



CITY OF ATASCADERO

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING STAFF REPORT

Item 1

Department: Community Development
Date: 4/20/2026

TO: Phil Dunsmore, Administrative Hearing Officer
FROM: Kelly Gleason, Planning Manager
PREPARED BY: Sahana Kotha, Planning Intern

SUBJECT: Specs by Kyla Commercial Signs

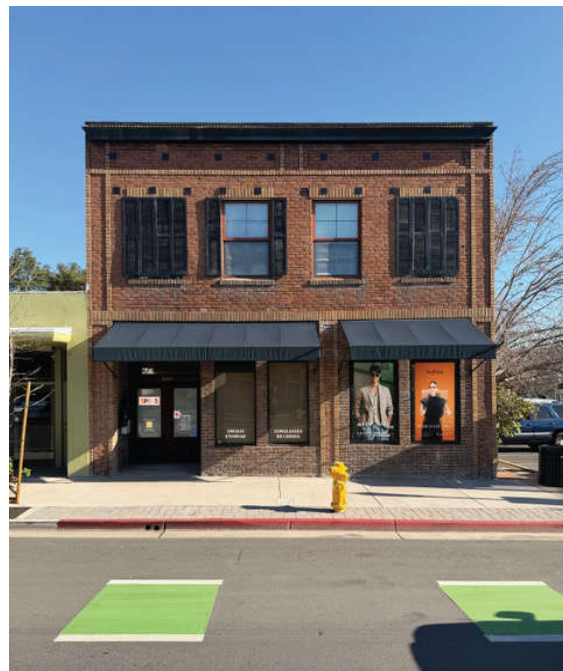
RECOMMENDATION:

The Administrative Hearing Officer approve Administrative Use Permit USE26-0024 for a sign design exception to allow the installation of one (1) 48 square-foot painted wall sign and two (2) 18 square-foot changeable copy window signs at 5915 El Camino Real (APN 029-323-025), based on findings and subject to conditions of approval.

DISCUSSION:

PROJECT SUMMARY

Kyla Skinner, the applicant, requests a sign design exception to allow commercial signage with an aggregate sign area of 84 square feet (SF), a wall sign located above the second-floor sill, and continued use of two faux-windows for signs for an optical shop at 5915 El Camino Real. The subject property is a 0.08-acre lot in the Downtown Commercial (DC) zone that contains a two-story building occupied by Specs by Kyla on the ground floor. The proposed commercial signs include a 48 square-foot (SF) wall sign and 36 SF of window signage.



ANALYSIS

The existing building has a 28’ frontage along El Camino Real and an approximately 59’ side façade facing a shared parking lot along Traffic Way. The first-floor frontage is outfitted with two (2) existing 18 SF faux-windows used for signage and display. The Atascadero Municipal Code (AMC) allows an aggregate sign area of 50 SF in the Downtown Commercial zone, as summarized in the chart below.

DESIGN EXCEPTION SUMMARY TABLE	
Sign Code Standard	Requested Design Exception
Aggregate sign area limited to 50 SF in the DC Zone.	Proposed aggregate sign area of 84 SF comprised of one 48 SF painted wall sign and two 18 SF faux-window displays.
Changeable copy signs are limited to one per business.	Two existing faux-window displays are proposed to be used for commercial signs and advertisements associated with the business.
One wall sign per public street or parking lot frontage. Wall signs shall be located below the second-floor sill on multi-story buildings.	Proposed painted wall sign extends above the second-floor sill.

The applicant is proposing one 48 SF painted wall sign facing the adjacent shared parking lot. The wall sign consists of multi-colored letters positioned vertically down the side of the building and extends above the second-story sill. The applicant is also proposing to utilize two existing faux-windows facing El Camino Real for additional signage and advertisement display. These faux window displays allow for changeable copies by design. The aggregate area of the commercial signage is 84 SF. An AUP is required to allow for the requested design exceptions. Approval of an Administrative Use Permit subject to the findings below.

FINDINGS:

- FINDING:** The sign is consistent with the purposes set forth in Section 9-15.002 (“Intent”).

FACT: The signs are consistent with the intent of the Sign Ordinance. They are reasonable in size and placement and are not designed to be unduly distracting or obstructive. Signs are proposed on faux-windows on the front building façade; these faux-windows are not fully transparent and do not provide any visibility into the building. These window signs are an adequate option for maintaining active street frontage in this circumstance where the windows would not otherwise add to the building’s transparency.
- FINDING:** The opportunity to combine signs for more than one use on a single sign structure has been considered.

FACT: The site contains one tenant space currently. Signage is limited on each façade and consolidated to respond to the visual appearance and scale of each facade.
- FINDING:** The sign conforms with all other applicable codes and ordinances of the City, including, but not limited to, the Zoning Ordinance, the General Plan and its several elements, and the appearance review guidelines.

FACT: The proposed sign complies with all other applicable codes and ordinances of the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The proposed project qualifies for a Class 11 categorical exemption from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq., "CEQA") and CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000, et seq.) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15311, which exempts the installation of accessory signs on existing commercial facilities.

CONCLUSION:

- The applicant is requesting a design exception to allow a painted wall sign to extend above the second story sill, utilize the faux-windows for commercial signage, and allow the applicant to exceed the existing 50 SF aggregate sign area limitation.
- The signs are well-designed, proportioned with the massing of the building, and compatible with the commercial nature of the downtown zone.

CONDITIONS:

1. This approval of Administrative Use Permit USE26-0024 allows the installation of a 48 square-foot wall sign on the southeast, parking lot-facing façade and two 18 square-foot changeable copy signs in faux-windows on the front façade of an existing building at 5915 El Camino Real, APN 029-323-025, as depicted and described on the attached exhibits. This Administrative Use Permit approval authorizes signage solely for Specs by Kyla and shall remain valid under continued operation of the same business. It shall automatically expire upon termination or change of the business occupying the tenant space and does not run with the land.
2. Any additional signage shall be subject to review and approval through the construction permit process and shall comply with all requirements of the Municipal Code, except as may be otherwise authorized through an approved Administrative Use Permit or other applicable entitlement.
3. The approval of this entitlement shall become final and effective for the purposes of issuing building permits fourteen (14) days after the Administrative Hearing Officer's action unless an appeal is made in accordance with the Atascadero Municipal Code.
4. Approval of this entitlement shall be valid for six (6) months after its effective date. At the end of the period, the approval shall expire and become null and void unless the signs have been installed, or the project has received a time extension consistent with the Atascadero Municipal Code.
5. The Community Development Department shall have the authority to approve minor changes to the project that result in a superior site design or appearance.
6. The Applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Atascadero or its agents, officers, and employees against any claim or action brought to challenge an approval by the City, or any of its entities, concerning this Administrative Use Permit.

ACTION:

APPROVE

APPROVE AS MODIFIED

DENY

CONTINUE TO ALLOW _____

SIGNED: _____

Phil Dunsmore, Administrative Hearing Officer

Date

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Sign Exhibits

