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November 14, 2023

To: Benjamin Bravenec, Project Manager, City of Aurora  
From: Michael Goldman, Waterway Gas & Wash Company  
Re: Purchase and Renovation of Existing Office Building into a Double Tunnel Waterway Car Wash,  
3100 S. Parker Road, Aurora, Colorado

## **Letter of Introduction, Operations Plan and Justification of Conditional Use**

### **Background**

Waterway Gas & Wash Company is a 53+ year old car wash company based in St. Louis, Missouri. Waterway currently owns and operates 28 locations in five markets: Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Denver. Our traditional locations have all included gasoline, convenience stores, and emphasized full-service washing. Waterway has six Denver metro locations, the first opened over 25 years ago, and all are the traditional Waterway model. Waterway has expanded our offerings in recent years to include locations without gas as well as express car wash locations that may or may not include a full-service component. Additionally, in recent years Waterway has completed its first project of re-using an existing building as a car wash. Strategic re-use and re-purpose of existing construction has created new and interesting opportunities for both out-of-date uses and Waterway growth. The Aurora location will fall into this category of express wash with a full-service component, but it will not offer gasoline. Waterway Gas & Wash corporate owns and operates all of our locations, and we rely on strong local management teams with decades of car wash experience to operate the locations at a best in category level. Waterway has won many awards in all of our markets for architecture, landscape, community engagement, best employer, and car wash quality.

### **The Project**

The existing office building at 3100 S. Parker has gone through a series of users in the decades since its construction. Most recently, the prime tenant had been a for-profit school, as well as other mixed office and medical/dental users. Our plan is to renovate the existing building and utilize it as a flex style car wash (no gas). The flex style is part of a conversion Waterway has made in several markets, requiring all customers to pay outside the car wash at a "ATM" type machine, ride through the tunnel in their car, and then leave with a clean, and dry car, use free vacuums to vacuum and detail their own car, or have Waterway attendants provide vacuum, drying and other cleaning services. Besides the car wash services there will not be any other services offered outside the footprint of the building. No sidewalk sales, glass repair, or other unrelated auto service. We will offer some convenience and auto related products for sale to customers, potentially both inside and outside of the building.

### **Layout and Operations Plan**

As per the site plans, renderings, and elevations, two garage doors will be added to the south elevation of the building as entrance of the two car wash tunnels. Feeding those two tunnels (and closest to the corner of S. Parker and Cornell) will be a canopy over 4 express pay terminals. That area will be staffed at all times by Waterway personnel who will greet customers, help the car wash purchase decision (either an express wash or a serviced wash), and direct/control traffic flow. The customer will then

drive their personal car onto one of the two conveyors (these are belts, not traditional narrow tracks). The customer and their car will proceed through the 110' (+/-) car wash tunnel, and then proceed out the car wash exit door on the East elevation of the building. From there, customers have three choices (that choice will have been made at the car wash entrance):

- Leave the property with a clean dry car.
- Stay on the property and vacuum and dry the car themselves at one of the 18 free vacuums.
- Have Waterway employees vacuum and dry the car for the customer at one of the 7 full service/flex vacuum spaces.

Upon exiting the building, attendants at the exit will aid in directing customers to where they need to go.

#### **Other Related Operational Plan Details**

- Proposed Hours – 6:00 am – 10:00 pm
- Expected Employee count – 8-10
- Employee Parking – 15+
- ADA Parking – 2 spaces provided
- Traffic Study – See attached study
- Lighting – See attached plan; all exterior lighting LED
- Landscape – See attached plan as well as tree protection plan
- Signage – See attached plans and renderings
- Sound – Car dryers are full enclosed within the building, and re-set approximately 40 feet from the garage door exit
- Second floor of building – Vacant, reserved for possible future use

#### **Conditional Use; Criteria of Approval**

The site is zoned MU-C, and the proposed uses as a car wash is subject to Conditional Use Approval.

Per Code Section 146-5.4.3.A, Conditional Use Criteria

- Compatibility of Proposed Use with Existing and Planned Use
  - The corner of Parker and Cornell is an existing office building that is adjacent to and connected with strip retail, restaurants, and fast food. This is a retail intensive area, and investment in and re-purpose of the existing office building is compatible with the Aurora comprehensive plan.
- Traffic Generation
  - See attached traffic study. In general, a car wash “reaps” existing traffic, and generates modest number of new trips. The intention is to benefit from the active and busy retail and commuter traffic.
- Existing Infrastructure have Adequate Capacity
  - Streets, lights, traffic signals have been reviewed by staff. Some utility infrastructure (notably electric and water) may require upgrades that Waterway will be responsible for.
- Use of Architectural and Landscape Features to Mitigate Impact
  - The building is being re-used and updated both for functionality and modern looks. Landscape upgrades are proposed throughout the site, and the total landscape area is approximately the same as existing.

- The proposed use will not create significant dislocation of tenants or occupants
  - There is only one current tenant (a dentist) who is being re-located. There are, of course, no occupants.

## Parking Requirements

The parking requirements for this project were determined using a value of 1 parking space per employee plus 1 parking space per wash bay per Aurora's Planning Director. At peak-time employee demand, it is estimated that there will be approximately 10 employees which would require 12 total standard spaces be provided for this project. The total parking provided is 15 standard spaces and 42 total spaces.

## Requested Adjustments

Adjustments for this project have been requested in order to be approved. The request adjustments, proposed waiver and justifications are outlined in the table below.

Adjustments		
Requested	Waiver	Justification
Greater than 25% of the lot frontage on Parker road can be occupied by surface parking. Less than 75% of lot frontage on Parker road and Cornell avenue will be occupied by a structure.	Section 146-4.6.5.A.2.a: no more than 25% of the lot frontage on arterial or collector streets to a depth of 60 feet shall be occupied by surface parking. The other 75% of lot frontage on arterial or collector streets should be occupied by a structure. There should be no surface parking between building and street.	The building is existing and does not currently meet the requirement. Additionally, relocating the parking areas is not feasible due to the size and orientation of the property. Detached sidewalk along both frontages has been shown for deferred construction and landscaping will be added along the frontages where possible.
Increase allowable buffer reductions along E Cornell and S Parker.	Section 146-4.7.5.D: allowable buffer reduction of 10 feet with a low wall.	The building and parking lot curb are existing and the landscape buffers along Cornell Avenue and South Parker Road have been reduced from the existing condition due to the addition of the detached sidewalk requested by the city. Adding a low wall in these areas is not feasible due to the existing utilities and easements.
Eliminate required curbside trees for current condition on E Cornell and S Parker and for deferred condition on S Parker.	Section 146-4.7.5.C Curbside Landscape: street trees are required whether on a public or private street; minimum plant material quantities. One tree per 40 linear feet of street frontage.	Existing utilities and easements limit the ability to plant curbside trees along Cornell Avenue and South Parker Road.
Eliminate street frontage tree requirement above existing for current condition on E Cornell and S Parker and eliminate tree requirement for deferred condition on S Parker.	Section 146-4.7.5.D Street Frontage Landscape Buffers: street trees are required whether on a public or private street; minimum plant material quantities. One tree per 40 linear feet of street frontage.	Existing utilities and easements limit the ability to plant curbside trees along Cornell Avenue and South Parker Road.
Reduce the parking lot perimeter screening requirements.	Section 146-4.7.5.K.5.c.ii Parking Lot Landscaping: in lieu of berms, a low continuous landscaped hedge between three and four feet high consisting of a double row of shrubs planted 3 feet on center in a triangular pattern.	Due to the addition of the detached sidewalk requested by the city, there is insufficient space to plant a double row of shrubs between the detached sidewalk and the existing curbline of the parking lot.

We look forward to discussing these matters with you, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.