



Goodwill Retail Store with Drive-Up Donation Operations

Conditional Use Permit CUP 26-01 & Design Review Permit DRP 26-01

1551 Sycamore Avenue · Creekside Shopping Center · Hercules, CA

CITY COUNCIL CALL-UP REVIEW

Called up by the Council on July 14, 2026, following Planning Commission approval on July 6, 2026. The Council specified review of the donation drop-off area operations and controls.

PUBLIC HEARING — JULY 28, 2026

Overview

Goodwill of the San Francisco Bay proposes to occupy the vacant former Big Lots building in Creekside Shopping Center — a change of tenancy with interior improvements, a new rear donation door, a trash compactor, and updated signage.



31,631 SF

Existing building
(no added floor area)



CC District

Community Commercial
zoning & GP designation



≈ 31 jobs

New employees
(max. 14 per shift)



9 AM – 9 PM

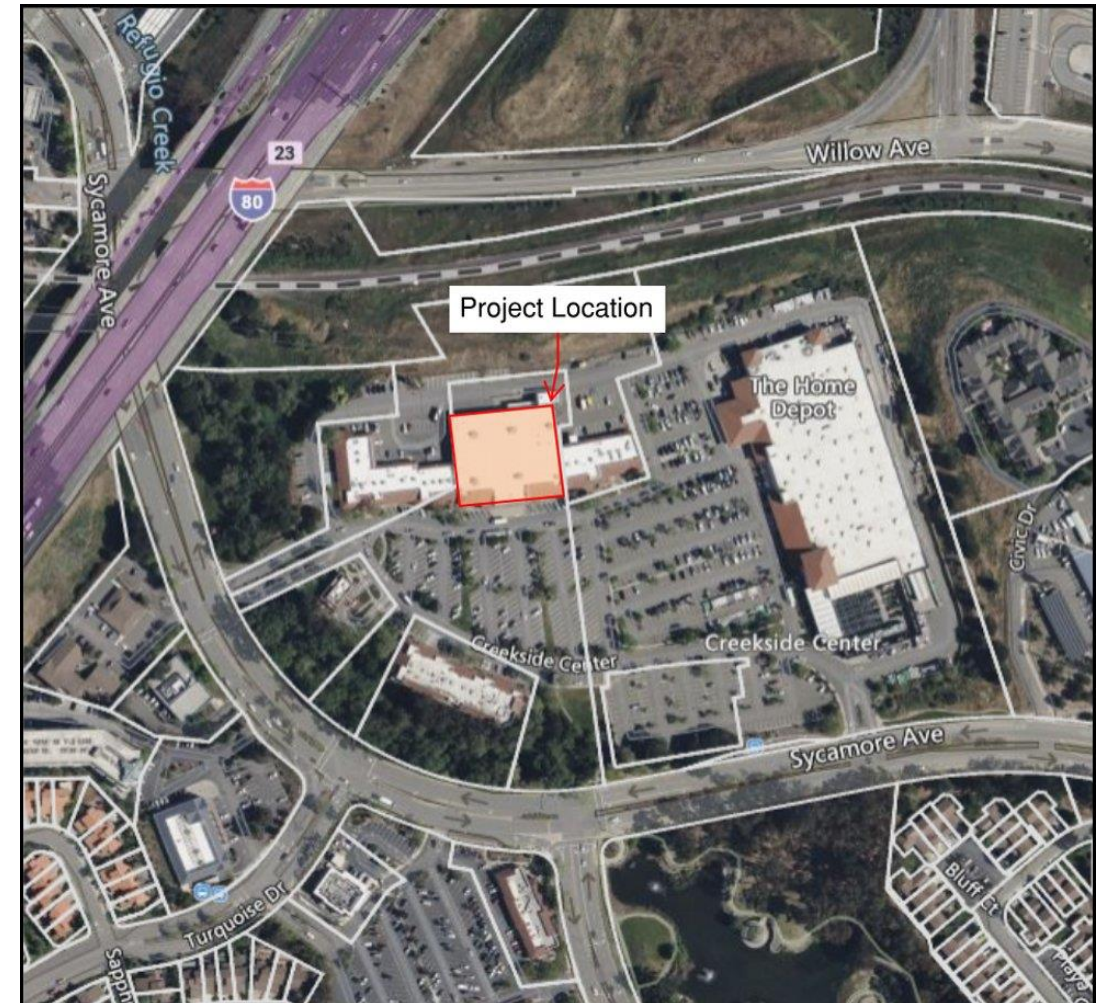
Daily hours
(staff from 8 AM)

Staff Recommendation:

Affirm the Planning Commission's approval of CUP 26-01 and DRP 26-01, subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval, and find the project categorically exempt from CEQA.

Site & Setting

- 4.456-acre parcel (Parcel 3 of Parcel Map 477-82) within Creekside Shopping Center
- Multi-tenant retail center anchored by Home Depot (± 190,567 SF total)
- Surrounding uses: general retail, food service, and personal-service commercial
- Fully developed — building, surface parking, drive aisles, and landscaping in place
- Most recently operated as a Big Lots store; that entitlement has since expired



Creekside Shopping Center — aerial view

The Proposal

USE & OPERATIONS

- Retail sale of new and donated used goods — clothing, household items, furniture
- Hours 9 AM – 9 PM, Mon–Sun (employees from 8 AM)
- ≈ 31 employees; maximum 14 per shift
- No alcoholic beverages sold or served

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Interior tenant improvements: ADA restrooms, LED retrofit, sorting/production area
- New 12' × 8' rear donation door with concrete landing and ramp
- New trash compactor and pad in the existing loading-dock area
- Replacement and new signage (reviewed under DRP 26-01)

No expansion of building area, no change to the site plan, layout, or landscaping, and no reduction in parking.

Drive-Up Donation Operations & Controls

Donations are received at the rear (north) of the building. Conditions of Approval — protect the center's character and directly respond to the Council's concerns:

- 

Attended drive-up
Dedicated attendant receives donations from vehicles during all open hours
- 

Business hours only
No overnight drop-offs; motion chime alerts the attendant on arrival
- 

No outdoor storage
No exterior storage or display of donations or merchandise at any time
- 

24/7 monitoring
Live-streamed video plus an after-hours deterrent speaker system
- 

Screened back-of-house
Tinted sliding doors screen the interior work area from public view
- 

Efficient queuing
Under-1-minute turnover; space for 4+ cars off the parking & drive aisles

Parking



No spaces removed

The project does not remove, reconfigure, or reduce parking anywhere in the center



Comparable demand

Same retail use classification and intensity as the prior retail tenancy



Pre-existing parking

The existing center-wide parking supply was allowed by prior approvals — not this project



No new exception

Does not trigger a new Parking Exception under HMC § 13-32.500

Proposed Signage Program

Sign	Type	Area
Sign A — Primary façade (south)	Replacement face	154.17 SF
Freeway pylon + 2 monument signs	Replacement faces	Existing structures
Sign B — Wall sign (south)	New	33.92 SF
Sign C — Wall sign (north)	New	28 SF
West entrance directional sign	New	3.9 SF
Temporary banners	Temporary	Limited per HMC

Design Quality

- Halo-lit reverse pan-channel brushed-aluminum letters on Deep Brown panels — consistent across all signs
- Freestanding signage limited to new faces within existing cabinets — no new structures, height, or area
- Materials compatible with the center's established character

Sign A — Primary Façade (South)

Fabricate and install one set of lighted letters and logo.

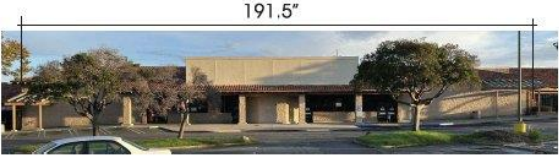
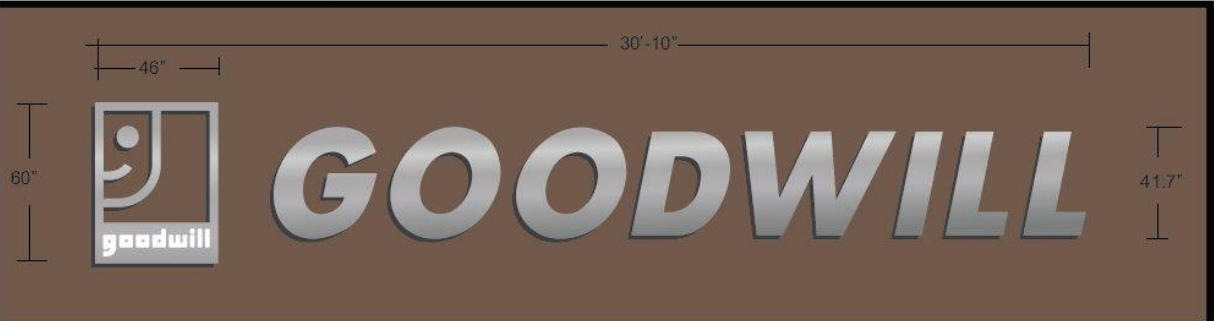
To be Halo-lit, aluminum reverse channel letters.
Letter finish to be horizontal brushed.
Letter depth to be 5"
Letters pegged off background 2".
Illumination to be white LED's.

Backlit with white LED's. (Double normal amount)

Goodwill copy on logo to be routed out and backed with white acrylic.

154.17 Sq. Ft.
SIGN A

Fascia
Painted Goodwill brown.



South Elev.

Halo-lit reverse pan-channel aluminum letters and logo on Deep Brown background panel

Sign B — Wall Sign (South)

Directional Signage

33.92 Sq Ft.
SIGN B

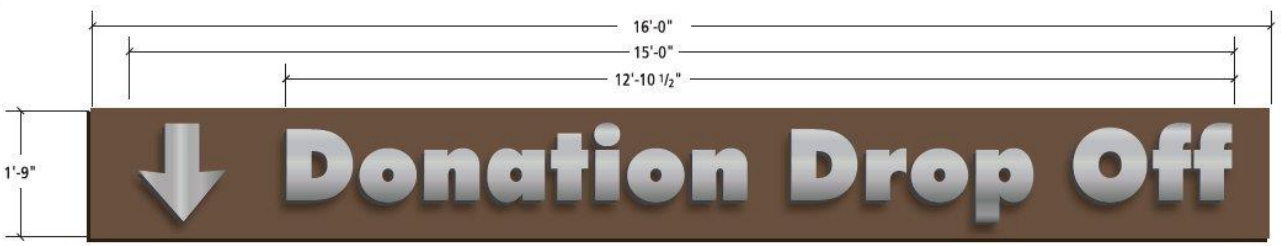
Fabricate and install one set of lighted reverse pan channel letters. Letters to be brushed aluminum with 3" deep returns. Peg off background 2". All backlit with white LED's.

Background panel to be 2" deep aluminum frame with aluminum face surface. Montex textured finish painted Dunn Edwards De6077 "Deep Brown"

“Donation Drop Off / Around Back” directional copy — 33.92 SF

Sign C — Wall Sign (North)

Directional Signage



28 Sq Ft.
SIGN C

Fabricate and install one set of halo-lit reverse pan channel letters. Letters to be brushed aluminum. Letters to have 3" returns. Peg off background 2". All back-lit with white LED's.

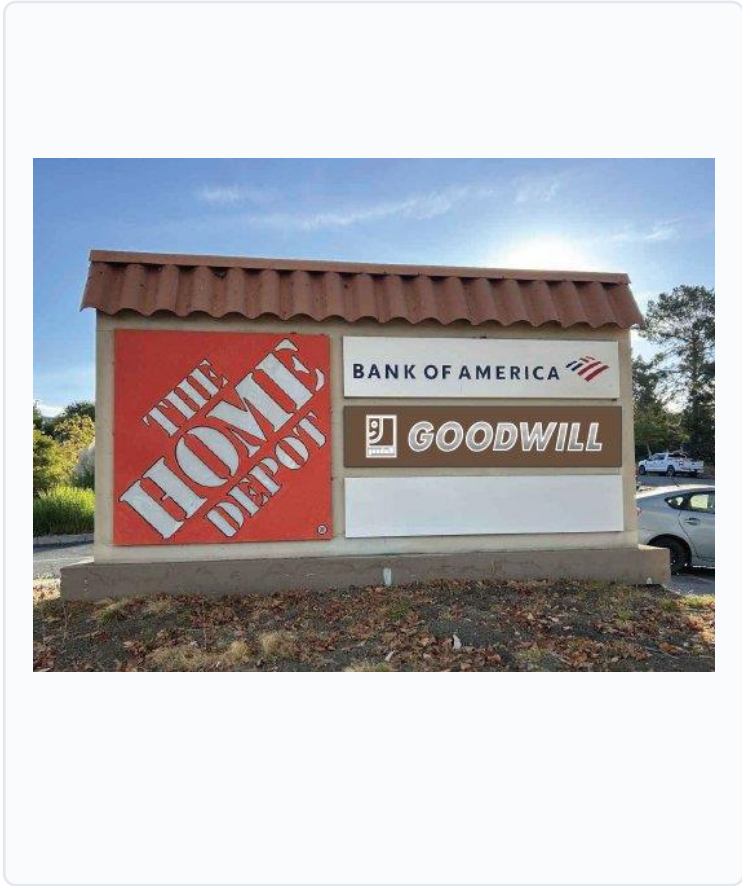
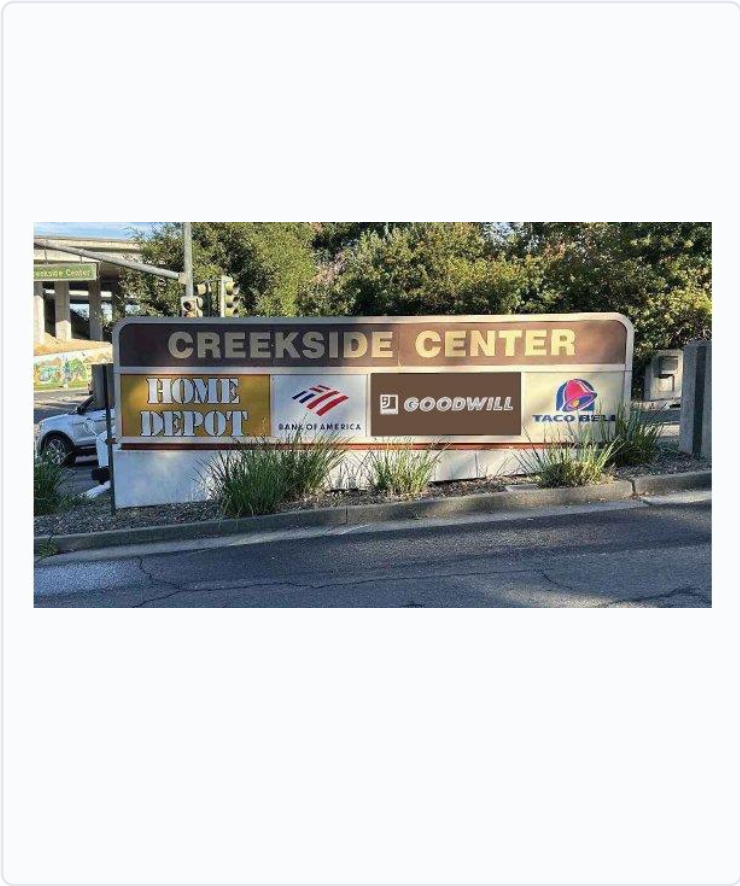
Background panel to be 2" deep aluminum frame with aluminum face surface. Montex textured finish painted Dunn Edwards De6077 "Deep Brown"



North Elev

"Donation Drop Off" informational sign above the new donation door — 28 SF

Freeway Pylon + 2 Monument Signs



West Entrance Directional Sign

Fabricate and install one Single-sided directional sign.

1/8" thick face panel to be painted to match Dunn Edwards De6077 "Deep Brown".
2" square aluminum tube supports to be painted to match
Dunn Edwards De6151 "Warm Butterscotch".

Copy to be brushed alum vinyl, with white outlines as shown.

Note: Top of posts to be capped. Posts extend into ground 18" for concrete footing.



West view



South view

3.9 Sq Ft.

Top view of sign

34"

36"

16.5"

19.5"



Single-sided, ground-mounted sign with logo, "Donation Drop Off" copy, and arrow — 3.9 SF

Wall Sign Area — Analysis

HMC § 13-34.302(3)(A) allows 1 SF of wall sign area per lineal foot of customer-serving storefront.

191.5 SF

baseline allowance

Single frontage
(south, 191.5 LF)

226.5 SF

allowance applied

Two storefronts
(south 191.5 + rear 35 LF)

216.09 SF

Signs A + B + C

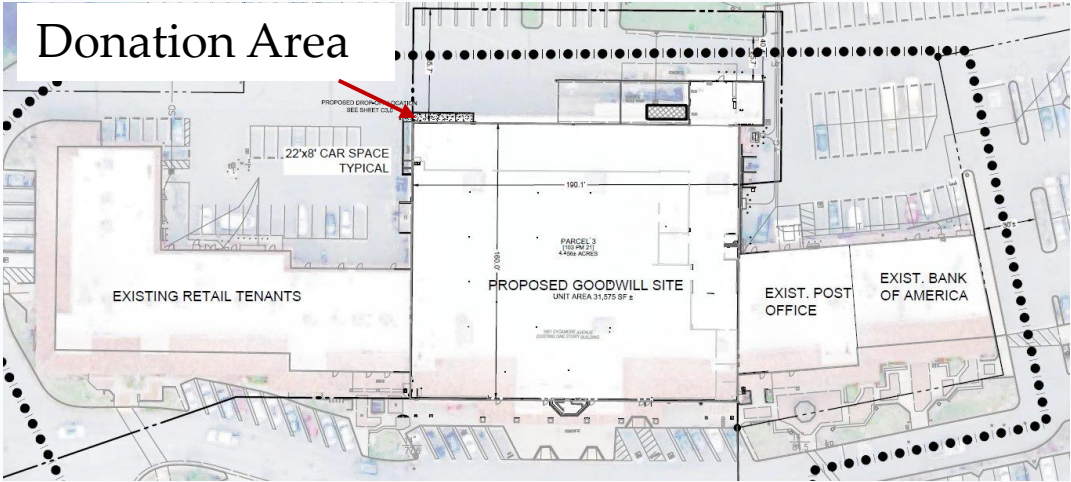
Proposed combined
wall signage

Conforms on a two-storefront basis (rear is a customer-serving donation entrance). Each elevation also independently conforms to its own frontage-based allowance.

New Donation Door & Signage

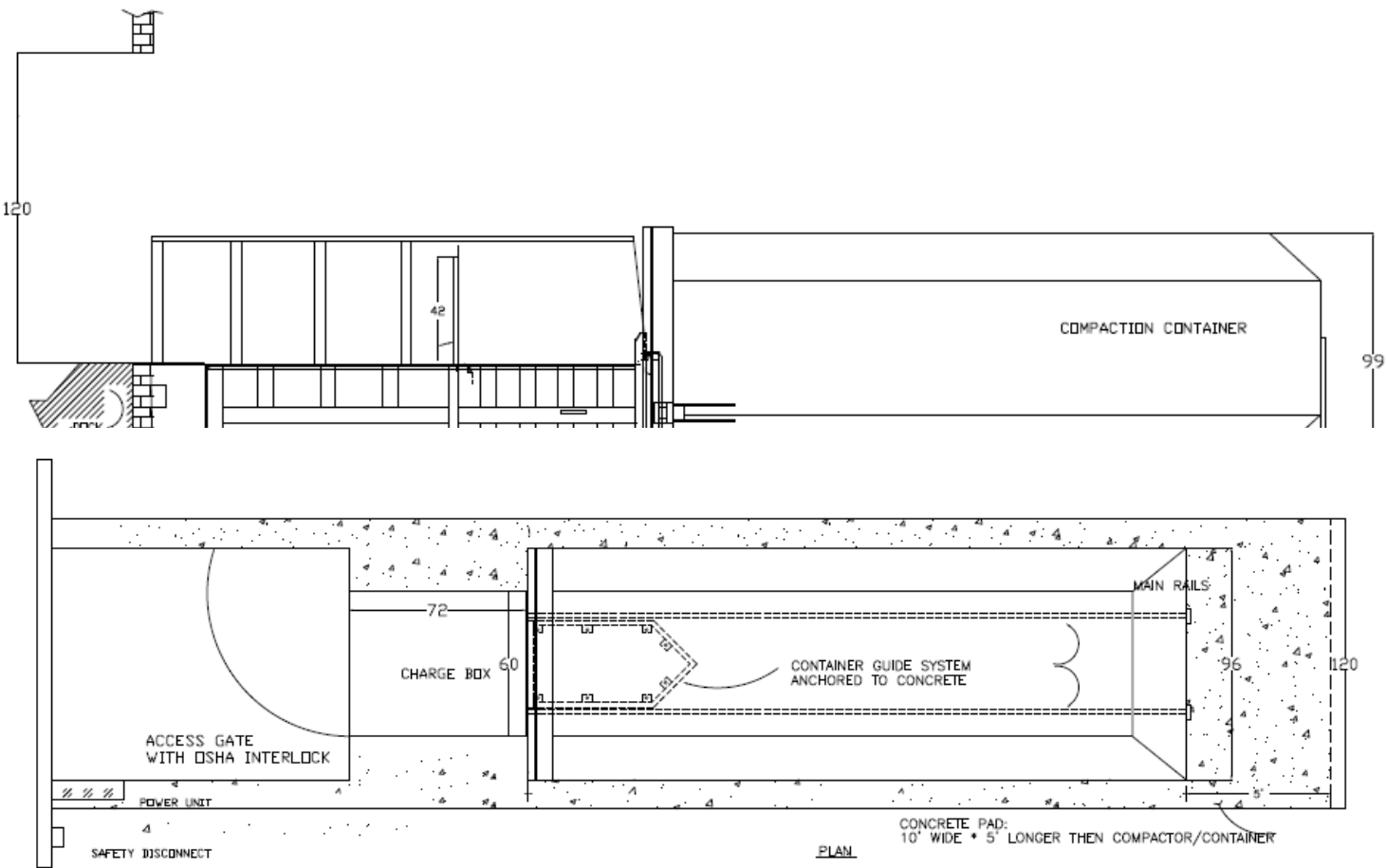


Donation area



Rear elevation

New Trash Compactor



Required Findings

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT — HMC § 13-50.300

- ✓ Consistent with the General Plan (CC designation)
- ✓ Conforms to the purposes of the CC district & zoning
- ✓ Compatible in design, scale & operating character
- ✓ Adequate access, traffic, utilities & services
- ✓ No significant environmental impacts

DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT — HMC § 13-42.500

- ✓ In the interest of public health, safety & welfare
- ✓ Sound site design, circulation & access
- ✓ Quality architecture, materials & screening
- ✓ Landscaping consistent with design standards
- ✓ Complies with all provisions of the Design Review chapter

The finding can be made for all ten findings. Supporting analysis is provided in the staff report.

CEQA Determination

Categorically Exempt — Class 1 (Existing Facilities)

CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR § 15301

- Change of occupancy within an existing commercial building
- Minor alterations only — interior work, one rear door, a compactor pad, and signage
- Negligible expansion of use; consistent in type & intensity with the prior tenancy
- No unusual circumstances; none of the § 15300.2 exceptions apply

Key Conditions of Approval



Hours of operation

9 AM–9 PM daily; no operations or donation acceptance outside approved hours



Attended donations

Attendant present all hours; no unsupervised bins; items removed within 1 hr of opening



No outdoor storage

No merchandise, goods, trash, or equipment stored or displayed outside



Signage

Install per approved package & Creekside Master Sign Program; banners time-limited



Trash compactor

Maintained clean per solid-waste & vector-control rules



Security & cameras

Install and maintain video security equipment to discourage off-hours donations

Full conditions — including Building, Fire, and Public Works requirements — appear in Staff Report, Attachment 2.

Recommendation

1

Find the project categorically exempt from CEQA

Class 1 — Existing Facilities, 14 CCR § 15301

2

Affirm the Planning Commission Decision and approve CUP 26-01 / DRP 26-01

Subject to the Conditions of Approval in the Staff Report (Attachment 2)

Questions & Discussion

CUP 26-01 · DRP 26-01 · 1551 Sycamore Avenue