



"We are a welcoming, active and business-friendly rural foothill community built on California's rich gold rush history."

Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 21, 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).

The subject application was introduced to the Planning Commission at the August 16, 2025, meeting. The Planning Commission discussed the proposal in detail and provided several

suggestions for the applicant to consider and continued the item to allow for revisions to the sign package.

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 Signs:

- Two (2) double-sided freestanding monument signs with one (1) ARCO logo and fuel price display and one (1) Propel logo and fuel price display, located near the Main Street entrance
- Size: ARCO 50 square feet (8.33' width/6' height) Propel 17.15 square feet (3.17' width/5'42")
- Materials: Aluminum, Plastic & 3M vinyl
- Illumination: LED Internal illumination

Canopy Signs:

- Two (2) signs on the fuel canopy faces, displaying the ARCO "spark" logo and two (2) ARCO channel letters
- Size: ARCO "spark" is 36" in diameter at a square footage of 7.06 square foot with the channel letter at 10 square feet (6' width/1'8" height)
- Materials: Plastic & 3M vinyl
- Illumination: LED internal illumination

Wall Signs:

- One (1) wall sign on the convenience store facade facing Main Street, identifying the ARCO station.
- Size: 11.88 square feet (7.5' width/1.58' height)
- Materials: Plastic & 3M vinyl
- Illumination: LED internal illumination

Pole Sign (Existing):

- One existing double-sided pole sign with two (2) panels, originally installed in 1965, to be rebranded with ARCO logo and fuel price display, located along Main Street.
- Size: ARCO "spark" is 60.39 square feet (7.75' width/7.79' height) and the food mart sign is 25.97 square feet (7.72' width/3.36' height).
- Materials: Plastic & 3M vinyl
- Illumination: LED Internal illumination

Fueling Islands will also be rebranded with the ARCO design as shown in Attachment A of this staff report. The color palette includes white, blue, red, black and several shades green as shown

on Sheet 11 of Attachment A. The existing signage to be refaced or replaced totals 199.51 square feet as shown in the table below.

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	2		7.06 SQ. FT.	14.12 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1C	FOOD MART WALL SIGN	90" x 19"	1		11.88 SQ. FT.	11.88 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 40¾"	1		25.97 SQ. FT.	25.97 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1F	MID ARCO PRICE SIGN	100" x 72"	1		50.00 SQ. FT.	50.00 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
1G	PROPEL PRICE SIGN	38" x 65"	1		17.15 SQ. FT.	17.15 SQ. FT.	ILLUMINATED
TOTAL SIGN SQ. FT.						199.51 SQ. FT.	

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.

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 east is Old Canal Street and the Tap House. Century 21 is located to the west across Spring Street. Hangtown Creek is located to the north and to the south is the Buttercup Pantry. 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	Hangtown Creek	-	-
SOUTH	Buttercup Pantry	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
EAST	Tap House	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
WEST	Century 21 Real Estate	Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)

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.

Historic Resources:

The property at 151 Main Street is located in Placerville's historic downtown. The property is within 300 feet of multiple resources from the inventory. Placerville's Main Street is densely developed with 19th-century buildings, and the inventory lists over 40 properties on Main Street alone. The area falls within or adjacent to the Historic Main Street District (informally recognized, with boundaries roughly from Sacramento Street to the east and extending west toward Spring Street/Center Street). This district encompasses much of the commercial core, where the 300-foot radius (approximately 0.17 acres or a 100-foot radius circle) overlaps with several listed buildings.

Based on the inventory's street-indexed list and cross-referenced with maps (e.g., city zoning maps and walking tour descriptions), the following resources are within 300 feet (estimated using standard block lengths of ~300-400 feet in downtown Placerville and confirmed via descriptions of adjacent sites):

Address	Inventory Name	Year Built	Architectural Style	Distance Estimate	Significance
Main & Spring St Intersection (approx. 150-200 ft east)	Pony Express Terminus (State Historical Landmark #701)	1860 (site)	N/A (marker/site)	~200 ft	Western terminus of the Pony Express (1861); key Gold Rush transportation hub. Listed in inventory and National Register-eligible.
Main & Spring St Intersection (approx. 150-200 ft east)	Old Dry Diggings/Old Hangtown Marker (State Historical Landmark #475)	1848 (site)	N/A (marker)	~200 ft	Commemorates Placerville's founding as a mining camp; central to Gold Rush history.
82 Main St (approx. 250-300 ft east)	O'Keffe Residence & Toll House	1860	Victorian Farmhouse	~250 ft	Early residential structure tied to mining toll roads; APN 003-051-341.
582 Main St (approx. 250 ft west)	Stable Building (State Point of Interest #653)	1850s	Western Vernacular	~250 ft	Historic stable linked to Pony Express and stagecoaches.
487 Main St (approx. 200-250 ft west)	Confidence Engine Company Hall	1890s	Victorian	~220 ft	National Register of Historic Places (NRIS #82002174); former

Address	Inventory Name	Year Built	Architectural Style	Distance Estimate	Significance
					firehouse with Gold Rush firefighting history.

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. No historic resources will be altered, as confirmed by a review from the City's Historic Preservation Consultant.

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,

The Planning Commission may take one of the following actions based on the analysis provided:

1. Approve the Master Sign Plan as Proposed: If the Commission finds full consistency with standards. Motion language: “Move to approve MSP 25-02 based on the findings and conditions in the staff report.”

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.

2. Approve the Master Sign Plan with Modifications and/or Additional Conditions: If changes are needed (e.g., size reduction, alternative location, or time-limited approval). Specify in the motion.

3. Deny the Master Sign Plan: If inconsistencies exist, particularly with historic guidelines or sign regulations. Provide specific reasons, e.g., the mural’s incompatibility. Motion language: “Move to deny MSP 25-02 based on [specific findings].”

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