DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION (DRC) STAFF REPORT (Workshop)

WORKSHOP

DATE: August 19th, 2015

STAFF: Matt Gilster, Planner I (415) 493-4708; mgilster@novato.org

THE CITY OF NOVATO CALIFORNIA

922 Machin Avenue Novato, CA 94945-3232 (415) 899-8900 FAX (415) 899-8213 www.ci.novato.ca.us

SUBJECT: SHELL GAS STATION AND CONVENIENCE STORE REMODEL P2015-039; DESIGN REVIEW APN 141-244-16; 7473 REDWOOD BOULEVARD

REOUESTED ACTION

Conduct a public workshop to review the site design, circulation, and general architecture proposed for a remodeled Shell gas station, drive through carwash, and convenience market located at 7473 Redwood Boulevard.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The project site is a .52-acre corner parcel (23,028 square feet) that fronts onto Redwood Boulevard and Olive Avenue. The project site is currently developed with a Shell gas station facility which includes a drive through car wash, four fueling stations, underground fuel storage tanks, and a convenience market. There is onsite parking for the convenience market and fuel stations. For reference, an aerial photo showing the existing site configuration is on Page 7.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing structures on site are proposed to be removed and replaced. The proposed replacement convenience market is a single-level structure with a floor area of 3,027 square feet. The proposed replacement canopy for the fueling area will be 2,744 square feet, and the proposed replacement carwash tunnel will be 1,129 square feet with an equipment shed of 234 square feet. Two (2) 20,000 gallon underground fuel storage tanks are also proposed to be installed north of the fueling area. Primary ingress and egress to the site will be taken from one of two driveways that access onto Redwood Boulevard as well as a single driveway with access onto Olive Avenue. A new pedestrian access walkway will replace the existing carwash exit driveway onto Olive Avenue. Note: AU Energy, LLC owns and operates this and several other gas stations in Novato which they are in the process redeveloping with improved site and structure(s) designs.

Key features of the site design are:

• Expand the distance between the existing gas pumps, and stagger the location of the pumps. The same number of four (4) pumps will remain which can accommodate eight (8) cars. A new canopy will also be installed above the gasoline pumps. The canopy above the fueling area is proposed to increase to 2,744 square feet.

- Replace, relocate and reorient the convenience market of 3,027 square feet. New orientation will be placed closer to the rear property line to open up the site for better traffic circulation.
- The drive though carwash will be relocated to allow for additional queuing spaces and a more optimal use of space.
- Create fifteen (15) on-site parking spaces for the customers of the gasoline station and convenience market; one is ADA compliant, three are parallel to the fuel canopy, four spaces are provided at the fuel stations and seven spaces will be located in front of the convince mart. There are also five (5) additional vehicle queuing spaces for the carwash.

Architecture

This building design is characterized by a rectangular form punctuated by horizontal projections and two vertical elements. The building is primarily a flat roof structure with a modern and decorative cornice detail. Other architectural details include a concrete tile finish along sections of the base of the building, pewter and grey colored trim and metal roofing material. A color rendering of the proposal will be provided at the workshop for Design Review Commission review.

BACKGROUND

Property Owner:	AU Energy, LLC
Applicant:	MI Architects
Assessor's Parcel No.:	141-244-16
Project Area:	.52 acres (23,028 square feet)
General Plan Designation:	General Commercial (CG); Maximum FAR of 0.40
Existing Zoning:	General Commercial (CG) with Downtown (D) overlay
Existing Use:	Gas station with a convenience market and carwash
Adjacent Zoning/Uses:	General Commercial (CG)

HISTORY OF ENTITLEMENTS AT THIS SITE:

April 1972 -	Plan review approval for landscaping plan for gas station and car wash use on portion of adjacent property.
May 1972 -	Use Permit approval for extension of service station and car wash use to portion of existing property.
May 1979 -	Use permit approval for establishment of a food mart.
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- December 1984 Use permit approval for remodeling of food mart.
- October 1988 Use permit approval for installation of self-service car wash.
- July 1994 Use permit to allow expansion of the food mart.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

An environmental assessment is not required to conduct a public workshop. However, an environmental determination will be required for the Design Review Commission to take action on the request to remodel, replace, and reorient the gas fueling area, convenience market, and carwash at a future public hearing. Staff will provide an environmental determination when the project returns to the Design Review Commission for formal action.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The Design Review Commission is asked to conduct a workshop to obtain public comment and provide feedback to representatives MI Architects and staff with respect to the site design, and architecture proposed for the remodeled gas station. The workshop is an opportunity to have an informal discussion regarding the project's design. As such, the Design Review Commission will not be making a decision to approve or deny the proposed remodel.

To assist the Design Review Commission with its review of the proposed remodel of the gas station staff has listed the framework of findings, policies, and development standards that apply to the project. These items are provided to help guide the Design Review Commission and public's review of the project. Staff will prepare a detailed analysis regarding whether the proposal by MI Architects meets the noted findings, policies and development standards when the project returns to the Design Review Commission for a formal recommendation.

Design Review Findings

To approve the proposed request to replace the gas fueling area, convenience market, and carwash the Design Review Commission will need to make three design review findings. These findings are:

<u>Design Review Finding No. 1:</u> The design, layout, size, architectural features and general appearance of the proposed project is consistent with the general plan, and any applicable specific plan and with the development standards, design guidelines and all applicable provisions of this code, including this title and any approved master plan and precise development plan.

<u>Design Review Finding No. 2:</u> The proposed project would maintain and enhance the community's character, provide for harmonious and orderly development, and create a desirable environment for the occupants, neighbors, and visiting public.

<u>Design Review Finding No. 3:</u> The proposed development would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; is not materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity; does not interfere with the use an enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments and does not create potential traffic, pedestrian or bicycle hazards.

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General Plan Consistency

MI Architects is proposing to remodel a gas station and convenience market, on a site that is located on a northern stretch of Redwood Boulevard that has the General Commercial (CG) land use designation of the Novato General Plan. The CG land use designation permits a variety of commercial uses, including gas stations, convenience markets, and professional offices and retail. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be an acceptable land use at this location.

The CG land use designation permits a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.40. Floor area ratio is the maximum amount of floor area represented as a percentage of a given parcel's land area. The proposed gas fueling area, convenience market, and carwash have a combined FAR of 0.12. This FAR level is within the maximum FAR limit of 0.40.

In addition to specifying acceptable types of land uses and maximum development intensities, the Novato General Plan provides a framework of policies addressing such matters as land use, transportation and circulation, and community character. These policies are intended to coordinate Novato's physical development over a 20-year period. In this instance, the Design Review Commission should consider applicable design policies of the Community Identity Chapter of the General Plan when reviewing this proposal. Relevant Community Identity policies are:

Community Identity Policy 1 <u>Compatibility of Development with Surroundings</u>. Ensure that new development is sensitive to the surrounding architecture, topography, landscaping, and to the character, scale, and ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood. Recognize that neighborhoods include community facilities needed by Novato residents as well as homes, and integrate facilities into neighborhoods.

Community Identity Chapter Policy 12 <u>Parking Standards</u>. Reduce the visibility of parking facilities and the amount of land necessary for them to the maximum extent feasible.

Community Identity Chapter Policy 15 <u>Pedestrian Paths</u>. Provide for maximum feasible pedestrian circulation.

Zoning Consistency

The General Commercial (CG) zoning district is applied to areas appropriate for a range of community serving commercial uses. The CG zoning district is consistent with the General Commercial land use designation of the General Plan.

As mentioned above, the gas station, convenience market, and carwash have been previously approved with use permits for these uses and received design review approval. The gas station and convenience market have been operating 24 hours a day, which now requires a use permit for operating between the hours of 11pm - 6am. Section 19.52.020(A)(3)(c) of the Novato Zoning Code states that a non-conforming use shall not retain the benefits as a non-conforming use if the structure in which the nonconforming use is destroyed, by any means to more than 75 of its assessed value, exceeding the value of the land. As both the gas fueling area, and the convenience market are proposed to be demolished and relocated, the applicant needs to secure a use permit for the gas station and convenience market to operate 24 hours a day. Should the DRC recommend approval of sr15040;08/12/15 4

the redesign of the gas station and convenience market, staff will then notice the request for the use permit for these uses, and for the extended hours of operation, between 11pm - 6am, and incorporate the recommendation of the DRC in this notice.

The table below lists the general standards of the CG Zoning District and special provisions and standards of the Zoning Ordinance that apply to the proposal submitted by MI Architects.

	GENERAL COMMERCIAL STANDARD	MI ARCHITECITS, PROPOSAL
Maximum FAR	0.40	0.12
Maximum Lot Coverage	40%	29%
Maximum Height	35-feet	27-feet at highest element
Minimum Setbacks from Property Line	Front – None Side – None Rear - None	West Elevation: 20-feet North Elevation: 27-feet South Elevation: 20-feet East Elevation: 27-feet
Minimum Solid Waste Storage Area	24 sq. ft. solid waste and 24 sq. ft. recyclables	60 square-foot trash enclosure
Art Ordinance	Provide or pay in-lieu fee for art.	Under consideration by the applicant.
Parking	<u>Convenience market:</u> 1 space for each 200 sf = 15 spaces required. <u>Carwash:</u> (5) Queuing spaces for the carwash.	15 proposed on-site (5) Queuing space for the carwash.

Staff Comments

The relocated and reoriented gas fueling area, convenience market and carwash facilities create a much more usable site plan, and provides for better access into and out of the property as well as better vehicle and pedestrian access to the onsite facilities. The reorientation of the convenience market and carwash closer towards the west property line and further away from the street to the east creates more space for parking, carwash queuing, and opens up the fueling area to provide better access.

Art Program

Staff has advised the applicant that this proposal is subject to the City's Art Program pursuant to Division 19.21. The applicant has expressed interest in paying an in-lieu fee for the required art which is allowed subject to approval from the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct the public workshop and provide comments to project applicant and staff regarding MI Architect's proposed site design, architecture, and landscape plan.

FURTHER ACTION

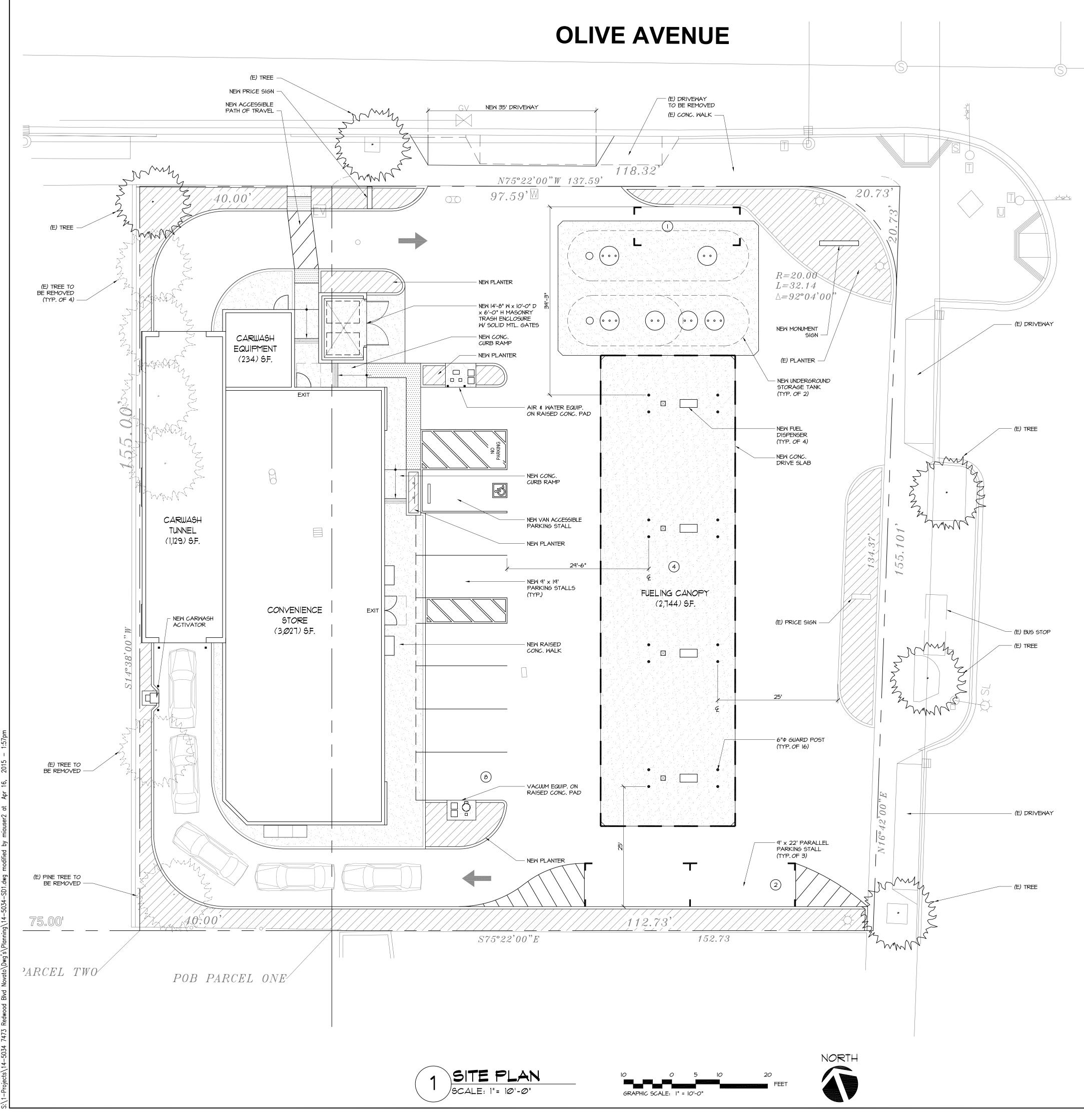
The proposal by MI Architects to remodel, replace, and reorient the gas fueling area, convenience market, and carwash will return to the Design Review Commission for a public hearing. At this hearing, the Design Review Commission may consider taking a formal action to approve design plans for the project.

ATTACHMENTS

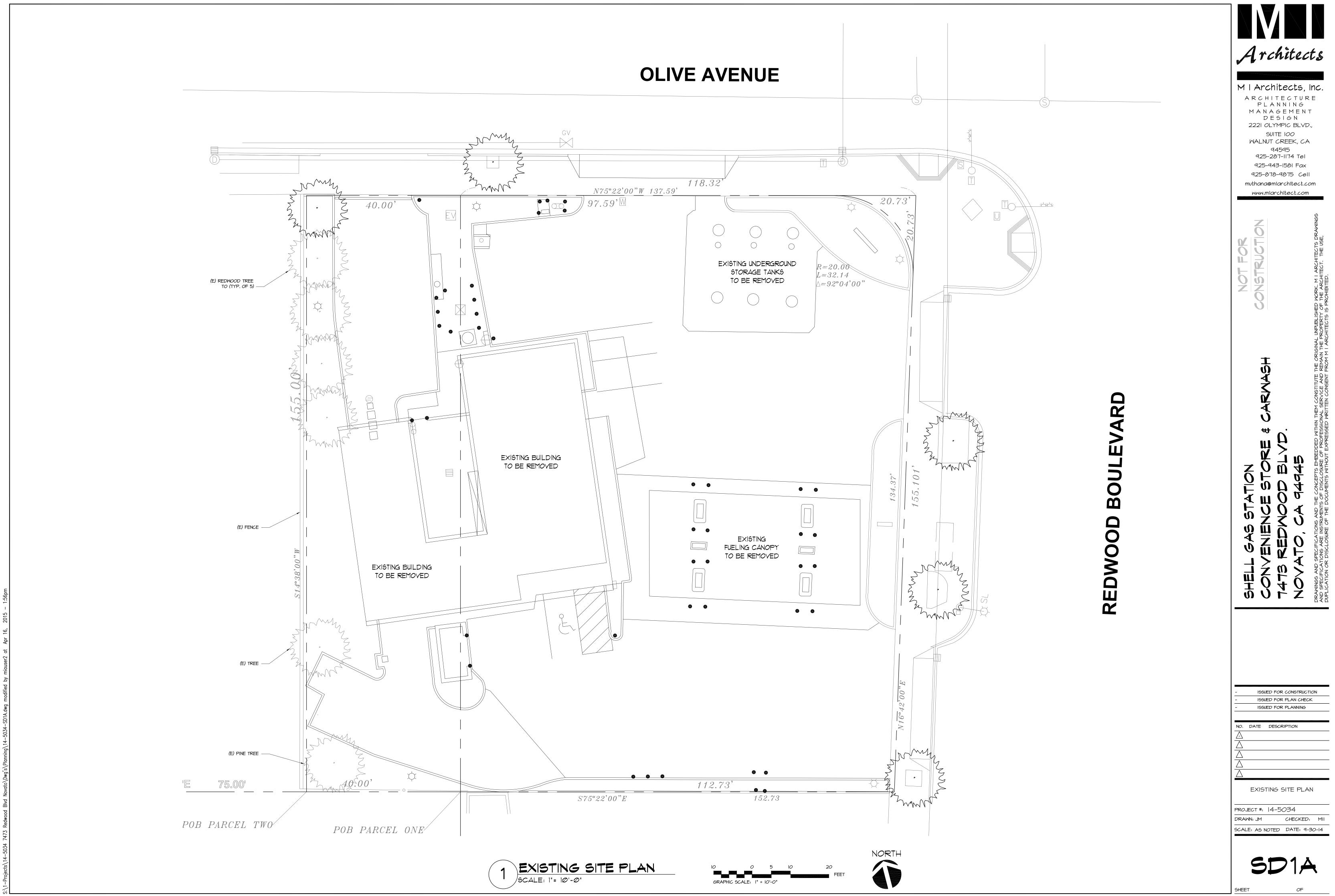
- 1. Architectural Plan Package
- 2. Site Photos



Existing site layout at 7473 Redwood Boulevard









SHELL GAS STATION, CONVENIENCE STORE & CARWASH 1413 REDWOOD BLVD. APN # 141-244-16

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FUELING CANOPY

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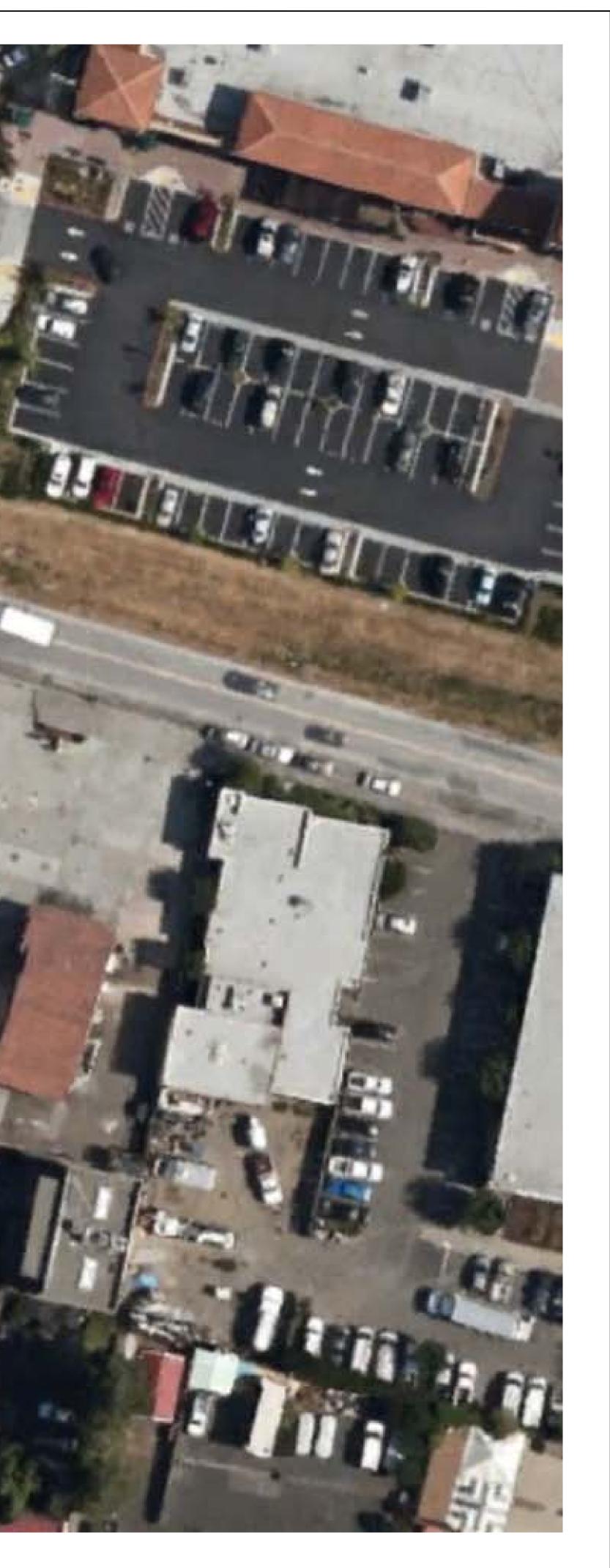
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Reduce

Trader Joe's









A R C H I T E C T U R E P L A N N I N G M A N A G E M E N T D E S I G N 2221 OLYMPIC BLVD., SUITE 100 WALNUT CREEK, CA 94595 925-287-1174 Tel 925-943-1581 Fax 925-878-9875 Cell muthana@miarchitect.com www.miarchitect.com



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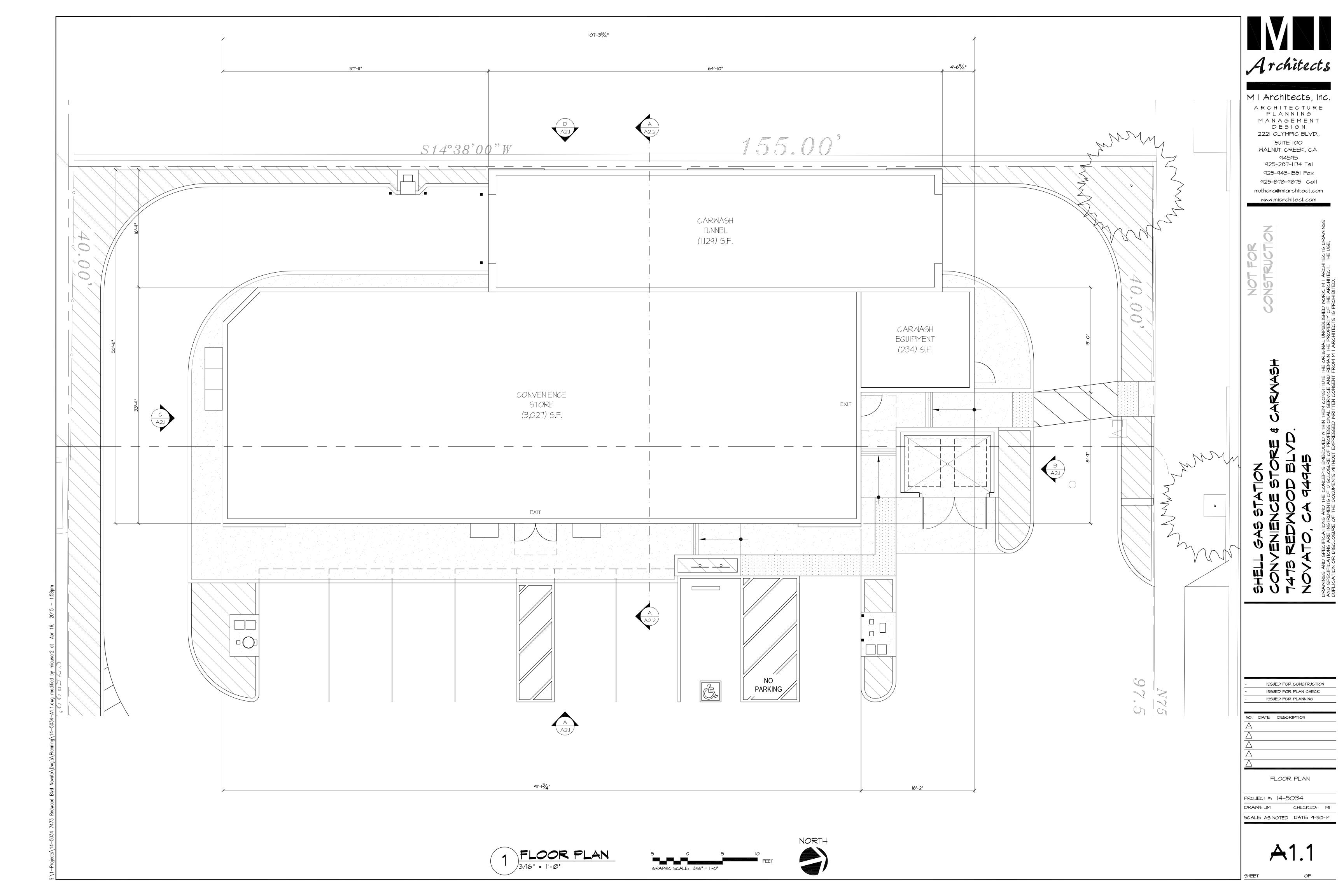
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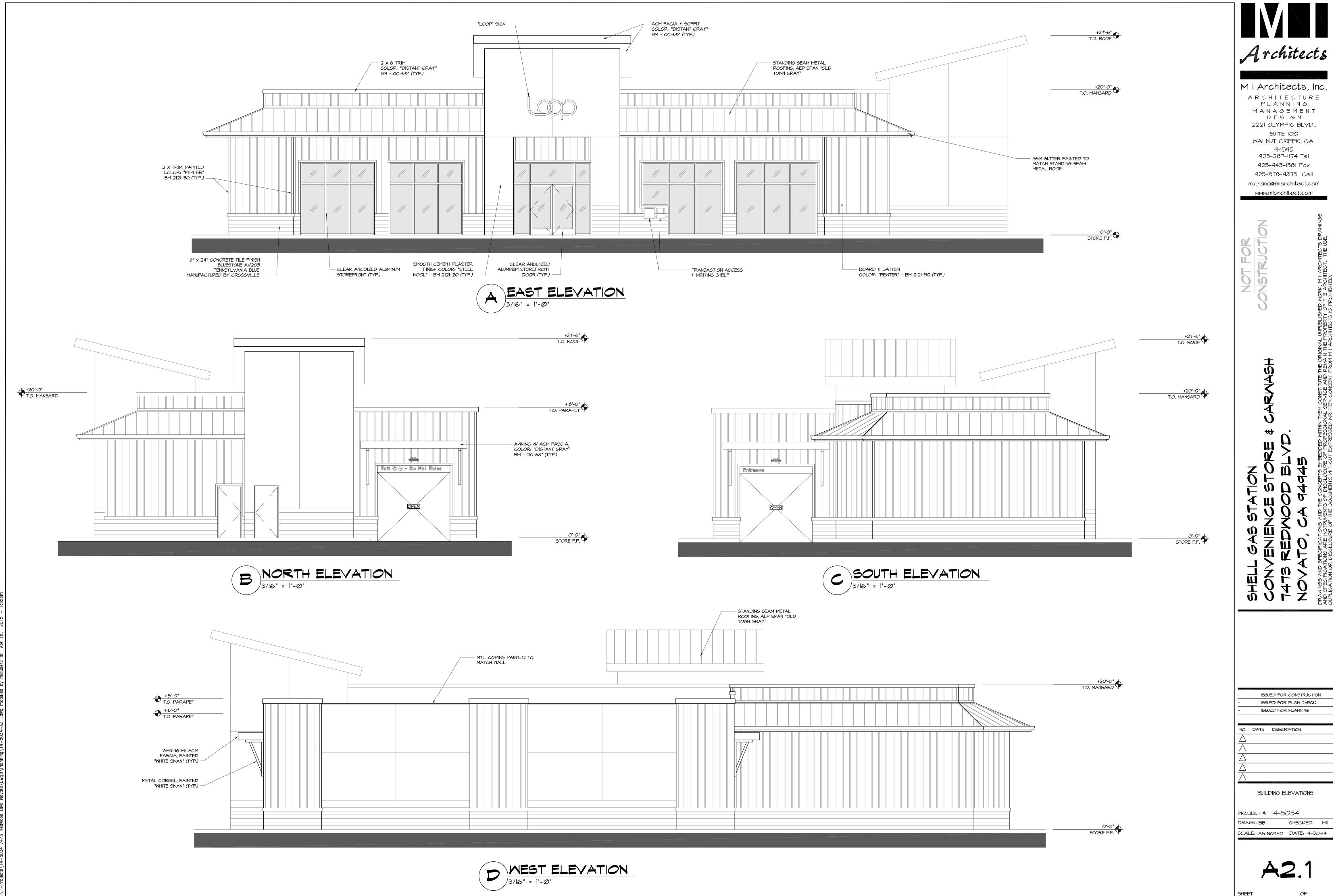
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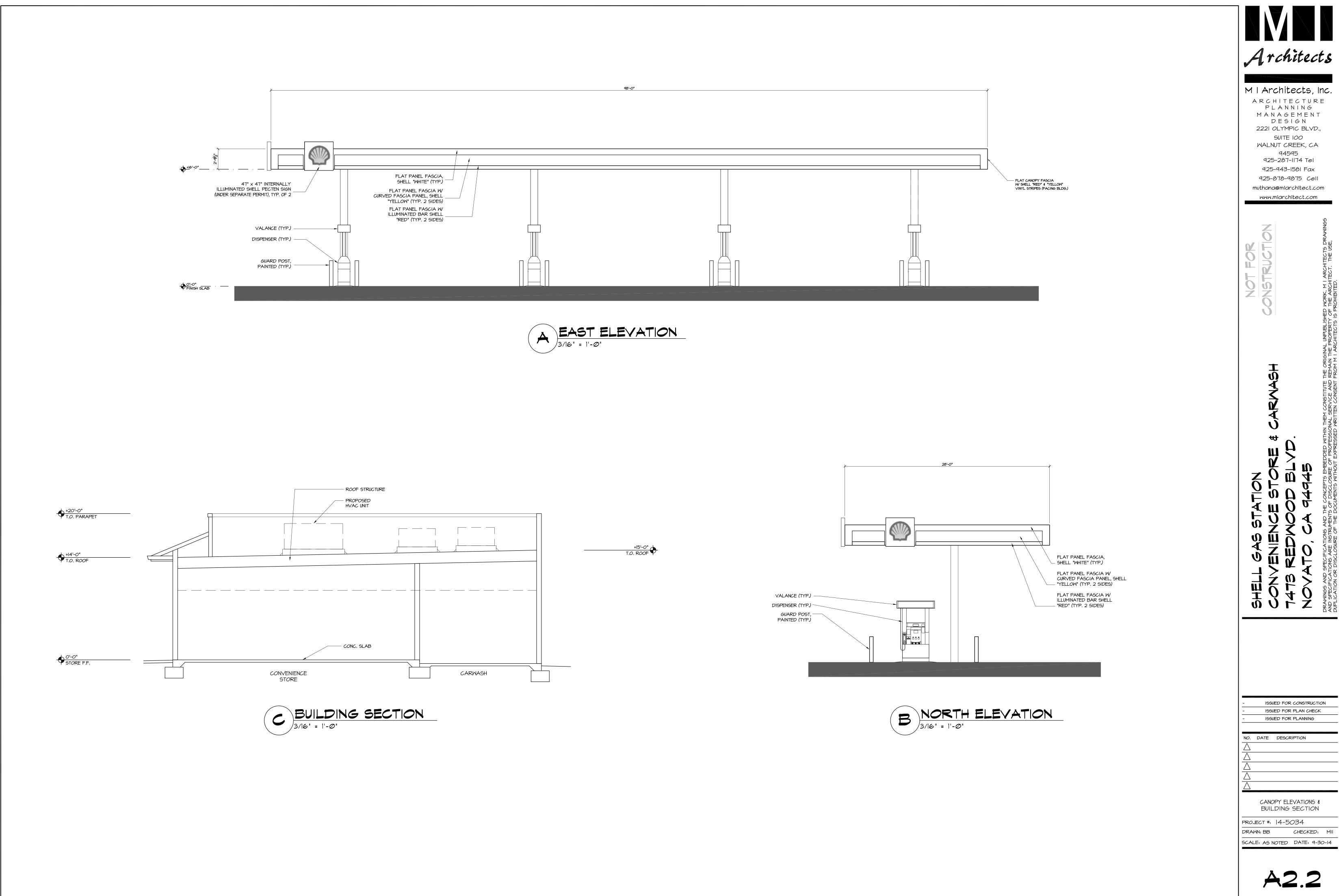
MASTER SITE PLAN

PROJECT #: 14-5034 DRAWN: JM CHECKED: MII SCALE: AS NOTED DATE: 9-30-14

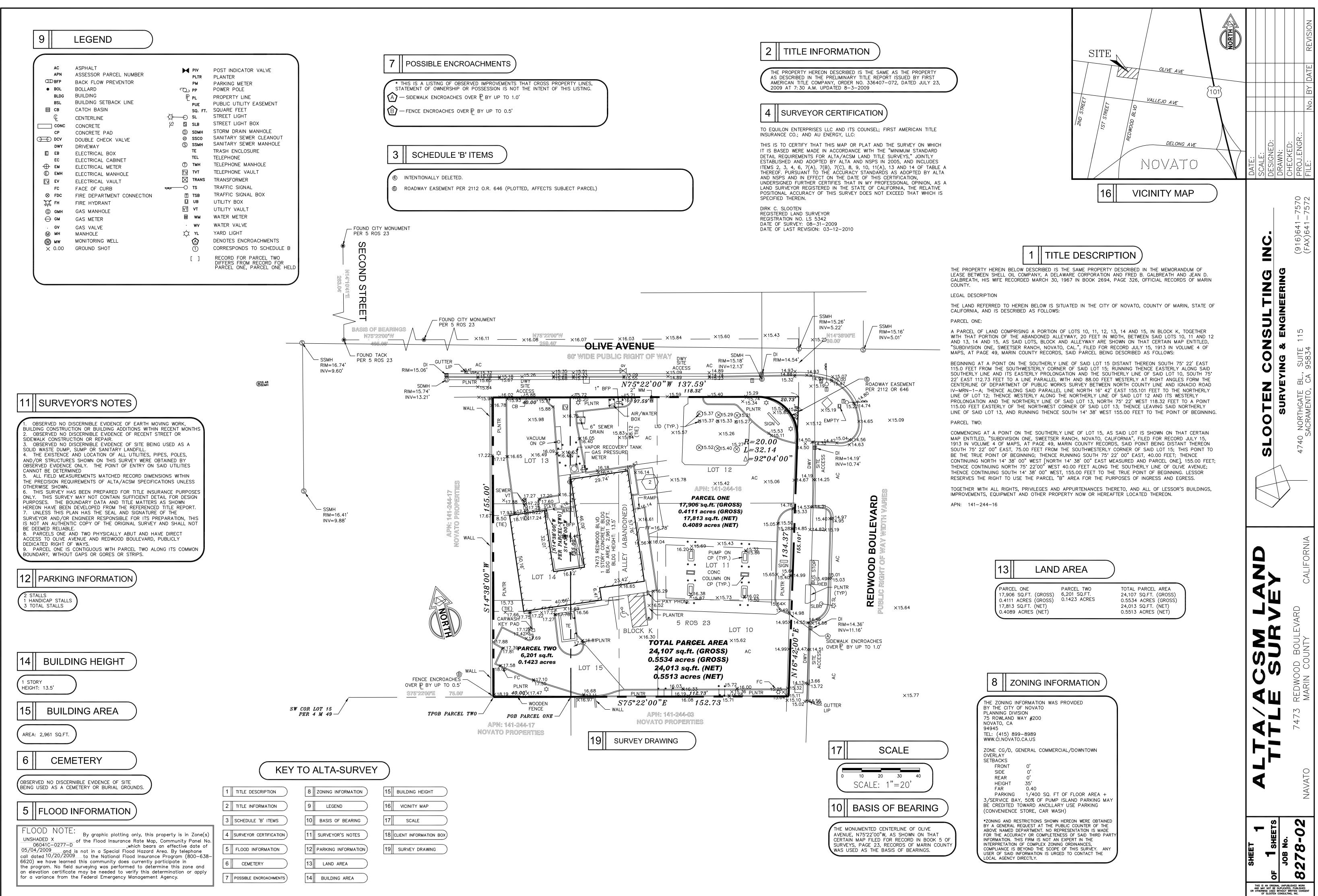








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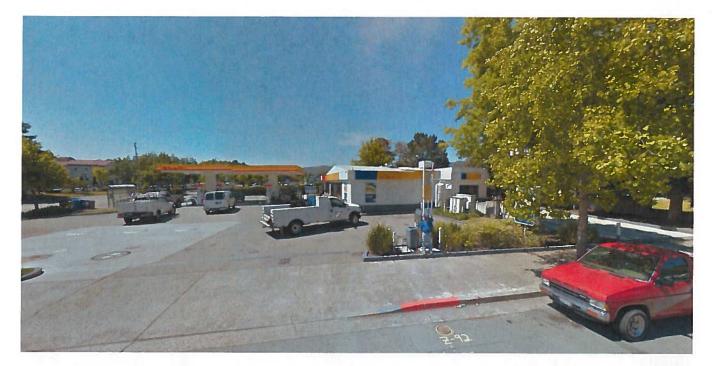


Existing Gas Station (Redwood Blvd.)

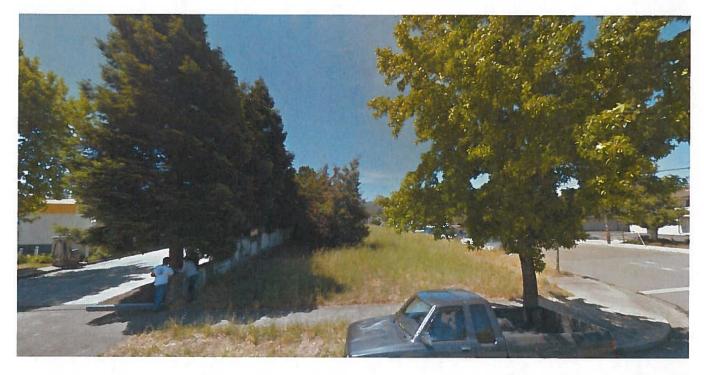


Adjacent Property along redwood Blvd.

Shell Gas Station, Convenience Store & Carwash 7473 Redwood Blvd Novato, CA 94945



Existing Gas station (Olive Ave)

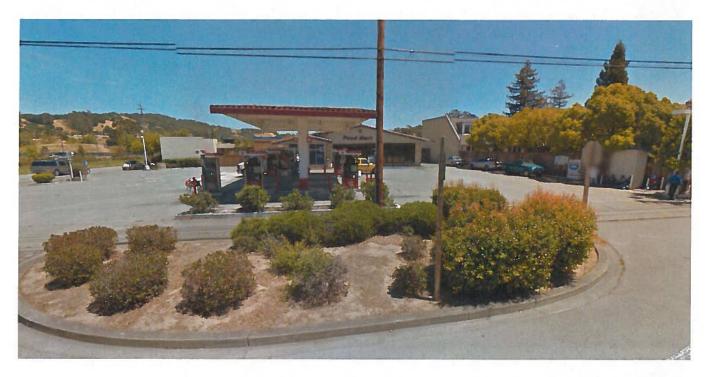


Adjacent Property along Olive Ave

Shell Gas Station, Convenience Store & Carwash 7473 Redwood Blvd Novato, CA 94945



Property to the North (Olive Ave)



Property to the east (Redwood Blvd)

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