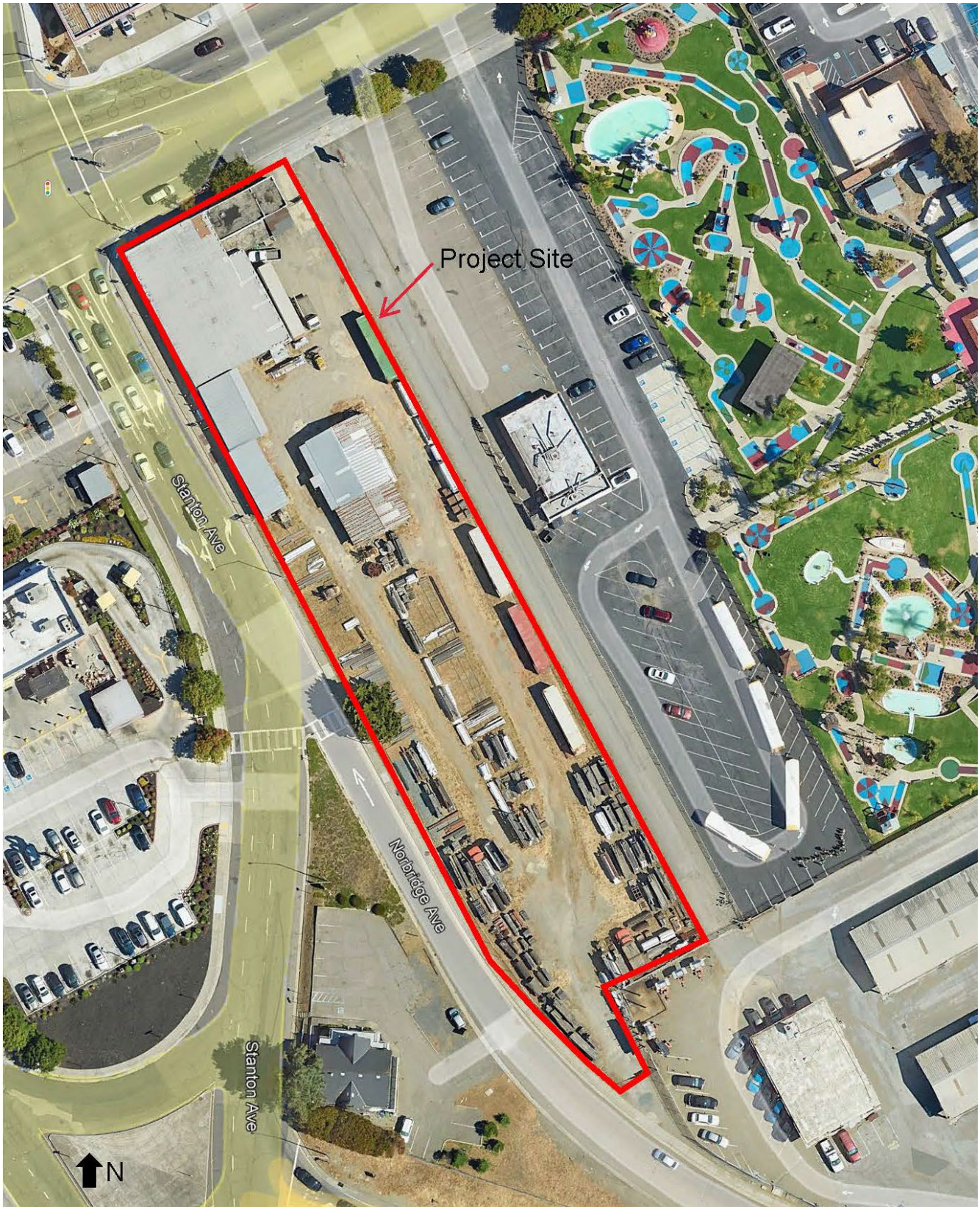

Figure 2: Existing Conditions
Source: Google Earth, modified

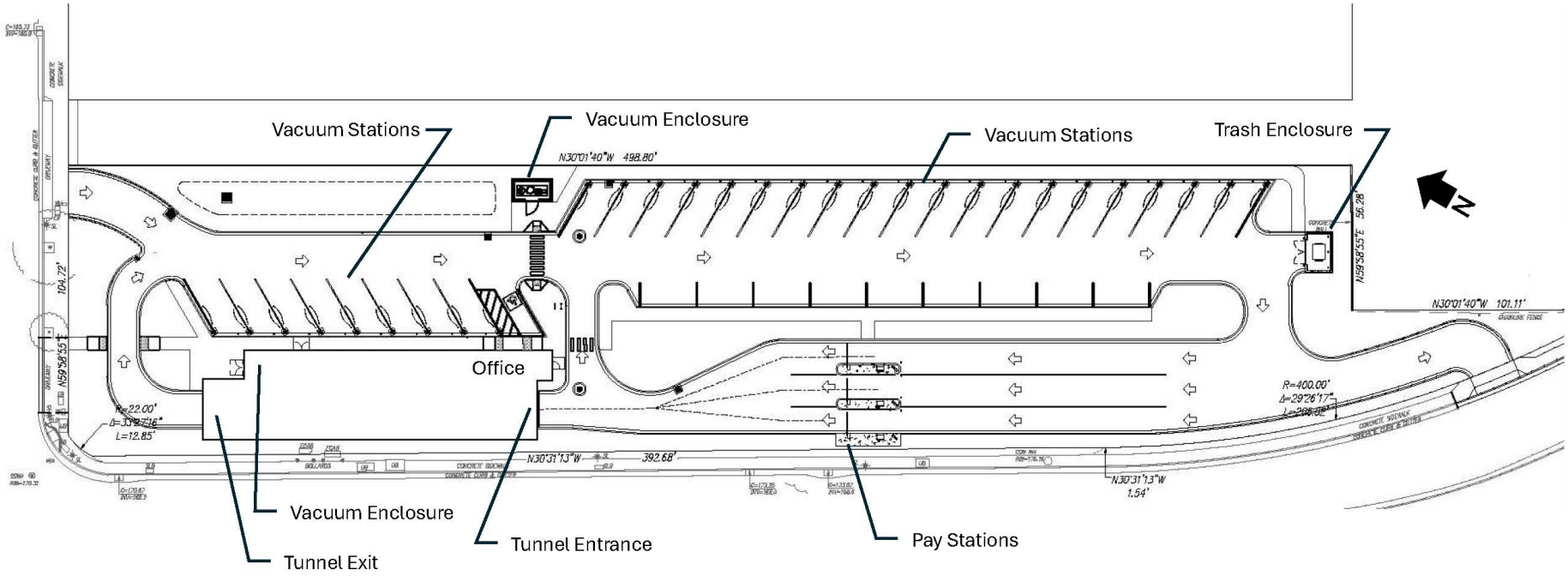

Figure 3: Site Plan
Source: Project Site Plans, dated 5/23/24, callouts added

Summary Conclusions

The following analysis presents substantial evidence that the Class 3 CEQA Exemption is applicable to the proposed project and that there are no exceptions that apply to the project or its site that would exclude the use of an exemption.

Categorical Exemption Criteria

Article 19 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 to 15333), includes a list of classes of projects that have been determined to not have a significant effect on the environment and as a result, are exempt from review under CEQA. This document assesses the applicability of the Class 3 Exemption, which is described in the Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows.

Class 3: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. The numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel. Examples of this exemption include, but are not limited to:

(a) One single-family residence, or a second dwelling unit in a residential zone. In urbanized areas, up to three single-family residences may be constructed or converted under this exemption;

(b) A duplex or similar multi-family residential structure, totaling no more than four dwelling units. In urbanized areas, this exemption applies to apartments, duplexes and similar structures designed for not more than six dwelling units;

(c) A store, motel, office, restaurant or similar structure not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, and not exceeding 2500 square feet in floor area. In urbanized areas, the exemption also applies to up to four such commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area on sites zoned for such use if not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive;

(d) Water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction;

(e) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences;

(f) An accessory steam sterilization unit for the treatment of medical waste at a facility occupied by a medical waste generator, provided that the unit is installed and operated in accordance with the Medical Waste Management Act (Section 117600, et seq., of the Health and Safety Code) and accepts no offsite waste.

Exceptions

Even if a project is ordinarily exempt under any of the potential categorical exemptions, CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 provides specific instances where exceptions to otherwise applicable exemptions apply. Exceptions to a categorical exemption apply in the following circumstances, effectively nullifying a CEQA categorical exemption:

(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located - a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section *65962.5 of the Government Code.*

(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

CEQA Exemption Checklist

The following analysis provides substantial evidence to support a conclusion that the proposed project qualifies for an exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, as a Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures project.

An answer of "Yes" in this section indicates that the project qualifies under the subject exemption criterion. An answer of "No" would indicate that the project would not quality under the subject criterion.

Exemption Criterion Section 15303, Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Yes	No	
☑	❒	Does the project consist of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; or the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure?

As excerpted in full above, this exemption criterion includes a list of qualifying examples. While explicitly not intended to limit projects to which this exemption could apply, the project's relationship to relevant examples is useful to demonstrate that the project would qualify under this exemption. Examples (a), (b), and (f) are omitted because the project is not a residential dwelling or medical waste facility.

(c) A store, motel, office, restaurant or similar structure not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, and not exceeding 2500 square feet in floor area. In urbanized areas, the exemption also applies to up to four such commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area on sites zoned for such use if not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

As detailed in the project description, the proposed project would construct a commercial carwash building of 4,307 square feet in an urbanized area, which is less than the example 10,000 square feet. The proposed carwash building would not have different construction techniques or otherwise be expected to result in greater potential for environmental impacts than the example uses of a store, motel, office, or restaurant, so would be a "similar structure" for purposes of this exemption criterion. There would be no substantial hazardous chemical use at the project site, with use of biodegradable cleaning products for the car washes, and small amounts of other typical cleaning, landscaping, or maintenance supplies.

The project is on a site in an urban area, already serviced by public services and facilities. The project would not cause an increase in population, directly or indirectly, that would require an increase in any public services. The surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive (as discussed further below).

The project is consistent with this example.

(d) Water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction;

The site is currently served by existing utilities. Utilities are available either on-site already or with extension from adjacent roadways and would not require substantial off-site improvements or otherwise "unreasonable" lengths for service. The project is consistent with this example.

(e) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences;

As detailed in the project description, the project includes renovated or new facilities that would be considered to be accessory to the main building, including a vacuum enclosure building, vacuum stations, a trash enclosure and pay stations. The project is consistent with this example.

As discussed above, the project consists of construction of one new small commercial structure, extension of utilities from adjacent roadways and/or already within the site, and installation of accessory equipment and facilities. Therefore, the project qualifies for a Class 3 exemption as defined under Section 15303 as new construction of small structures.

Exceptions to Categorical Exemptions Checklist

In addition to investigating the applicability of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (Exemption Class 3), this technical report also assesses whether any of the exceptions to qualifying for an exemption are present. The following analysis compares the criteria of CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 (Exceptions) to the proposed project.

An answer of "No" in this section indicates that the subject exception does not apply to the project. An answer of "Yes" in this section would indicate that the project would not qualify for a CEQA exemption.

Criterion 15300.2(a): Location

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located. A project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

The project is located on a fully developed site, surrounded by other urban development. As discussed under Criterion 15300.2(e) below, the project site is not identified on any hazardous materials site lists. The Castro Valley General Plan EIR assessed the potential for vegetation and wildlife impacts and determined that there was no significant potential for critical habitat in the vicinity of the project site, which is consistent with the developed state of the site and surroundings.[2]

The project site is currently developed as a lumberyard, is surrounded by urban development, and would not otherwise be considered a particularly sensitive environment. As discussed above, the project would not have the potential to result in a significant impact due to a designated sensitive environment.

[2] Alameda County, Castro Valley General Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH Number 2006032036), November 2011, Figure 3.5-1, available at: https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/4_Revisions_to_the_Draft_EIRrevNov2011forStaff.pdf.

Criterion 15300.2(b): Cumulative Impact

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Does the project have the potential to contribute considerably to significant cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type and in the same place, over time?

As discussed throughout this document, the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. There are no plans for concurrent development within 1,000 feet of the project site and even if there were, all construction activities would be required to comply with County requirements (see discussion below). Therefore, there would not be cumulative construction impacts. The project is consistent with the Castro Valley General Plan, and the Castro Valley General Plan EIR determined that projected development within Castro Valley would not have cumulative significant impacts.[3]

Criterion 15300.2(c): Significant Effect from Unusual Circumstances

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Is there a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances?

This criterion is intended to capture projects that are so different from others in the relevant exemption category that conclusions regarding the lack of significant impacts cannot be assumed due to these "unusual circumstances." The project's potential for significant impacts is discussed below by topics that are expected to be of the most concern for a project of this type. There are no unusual circumstances or other topics areas under which the project could contribute to significant effects.

As discussed below, this exception criterion does not apply to the proposed project.

Noise

Construction activities and related noise would last a total of approximately 9-12 months. Construction activities would comply with Alameda County Municipal Code Section 6.60.070(E) regarding construction days/hours and construction noise. There are no unusual circumstances with the project or the project site that would create more substantial noise impacts than would otherwise be assumed for development.

Operationally, the main sources of noise at a carwash are the central vacuum unit that produces the vacuum for all of the individual vacuum stations, and the blowers at the end of the carwash tunnel. These noise sources can be very noisy at the source but noise is attenuated (reduced) over distances and if fully or partially enclosed, as discussed below.

Alameda County Municipal Code Section 6.60.040(A) sets the maximum noise level at a receiving residential property at 50 decibels[4] during daytime hours, and 65 decibels at commercial properties, however Section

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[3] Alameda County, Castro Valley General Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH Number 2006032036), November 2011, State Clearinghouse No. 2006032036, Summary of Impacts Chapter available at: https://acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/2_Summary_of_Impacts7Nov2011forStaff.pdf.

[4] While there are different units to report noise, the term "decibels" is used in this document to represent A-weighted decibels, which are noise units weighted to take into account how the human ear perceives sound, often abbreviated as dBA. These are the noise units commonly used in municipal code requirements and environmental analyses.

6.60.040(B) adjusts the maximum noise level to the ambient noise level if it is higher than the applicable noise level standard. The carwash would not operate during nighttime hours, when maximum noise levels are lower.

The ambient noise environment in the vicinity of the project is characterized by traffic noise from I-580, which gradually dissipates from above 70 decibels at the highway to below 55 decibels about a half mile from the highway. The project site is approximately 180 to 685 feet from I-580, with an estimated ambient noise level ranging from 60 to 70 decibels. The noise level at the closest nearby residential property (behind the commercial properties on the other side of Castro Valley Boulevard) has an existing ambient noise level estimated at 60 decibels.[5]

Therefore, per the Alameda County Municipal Code as discussed above, because the ambient level already exceeds 50 decibels, the maximum noise level allowed at those residential properties would be 60 decibels. Maximum noise levels allowed at nearby commercial properties would be 65 to 70 decibels depending on how close they are to I-580.

Technical specifications for the proposed central vacuum units report the maximum noise level to be 95 decibels 15 feet from the machine (see Attachment A). There would be two central vacuum units – one enclosed in the carwash tunnel building to operate the self-service vacuum stations next to the tunnel, and one in a small enclosure on the eastern edge of the project site to operate the vacuum stations along that side of the project site. These solid enclosures would reduce the noise level by approximately 20 to 25 decibels.[6] Noise is louder at the source and gets quieter the farther away from the source. The closest active use (not a driveway, parking lot, or vacant use) to a central vacuum unit would be the miniature golf facility, approximately 145 feet from the proposed location of the central vacuum unit located along the eastern edge of the project site. At that distance, the vacuum noise would drop to approximately 50 to 55 decibels, which is below ambient noise levels in the vicinity.[7, 8] All other active uses in the vicinity, including the closest residential receivers, would be farther from the central vacuum units, with even lower vacuum noise levels – all below existing ambient noise levels and consistent with County standards.

The other main source of carwash noise would be the blowers toward the end of the carwash tunnel that dry the vehicles before exiting. Technical specifications for the blowers report the sound level at 90 decibels at 10 feet (see Attachment A). The blowers would be located within the tunnel building, above and/or to the side of the opening such that the line of sight would be largely blocked from the tunnel opening, which would reduce noise levels by approximately 5 decibels.[9] Noise is louder at the source and gets quieter the farther away from the source. The closest receptor from the front of the carwash tunnel opening would be the commercial property across Castro Valley Boulevard, approximately 168 feet from the tunnel opening. The noise level of the blowers would drop to approximately 61 decibels at the closest receptor, which would be below the County's threshold of

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5 Alameda County, March 2012, Castro Valley General Plan (SCH Number 2006032036), Figure 11-1, available at https://acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/CastroValleyGeneralPlan_2012_FINAL.pdf.

6 The Engineering Toolbox, Noise from Machines – Enclosures and Sound Pressure Level Reductions, available at: https://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/machines-sound-level-reduction-d_1411.html

7 Noise reduction by distance follows the inverse square law, which means that for every doubling of distance from a sound source, the sound level decreases by approximately 6 decibels. Therefore, a noise level of 95 decibels at 15 feet would be 89 decibels at 30 feet.

8 WKC Group, Sound Attenuation Calculator - Inverse Square Law, available at https://www.wkcgroup.com/tools-room/inverse-square-law-sound-calculator/.

9 Virginia Department of Transportation, *Noise Walls – Some Noise Facts*, available at: https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/media/vdotvirginiagov/doing-business/technical-guidance-and-support/environmental/noise/Did_you_know_acc100722.pdf

65 decibels at a commercial property. At the distance of the closest residential receptor (230 feet), the blower noise would drop to approximately 58 decibels, which is below the existing ambient noise level of 60 decibels and therefore below the County's threshold for noise at those residential properties.[10, 11]

As indicated above, noise from the proposed carwash would be consistent with County standards at receptors in the vicinity and would not result in a significant impact or otherwise be considered an unusual circumstance with respect to noise.

Air Quality

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) includes screening criteria in their CEQA Guidelines that identify project sizes by type that could have the potential to result in emissions over threshold levels. While there is no category for a carwash, the screening size for a fast food restaurant that would have similar drive thru business is 21,000 square feet for operational criteria pollutants and 452,000 square feet for construction pollutants. At 4,307 square feet, the proposed project is well below these screening level sizes and would therefore not result in significant impacts related to air quality.

The location of a carwash in a commercial district is not an unusual circumstance. That erecting a new building requires demolition and construction activities that generate emissions is not an unusual circumstance. The emissions from a project of this type would therefore already have been considered under the Class 3 exemption criteria and would not cause an exception under this criterion. As indicated above, emissions from the proposed carwash would not result in a significant impact or otherwise be considered an unusual circumstance with respect to air quality.

Water Quality

Construction of a structure in an urban area is not an unusual circumstance, and during construction, the project would be required to follow all requirements of a General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit, including the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

The project proposes use of bioretention areas to manage runoff from paved areas of the site during operations, in accordance with applicable County C.3 Stormwater Permit requirements. As described in the project description section, the project would use environmentally friendly products, and wash water from operation of the carwash would be captured, treated, and re-used on site as feasible with a PurWater Water Recovery System (see project description) and would comply with water quality discharge requirements.

As indicated above, the proposed carwash would comply with applicable water quality standards during construction and operations and would not result in a significant impact or otherwise be considered an unusual circumstance with respect to water quality.

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[10] Noise reduction by distance follows the inverse square law, which means that for every doubling of distance from a sound source, the sound level decreases by approximately 6 decibels. Therefore, a noise level of 95 decibels at 15 feet would be 89 decibels at 30 feet.

[11] WKC Group, Sound Attenuation Calculator - Inverse Square Law, available at https://www.wkcgroup.com/tools-room/inverse-square-law-sound-calculator/.

Transportation

A Transportation Assessment was prepared by TJKM Transportation Consultants in March 2024 for the applicant (see Attachment B). The project was estimated to generate approximately 378 daily trips, including 32 AM peak hour trips and 78 PM peak hour trips.

Under CEQA, traffic-related impacts are assessed using vehicles miles traveled (VMT). The Transportation Assessment determined that the area in which the project is located has an average VMT per employee of 14.02, which is considered a low-VMT area because it is more than 15% below the area average of 19.2.

Alameda County currently defaults to VMT thresholds recommended by California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, which identifies screening criteria that may be used by jurisdictions to identify certain types of projects that can be assumed not to have a significant VMT impact. If a project satisfies one or more of the following conditions, then the project would be assumed to have an insignificant impact on VMT and could be screened out from a full VMT analysis.[12]

1. Small Projects
2. Designated Low-VMT Area – map-based screening
3. Near a Transit Station – within 0.5 miles of a proposed or existing major transit stop
4. Affordable Residential Developments
5. Infill Developments
6. Local Serving Retail – commercial uses generally less than 50,000 SF

The project is a small project with less than 10,000 square feet (screening criteria 1), is located in a designated low VMT area (screening criteria a), and is a local-serving project, and therefore would meet the VMT screening criteria.

The Transportation Assessment determined that the site access would be adequate (meeting safety and access requirements). The project would have stacking space for up to 33 cars, which was determined to be adequate, and the project would not be expected to have queues that extend beyond the project site that would interfere with off-site traffic. The project would not make any changes to offsite pedestrian, bicycle or transit facilities, and would not generate substantial trips in these modes.

As indicated above, the project is a small, local-servicing commercial project that is located in a low-VMT area and would meet safety and access standards and would therefore not result in a significant impact or otherwise be considered an unusual circumstance with respect to transportation.

Criterion 15300.2(d): Scenic Highway

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Does the project have the potential to result in damage to scenic resources including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway?

[12] California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, 2018, Transportation Impacts (SB 743) CEQA Guidelines Update and Technical Advisory, available at https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

The southern end of the project site is approximately 200 feet from I-580, a designated state scenic highway.[13] The project site is currently developed as a lumber yard and is surrounded by other commercial development. There are no scenic resources present at the project site that could be damaged by the project. The current view from I-580 towards the project site is of commercial and residential development with a backdrop of distant hills. The project would not change the nature of the existing view. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to result in damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. This exception criterion does not apply to the proposed project.

Criterion 15300.2(e): Hazardous Waste Sites

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Is the project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code?

A list of sites compiled according to the provisions of Government Code Section 65962.5 is commonly referred to as the "Cortese List." The provisions require the Department of Toxic Substance Control, the California State Water Resources Control Board, the California Department of Public Health, and the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery to submit information pertaining to sites associated with solid waste disposal, hazardous waste disposal, leaking underground tank sites, and/or hazardous materials releases to the Secretary of California Environmental Protection Agency.

Site records indicate that there was an underground fuel storage tank at the site that was previously removed. Per standard procedure, a design-level geotechnical report would implement recommendations for soil testing and handling during earth moving or re-use.

The project site is not identified on any lists compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.[14] Therefore, this exception criterion does not apply to the project.

Criterion 15300.2(f): Historical Resources

Yes	No	
❒	☑	Does the project have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource?

Historic-aged buildings are defined as 45 years old or older. The storefront portion of the existing building was constructed in approximately 1930, and has been associated with a lumber yard since that time. Other structures at the project site include a lumber shed and freestanding plywood shed built around 1939, the latter with a post 1988 rear addition; a trim shed built around 1950, and a 1988 storage shed. The project site address was listed on the Alameda County Register's *Alameda County Landmarks & Contributing Buildings Identified in 2005-2008 Comprehensive Survey*.[15] Inclusion of a project on this list does not confer formal historic resource status on

13 California Department of Transportation, State Scenic Highway Mapping System, https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways.

14 State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker Database, website accessed 8/5/2024 at http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/; Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor Database, website accessed 8/5/2024 at http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/.

15 Alameda County, June 2005, *Alameda County Landmarks & Contributing Buildings Identified in 2005-2008 Comprehensive Survey.*

properties, but rather indicates the need for a site-specific historic assessment to determine the eligibility to be included on the California Register of Historical Resources.

A Historic Resource Evaluation was prepared by Preservation Architecture for this analysis (see Attachment C). The Historic Resource Evaluation included a review of historic photos, maps, documentation and records about the subject property. The property was evaluated based on the California Register of Historical Resources evaluation criteria, as summarized below (see Attachment C for additional detail):

1. *Is it associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States?*

The main office/shop building that still exists on the project site was moved to the project site from its original location across Castro Valley Boulevard in 1939. There is no evidence that this was an event of any historical significance.

It has been misinterpreted in some of the records that the moved structure was another building, a cabinet shop owned by Clarence Elsworth and Robert A. Wilson, located nearby on Castro Valley Boulevard. While Elsworth and Wilson did eventually own the project site, they did not own it at the time of the move, and historic photos of the cabinet shop show a more architecturally interesting building than the one that was moved to the project site. The project site does not contain the former cabinet shop structure and it is not further discussed in this analysis.

The project site and its buildings fit with the commercial development pattern of the time, both locally and in general at that time in history, and there is no historical significance associated with either the property or buildings as a commercial site. The project site is not eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1.

2. *Is it associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history?*

The few individuals associated with commercial development and use of the project site in its potential historic period were its owners when the commercial property was first developed in the late 1930s (E. L. and A. V. Lucas, Anthony F. Taylor and H. L. Landis), and its subsequent owners from 1941-1961 (Clarence Elsworth and Robert A. Wilson). While the record shows that these persons were associated with their respective retail lumber businesses, none have any identifiable importance to history. The project site is not eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

3. *Does it embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values?*

Each of the sheds on the project site are highly utilitarian, temporal wood frame and metal clad structures and each can be summarily dismissed as having any potential historical importance on the basis of their design and/or construction. The retail/office building moved to this site, while seemingly of more durable construction, is itself a simple, indistinguishable building and is diminutive relative to the overall grouping and setting. Its moved status is its most interesting aspect, yet that fact does not lend the building design or construction importance. No evidence has been found to identify any original architects, engineers or designers. Again, the buildings were individually expedient and utilitarian, and there is no evidence of any planning or design interrelationships with any other development in the area. The project site is not in a historic district. As the project site buildings do not embody any design or construction distinction in terms of type, period, region or methods; as they are not the work of any identified architect, engineer, designer

or builder; nor do they possess any artistic values; the project site is not eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.

4. *Has it yielded, or have the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation?*

   The project site and its existing buildings have not yielded and have no identifiable potential to yield important historical information, and therefore are not eligible for the California Register under Criterion 4.

The project site and its existing buildings do not meet any applicable criteria for the California Register, and therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse changes to historic resources. This exception criterion does not apply to the proposed project.

Exemption Conclusions

The project represents new construction of a small structure. As demonstrated in the substantial evidence presented in the discussion above, the project meets the criteria for a Class 3 Exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

As also demonstrated in the substantial evidence above, there are no exceptions that apply to the project or its site that would exclude the use of an exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, including those related to location, cumulative effects, significant effects from unusual circumstances, scenic resources, hazardous waste, or historical resources.

Therefore, the analysis presented in this document provides substantial evidence that a Class 3 CEQA Exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 is applicable to the proposed project and that no additional environmental analysis is required under CEQA.

EQUIPMENT DECIBEL CERTIFICATION

ATTACHMENT A

to the

Splash Brothers Carwash Castro Valley Project CEQA Exemption Class 3

EQUIPMENT DECIBEL CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the following AutoVAC equipment was measured with the following decibel levels of noise emission (+/- 2dB) in accordance with ISO 2151:2004. These ratings are taken at 15 feet from the machine with no background noise or outside interference in a 50 x 50ft interior room.

VACUUM PRODUCER					
HORESPOWER	**STAGE**	**START/RUN dB WITH VFD**	**START dB NO VFD**	**SERIAL NO**	**PASS/FAIL**
10	3	64	84		
15	4	66	88		
20	5	66	88		
25	6	72	92		
30	7	74	92		
40	8	76	95		

BLOWER				
HORESPOWER	**START/RUN dB WITH VFD**	**START dB NO VFD**	**SERIAL NO**	**PASS/FAIL**
15	72	85		

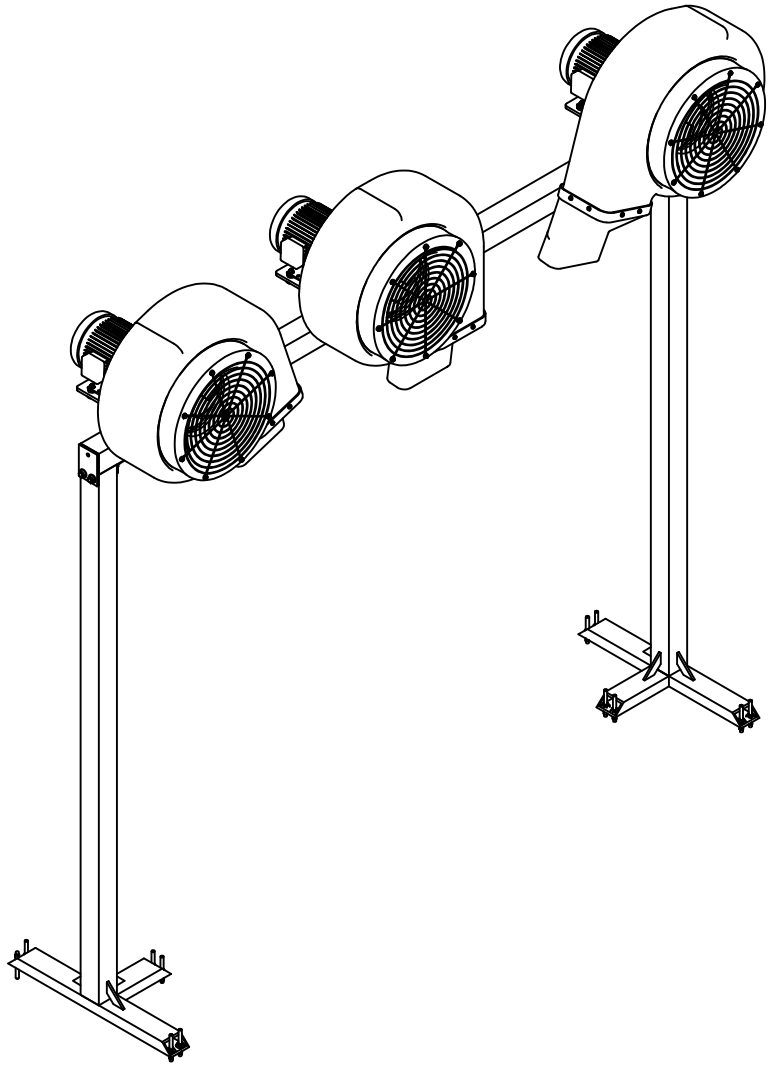
Equipment Used to measure decibel levels

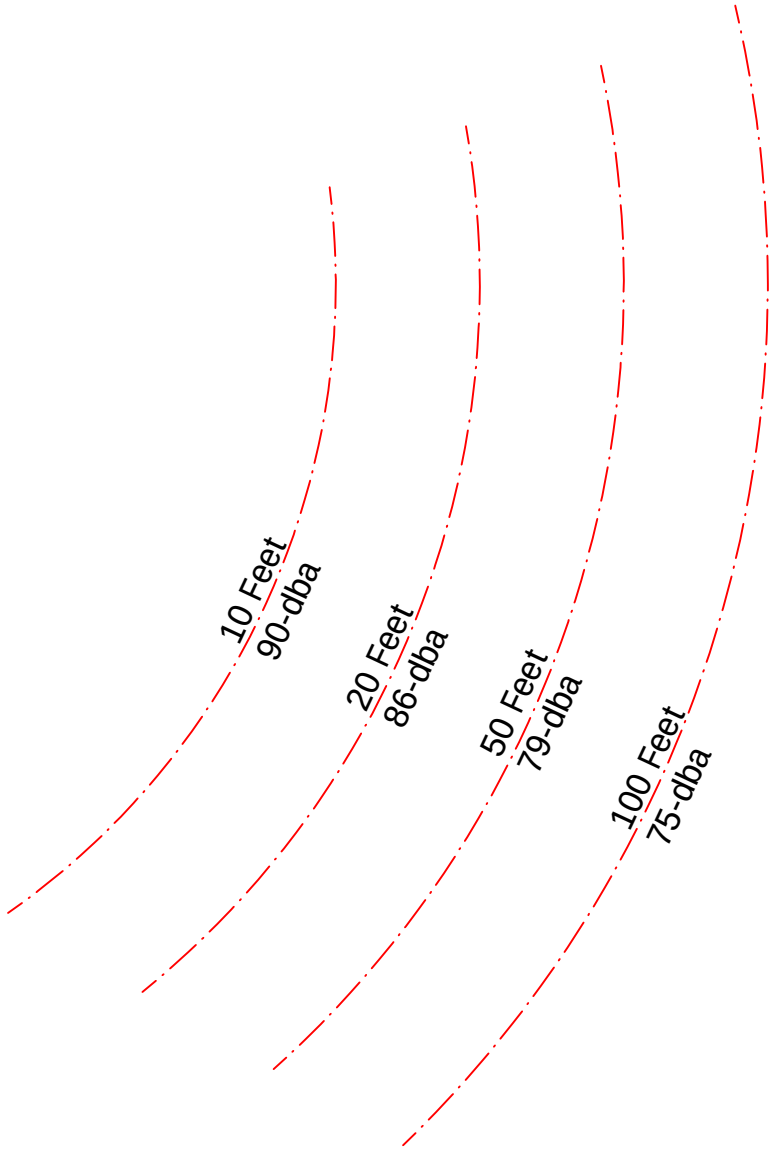
EQUIPMENT	MANUFACTURER	MODEL NO	SERIAL NO
Sound Level Meter	Extech Instruments	407730	9848853

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

This certificate does not claim product approval or endorsement by NVLAP, NIST or any agency of the Federal Government. If you have any further questions, please contact AutoVAC at our toll free number 888-628-8682.

Enviromental Noise with Dryer OFF: 70 dba





THIRD ANGLE PROJECTION	*MACHINING TOLERANCES*	DRAWN LVerdecia	8/26/2011
BREAK ALL SHARP CORNERS. PART TO BE FREE OF BURRS.	FRACTION± 1/16"	APPROVED	8/1/2012
UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN INCHES	.XX DECIMAL ± 0.030	CATEGORY BLOWER	
MATERIAL	.XXX DECIMAL ± 0.005	DESCRIPTION BLOWER ASSEMBLY, ONE ARCH 45HP	
	ANGULARITY ± 2°	PART NUMBER BL1-45HP-1	
	FINISH 125	SHEET 2 OF 2	SIZE A / SCALE N.T.S.

SONNY'S ENTERPRISES
THE CARWASH FACTORY

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TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT

ATTACHMENT B

to the

Splash Brothers Carwash Castro Valley Project CEQA Exemption Class 3

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Date:	March 26, 2024	
To:	Michael Mansouria	Splash Brothers Carwash
	Sean Amin	Splash Brothers Carwash
From:	Grishma Pandya	TJKM
	Renee Reavis, EIT	TJKM
	Steven Matthew Dauterman, PE, TE, PTOE, RSP_1	TJKM
Subject:	***Splash Brothers Carwash – Transportation Assessment***	

This memorandum summarizes a transportation assessment for a proposed redevelopment in the Castro Valley area of Alameda County, California. The site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Castro Valley Boulevard and Stanton Avenue. This site currently contains an approximately 57,385 square feet (sq. ft.) of lumber store, known as Castro Valley Lumber Store, which is intended to be replaced by a Splash Brothers Carwash facility.

This memorandum includes a trip generation assessment, a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact analysis, and assessments of site circulation, site access, and parking. This memorandum does not constitute of full traffic impact study (TIS) as requested by County staff but is intended to be a preliminary assessment for the initial application of the project and will be superseded by a full TIS.

Based on our findings, TJKM supports the following conclusions:

- The project would generate approximately 378 daily trips (189 inbound, 189 outbound), including 32 a.m. peak hour trips (16 inbound, 16 outbound) and 78 p.m. peak hour trips (39 inbound, 39 outbound).
- The project would is screened out of detailed VMT analysis, as it is in a low-VMT area, is considered a small project, and is considered local serving.
- Site access and on-site circulation are expected to be adequate.
- The project would provide eleven parking spaces, including one van-accessible space. This parking supply is expected to satisfy the County's parking requirements.
- The project would provide a bike rack, which accounts two short-term bicycle spaces. This parking supply is expected to satisfy the County's parking requirements.

Project Overview

The proposed project site includes one parcel of land, which can be identified by the following parcel number: 84A-7-6. The property is approximately 1.33 acres. As per the Castro Valley General Plan (March 2012), the proposed site is zoned as Castro Valley Business District (CVBD-CBD3). According to the Central Business District General Plan Land Use Figure in the General Plan, the proposed site

located in the "West Gate District" and is designated as Regional Retail and Entertainment (CBD-CD-2).

Currently, the site contains a lumber store. The project would replace the existing use with a building consisting of an office, equipment room, and approximately 130-foot car wash tunnel, with stacking space for up to 33 cars. The project will provide a total of eleven parking spaces and 27 additional stalls for vacuum stanchions. The access to the site is proposed via one entrance-only driveway on Castro Valley Boulevard and an exit-only driveway along Norbridge Avenue.

Project Trip Generation Assessment

To estimate trips generated by the proposed development for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, as well as for weekday daily trips, TJKM utilized a combination of published trip generation rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition (TGM) and data provided by the applicant. The trip generation assessment was consistent with the methodology published in ITE's Trip Generation Handbook, 3rd Edition (TGH).

Two months of sales data (January and February 2024) was provided by the applicant from their existing car wash facility in San Leandro, California. This data was used to estimate the number of trips that would occur during the a.m. peak hour. Since the existing facility is only open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the proposed site in Castro Valley would likely close at 6 p.m., the data provided by the applicant may not fully encompass the expected trip generation for the p.m. peak hour. If linear interpolation or an approximate average was used, the expected trip gelation of the p.m. peak hour would be close to 15-25 vehicles per hour (30-50 trips). In order to provide a conservative assessment, the published trip rate for the ITE Land Use Code (LUC) 948 (Automated Car Wash) was used for the p.m. peak hour. The publish rate indicates that the site would expect approximately 39 cars per hour during the commuter rush hour (78 trips). The daily trips were approximated based on the applicant's data and included the additional trips expected during the 5-6 p.m. period.

The trip generation analysis herein accounts for the application of a 20% pass-by trip reduction, applied consistent with the methodology presented in the TGH. Pass-by trips are defined as trips that are "made as an intermediate stop on the way from an origin to a primary trip destination without a route diversion" (ITE, 2017, p. 93). They are, for all intents and purposes, "trips of convenience," as they would be along an existing driver's route. Of note, ITE LUC 948 does not have available pass-by rates. In order to approximate the pass-by rates for this use, TJKM looked at other car wash traffic studies that were conducted in California; pass-by rates varied between 15% and 35%. 20% was assumed to be reasonable based on engineering judgment and the location of the site.

The project trip generation are portrayed in **Table 1**. The proposed development would generate approximately 378 daily trips, including 32 a.m. peak hour trips and 78 p.m. peak hour trips, when not considering the application of pass-by trips. With the application of pass-by reductions, the site is expected to generate 302 new daily trips, including 26 new a.m. peak hour trips (approximately 13 vehicles) and 62 new p.m. peak hour trips (approximately 31 vehicles).

Table 2: Project Trip Generation (ITE TGM-Peak Generator of the Adjacent)

Land Use	ITE Code	Size	------ Weekday ------												
			Daily			a.m. Peak Hour				p.m. Peak Hour					
			Rate	Total	Rate	In: Out %	In	Out	Total	Rate	In: Out %	In	Out	Total
Proposed Use															
Automated Car Wash [3]	948	1 Car wash Tunnel	N/A [1]	378	N/A [2]	50:50	16	16	32	77.5	50:50	39	39	78
Anticipated Pass By -Trips	*20% Reductions [4]*			*-76*			*-3*	*-3*	*-6*			*-8*	*-8*	*-16*
Total without Reductions Applied				**378**			**16**	**16**	**32**			**39**	**39**	**78**
Total with Reductions Applied				**302**			**13**	**13**	**26**			**31**	**31**	**62**

Notes:

[1] - The daily trips were estimated based on two months of data provided by the applicant from their existing car wash facility (Jan and Feb 2024). The daily trips include an additional 78 trips to account for one-hour of extended operation from 5-6 p.m. (see note 3).

[2] - The a.m. peak hour trips were estimated based on two months of data provided by the applicant from their existing car wash facility (Jan and Feb 2024). Additionally, note that ITE LUC 948 does not contain data for the a.m. peak hour.

[3] - The existing facility that was used in determining the daily and a.m. peak hour trips is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. As such, the data could not accurately determine conditions after 5 p.m. Based on other corresponding hours, it is likely that the actually expected trips would be closer to 34 trips (17 cars) as opposed to 78 trips (39 cars). 78 trips are anticipated to be conservative.

[4] - ITE Trip Generation Handbook does not provide data for car wash pass-by percentages. However, it is expected that there would be at least some pass-by trips to account for the site location on a major thoroughfare. Three other studies conducted in California estimated pass-by reductions at 15%, at 25%, and at 35%.

Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment

Traffic impacts related to the proposed project were evaluated for both compliance with applicable regulatory documents and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In accordance with the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (December 2018), published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) as per California Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), a quantitative Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) assessment forms the basis of the CEQA analysis for a proposed project. The OPR guidelines state that "VMT" refers to automobile VMT, specifically passenger vehicles and light trucks; heavy truck traffic is typically excluded.

Alameda County has not adopted VMT procedures, so the OPR guidelines and standards were used. OPR indicates that residential projects exceeding a level of 15 percent below the existing VMT per resident (within a region or within a city) may be used to indicate a significant transportation impact. Consistent with OPR's guidelines, TJKM used the rate for the Central Planning Area of Alameda County. Currently, the Central Planning Area has an average VMT per employee value of 19.2, according to the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC), thus the VMT per employee threshold for significant impact is 16.3.

To assess potential impacts, TJKM utilized the ACTC VMT mapping tool, based on ACTC's latest travel demand model. OPR guidance on VMT analysis for commercial projects requires a base year condition

model run to extract VMT data for the Travel Analysis Zones (TAZs) that the project is located in (for this project, the TAZ is #611).

Table 2 illustrates the VMT per employee values for the project when compared to the threshold value for the County of Alameda.

Table 2: VMT/Capita Values from ACTC Model

TAZ	VMT per Employee	Central Planning Area Average VMT per Employee	Significance Threshold (15% Below Area Average)
611	14.02	19.2	16.3

The base year (2020) VMT/Capita value for TAZ #611 is **14.02**. Therefore, TJKM finds the project location has low rate of VMT per employee (14.02), and is under the threshold value for the Central Planning Area average for Alameda County. In addition, the project is under the 10,000 commercial square footage requirement for small projects and under the 50,000 square footage requirement to qualify as local-serving. Thus, the proposed site **qualifies for a categorical exemption** from the provision of CEQA, as it is expected to have an **insignificant impact on VMT**.

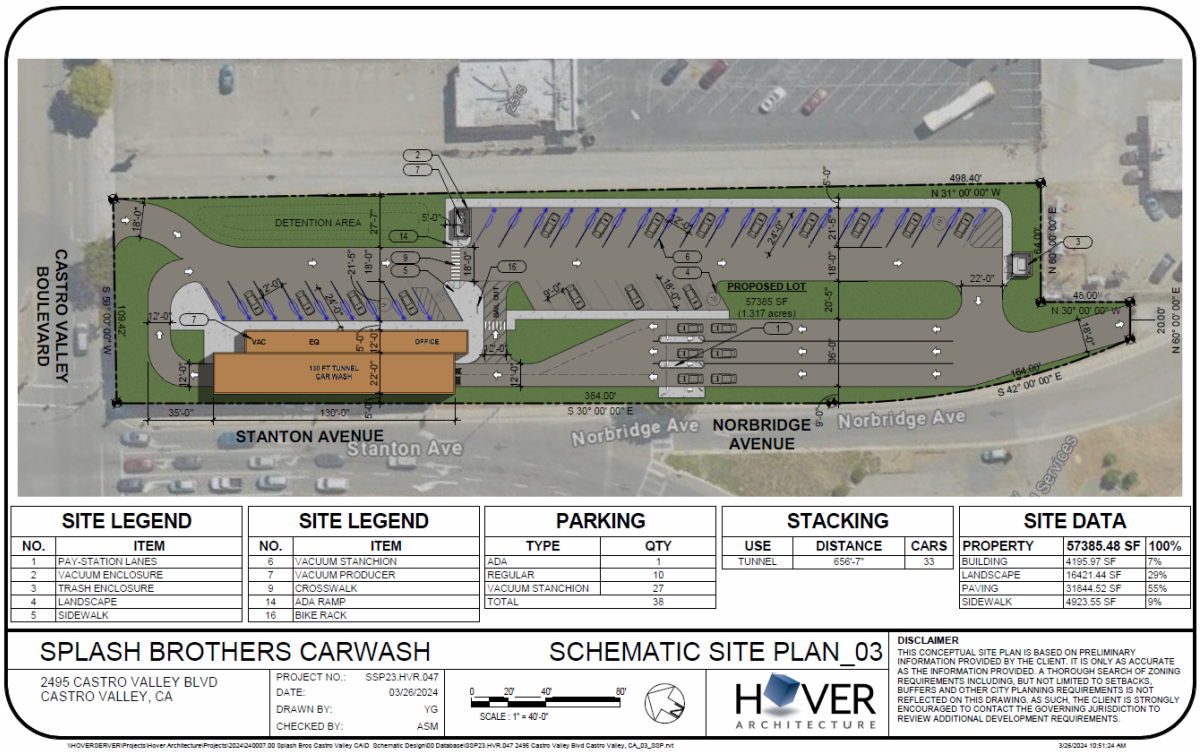
On-Site Circulation and Vehicular Access

The proposed development will allow ingress on Castro Valley Boulevard and egress from Norbridge Avenue. Norbridge Avenue operates as a two-way thoroughfare until it converges with Stanton Avenue, which runs parallel and adjacent to the site in a north-south direction. Castro Valley Boulevard runs east-west within the Castro Valley area, facilitating eastbound traffic movement at the entrance. Other significant roadways include Stanton Avenue (one-way), catering to northbound traffic exclusively, and Strobridge Avenue (one-way), facilitating southbound traffic only. Both roads intersect with Norbridge Avenue. Norbridge Avenue forms the western project frontage, and initially operates as a two-way road at the site's entrance before merging with Stanton Avenue near Castro Valley Boulevard. Note, the County is looking to modify the surrounding road network to allow Norbridge Avenue, Stanton Avenue, and Strobridge Avenue to become two-way; the County is currently in the design stage of this endeavor.

As shown in **Figure 1**, the site's internal traffic flow is facilitated by a looped circulation design, with vehicles required to enter on Castro Valley Boulevard and exit onto Norbridge Avenue. As one enters the initial staging area, it branches into three payment station lanes, eventually connecting with the car wash tunnel. Continuing onward, it veers right, intersecting with the driveway originating from the entrance on Castro Valley Boulevard. This driveway runs straight one-way, with car wash tunnel accessible on its right hand side and vacuum stations positioned along its sides throughout the driveway, before curving back and reconnecting with Norbridge for the exit.

TJKM expects that this internal roadway configuration would adequately service the site.

Figure 1: Splash Bros Carwash Schematic Site Plan (March 26, 2024)



SITE LEGEND	
NO.	ITEM
1	PAY-STATION LANES
2	VACUUM ENCLOSURE
3	TRASH ENCLOSURE
4	LANDSCAPE
5	SIDEWALK

SITE LEGEND	
NO.	ITEM
6	VACUUM STANCHION
7	VACUUM PRODUCER
9	CROSSWALK
14	ADA RAMP
16	BIKE RACK

PARKING	
TYPE	QTY
ADA	1
REGULAR	10
VACUUM STANCHION	27
TOTAL	38

STACKING		
USE	DISTANCE	CARS
TUNNEL	656'-7"	33

SITE DATA		
PROPERTY	57385.48 SF	100%
BUILDING	4196.97 SF	7%
LANDSCAPE	16421.44 SF	29%
PAVING	31844.52 SF	55%
SIDEWALK	4923.55 SF	9%

SPLASH BROTHERS CARWASH — SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN_03

2495 CASTRO VALLEY BLVD
CASTRO VALLEY, CA

PROJECT NO.: SSP23.HVR.047
DATE: 03/26/2024
DRAWN BY: YG
CHECKED BY: ASM

SCALE : 1" = 40'-0"

HOVER ARCHITECTURE

DISCLAIMER
THIS CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN IS BASED ON PRELIMINARY INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT. IT IS ONLY AS ACCURATE AS THE INFORMATION PROVIDED. A THOROUGH SEARCH OF ZONING REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO SETBACKS, BUFFERS AND OTHER CITY PLANNING REQUIREMENTS IS NOT REFLECTED ON THIS DRAWING. AS SUCH, THE CLIENT IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT THE GOVERNING JURISDICTION TO REVIEW ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS.

Source: Hover Architecture

Parking Assessment

Under the Alameda County Code of Ordinances, the proposed car wash would mostly likely be considered an office use, based on the office portion of the building. The remaining portion of the building houses equipment and the car wash tunnel.

As per Section 17.52.930 in the Code, the project would require one parking spaces per 250 square feet (sq. ft.) of floor area. The office portion of the building is approximately 1,560 sq. ft. (this estimate includes the mechanical room portion the building to be conservative). The proposed project would require six parking spaces (rounding down per the Code). Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), parking facilities up to 25 spaces must provide at least one accessible space. As shown on the site plan, the project would provide eleven total parking spaces, including one accessible space located near the building entrance. Thus, parking supply meets County and ADA requirements.

Bicycle parking requirements for the site are discussed in the County's Residential Design Standards and Guidelines for Unincorporated Communities of West Alameda County (2015), Chapter 6 of the Standards, titled "Standards that Apply to all or some Projects" notes for Commercial/Office uses that "Short-term bicycle parking spaces shall be provided at a rate of two percent of the number of required automobile parking spaces, with a minimum of two [bicycle] parking spaces provided per establishment" (Alameda County, 2015, p. 6-3). As illustrated on the plans, one bike rack is proposed which can provide two parking spaces. Thus, bicycle parking supply meets County's requirements.

HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION

ATTACHMENT C

to the

Splash Brothers Carwash Castro Valley Project CEQA Exemption Class 3

PRESERVATION
ARCHITECTURE

August 5, 2024

2495 Castro Valley Blvd., Castro Valley
Historic Resource Evaluation

This report provides an historical evaluation of the parcel and buildings located at the above address. The purpose of this evaluation effort is to determine if the subject property and buildings do or do not qualify as historic resources per the California Register of Historical Resources (CR) criteria and with respect to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This evaluation effort is based on the collection and review of documentation and records about the subject property, specifically historic photos, maps and newspapers held at the Hayward Area Historical Society (HAHS); building permit records from the County of Alameda; along with Alameda County deed research. Despite these research efforts, few original records and no original plans have been located. Additionally, a built environment records request from the California Historical Resources Information System's Northwest Information Center (NWIC) found no results for the subject property. The site is currently vacant and fenced yet comprehensive views of the property prior to its recent closure are available online and have been used for and within this evaluation.

2495 Castro Valley Blvd. has been previously identified as potentially historic by inclusion on the *Alameda County Landmarks & Contributing Buildings Identified in 2005-2008 Comprehensive Survey,* which list does not confer formal historic resource status on properties not previously evaluated yet identifies potential and, concomitantly, the need for historical assessment. The current effort has been requested to provide requisite evaluation.

Introduction

Castro Valley Lumber is located at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. in downtown Castro Valley in the immediate midst of a disintegrated mix of commercial properties and uses that includes a maze of roadways. The 1.35 acre corner property fronts northward on Castro Valley Blvd. with a west side along Stanton Ave. (figs.1-2). It is an elongated site first subdivided in 1936 from a larger parcel that was itself a portion of lot 20 of the 1884 *Map of Laurel Farm* (fig.3). Then some 500 feet north-south by 110 feet east-west, the parcel's arced southwestern corner was clipped for state highway purposes in 1969, resulting in its current configuration (fig.4).

As addressed herein: there are no associated events or persons of historic importance; the subject buildings are plain structures and their uses are of no identifiable design or construction importance, individually or collectively; there are no identifiable designers or builders; and the subject resources do not present any historic information specific or unique to their context, setting or locale. Consequently, the property and buildings at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. are without potential historical significance so are not historic resources for planning purposes under CEQA.

Summary History

The extant buildings are utilitarian commercial structures, predominately sheds except for the small frontward retail/office building, which was relocated c1939 to the subject site from its original location across the street. Despite the interest that moved buildings generally receive, especially at central locations, there is no more definite date for or story about the building move, the knowledge about

446 17th Street #302 Oakland CA 94612
510.418.0285 mhulbert@earthlink.net

which is largely based on a c1939 photo of the building being moved (fig.5). Once moved, the property's address was 5909 Castro Valley Blvd., which address was changed to 2495, presumably in the 1950s with development of the freeway.

Based on the minimally available historical information, the extant building at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. has been a retail construction material business since its move c1939. The historical record suggests that the owners of the business were Clarence Elsworth and Robert A. Wilson and whose business and building, Elsworth & Wilson, was relocated from across the way. A generally available photo of their prior location and its building accompanies that basic story (fig,6). However, the previous building in the photographic record was not the building that was moved. Rather, it was another structure that stood directly at the northwest corner of Castro Valley Blvd. and Stanton Ave., which understanding is supported by an annotated c1930 photo of Castro Valley Blvd. commerce, wherein the Castro Valley Lumber and Mill Co. location and building were identified. In that photo, the (future) Elsworth & Wilson building was identified as a cabinet shop that stood further to the west on the north side of Castro Valley Blvd. (fig.7)

Based on current deed research, the Castro Valley Lumber and Mill Co. was the business located at Castro Valley Blvd. and Stanton Ave. and whose building was moved. In the mid to late 1930s until 1941, the owners of that business included E. L. and A. V. Lucas and Anthony F. Taylor, who appear to have acquired the current site in 1936 from Fred and Leah Planett and who acquired a deed of trust, presumably to develop that land, in 1939. A February 1941 ad for the Castro Valley Lumber and Mill Co. at 5909 Castro Valley Blvd. also identified its then proprietor as Anthony F. Taylor. In November 1941, the Castro Valley Lumber and Mill Co. (H. L. Landis, secretary) sold the property and business to Elsworth and Wilson and who also in that year acquired a deed of trust, presumably to make improvements. An undated announcement of their acquisition of and relocation to the 5909 Castro Valley Blvd. site was evidently from late 1941. Clarence and Irene Decamp Elsworth and Robert A. and Myrtle M. Wilson shared ownership of the Castro Valley Lumber Co. from 1941 until 1961, when they sold the business and property to Ralph and Arnold Boshion. By 1976, the owners were Gary and Carree Hansen.

A 1939 aerial additionally clarifies that the original lumber yard then included the moved office building and the relatively large wood shed at its side, plus another larger detached shed in the middle of the yard, while the southward shed additions are not yet present (fig.8). At that juncture, there was no street to the west of the site, which then abutted a large and largely open parcel with some remnants of an orchard and a building at its southern edge.

Thus, in 1940, there were 2 competing lumber businesses, one on the north side of Castro Valley Blvd. (Elsworth & Wilson at 4941 Castro Valley Blvd.) and one on the south (Castro Valley Lumber and Mill Co. at 5909), which another ad, dated Dec. 1940, confirms (fig.9).

The c1939 photograph (fig.5) provides further evidence about the moved structure, which photo is looking east and with the building on its way across the boulevard. That view is of the back of the moved building, yet it is clearly the small northeast part of the extant structure, which was thereafter substantially added to and altered. Another undated snapshot, presumably from the early 1950s and as yet at the 5909 address, partly captured the front of that building with its earlier doors and windows, which were since replaced and with one set of doors converted to a window (fig.10).

Just 3 building permit records are available for this property, the earliest in 1957 for a sign, a second in 1962 for a steel tank and pump, and a third in 1986 for a 42 ft. x 20 ft. storage shed appended to the south end of the structures along Stanton. In the latter, along with a plan for that extant addition that illustrated the on-site structures (fig.11), the owner of Castro Valley Lumber was identified as Bill Peterson who remains part owner of the subject property.

Summary Descriptions (figs.12-19)

The 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. parcel houses an accumulation of structures, mostly attached to each other at the front (north) and northwest corner, one standing separate in the center of the site. The building's 2-part architectural front facing Castro Valley Blvd. is, in part, the moved retail and office building at the overall building's northeast corner, standing next to which is an attached lumber shed with a central vehicular opening. These two fronts are unified under their stepped parapets and which stepped facade forms a western (i.e., false) front. All of the structures are light wood frame. The retail/office building is entered via a raised concrete landing with steps at each end. Its walls are clad in stucco with a roughly central entry with a pair of doors flanked by roughly square fixed windows, with another set of windows at that front's eastern end, the inboard window a former doorway that has been partly infilled and patched. That building's east side wall is wood-sided as is the rear wall (south), where there is a shed roof lean-to addition alongside an open shed. The east side abuts the lumber shed, which has a metal clad and wood trimmed exterior front wall that turns the corner with a long, corrugated metal clad side wall on Stanton. Attached to the rear of the lumber shed are two other sheds, their conjoined west sides creating an extended wall along the street yet without any openings. A single sign ("Lumber") is painted at the north end of the frontward lumber shed. At the interior of the site, the sides of those shed structures are partly metal clad, partly open or have open racks attached. Their roofs are low-slope. Lastly, the freestanding building in the yard is in 2-parts, front and back, the front metal clad with vehicular doors, a metal roof overhang at its west side and a metal clad lean-to at the east side. The rear part is an open structure, both parts with double-pitched metal roofs.

As noted, the moved structure is a small part of the extant building complex, dates to c1930 and was moved to this site c1939. The attached lumber shed alongside appears in the 1939 aerial so is understood to date to 1939, as is the front portion of the freestanding building in the yard. The small shed attached to the rear of the 1939 lumber shed is not dated yet was present when the smaller shed appendage to its south was added in 1988. The site is otherwise open storage with looped vehicular circulation.

Historic Contexts

Relative to downtown Castro Valley, a pivotal 20th century historic context is the development of the 580 freeway, which was constructed and opened in the course of the 1950s and has since passed immediately to the south of the subject property, its on and off ramps directly adjacent and directly impacting the locale. The extension of Stanton Ave. along the west side the 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. property serves as the connector from the freeway offramp to Castro Valley Blvd. and was evidently developed for that purpose. Based on USGS maps, that extension dates to c1980. Prior to then, a street connecting Castro Valley Blvd. to Norbridge Ave. ran along the east side of the subject property, which street partly remains to access an adjoining property. In aerial views, the curved path of that relatively recent street is still evident in the rear of the 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. property.

Prior to the freeway's construction, Castro Valley Blvd. through downtown was the state highway (hwy.50, also known as the Castro Valley Highway). As is evidenced by USGS maps from before development of the freeway, thereafter, the boulevard and downtown became a local domain with a maze of freeway access roads at each end (figs.20-21). At the west end, such construction did not sever yet did separate the effected properties from what was evidently a more contiguous downtown and to which the subject parcel was more closely related prior to the freeway. Thus, given its separation, the historic context of the Castro Valley downtown is diminished and secondary with respect to the subject property.

Evaluation

The three subject parcels and their four buildings have not previously been evaluated for historic resource eligibility. In order to address the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) specific to historic resources, the current effort has been requested and is intended to provide such historic resource evaluation.

Under CEQA, which applies the California Register of Historical Resources (CR) evaluation criteria, to be eligible for listing on the CR, a resource must be historically significant at the local, state, or national level, under one or more of the following four criteria, each of which is cited then summarily addressed.

1. *It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;*

   In its 20th century Castro Valley context, there is no potential historical significance associated with this former commercial property or buildings, which generally fit the local as well as far-ranging 20th century commercial development pattern.

   While the original building was moved to this site, there is no evidence that that was an event of any historic importance. Curiously, the move apparently went unreported at the time despite its then central location and yet, more recently, it has been misinterpreted that the moved structure was another and clearly more interesting building with an association to the later owners of 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – which interpretation is incorrect. The moved building and original development of the subject site with a retail lumber business predated the Elsworth and Wilson acquisition of the property.

   As there is no evidence of any historic events directly associated with the subject properties, this property does not meet *CR criterion 1.*

2. *It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;*

   The few individuals associated with commercial development and use of the 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. property in its potential historic period were its owners when the commercial property was first developed in the late 1930s (E. L. and A. V. Lucas, Anthony F. Taylor and H. L. Landis), and its subsequent owners from 1941-1961 (Clarence Elsworth and Robert A. Wilson). While the record shows that these persons were associated with their respective retail lumber businesses, none have any identifiable importance to history. Consequently, the subject property does not meet *CR criterion 2.*

3. *It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values;*

The built resources at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. include a small c1930 retail/office building that was moved to this site c1939; a c1939 lumber shed and freestanding plywood shed, the latter with a post 1988 rear addition; a c1950 trim shed and a 1988 storage shed. Of these structures, the only original documentation is of the 1988 shed. Additionally, as their names indicate, each of the sheds are highly utilitarian, temporal wood frame and metal clad structures and each can be summarily dismissed as having any potential historical importance on the bases of their design and/or construction.

The retail/office building moved to this site, while seemingly of more durable construction, is itself a simple building and is diminutive relative to the overall grouping and setting. Its moved status is its most interesting aspect, yet that fact does not lend the building design or construction importance. The retail/office building is undistinguished.

The plain character of the group of extant buildings, if generally interesting as vestigial commercial structures, again do not suggest or convey historical importance. Neither are the buildings historically associated with other surviving off-site buildings, given the extent of change in the immediate vicinity.

Moreover, the historical potential of such basic structures and uses are dependent on associations to other resources. Thus, any potential historical importance of this group of basic buildings is dependent on a collection of resources – i.e., an historic district. None exists and there is no potential district that would include 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. as this property and surrounding properties, necessarily also including roadways, are a disparate mix of some mid- yet predominately late-20th century auto-serving uses – utility services, auto care, fast food, entertainment – that have minimal association to Castro Valley's either early or existing downtown (which the well-intentioned yet stranded Stanton House on the island to the southwest of Castro Valley Lumber exemplifies).

Further, no evidence has been found to identify any original architects, engineers or designers.

Lastly, while most of these built resources directly interrelate to their mid-20th century period of development, there is no evidence of any planning or design interrelationships. Again, the buildings were individually expedient and utilitarian.

As the subject buildings do not embody any design or construction distinction in terms of type, period, region or methods; as they are not the work of any identified architect, engineer, designer or builder; nor do they possess any artistic values; 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. is not eligible for the CR under *CR Criterion 3.*

4. *It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation;*

The subject property and structures have not yielded and do not appear to have the potential to yield any important historic information beyond the present historical record (prehistory is outside the scope of this historical effort). Thus, relative to the subject of this evaluation – potential

historic resources – the built resources at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. have not yielded and have no identifiable potential to yield important historical information, so do not meet *CR Criterion 4.*

In conclusion, the extant resources at 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. do not meet any applicable criteria so are not eligible for the CR. This conclusion is also plainly visible, as none of these buildings, individually and collectively, suggest or present noteworthy uses, designs or construction. In addition, the predominate lack of records about the origins of these buildings further underscores their lack of potential importance. Finally, the discovery of additional details about their origins would not alter the evaluative outcome.

Signed:

Mark Hulbert
Preservation Architect

attached: Figs.1-21 (pp.6-15)

Fig.1 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (highlighted) – Location aerial (Google Earth, 2023, north is up)

Fig.2 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (highlighted) – Site aerial (Google Earth, 2023)

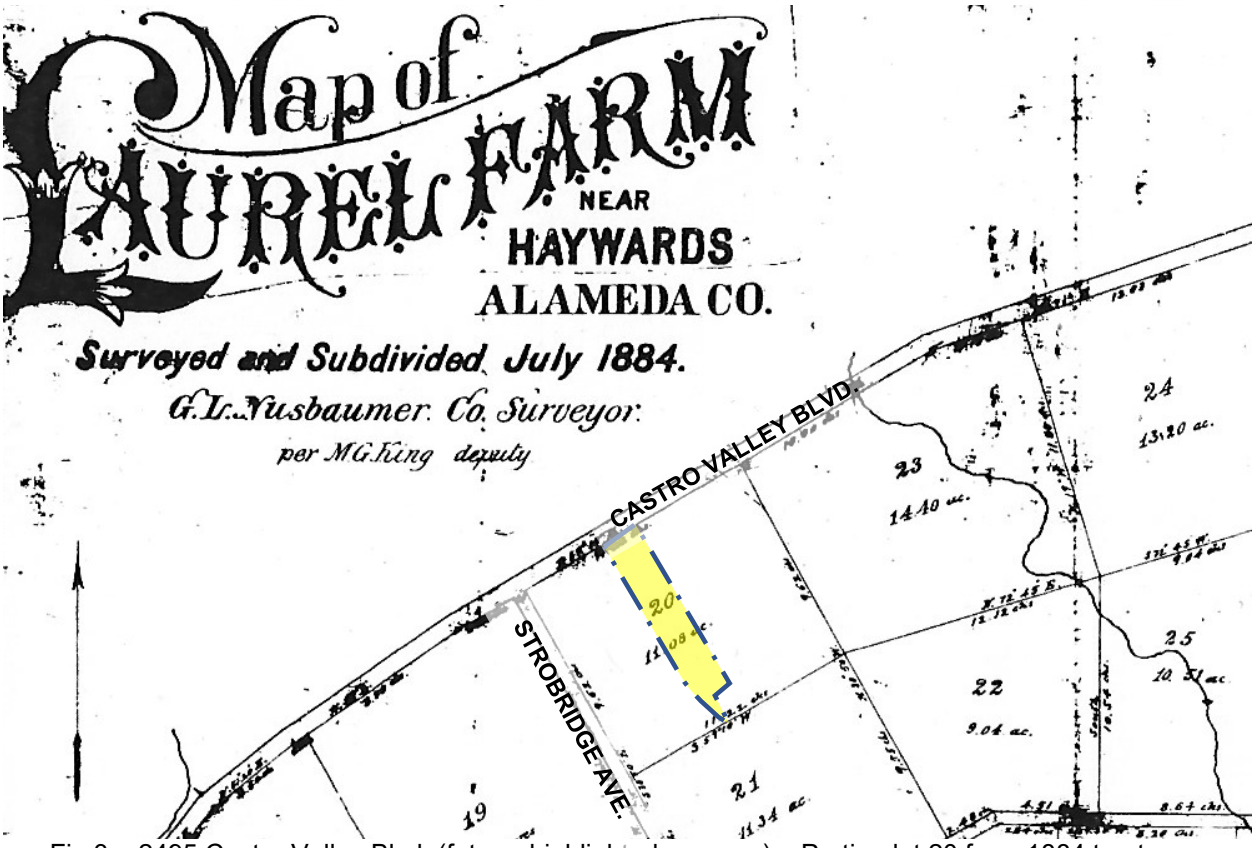


Fig.3 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (future, highlighted, approx.) – Portion lot 20 from 1884 tract map

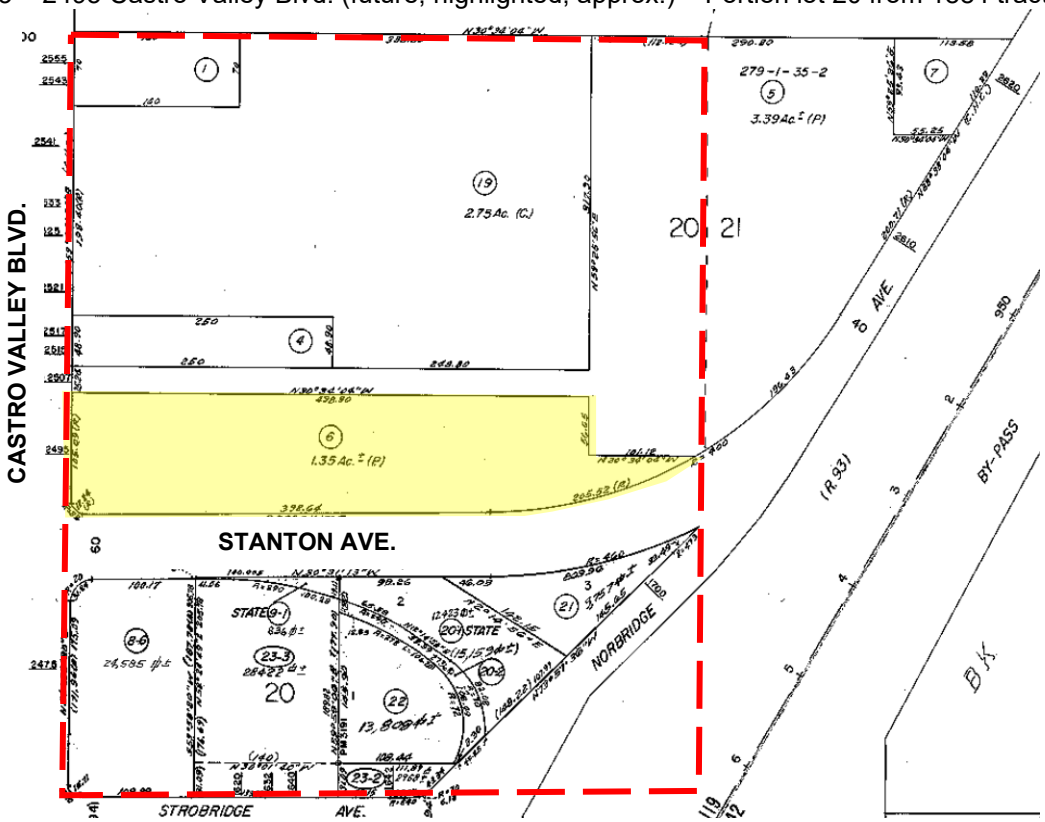


Fig.4 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (yellow highlighted) – from Assessor's Parcel map (north at upper left) with original Laurel Farm lot 20 (red outlined, approx.)

Fig.5 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (future) – View of building being moved, c1939 (figs.5-10, from HAHS)

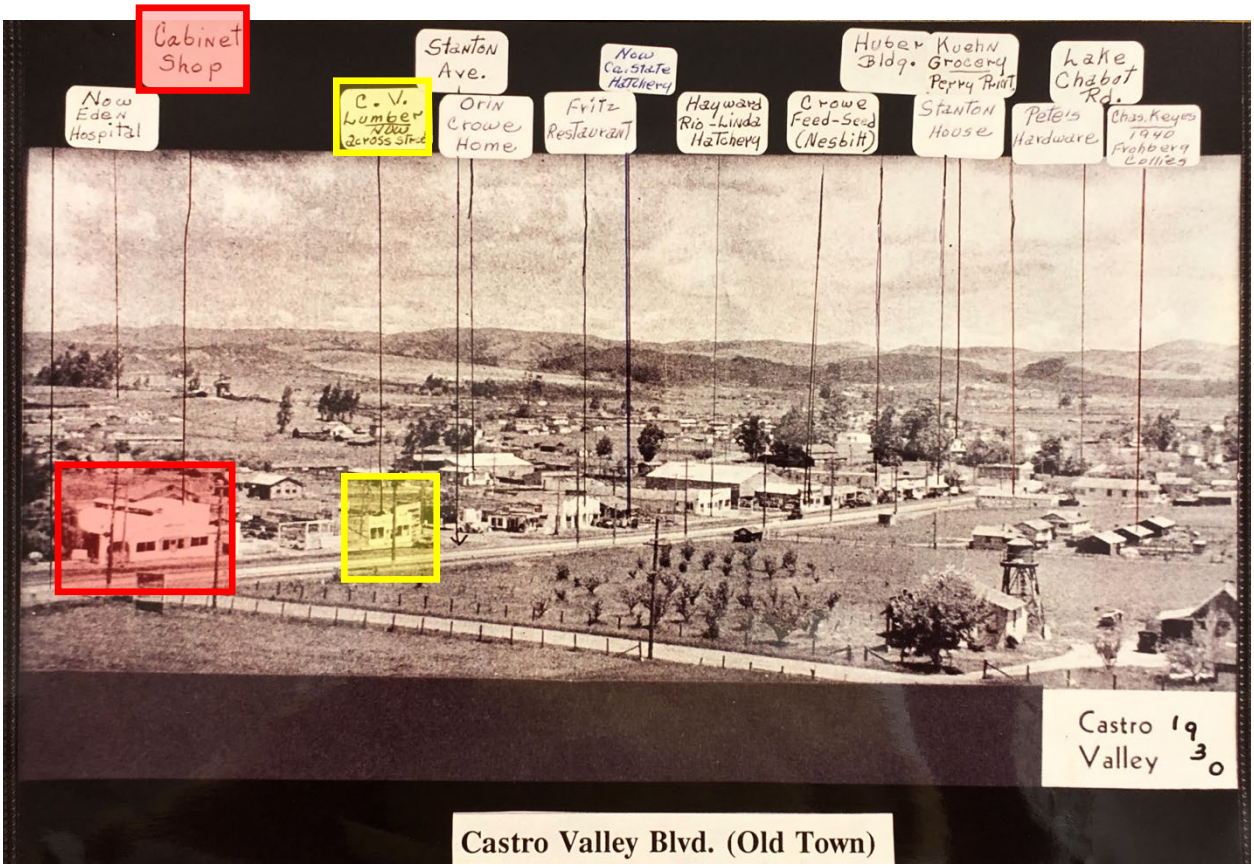


Fig.6– 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (future, undeveloped, in foreground) – View of downtown, 1930, with future moved building outlined in yellow and future Elsworth & Wilson Lumber building outlined in red

Fig.7– 4941 Castro Valley Blvd., c1939

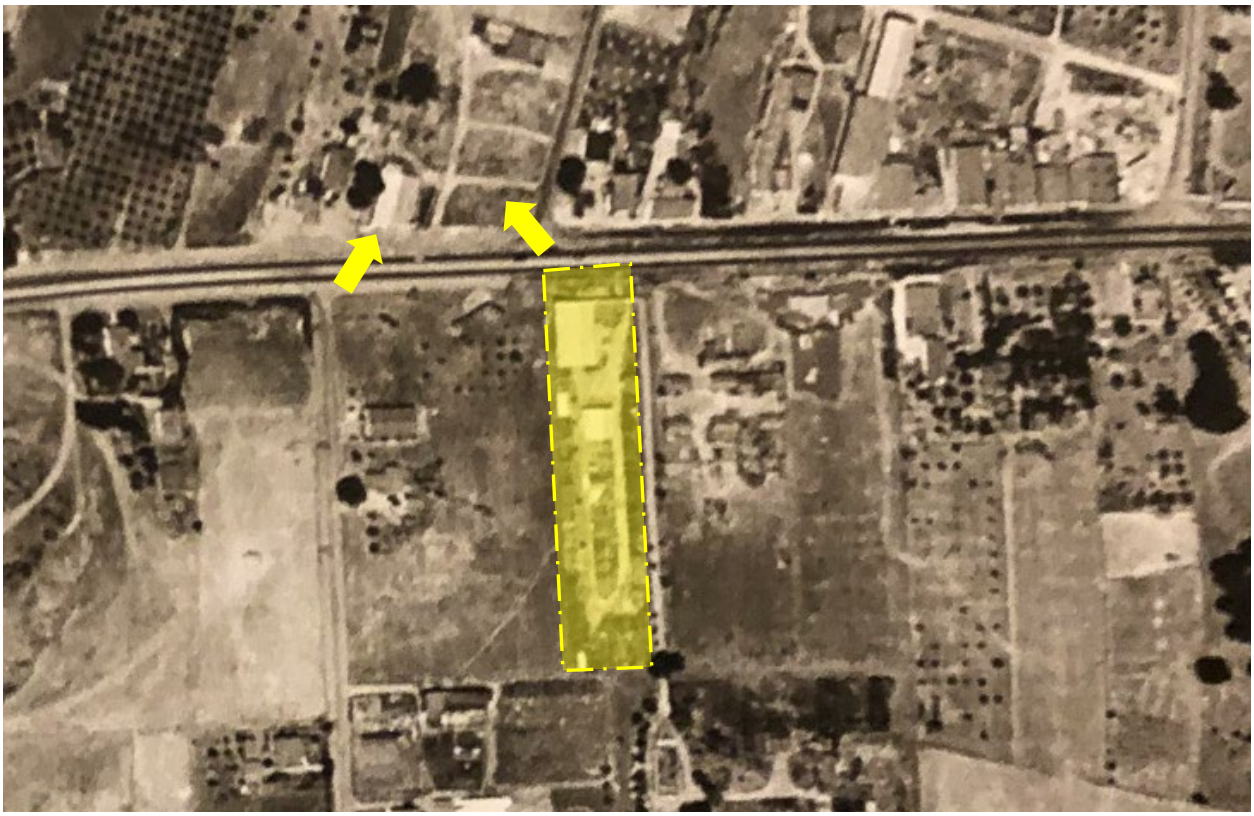


Fig.8 – 5909/2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (highlighted) – Aerial, 1939, indicating previous site of moved Castro Valley Lumber building seen being moved in fig.5 (right arrow) and former Elsworth & Wilson Lumber building depicted in fig.7 (left arrow)

Fig.9– 4941 and 5909 Castro Valley Blvd., Dec. 1940 advertisements

Fig.10 – 5909/2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Front (north), c1950

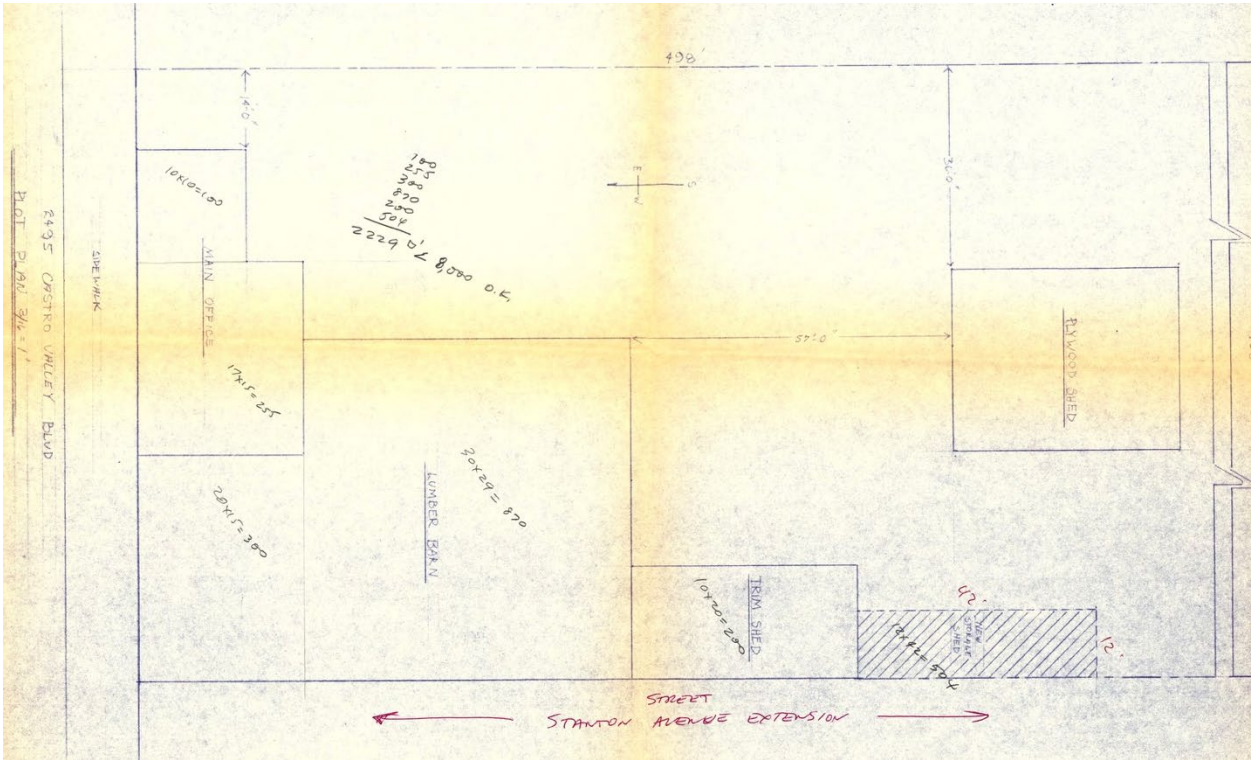


Fig.11 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Site plan, 1988 (from Alameda County Public Works, north at upper left)

Fig.12 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Front (north) from Castro Valley Blvd. (figs.12-18, Google Earth 2024)

Fig.13 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Front (north) and west side


Fig.14 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Front (north) and east side

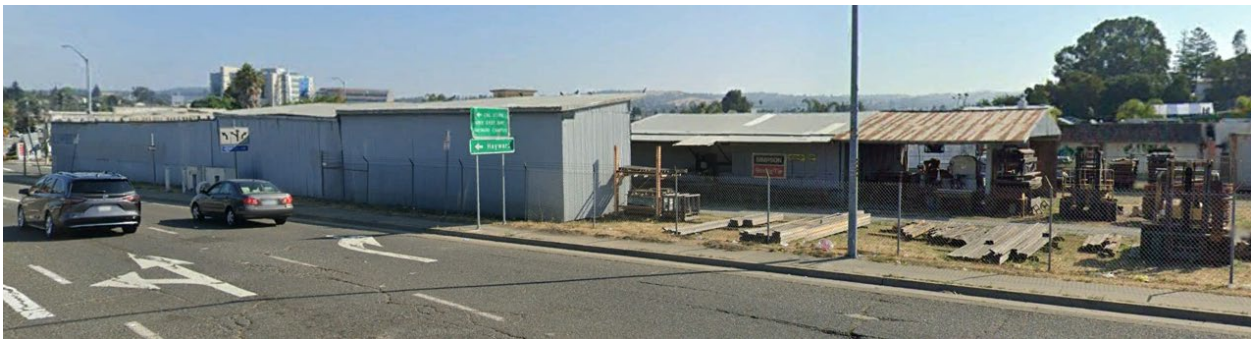


Fig.15 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – West side, from Stanton Ave.

Fig.16 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Interior of site from west side

Fig.17 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Interior of site from east side

Fig.18 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Part east side

Fig.19 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. – Part east side

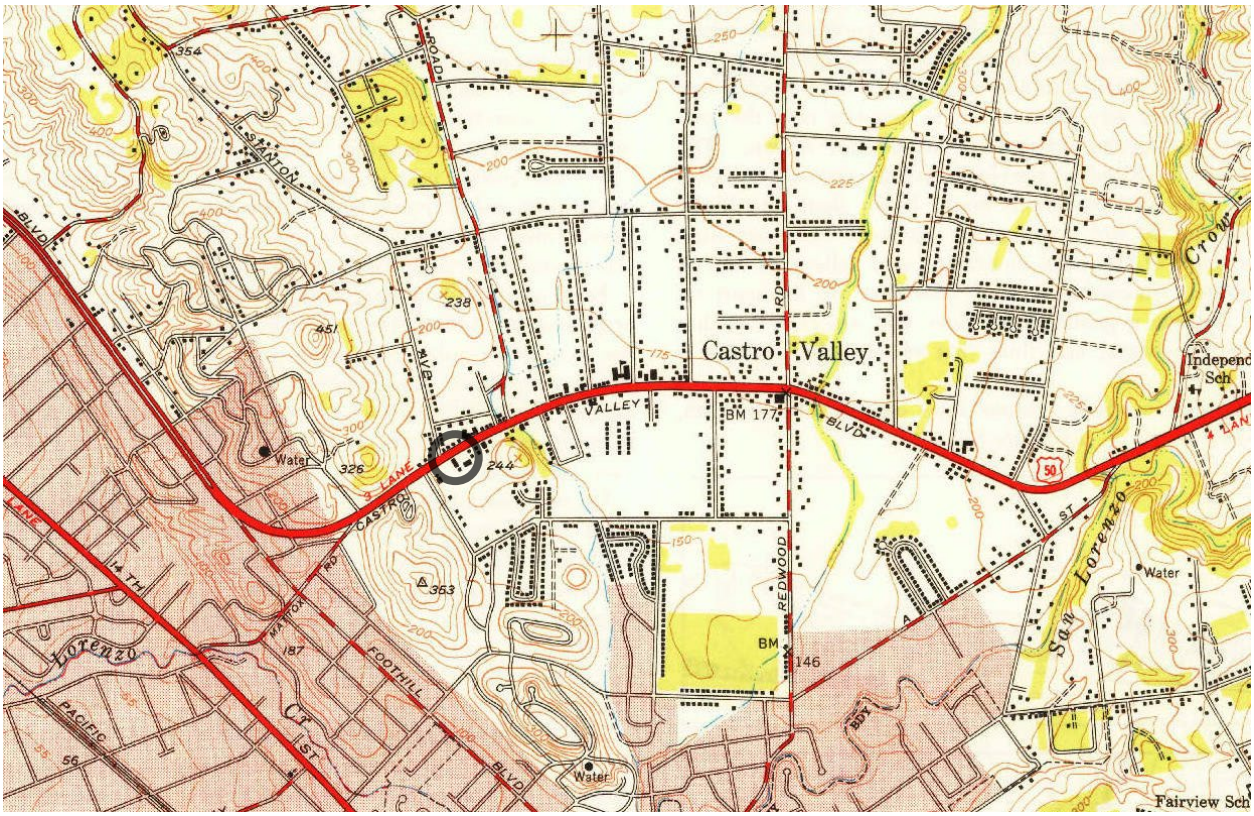


Fig.20 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (circled) – USGS map, 1950 (figs.20-21 from https://ngmdb.usgs.gov - north is up)

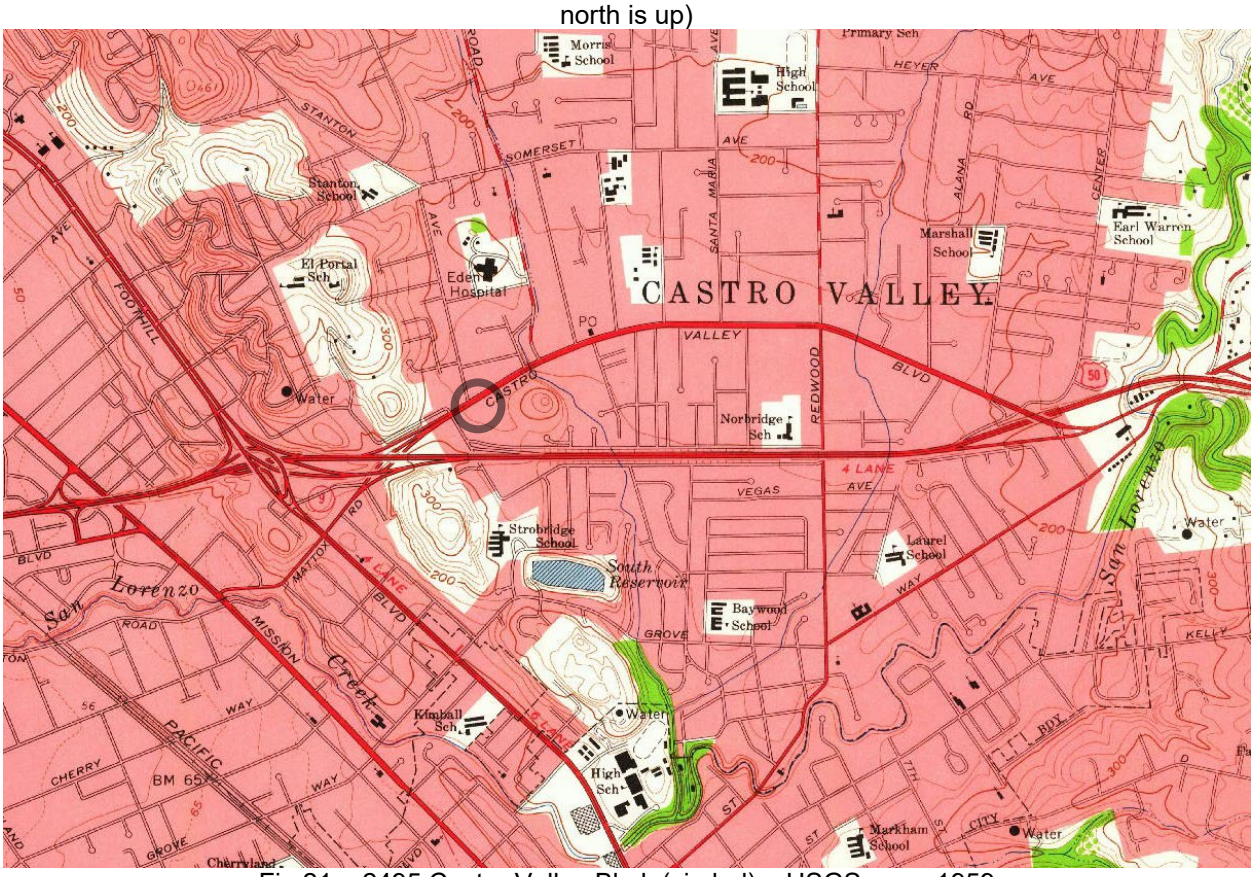


Fig.21 – 2495 Castro Valley Blvd. (circled) – USGS map, 1959