



CARSON PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 11, 2025
FROM: Christopher Palmer, AICP - Planning Manager
BY: Richard Garcia – Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 3-24

PROJECT/APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Summary: A request for approval of Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 3-24 for Alcohol Beverage Sales at a convenience store.
Project Location: 16502 S. Main St. (APN # 6126-010-042)
Zoning: Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay (ML-D)
Project Applicant: Justin Lee
Property Owner: David Pai (Kenski Properties, Inc)

I. OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

Carson Municipal Code (“CMC”) Section 9141.1 (Uses Permitted) states that Alcoholic beverage sales in conjunction with variety store, drugstore, mini market, drive-through market, food store, or grocery store excluding a supermarket, take-out food, liquor store, are subject to requirements of CMC 9138.5, and a conditional use permit (“CUP”) shall be required. Section 9138.5 requires that after the effective date of Ordinance No. 01-1231, 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.

B. Project Description

The project consists of a new owner taking over an existing business location. The applicant submitted for a Conditional Use Permit with the department to be brought into compliance with the CUP requirement the Carson Municipal Code section 9141.1 has for businesses with proposed Alcohol beverage sales. The previous tenant had been operating at the location but did not have a CUP on file due to some oversight; the business was and is required to obtain a CUP for the sale of Alcoholic beverages. Per section 9182.21 CMC, existing businesses established prior to January 21, 1983, that would sell alcohol were not subject to the conditional use permit requirement. The previous owner took possession of the business in

a similar fashion in 2006 and due to misunderstanding was allowed to operate. The new ownership came to the department to try and obtain clearance for their ABC license to sell alcohol and through this it was discovered the new owner is now subject to the CUP requirement to lawfully establish a business that proposes alcohol beverage sales.

C. Project History

The business located at 16502 Main Street was established in 1995 as Market Liquor and was subject to a CUP but was missed and continued operation until 2006 in which ownership changed. The non-conformity in the use on the site continued under the assumption the business has been operating since 1995 so no full review of the change of ownership brought up any questions.

In late 2024 the applicant inquired to our department about taking over the business at the location. Upon review of the requested business and location, staff reviewed historical documentation with the attempt at seeing if the business could be approved for its zoning clearance as the previous tenant did. Unfortunately, there was never any proper entitlement obtained for the use of selling alcoholic beverages at the existing convenience store. This application is now being processed to assist the new business owner to properly legalize the use of selling alcoholic beverages in conjunction with the existing convenience store that has been at 16502 Main Street since 1995.

D. Existing Conditions

- Land Use Information

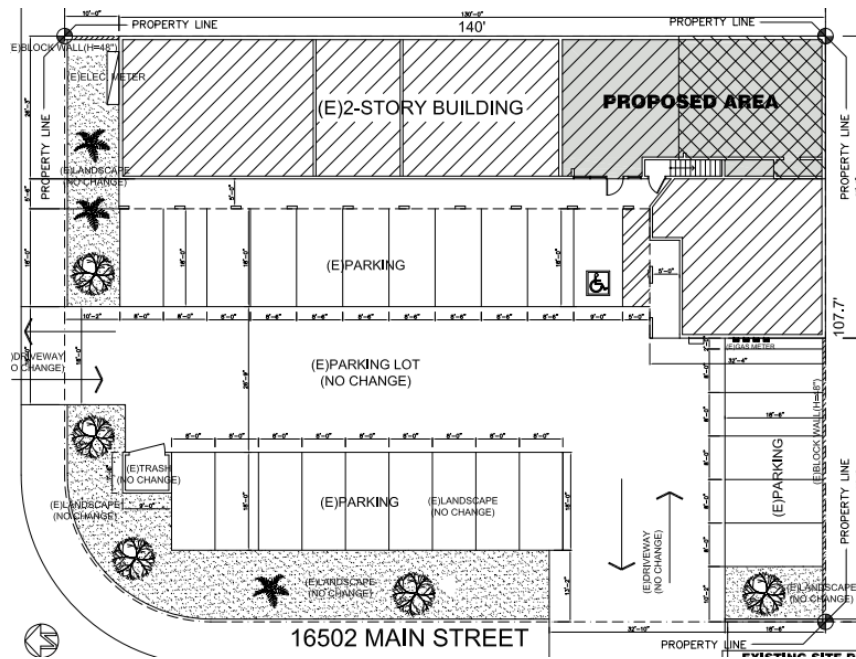
As shown on the location map below, the project is located on the southeast corner of Main Street and Gardena Blvd. The site is approximately 15,077 square feet in area and is comprised of one parcel identified as Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 6126- 010-042. The project site is surrounded by completely industrial uses. The surrounding land uses are both a combination of light and heavy industrially zones properties. Additional Light Manufacturing (ML-D) uses can be found to the north and south of the project site.



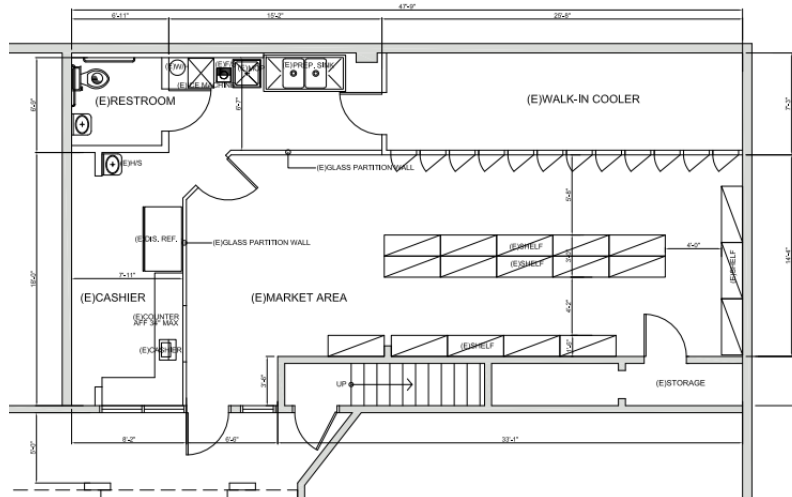
- Site Conditions

The existing project site consists of a 4,810 square foot commercial building located in an industrial area for the city of Carson. The applicant proposes to occupy 1,200 square feet on the first-floor space of one unit as seen on the site plan and floor plan below. There is a second story that appears to be office space at the location, but plans do not demonstrate it so no accurate size can be described. The property appears to have been developed in 1993 according to the LA County Assessor Portal. The site presents 25 parking spaces, and landscaping along the setback areas to both Gardena Blvd and Main St.

Site Plan



Floor Plan



- General Plan and Zoning Information

The following table summarizes the surrounding land uses, zoning, and general plan designations:

Table A

Land Use Summary Table			
	Existing Use	Zoning	General Plan
Subject Site	Commercial plaza	Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay (ML-D)	Industrial Light (IL)
North of Subject Site	Muffler shop	Manufacturing, Heavy – Design Overlay (MH-D)	Industrial Light (IL)
South of Subject Site	Warehouse	Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay (ML-D)	Industrial Light (IL)
West of Subject Site	Warehouse	Manufacturing, Heavy – Design Overlay (MH-D)	Industrial Light (IL)
East of Subject Site	Storage	Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay (ML-D)	Industrial Light (IL)

II. ANALYSIS

A. General Plan Consistency

The project site’s General Plan Land Use Designation is Industrial Light (IL), per the adopted General Plan 2040. The IL designation provides that commercial and retail uses are permitted subject to criteria outlined in the zoning ordinance. The zoning code for industrial zones are being updated through the Phase 2 update which is ongoing, but not yet complete. The regulation for this location would be under the old zoning code, Carson Municipal Code section 9141.1, which requires any business that proposes to sell alcoholic beverages to acquire a conditional use permit. The language in the phase two for permitted uses is expected to remain very similar for items like these moving forward. Staff believes the project complies with the General Plan subject to the CUP requirement. Also, the project is proposing no changes to, or expansion of the existing building or building footprint; only minor operational legalization as discussed above to bring this business that has been in operation up to code with respect to the CUP requirement for the alcohol sales use.

The proposed project is consistent with the Zoning (ML-D – Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay) Designation of the site, which allows for alcoholic beverage sales with a Conditional Use Permit, subject to the requirements of CMC 9138.5.

The proposed project complies with the following development and design standards of the CMC:

- Carson Municipal Code Section 9162.21 (Parking Spaces Required) states 1 parking space per 300 square feet of retail/commercial gross floor area is required. Therefore, a total of 16 parking stalls are required. 1 of those spaces are required to be ADA compliant. The site currently has 25 parking spaces: 24 regular and 1 ADA compliant parking spaces. The parking is being generalized with commercial standards because we do not have floorplans of all units on site.
- Carson Municipal Code Section 9162.52 (Landscaping Requirements) requires any parking facilities visible from the public right-of-way to have interior landscaping of not less than five 5%. It is not currently clear whether the existing landscaping in all respects complies with the current code, including as it pertains to applicable water conservations requirements. The project is not changing any of the existing landscaping but does maintain landscaping along setbacks as required by code, and there is shade in the parking area for vehicle parking.

1. Conditional Use Permit Application

Section 9172.21 of the CMC states that approval of a CUP requires affirmative findings based on the following criteria:

- A. The proposed use and development will be consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan land use designation for the site is Light Industrial, which provides that commercial and retail uses are permitted subject to criteria outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. With the proposed CUP, the project meets the criteria outlined in the Zoning Ordinance.
- B. The site is adequate in size, shape, topography, location, utilities, and other factors to accommodate the proposed use and development. The project location is an existing convenience store and will not be changing anything on site that would interfere with the size, shape, and topography of the site that would cause any issues.
- C. There will be adequate street access and traffic capacity. The access and the capacity of the site will not be changed as this has been an operating business since 1995 and is now just properly obtaining the conditional use permit the original owners should have obtained when operation began.
- D. The proposed permit for the use of selling alcoholic beverage intended for off-site consumption will not have a bearing or effect on the existing water supply for the fire protection of the site.

E. The proposed use and development will be compatible with the intended character of the area. This has been a small commercial center since being developed in the 90's. The industrial surrounding the site has also been long standing and there are no schools or parks in proximity that could be impacted by this business. Also important to note there is not a business near this location with the same operation.

B. Environmental Analysis

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1 – Existing Facilities. Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. The proposed project involves no expansion of the existing use.

III. RECOMMENDATION

ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 25-___, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON FINDING A CEQA EXEMPTION AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 3-24 FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE SALES IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN EXISTING CONVENIENCE STORE LOCATED AT 16502 S. MAIN STREET."

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Draft Resolution
 - A) Legal Description
 - B) Conditions of Approval