



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING: December 13, 2022

SUBJECT: Site Plan and Design Review (DOR) No. 1924-22
 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1123-22
 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1124-22

APPLICANT: Arris Studio Architects
 c/o Steve Rigor
 1327 Archer Street, Suite 220
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

PROPERTY OWNER: Carson Hospitality, LLC
 7126 De Soto Avenue
 Canoga Park, CA 91303

REQUEST: Consider finding an exemption from CEQA and approval of a site plan and design review and conditional use permits for a proposed 111 room, 56,242-square-foot hotel and onsite alcoholic beverage sales and services of beer, wine, and distilled spirits at within the proposed hotel

PROPERTY INVOLVED: 888 E. Dominguez Street (APN 7381025071)

COMMISSION ACTION

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Chairperson (Vacant)			Hernandez
		Vice-Chair Palmer			Huff
		Diaz			Monteclaro
		Docdocil			Rashad
		Guerra			D. Thomas
					Alt. (Vacant) Alt. Mfume Alt. Wilson

Item No. 6A

I. Introduction

Property Owner

Carson Hospitality, LLC.
7126 De Soto Avenue
Canoga Park, CA 91303

Applicant

Arris Studio Architects
c/o Steve Rigor
1327 Archer Street, Suite 220
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

II. Project Description

The applicant, Arris Studio Architects, on behalf of Carson Hospitality Group, requests approval of DOR No. 1924-22 and CUP No. 1123-22 to develop a new Marriott TownePlace Suites hotel and CUP No. 1124-22 to serve/sell beer, wine, and distilled spirits within a hotel in the CR-D (Commercial, Regional Center; Design Overlay District) zone.

The applicant is requesting approval of alcoholic sales and service within the hotel's outdoor patio and first floor bar and third floor pool lounge. Hours of operation will be from 12:00 PM to 11:00 PM.

Carson Municipal Code Section 9131.1 (Uses Permitted) allows for alcohol sales and service in conjunction with cocktail lounge, bar, indoor theater, or an eating establishment other than a bona fide restaurant in the CR-D zone with the approval of a conditional use permit by the Planning Commission.

Carson Municipal Code Section 9172.21 (Conditional Use Permit) states generally that the Commission shall approve a CUP if it is able to make affirmative findings based on General Plan consistency, the site can accommodate the proposed use, adequate circulation, adequate water supply, and compatibility with character of the area, as well as any other criteria as are specified for the particular use in other sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

Carson Municipal Code Section 9172.23 (Site Plan and Design Review) requires Planning Commission review of projects within the Design Overlay District having construction valuation of \$50,000 or more.

The proposed hotel development includes the demolition and removal of the Carson Buffet & Event Center located on the eastern portion of the subject property. The existing Motel 6 on the western portion of the subject property will remain undisturbed. The proposed six-story-high, 56,242-square-foot hotel development will consist of 111 rooms, with associated parking and will occupy about an acre on the eastern edge of subject property.

CMC 9133 (Conditional Use Criteria) provides, "In addition to the general criteria for the approval of a conditional use permit pursuant to CMC 9172.21(D)(1), special criteria and limitations as indicated below shall be considered in acting upon a conditional use permit

in a commercial zone: . . . *Alcoholic beverage sales and services*: Ability to comply with the provisions of CMC 9138.5.”

CMC 9138.5 (Alcoholic Beverage Sales and Services) provides, “In connection with alcoholic beverage sales and services, the following requirements shall be met: . . . no off-sale business (incidental) shall be established within three hundred (300) feet of any school or park, and no off-sale business (primary) shall be established within three hundred (300) feet of any school, park, or church. The distances set forth in the preceding sentence shall be determined by measuring from lot line to lot line. The total number of on-sale businesses shall not exceed eighty-five (85). The total number of off-sale businesses shall not exceed seventy (70).”

Alcoholic Beverage Control

The proposed conditional use permit is a precursor to an application with the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The applicant will be solely responsible for pursuing a Type 70 On Sale General - Restrictive Service ABC License Type that authorizes the sale or furnishing of beer, wine, and distilled spirits for consumption on the premises to the establishment’s overnight transient occupancy guests or their invitees. The ABC license would be required prior to any alcohol sales taking place, notwithstanding the issuance of the proposed conditional use permit.

Because the proposed service/sale of alcoholic beverages is solely for on-site consumption, there is no proposed off-sale business and therefore the distance restrictions from sensitive uses are inapplicable. The total number of on-sale businesses in the City is currently eight (8). Therefore, the proposed project meets the requirements of CMC 9133 and 9138.5.

III. Project Site and Surrounding Land Uses

The subject property site is in the CR-D zone and is designated Commercial Regional under the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The subject property is located at the intersection of East Dominguez and Bonita Street.

Land uses surrounding the proposed project site are primarily regional commercial uses.



Figure (A) Project Site in context to surrounding area.

The following provides a summary of the site information:

Site Information	
General Plan Land Use	Regional Commercial
Zone District	CR-D (Commercial Regional - Design Overlay District)
Site Size	215,498 Square feet (4.95 acres)
Present Use and Development	Motel 6 and Carson Buffet & Event Center (vacant)
Surrounding Uses/ Zoning	North: Regional Commercial, CR-D South: Regional Commercial, CR-D/Vacant land East: Regional Commercial, CR-D West: Dominguez Channel
Access	Ingress/Egress: Dominguez Street and Bonita Street

IV. Analysis

Site History

The subject property was originally developed with a Motel 6, restaurant, and event center in 1974. The Carson Hospitality Group took ownership in 2004 and continue to operate the motel but in 2021 the restaurant and event center closed due to the pandemic.



Figure (B) Street view of existing Carson Buffet & Event Center



Figure (C) Street view of existing Motel 6

Site Plan; Prior Entitlement

On August 25, 2020, the Planning Commission approved Site Plan and Design Review (DOR) No. 1827-20 and Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1101-20 for a proposed Holiday Inn Express and Suites Hotel that included a first floor designed with entrance lobby, breakfast area, conference center, meeting room and adjoining outdoor patio area. The entitlement included the demolition and removal of the Carson Buffet restaurant and event center at the eastern portion of the subject property and the construction of a new 118 room, six story hotel with 120 parking spaces. (Exhibit No. 4).

In 2021, ownership changed hotel branding to the Marriott TownePlace Suites which resulted in the following changes to the original entitlement:

- 1. Guest rooms were reduced from 118 to 111.
- 2. Parking spaces were reduced from 120 to 113.
- 3. First floor meeting room was converted to a bar and lounge.
- 4. Third floor pool area added a lounge area.

- The above changes reduced the size of the hotel development to 56,242 square feet (by approximately 100 square feet).

These modifications did not extend beyond the intent of the original approval and were approved by the Planning Division pursuant to CMC 9172.21.G (Conditional Use Permit, Subsequent Modifications of Conditions).

On September 27, 2022, the Planning Commission approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1118-22 for onsite alcoholic beverage sales and services of beer, wine, and distilled spirits at a lounge and bar within the proposed hotel (Exhibit No. 4).

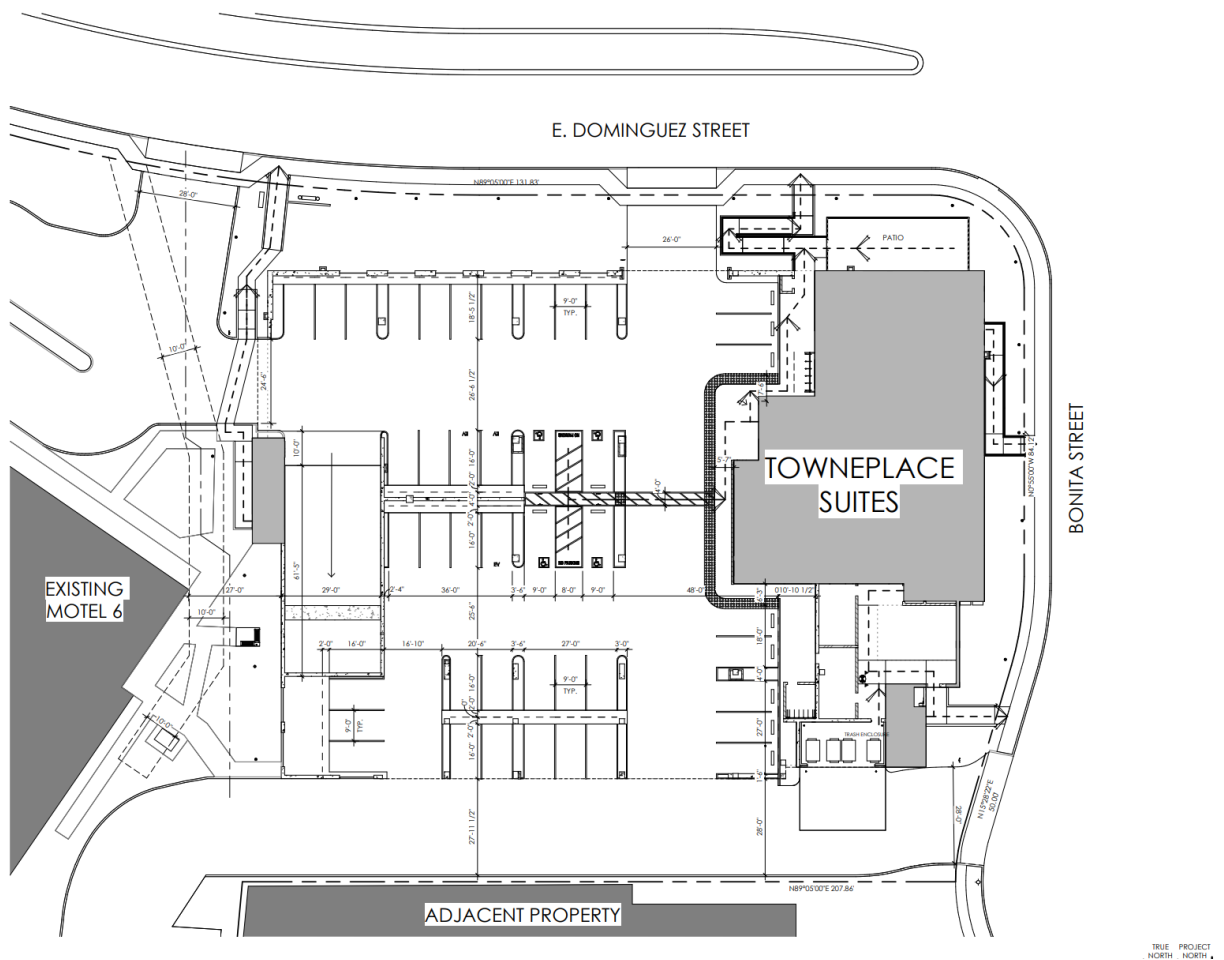


Figure (D) Approved Site Plan

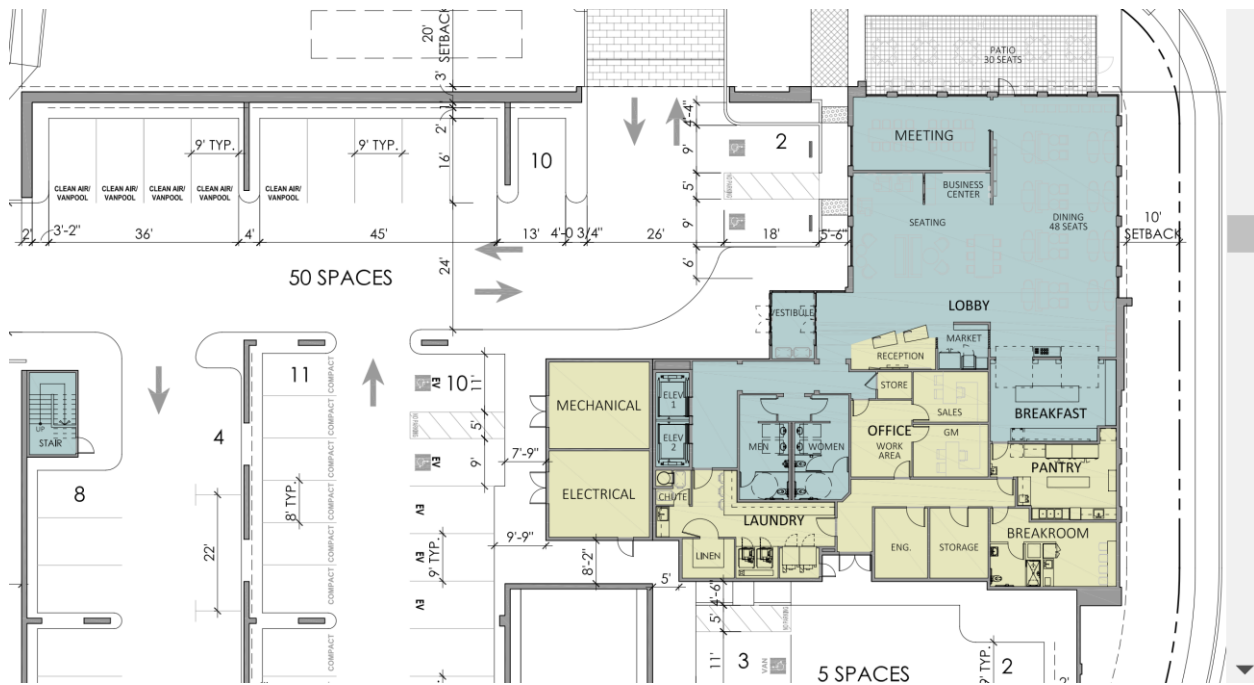


Figure (E) Original First-Floor Plan



Figure (F) Revised First-Floor Plan with a Cocktail Bar Lounge & Outdoor Patio

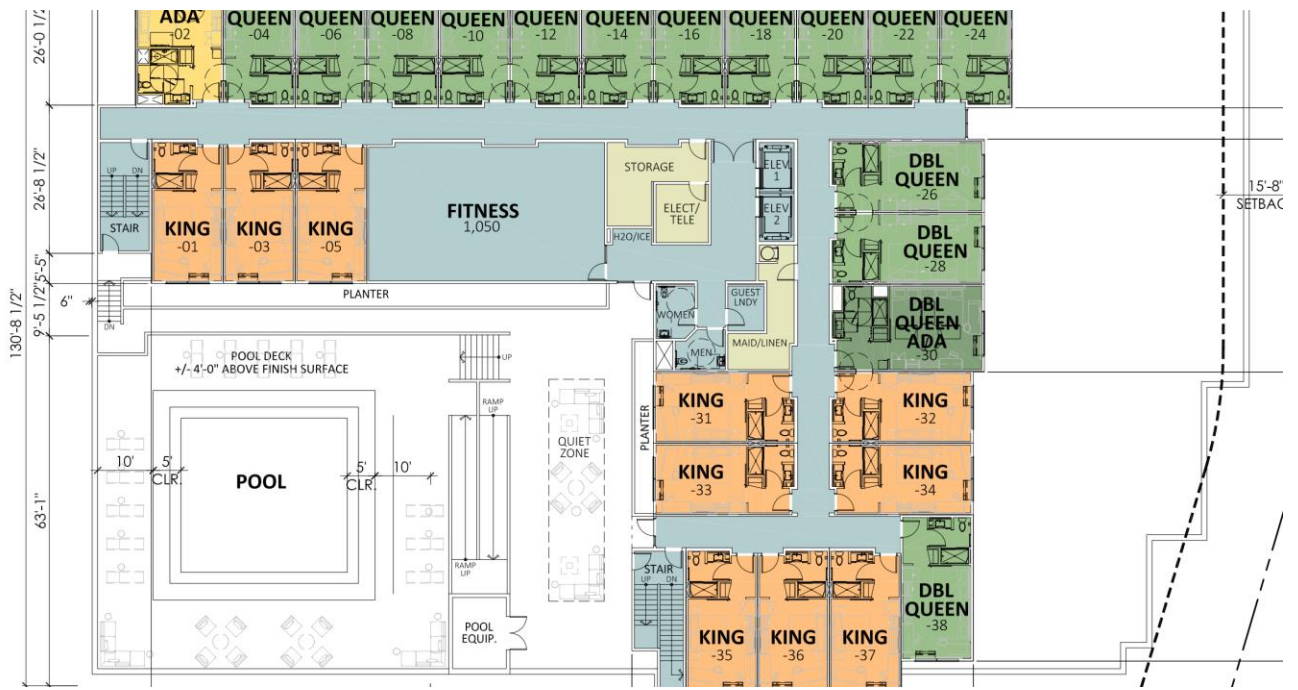


Figure (G) Original Third-Floor Pool and Lounge Plan

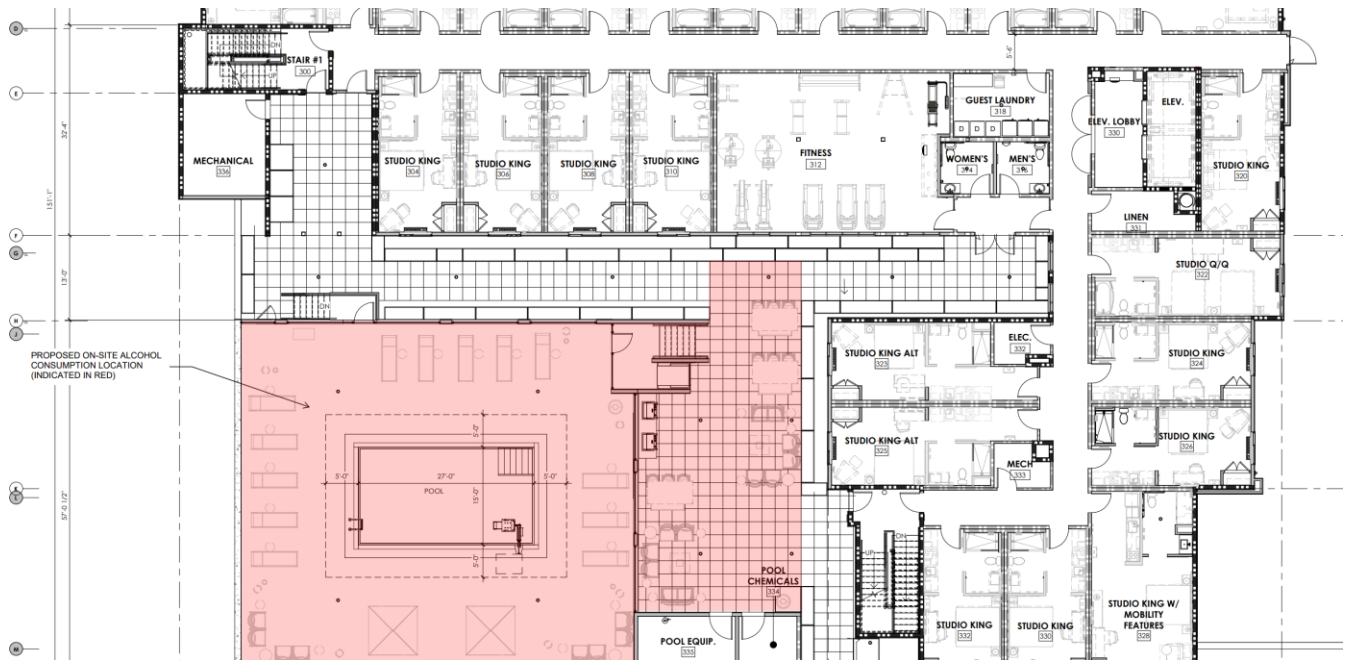


Figure (H) Revised Third-Floor Pool & Lounge Plan

Background: Expired Permits

DOR No. 1827-20 and CUP No. 1101-20, the entitlement applications to permit the development of the hotel that were approved by the Planning Commission in August 2020, expired and became automatically null and void because they were unused (i.e., no construction permit issued) within two years from the effective date of the approval action and because no extensions were timely requested or approved, pursuant to CMC

Sections 9172.21(H) (Conditional Use Permit) and 9172.23(I) (Site Plan and Design Review) and their respective Conditions of Approval.

Condition No. 2, DOR No. 1827-20 and CUP No. 1101-20 (as were modified in 2021 by Planning Division approval):

“If a building permit for Site Plan and Design Review No. 1827-20 and Conditional Use Permit No. 1101-20 is not issued within two years of the effective date of the approved Planning Commission Resolution, said entitlements shall be declared null and void unless an extension of time is previously approved by the Planning Commission;” and

CUP No. 1118-22, the entitlement application to allow the sale and service of on-site consumption of alcoholic beverages within the hotel that was approved by the Planning Commission in September 2022, also expired and became null and void due to the aforementioned applications’ expiration per the following condition of approval:

Condition No. 5, CUP No. 1118-22:

“Conditional Use Permit No. 1118-22 shall expire/become null and void if and when DOR No. 1827-20 and/or CUP No. 1101-20 (as were modified in 2021 by Planning Division approval) expire/become null and void.”

The applicant submitted Planning approved plans for Building Plan Check in September 2021. The applicant has been working diligently towards obtaining the necessary approvals and permits. However, the plan review process by multiple Los Angeles County agencies (fire, grading, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical) has taken longer than expected to obtain building permits due to issues arising in inter-departmental coordination and limited staffing. These issues were exacerbated due to restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The applicant inadvertently did not submit a timely request for additional time to the Director, resulting in all of the aforementioned entitlements expiring with no opportunity for the City to grant an extension. Approval of the presented applications will allow the applicant to obtain the entitlements anew, complete the plan check permit process and start construction on this project.

Motel 6

Although not required by the Carson Municipal Code, the applicant is volunteering to repaint the existing Motel 6 building’s exterior to revive its façade in response to the Planning Commission’s comment during the September 27, 2022, public hearing. In compliance with the approved Motel 6 brand paint color palette, the applicant will be utilizing muted, neutral earth toned colors for the building façade with guest room doors painted in deep-hued blue. (Condition of Approval No. 21 and Exhibit No. 3)

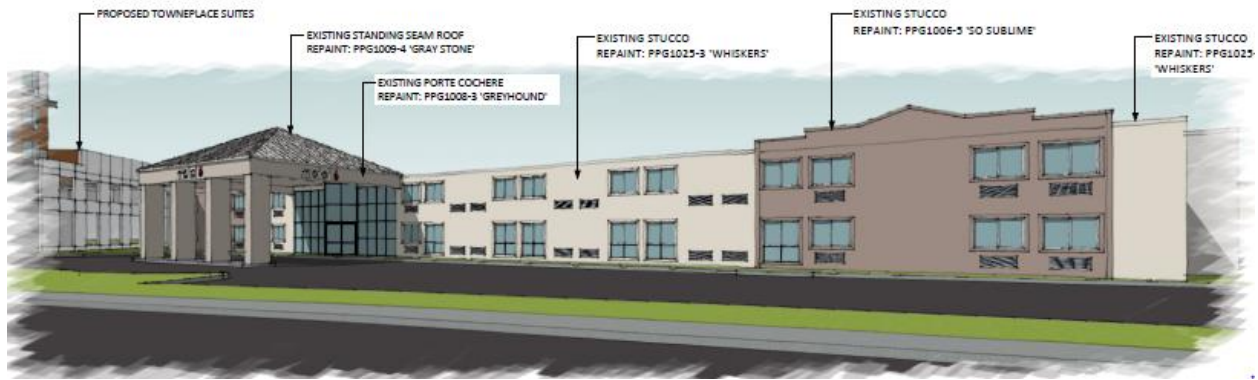


Figure (I) Concept Motel 6 Rendering



Figure (J) Existing Motel 6

Access

There are two existing driveways off East Dominguez Street (one exclusively for Motel 6 and the other shared between Motel 6 and the existing Carson Buffet), and an existing driveway off Bonita Street. A third, 26-foot-wide driveway off Dominguez Street will be added for exclusive access to the future hotel.

Parking and Traffic

Carson Municipal Code Section 9162.21 (Parking Spaces Required) requires 1 parking space for every guest room and 2 parking spaces for the resident manager’s unit. The original entitlement for Holiday Inn Express and Suites Hotel included 118 guest rooms and 120 parking spaces. The newly branded Marriott TownePlace Suites with the approved modification includes 111 guest rooms and 113 parking spaces: 111 for guest rooms and 2 for resident manager, in compliance with CMC 9162.21. These include 5 ADA accessible spaces; 7 EV charging spaces and 11 Clean Air/Van Pool EV spaces. The adjoining Motel 6 use meets parking requirements independently of the Marriott TownePlace Suites development.

Based on the City’s Traffic Engineer review, the addition of a lounge and bar in the hotel is not considered a significant generator of traffic as those facilities usually serve patrons of the hotel and only generate a few outside trips. This change is not expected to have a traffic impact on surrounding roadway facilities. A hotel of this size (111 rooms with

facilities) is only expected to generate approximately 65 peak hour trips which is relatively low.

Buildings and Architecture

The approved hotel will be a contemporary architecture style utilizing elements specific to the surrounding area and hotel brand including exterior cement plaster, cement fiber panels, and wood look cement fiber panels. The building design uses both horizontal and vertical elements to break down the overall look of the building. The project is compatible with the surrounding area and will be a significant improvement to the overall area.

Fencing

The subject property shares the western and southern property lines with adjoining commercial buildings. The northern and eastern property lines face Dominguez and Bonita Streets respectively. The approved hotel development will remove an existing 3'-foot block wall along the northern and eastern side to allow for an unobstructed view of the new hotel and better pedestrian connectivity- both physically and visually.

Landscaping

Carson Municipal Code Section 9162.52 (Landscaping Requirements) requires automobile parking facilities and any parking facilities visible from the public right-of-way to have interior landscaping with permanent irrigation of not less than 5%. The project proposes to install 10-feet of landscaping depth along Dominguez Street and 5 feet of depth landscaping along Bonita Street. In addition, landscaping is interspersed around the hotel building and in the parking area. A total of 6,700 square feet of landscaping is provided which exceeds code requirements.

In addition, the project is also conditioned to replace existing street trees and install additional parkway trees wherever missing per the approved "parkway trees" list. Permanent irrigation utilizing best water conservation practices will be installed for both on-site and off-site landscaped areas.

Signage

Carson Municipal Code Section 9136.7 (Signs) allows two square feet of signage for every one linear foot of lot frontage on a public street. The subject property has approximately 590 feet of lot frontage along Dominguez and Bonita Street allowing 1180 (590x2=1180) square feet of signage. The existing signage for Motel 6 is approx. 227 square feet, allowing the new Holiday Inn to make use of the balance of 953 square feet of signage allowance. The applicant has not proposed signage at this time.

The existing Carson Buffet pole sign shall also be demolished as part of the proposed development. (Condition of Approval No. 27)

V. CFD/DIF Discussion

On April 16, 2019, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 19-1931 to implement the City's Interim Development Impact Fee (IDIF) Program. In accordance with this IDIF program.

Interim Development Impact Fee:

The applicant shall be responsible for payment of a one-time development impact fee at the applicable rate, currently \$2,119.96 per room for Fiscal Year 2022-23, effective July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

If paid during Fiscal Year 2022-23, the proposed development would be responsible for development impact fees of \$235,315.56 ($\$2,119.96 \times 111$ hotel rooms = \$235,315.56). If the Project increases or decreases in size, the IDIF Amount will be adjusted accordingly at the same rate

The removal of the Carson Buffet & Event Center building allows for a demolition credit of \$47,223.80 ($\$4.10 \times 11,518$ sq. ft.). The net development impact fee is \$151,704.14 ($\$235,315.56 - \$47,223.80$).

VI. Zoning and General Plan Consistency

The proposed project is consistent with the standards of the CR (Commercial, Regional Center) zoning designation and Regional Commercial General Plan land use designation and will remain consistent with the surrounding uses.

VII. Environmental Review and CEQA Finding

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, Class 32 – In-Fill Development Projects. Class 32 consists of projects characterized as in-fill development meeting the conditions as enumerated below:

- (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.
- (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
- (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.
- (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.
- (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services; and

Additionally, pursuant to Section 15060(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the proposed activity (alcohol sales/service) pursuant to CUP No. 1124-22 is not subject to CEQA because the activity does not have the potential to, and will not, result in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. As such, it does not constitute a project within the meaning of CEQA (14 CCR 15378). Alternatively, the activity is covered by the common-sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (14 CCR 15061(b)(3)). Here it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, as it relates only to alcohol sales/service.

VIII. Public Notice

Notice of the public hearing was mailed to property owners and occupants within a 750' radius and posted to the project site by December 1, 2022. The agenda was posted at City Hall 72 hours prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

IX. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

- **ADOPT** Resolution No. 22-___, entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON FINDING AN EXEMPTION FROM CEQA AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN OVERLAY REVIEW NO. 1924-22, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1123-22 AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1124-22 FOR A PROPOSED 111 ROOM, 56,242-SQUARE-FOOT MARRIOTT TOWNEPLACE SUITES HOTEL DEVELOPMENT AND ONSITE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE SALES AND SERVICES OF BEER, WINE, AND DISTILLED SPIRITS WITHIN THE HOTEL AT 888 E. DOMINGUEZ STREET."

X. Exhibits

1. Draft Resolution
 - A. *Legal Description*
 - B. *Conditions of Approval*
2. Development Plans
3. Motel 6 Concept Rendering and Paint Color Palette
4. Planning Commission Excerpt Minutes dated August 25, 2020, and September 27, 2022

Prepared by: McKina Alexander, Associate Planner