

**STAFF REPORT – PLANNING  
CITY OF TEMECULA  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**TO:** Planning Commission Chairperson and members of the Planning Commission

**FROM:** Matt Peters, Director of Community Development

**DATE OF MEETING:** April 1, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Jaime Cardenas, Case Planner

**PROJECT**

**SUMMARY:** Planning Application Number PA25-0090, a Modification Application to a Development Plan for an approximately 735 square foot coffee shop with a drive-thru on the 0.94-acre parcel located at 43995 Mahlon Vail Road (APN 960-020-077).

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt a Resolution approving the project subject to Conditions of Approval

**CEQA:** Categorically Exempt  
Section 15332, Infill Development

**PROJECT DATA SUMMARY**

**Name of Applicant:** Nicholas Salazar

**General Plan Designation:** Industrial Park (IP)

**Zoning Designation:** Vail Ranch Specific Plan (SP-10)

**Existing Conditions/  
Land Use:**

Site: Vacant Parcel/Industrial Park (IP)

North: Temecula Parkway, Single Family Residential / Paloma del Sol Specific Plan

South: Existing Commercial Center / Industrial Park (IP)

East: Mahlon Vail Road, Existing Commercial Building / Industrial Park (IP)

West: Existing Commercial Center / Industrial Park (IP)

|                                   | <u>Existing/Proposed</u> | <u>Min/Max Allowable or Required</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Lot Area:</b>                  | 0.94 Acres               | N/A                                  |
| <b>Total Floor Area/Ratio:</b>    | 0.179                    | 0.40 Maximum                         |
| <b>Landscape Area/Coverage:</b>   | 36%                      | 25% Minimum                          |
| <b>Parking Provided/Required:</b> | 10 Proposed              | 10 Required                          |

**AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE HOUSING**

Located in Housing Element Vacant Sites Inventory?  Yes  No

Located in Affordable Housing Overlay Zone (AHOZ)?  Yes  No

**BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

On July 6, 2016, the City of Temecula Planning Commission approved PA15-1572, a Development Plan, and PA15-1573, a Conditional Use Permit, to allow the construction of two fast food drive-thru restaurants and one express car wash within the Vail Ranch Town Square commercial center. Of the three approved buildings, only the car wash was constructed.

On November 13, 2018, Donnie DeWees and Randy Morine submitted Planning Application No. PA18-1529, a Modification to the previously approved Development Plan (PA15-1572) to construct an approximately 1,389 square foot drive-thru restaurant and approximately 6,281 square feet of in line retail shops located at the southwest corner of Temecula Parkway and Mahlon Vail Road. Only the 1,389 square foot drive-thru restaurant was constructed from this entitlement (formerly QuickBurger, now Cotija’s Taco Shop).

On February 21, 2025, Nicholas Salazar submitted PA25-0090, a Modification requesting to replace the previously approved inline retail building with an approximately 735 square foot coffee shop with a drive-thru on the remaining vacant lot.

This development is part of the Vail Ranch Specific Plan (SP-10), which was approved while the area was within the jurisdiction of Riverside County. The portion of SP-10 where the project is located is designated Business Park (BP). The BP land use designation allows drive-thru restaurants and retail buildings; therefore, a Conditional Use Permit is not required for the drive-thru component of this proposed modification since PA15-1572 (Development Plan) and PA15-1573 (CUP) were vested by the car wash development.

Staff has worked with the applicant to ensure that all concerns have been addressed, and the applicant concurs with the recommended Conditions of Approval.

## **ANALYSIS**

### Site Plan

The overall site currently contains eight existing structures. This proposal would complete the development by constructing a drive-thru restaurant on the remaining vacant 0.94-acre parcel.

The overall project will be developed in four phases. The previously approved car wash is Phase I. Phase II includes paving and parking improvements to support site circulation. Phase III was the drive-thru restaurant (Cotija's Taco Shop), and Phase IV is this proposed drive-thru restaurant/coffee shop.

The proposed restaurant/coffee shop is approximately 735 square feet. The building setbacks meet or exceed the minimum requirements outlined in the City of Temecula Municipal Code and the Vail Ranch Specific Plan. The proposed building height is 22 feet, 9 inches, well below the maximum height of 50 feet. The overall lot coverage for the development is 1.79 percent, significantly below the maximum 40 percent allowed.

Parking requirements are satisfied, with 10 spaces provided where 10 are required. While the Temecula Municipal Code requires stacking for six (6) vehicles behind the ordering menu, this project accommodates 14 vehicles through a double stacked drive-thru lane.

### Architecture

The proposed drive-thru restaurant is designed to complement the existing structures within the center. The proposed building and the center's buildings share the same base tile and roof materials to maintain visual continuity.

### Landscaping

When the project is completed, the entire center would provide 36% landscaping which meets the minimum percentage- 25% of required landscaping. Tree types include Desert Willow, Olive and London Plane. Shrubs and accents include Kangaroo Paw, Flax, Iceberg Rose, Rosemary, and sage. Groundcovers include Lantana, Yellow Trumpet Vine, and Trailing Rosemary.

## **LEGAL NOTICING REQUIREMENTS**

Notice of the public hearing was published in *The Press-Enterprise* on March 19, 2026, and mailed to the property owners within the required 600-foot radius.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the proposed project has been deemed to be categorically exempt from further environmental review (Section 15332, In-Fill Development Projects);

(a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

*The project is consistent with the applicable General Plan designation because restaurant/fast-food uses are an allowable use within the Vail Ranch Specific Plan. The project also meets all applicable General Plan and Zoning policies and regulations.*

(b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.

*The project is located within City limits and is located on a site that is 0.94 acres in size. The proposed project is substantially surrounded by an urbanized environment zoned for commercial development and roadways.*

(c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.

*The project is not located within a Multi Species Habitation Conservation Strategy (MSHCP) criteria cell. The project has been conditioned that, if Burrowing Owl is found, the qualified biologist shall implement the necessary steps to prevent any taking of species as specified in the MSHCP prior to any ground disturbance. Furthermore, project site is surrounded by urban uses and the site was previously graded. As such, it has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.*

d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

*The proposed project was required to prepare a Project-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) that was reviewed and conceptually accepted for entitlement by City Staff as the WQMP meets the requirements of the City of Temecula. A traffic analysis was not required as part of this project as the proposed use is allowed within the commercial district, and there is nothing unique about this project that would trigger the need for a traffic analysis. Nonetheless, a stacking analysis was conducted to ensure the site may adequately accommodate enough vehicles behind the ordering menu. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality as the project is an allowed use per the City of Temecula General Plan, and the zoning district.*

(e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

*The project site is surrounded by development and is able to be serviced by all required utilities and public services.*

## **FINDINGS**

### Development Plan (Section 17.05.010)

The proposed uses are in conformance with the General Plan for Temecula and with all applicable requirements of State law and other Ordinances of the City.

*The General Plan and Vail Ranch Specific Plan allow for restaurant and retail uses at the project site. Therefore, the project is consistent with the General Plan for Temecula. The project, as conditioned, is also consistent with other applicable requirements of State law and local*

*Ordinances, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Citywide Design Guidelines, and Fire and Building codes.*

The overall development of the land is designed for the protection of the public health, safety, and general welfare.

*As conditioned, the project will meet all requirements of the Development Code, General Plan, and Building and Fire Codes, which provide safeguards for the health, safety and general welfare of the community and the overall design of the site, building, landscaping, parking, circulation and other associated site improvements, is consistent with, and intended to protect the health and safety of those working in and around the site. The project has been reviewed for and has been found to be consistent with all applicable policies, guidelines, standards and regulations intended to ensure that the development will be constructed and function in a manner consistent with the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare.*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Aerial Map
2. PC Resolution
3. Exhibit A –Draft Conditions of Approval
4. Exhibit B – Plan Reductions
5. Notice of Exemption
6. Notice of Public Hearing