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Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: August 19, 2025

Prepared By: Carole Kendrick, Director of Development Services

PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY

Case File: Master Sign Plan Amendment (MSP) 25-02

Request: Consideration of a Master Sign Plan amendment for the sign branding from Shell to ARCO including a new monument sign on a 0.48 acre parcel zoned CBD (Commercial Business District) located at 151 Main Street (APN: 003-022-017)

Summary Recommendation: Approve Master Sign Plan MSP25-02 for ARCO as presented.

<u>Property Owner:</u>	Mohammad Satar
<u>Applicant:</u>	Michele Richmond – Perry Builders, Inc.
<u>Address:</u>	151 Main Street
<u>APN:</u>	003-022-017
<u>Lot Area:</u>	0.48 acres
<u>General Plan:</u>	Central Business District (CBD)
<u>Zoning:</u>	Central Business District (CBD)
<u>Existing Use:</u>	Fueling Station and Convenience Store
<u>Environmental Document:</u>	Categorically Exempt per §15311 (Accessory Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines
<u>Decision Making Authority:</u>	Placerville Zoning Ordinance §10-4-17(H)

BACKGROUND

The Shell station, approved under Conditional Use Permit 65-01 in 1965, included a pole sign and maintenance bays. In 2009, Site Plan Review 08-05 approved converting the bays and office (1,530 square feet) into an expanded convenience store, adding landscaping, enclosures, and a relocated monument sign, with exterior upgrades (stucco, stone veneer, gridded windows). A 10,000-gallon tank for biodiesel and Ethanol 85 was proposed in 2009 (Propel Fuels).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Based on the submitted Master Sign Plan drawings for 151 Main Street, the MSP proposes the following signage elements to facilitate the rebranding from Shell to ARCO:

Ground Sign:

- One double-sided freestanding monument sign with ARCO logo and fuel price display, located near the Main Street entrance.
- Size: 32 square feet per side, maximum height 10 feet.
- Materials: Metal with vinyl lettering and non-reflective finishes.
- Illumination: Internal illumination with opaque background, warm white LED (3000K or less), only lettering and logo visible at night.

Canopy Signs:

- Two signs on the fuel canopy faces, displaying the ARCO logo.
- Each sign is not to exceed 20 square feet in area.
- Materials: Vinyl or metal with non-reflective finishes.
- Illumination: External lighting, shielded to prevent glare.

Wall Sign:

- One wall sign on the convenience store facade facing Main Street, identifying the ARCO station.
- Size: Not to exceed 20 square feet, with a maximum letter height of 12 inches.
- Materials: Painted metal with non-reflective finishes.
- Illumination: External gooseneck lighting, with warm white LED bulbs (3000K or less).

Pole Sign (Existing):

- One existing double-sided pole sign, originally installed in 1965, to be rebranded with ARCO logo and fuel price display, located along Main Street.
- Size: Approximately 32 square feet per side, maximum height 20 feet (per existing configuration, compliant with ordinance).
- Materials: Metal with vinyl lettering and non-reflective finishes, updated to ARCO branding.
- Illumination: Internal illumination with opaque background, warm white LED (3000K or less), only lettering and logo visible at night.

The existing signage to be refaced totals 199.59 square feet, with new proposed signage adding 16.63 square feet, resulting in a combined total of 216.22 square feet.

SIGN & SQUARE FOOT INDEX							
NO.	NAME OF SIGN	SIZE OF SIGN	QTY.	EXISTING SQ. FT.	NEW SQ. FT. EACH	TOTAL NEW SQ. FT.	REMARKS
1A	ARCO CHANNEL LETTERS	6'-0" x 1'-8"	2		10 SQ. FT.	20.00 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1B	ARCO SPARK SIGN	36" DIAMETER	3		7.06 SQ. FT.	21.18 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1C	FOOD MART WALL SIGN	96" x 23½"	1		15.83 SQ. FT.	15.83 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1D	HIGH RISE ARCO SIGN	93" x 93½"	1		60.39 SQ. FT.	60.39 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1E	HIGH RISE FOOD MART SIGN	92½" x 40½"	1		25.97 SQ. FT.	25.97 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1F	MID ARCO/FOOD MART SIGN	43½" x 60"	1		18.32 SQ. FT.	18.32 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1G	MID CASH PRICE SIGN	43½" x 60"	1		18.32 SQ. FT.	18.32 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1H	MID DEBIT/CREDIT PRICE SIGN	47½" x 60½"	1		19.58 SQ. FT.	19.58 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1I	PROPEL PRICE SIGN	3'-2" x 5'-3"	1		16.63 SQ. FT.	16.63 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
TOTAL SIGN SQ. FT.						216.22 SQ. FT.	

The MSP includes a design template specifying colors (aligned with ARCO branding, using blues and reds moderated for aesthetic compatibility), fonts (modern sans-serif for readability), and placement guidelines to ensure uniformity. The plan also includes provisions for future sign modifications, subject to administrative review for consistency with the MSP.

The City Code of the City of Placerville Section 10-4.17(H) allows master sign plans for new signage for any site having three (3) or more nonresidential occupants or those wishing to deviate from the standards herein shall submit a master sign plan to the development services department. Such plan must be approved by the planning commission prior to issuance of any permit for signs.

PROJECT SETTING

The subject property consists of a gasoline/service station that operates five (5) fuel pumps with 10 fueling positions and a 2,420 square foot canopy located on the eastern portion of the property, with fuel that will be provided by ARCO. A 2,340 square foot convenience store exists on the western portion of the subject property and will be operated by ARCO Food Mart.

The subject property is a 0.48-acre lot located at 151 Main Street and is fully developed with an existing Shell convenience store and fueling station that is converting to ARCO. To the north is Old Canal Street and the Tap House. Century 21 is located to the south across Spring Street. Hangtown Creek is located to the west and to the east is the Buttercup Pantry. The properties to the south, east, and west are developed with residential uses. The site is developed with existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements.

The project setting can also be seen in the following materials attached to this staff report:

- General Plan Land Use Map (Attachment B)
- Zoning Map (Attachment C)
- Aerial Photograph (Attachment D)

The land uses, zoning, and Placerville General Plan Land Use Element designations of the project site and surrounding area are shown in the following Table.

	LAND USE	GENERAL PLAN	ZONING
PROJECT SITE	Convenience Store & Fueling Station	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
NORTH	Tap House	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
SOUTH	Century 21 Real Estate	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
EAST	Buttercup Pantry	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
WEST	Hangtown Creek	-	-

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The City of Placerville Sign Ordinance (Chapter 10-4-17) regulates sign size, placement, materials, and illumination to ensure compatibility with the community's aesthetic and safety standards. Key findings:

- **Size and Number:** The proposed signs comply with the maximum allowable area (2 square feet per linear foot of business frontage for wall signs up to 200 square feet aggregate, 32 square feet for freestanding signs) and the limit of one primary freestanding sign per parcel. As a gas station, the freestanding sign accommodates fuel price display as permitted under the ordinance.
- **Illumination:** Internal and external lighting complies with the ordinance's requirement for fully shielded, non-glare illumination with opaque backgrounds for internally lit signs. The use of warm white LEDs aligns with energy efficiency standards and avoids prohibited flashing, moving, or hazardous effects.
- **Materials and Design:** The proposed materials (metal, vinyl) and color palette are consistent with the ordinance, which emphasizes durable, high-quality materials that enhance the commercial environment. The design maintains a professional appearance suitable for the CBD.

General Plan Consistency:

The Placerville General Plan (Policy C-1, Downtown Commercial) encourages signage that promotes business visibility while contributing to an attractive and cohesive streetscape. The MSP's use of standardized ARCO branding, moderated to avoid overly bright or garish

elements, supports commercial vitality while ensuring visual compatibility with the surrounding area. The monument-style freestanding sign, as opposed to a tall pole sign, aligns with the ordinance's preference for low-profile signage in the CBD.

Environmental Review:

The project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15311 (Class 11: Accessory Structures), as it involves minor signage installations with no significant environmental impact.

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

The Planning Commission is authorized under Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-17(H) to act upon Master Sign Plan applications within the City.

FINDINGS

1. The MSP complies with the City of Placerville Sign Ordinance (Chapter 10-4-17) regarding size, placement, materials, and illumination.
2. The proposed signage, including the retention and rebranding of the existing pole sign, is consistent with the Placerville General Plan, supporting commercial vitality and maintaining an attractive streetscape in the CBD.
3. The project will not adversely impact public safety, traffic, or pedestrian access.
4. The MSP provides a clear framework for future sign modifications, streamlining administrative approvals while ensuring design consistency.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Hold a public meeting; and,

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the Master Sign Plan (MSP) 25-02 for 151 Main Street, subject to the following conditions:

1. All signage shall conform to the specifications outlined in the MSP, including size, materials, and illumination standards.
2. Future tenant signs under the MSP shall be subject to administrative review to ensure consistency with the approved plan.
3. All external lighting shall be shielded and comply with the City's External Lighting Ordinance.
4. The applicant shall obtain a sign permit from the Building Division prior to installation.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Master Sign Plan
- B. General Plan Land Use Designation Map
- C. Zoning Map
- D. Aerial Photograph

INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

City of Placerville General Plan

City of Placerville Zoning Ordinance

Contents of City of Placerville Planning Department Project File CUP 65-01, SPR 08-05, LLA 16-04, PM51-126, MSP25-02