



## Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC)

Meeting Date: July 29, 2015

**PLANNER:** Adam Atamian, Associate Planner 

**SUBJECT:** **Minor Architectural Permit 14-386, Pico Welcome Mural**, a request to consider a mural on the wall of a commercial center located at 415 West Avenida Pico, within the Community Commercial portion of the West Pico Corridor Specific Plan.

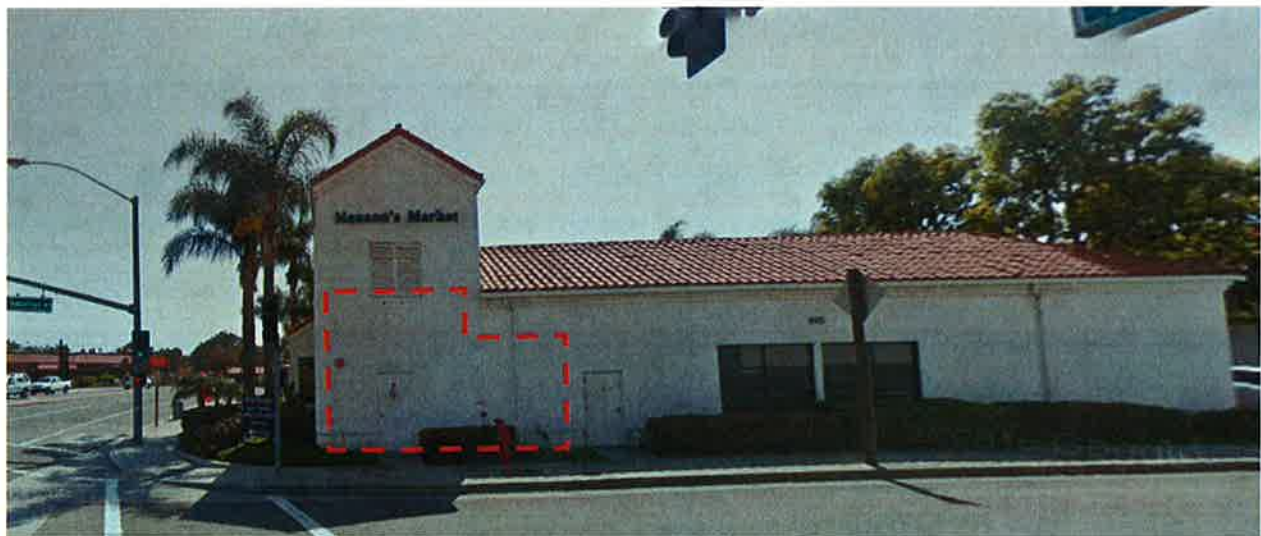
### **BACKGROUND:**

This project was reviewed by the Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC) on November 12, 2014. In their review, the DRSC was concerned with the size of the mural taking up the whole wall, lack of a frame and detracting from the design goals of the City Gateway area. The DRSC recommended design modifications to make the mural more compatible with the building and the vision for the surrounding gateway area.

### *Project Description*

The applicant proposes to paint a mural that is approximately 400 square foot on a street-facing wall located at the rear of the Hanson's Market building in the Pico Pavilion shopping center. The approximate area of the proposed mural is shown in Figure 1, below.

**Figure 1 – Proposed Location**



The mural depicts the Ole Hanson Beach Club, framed in a simple painted border, and with the words “San Clemente” and “Ole Hanson Beach Club.” The proposed mural, partially colored, is shown in Figure 2 below, with a larger copy of the image included as Attachment 3.

**Figure 2 – Mural Image with Colored Swath**



*Why is DRSC Review Required?*

A Minor Architectural Permit is required because the project includes exterior modifications to a non-residential building. Review of the Minor Architectural Permit is the purview of the Zoning Administrator. The DRSC is tasked with ensuring building alterations are compatible and harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood and consistent with the Design Guidelines. DRSC comments will be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator.

*Site Data*

The subject property is located in the West Pico Corridor Specific Plan (WPCSP). This location is visible from a Primary Gateway identified in the General Plan, the Avenida Pico I-5 interchange, and is close to another identified gateway, the intersection of Avenida Pico and Calle de Los Molinos.

Built in 1988, the Pico Pavilion shopping center was designed in a contemporary Spanish style that includes white stucco walls, red tile roofs, and covered arcades along the shop frontages supported by columns and arches.

The proposed mural is located on a wall that directly faces Calle de Industrias and is visible to traffic heading west on Avenida Pico. The rear wall is approximately 75 feet

long, with the majority of it being 13 feet tall. The left side of the wall is part of a tower element that is nearly 28 feet tall at the roof ridge. The wall includes two service doors, two windows, a few electrical and service fixtures, and two gutter downspouts. The tower element has a recessed vent that is approximately six feet tall and six feet wide. An image of the building as it currently appears is provided as Attachment 2.

**ANALYSIS:**

Recognizing the role of murals as a form of public art that can enhance community appearance, neighborhood character, and civic pride, the City Council adopted a policy to encourage murals on commercial buildings or walls by waiving fees associated with Minor Architectural or Cultural Heritage Permit applications. The proposed mural complies with this public art incentive because it is not considered a sign, as it does not advertise a specific business, service, or product. The mural is proposed to cover a large portion of the wall, as shown in Figure 3, below.

**Figure 3 – Mural Simulation**



***Consistency with General Plan***

Multiple Elements of the General Plan discuss public art on private property. The Gateways section of the Urban Design Element encourages, “the inclusion of public art in private development” (UD-2.09). The Public Services, Facilities and Utilities Element states that public art shall be supported and promoted in, “buildings, parks, open spaces and other public and private spaces” (PS-5).

In terms of design quality, the Gateways section of the Urban Design Element requires that new gateway area development include, “high quality design for buildings at visually significant gateway areas,” that includes, “appropriate entry design elements” that promote the Spanish Village by the Sea design identity. The subject matter of the

proposed mural is representative of this design identity, especially the inclusion of one of the City’s most significant historical resources.

***Consistency with WPCSP Design Guidelines***

The applicable Design Guidelines for this location are contained in the WPCSP. The design objectives of the WPCSP are to: 1) “Direct specific project designs toward achieving visual harmony within the various West Pico Corridor neighborhoods”; and 2) “Define a consistent approach to... streetscape, ..., and other design elements”. The WPCSP area contains two recently approved murals, the Los Molinos Business District Mural, and the Drew Brophy Mural, shown in the pictures below. Though the location of this mural is at a City gateway and is more visible than the other two, the subject matter is equally representative of the City’s Spanish Village by the Sea character, and consistent with the overall WPCSP area.

**Figure 4 – Los Molinos Business District Mural**



**Figure 5 – Drew Brophy Art Studio Mural**



While the Pico Pavilion is a more contemporary Spanish design, the WPCSP states that, “[Pico Pavilion] does reflect a contemporary Spanish style of architecture which sets a minimum standard for new development in the Pico Community Commercial Area” (Section 107.I.b). There are few buildings in this gateway area visible from Avenida Pico that are designed in a Spanish style. As this proposal is located on a major thoroughfare, it is important that this mural add to the architectural integrity of the center, and not diminish the already minimal presence of Spanish-style architecture in the area.

The proposed mural’s design quality is consistent with other approved murals, and the subject matter is compatible with the design goals of the General Plan and the WPCSP. Both of the other murals approved in the WPCSP area are of a more modest scale in terms of their coverage of the walls on which they are located, however, the generally muted tones of the proposed mural harmonize well with the Spanish-style design and white walls of the building. The reduced size of the mural greatly increases its compatibility with the building, serving to provide a unique design element on the structure rather than to overwhelm the entire façade. The simple frame provides a clean transition and sets this art work apart from the building, so as to not detract from the Spanish-style architecture.

The proposed mural is consistent with the design policies of the gateway area in the General Plan’s Urban Design Element. The mural provides art in public places (Policy UD-2.09) that reflects the City’s “Spanish Village by the Sea Identity” (Policy UD2-02). The mural’s high quality design meets the standards for new projects in this area (Policy

UD-2.01), helping to “reinforce the City’s identity and unique architectural character” (Gateways Goal).

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff supports the proposed mural because of its sensitivity to, and enhancement of, the center’s Spanish architecture.

Staff seeks DRSC concurrence on staff’s support of the proposed project, and welcomes any additional comments. Following final review and comment by the DRSC, the project will be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator for consideration.

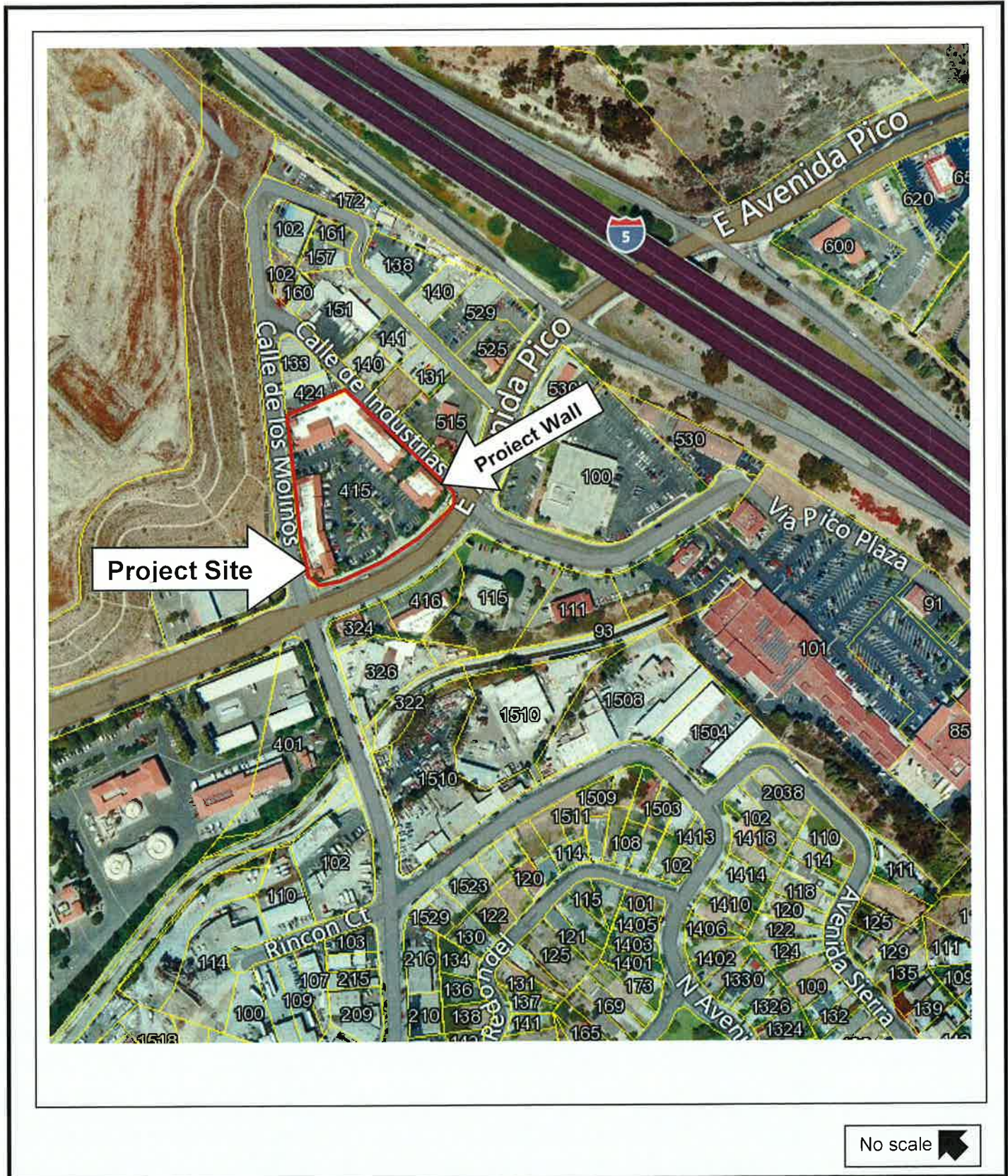
***Attachments:***


1. Location Map
2. Photo of Building
3. Illustration of Proposed Mural



LOCATION MAP

Minor Architectural Permit 14-386  
415 E. Avenida Pico



No scale 

# ATTACHMENT 2



415 East Avenida Pico, Rear wall of Hanson's Market



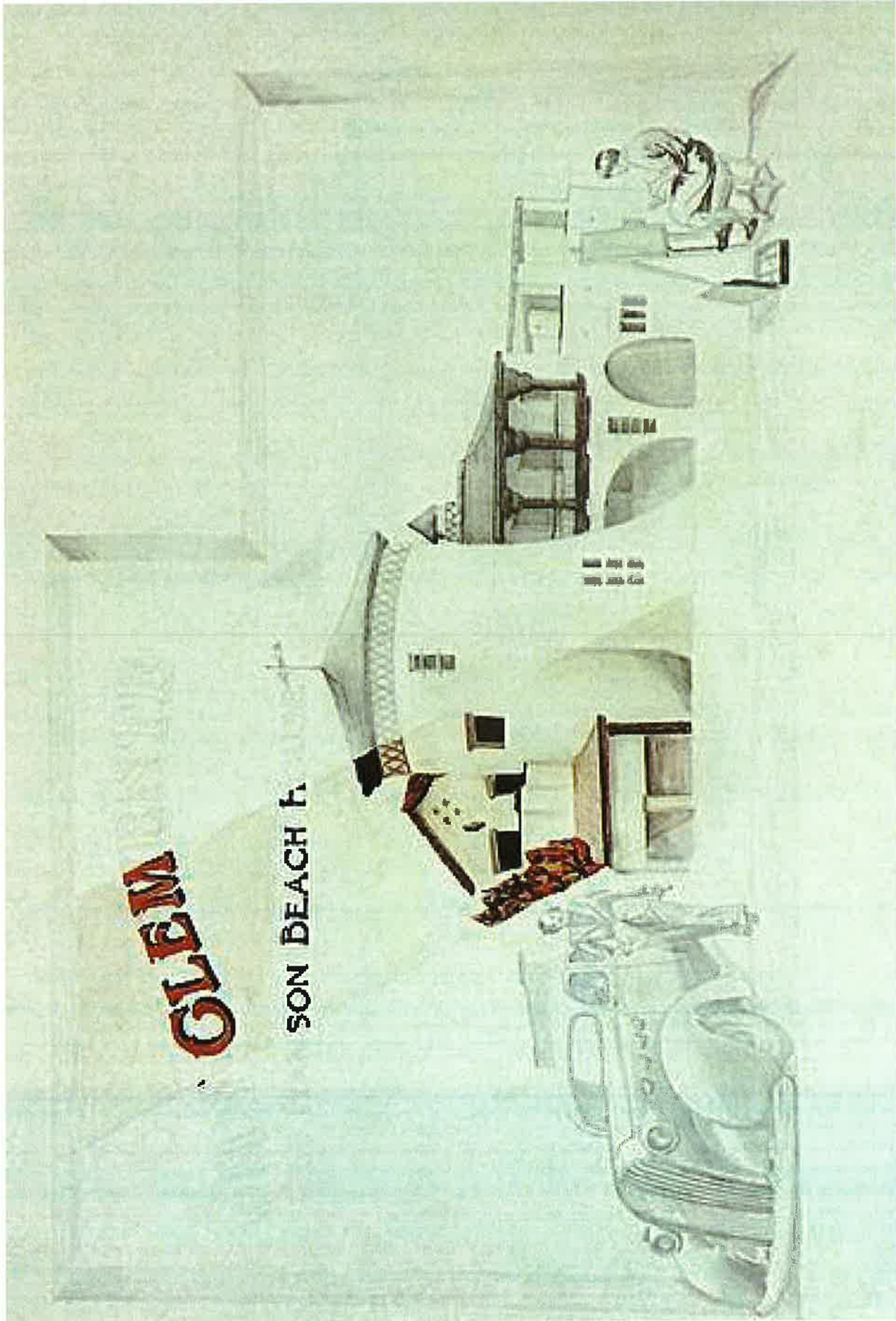


Illustration of Proposed Mural