

FINDINGS

(As Amended by the Central Area Planning Commission at its meeting of September 24, 2024)

BASIS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS

A particular type of development is subject to the conditional use process because it has been determined that such use of property should not be permitted by right in a particular zone. All uses requiring a Conditional Use Permit from the Zoning Administrator are located within Section 12.24 W of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. In order for the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption to be authorized, certain designated findings have to be made. In these cases, there are additional findings in lieu of the standard findings for most other conditional use categories.

CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS

1. **The project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.**

The proposed project is a new restaurant and karaoke bar, A Plus Karaoke, that will occupy a two-story multi-tenant commercial building that is located at the southwest corner of 8th Street and Normandie Avenue. The commercial building in which the subject establishment will occupy, contains 12,176 square feet of floor area. The proposed restaurant and karaoke bar will be located on the second floor of the multi-tenant commercial building and will encompass 5,000 square feet of floor area. The establishment will contain 15 enclosed karaoke rooms and a total of 133 indoor seats. Project improvements are limited to tenant improvements that will not result in the expansion of floor area or changes to the commercial building's height or building footprint.

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use to allow the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with the proposed restaurant and karaoke bar. The project does not propose any patron dancing or live entertainment.

The project site is located within a busy commercial corridor, at the intersection of 8th Street and Normandie Avenue, and two blocks south of Wilshire Boulevard, a major commercial thoroughfare. The site is served by Metro Local bus services along 8th Street and Irolo Street. The neighborhood contains a high concentration of restaurants, bars, and karaoke establishments, which are common uses throughout Koreatown. The proposed sale and dispensing of alcohol will be ancillary to subject establishment's primary use as a restaurant and karaoke bar. The sale of alcohol further augments the desirability of these establishments, as it is an amenity that is typically expected with food service and karaoke in Koreatown. The restaurant will provide its patrons with a unique and authentic dining experience coupled with karaoke.

A variety of commercial uses are an intrinsic part of the service amenities necessary for the conservation, development, and success of a vibrant neighborhood. The new restaurant and karaoke bar will support the local community by contributing to the rich diversity of food offerings in the area. The establishment will also provide a popular outlet for entertainment in the neighborhood enjoyed by both local residents and visitors from abroad. The establishment is in convenient location for neighboring residents and patrons across the city that can easily access the establishment either by walking or by means of public transit. The project provides an essential service by helping to preserve and strengthen a viable commercial corridor within the community. The project also benefits the community, by drawing in visitors from abroad, bringing in new revenue for local businesses in the surrounding area. In addition, the establishment will not feature any live music or dancing on its premises. Security personnel and cameras are required to be installed to assure safety and compatible use to the surrounding residential use. Therefore, in conjunction with the imposition of operational conditions, the request should result in a use which is compatible with and an asset to the local neighborhood and the community at large.

2. **The project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.**

The subject property is a gently sloping, rectangular-shaped parcel of land consisting of 10 lots having a combined lot area of 50,540 square feet (approximately 1.16 acres). The subject property has a street frontage of 94 feet along the west side of Normandie Avenue, a street frontage of 272 feet along the south side of 8th Street, and a street frontage of 290 feet along the east side of Irolo Street. The subject property is developed with a single-story commercial building and two-story commercial building, as well surface parking lot that contains a total of 59 vehicle parking stalls. The two existing multi-tenant commercial buildings consist of a variety of commercial uses including, a grocery store, a laundromat, a dry cleaner, restaurants, and a bakery.

The surrounding area is heavily urbanized and characterized by gently sloping topography and fully improved streets. Properties surrounding the subject site are zoned C2-1 and R4-2 and are designated for Neighborhood Office Commercial and High Medium Residential land uses. Properties to the north of the subject site, across 8th Street, are zoned C2-2 and R4-2 and improved with mixed-use buildings containing apartments with ground floor commercial retail and restaurants. Properties along Irolo Street are predominately improved with multi-family buildings and some single-family residences. Properties to the west of the subject site, across Irolo Street, are zoned C2-1 and R4-2 and improved with neighborhood-serving commercial uses including a grocery store, and multi-family residential buildings. Properties south of the project site along Irolo Street and Normandie Avenue are zoned R4-2 and improved with single- and multi-family residences. Properties to the east across Normandie Avenue are zoned C2-1 and R4-2 and improved with a market and multi-family residences.

The project proposes a new restaurant and karaoke bar that will occupy a 5,000 square-foot second floor tenant space located within a two-story, 12,176 square-foot multi-tenant commercial building located at the northeast corner of the subject property. The establishment will contain 15 enclosed karaoke rooms and have a total of 133 indoor seats.

The project will primarily involve tenant improvements and operational changes to the existing tenant space. The project does not involve any physical expansion of the subject building's footprint or change in the building's height. The project does not propose any outdoor patio area. The Conditional Use allows the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption as an ancillary amenity for restaurant and karaoke patrons.

Public testimony from the public hearing and correspondence received have indicated concerns of the hours proposed, noise, parking, and several other issues, as described in the Public Hearing Section of this determination letter. In response to the concerns raised during the public hearing, the Zoning Administrator has also restricted the hours of operation 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m., Sunday to Thursday and 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 a.m., Friday-Saturday and included many of the conditions from the applicant's operations and security plan. Additionally, conditions requiring security cameras, adequate lighting, and responsible management practices will ensure that the presence of alcoholic beverages will not degrade community safety.

The establishment's emphasis will be food service coupled with karaoke. The proposed sale of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption will offer an amenity incidental to food service and karaoke. In addition, the Zoning Administrator has imposed numerous conditions to prevent adverse impacts and integrate the use into the neighborhood. These conditions respond to the complaints made at the public hearing related to noise, loitering, responsible operation. Furthermore, the Alcoholic Beverage Control will impose their own set of conditions, which the applicant will also be subject to. In addition, at its meeting of September 24, 2024, the Central Area Planning Commission modified Condition No. 7a to limit the opening hours from 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., Sunday to Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., Friday-Saturday; modified Condition No. 8 to require the applicant file a Plan Approval within 18 months from the date of this approval; modified Condition No. 46 to include communications with the Neighborhood Council regarding questions and concerns; and modified Condition Nos. 49-51 to increase the security guards to three security guards to address concerns related to hours, outreach, and noise/security to further minimize impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, which help ensure safety of patrons, and deal with potential loitering and noise issues associated with previous operations. Therefore, based on the facts herein and in conjunction with the imposition of operational conditions, the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety of the community.

3. **The project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any specific plan.**

The General Plan is the City's roadmap for future growth and development. The General Plan Elements establish goals, policies, purposes, and programs that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City, and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. The majority of the policies derived from these elements are implemented in the form of Municipal Code requirements. The General Plan is comprised of the Framework Element, seven state-mandated elements, and four additional elements. The Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the General Plan.

The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the City into 35 Community Plans. The subject property falls within the boundaries of the Wilshire Community Plan Area and spans three zone designations, C2-1, PB-2, and R4-2. The Wilshire Community Plan Area Map designates subject site for Neighborhood Office Commercial land uses, corresponding to the C1, C1.5, C2, C4, P, CR, RAS3, and RAS4 zones, and for High Medium Residential land uses corresponding to the R4 Zone. The multi-tenant commercial building in which the existing restaurant occupies, is located entirely in the C2 zoned lots that make up the northernmost portion of the subject site. The project site's zoning is consistent with the General Plan's land use designation for the site. The subject property is not located within the boundaries of or subject to any specific plan, community design overlay, or interim control ordinance.

The Wilshire Community Plan text is silent with regards to the sale and dispensing of alcohol. In such cases, the Zoning Administrator must interpret the intent of the Plan. Specifically, the project addresses the following goal, objective, and policy of the Community Plan:

GOAL 2: *Encourage strong and competitive commercial sectors which promote economic vitality and serve the needs of the Wilshire community through well-designed, safe and accessible areas, while preserving historic and cultural character.*

Objective 2-1: *Preserve and strengthen viable commercial development in the community and to provide additional opportunities for new commercial development and services within existing commercial areas.*

Policy 2-1.3: *Enhance the viability of existing neighborhood stores and businesses which support the needs of local residents and are compatible with the neighborhood.*

The proposed restaurant and karaoke bar preserves and strengthens viable commercial development in the community. The project will improve the subject commercial building through tenant improvements and increased revenue from the restaurant and karaoke establishment. New businesses are essential in increasing the viability and longevity of various commercial developments throughout communities like Koreatown. The subject establishment is in a convenient location and will cater to nearby residents, local employees, as well as visitors and tourists. The presence of a new karaoke restaurant will further serve the local community by increasing pedestrian activity, which will not only increase the safety of the area, but also increase the vibrancy along 8th Street. The project supports the community economically, as the addition of a new restaurant and karaoke bar will likely draw in more visitors and patrons to the neighborhood, thus supporting local businesses.

In addition to the goal, objectives, and their policies described above, the request fulfills the intent of the Wilshire Community Plan provisions regarding land use compatibility and maintaining desirable characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods. As such, the project maintains an existing commercial use within an established commercial district and is consistent with the purpose, intent, and provisions of the General Plan and the Wilshire Community Plan.

4. **The proposed use will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community.**

The proposed restaurant and karaoke bar are uses allowed by right in the C2 Zone. The grant to allow the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption will be ancillary to the restaurant's food service, and an amenity for karaoke patrons. The availability of alcoholic beverages ancillary to food service, is consistent with the pattern of many neighborhood restaurants and karaoke establishments in Los Angeles, particularly in Koreatown. The high concentration of restaurants serving alcohol is warranted due to the high population density in the area. Additionally, the project will not physically alter the subject building's location, size, or height. Operational conditions imposed on the project will help to ensure that the ancillary alcohol service in conjunction with the restaurant and karaoke use will not adversely affect the neighborhood, including surrounding residences and businesses.

Negative impacts commonly associated with the sale of alcoholic beverages, such as criminal activity, public drunkenness, and loitering are mitigated by the imposition of conditions requiring responsible management and deterrents against loitering. Employees will undergo training on the sale of alcoholic beverages, including training provided by the Los Angeles Police Department Standardized Training for Alcohol Retailers (STAR) Program or the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control's Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs (LEAD) Program, or the Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) Training Program.

Furthermore, the Zoning Administrator has imposed numerous conditions to integrate the use into the community as well as protect community members from adverse potential impacts. Additional conditions have been included to ensure the operation provides adequate security measures, includes a surveillance system, and adequate lighting, adherence to the City's Noise Ordinance, and responsible management practices. In addition, at its meeting of September 24, 2024, the Central Area Planning Commission modified Condition No. 7a to limit the opening hours from 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., Sunday to Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., Friday-Saturday; modified Condition No. 8 to require the applicant file a Plan Approval within 18 months from the date of this approval; modified Condition No. 46 to include communications with the Neighborhood Council regarding questions and concerns; and modified Condition Nos. 49-51 to increase the security guards to three security guards to address concerns related to hours, outreach, and noise/security to further minimize impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, which help ensure safety of patrons, and deal with potential loitering and noise issues associated with previous operations. Both the Conditions of Approval and the requirements of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control are intended to protect the public health, welfare and safety of the community. Therefore, as conditioned herein, the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with the proposed restaurant and karaoke bar will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community.

5. **The granting of the application will not result in an undue concentration of premises for the sale or dispensing for consideration of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, in the area of the City involved, giving consideration to applicable State laws and to the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control's guidelines for undue concentration; and also giving consideration to the number and proximity of these establishments within a one thousand foot radius of the site, the crime rate in the area (especially those crimes involving public drunkenness, the illegal sale or use of narcotics, drugs, or alcohol, disturbing the peace, and disorderly conduct), and whether revocation or nuisance proceedings have been initiated for any use in the area.**

According to the California State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) licensing criteria, there are three (3) on-site and one (1) off-site licenses allocated to the subject Census Tract Number 2124.20, based on a population of 2,875. There are currently five (5) on-site licenses and two (2) off-site licenses within this census tract:

- (3) Type 41 – On-Sale Beer and Wine – Eating Place
- (2) Type 47 – On-Sale General - Eating Place
- (1) Type 20 – Off-Sale Beer and Wine
- (1) Type 21 – Off-Sale General

Within 1,000 feet of the subject site, there are currently 19 establishments that have an ABC license. The subject property is located within a densely populated urban neighborhood which has a wide variety of restaurants and retail establishments which has resulted in the number of existing on- and off-site alcohol licenses to exceed the maximum number allocated by ABC. Concentration can be undue when the addition of a license will negatively impact a neighborhood. Concentration however, is not undue when the approval of a license does not negatively impact an area, but rather such license benefits the public welfare and convenience. The ABC has discretion to approve an application if there is evidence that normal operations will not be contrary to public welfare and will not interfere with the quiet enjoyment of property by residents. In this case, the granting of the application will not result in undue concentration as the project will not result in negative impact to the surrounding businesses and residences. The project will rather provide a valuable amenity and desirable service that will support the vibrancy and longevity of the commercial corridor along 8th Street within the Koreatown. The proposed restaurant will offer a convenient food and beverage service that will address the needs of the local employees, residents, and visitors from abroad. Commercial uses such as the restaurant being proposed bolster pedestrian activity in the neighborhood, thus increasing public safety. The restaurant will likely bring in more visitors to the area, generating more revenue for local businesses, thus supporting the community's local economy.

According to statistics provided by the Los Angeles Police Department's Olympic Division Vice Unit, within Crime Reporting District No. 2044, which has jurisdiction over the subject property, a total of 134 crimes were reported in 2023 (103 Part I and 31 Part II crimes), compared to the Citywide Average of 162 crimes and the High Crime Reporting District Average of 194 crimes. Part II Crimes reported include (0) Narcotics, (7) Liquor Laws, (0) Public Drunkenness, (0) Disturbing the Peace, (0) Disorderly Conduct, (0) Gambling, (0) DUI related, (1) Moving Traffic Violations, and (9) other Miscellaneous Violations. These numbers do not reflect the total number of arrests in the subject reporting district over the accountable year. Arrests for this calendar year may reflect crimes reported in previous years.

The above statistics indicate that the crime rate in the reporting district where the subject site is located is lower than the Citywide Average and the High Crime Reporting District Average. No evidence was submitted for the record establishing any link between the subject site and the area's crime rate.

The project will not adversely affect public welfare because it is a desirable use and convenient amenity in an area designated for such neighborhood- and regional-serving commercial uses. Nevertheless, conditions such as those related to the STAR/LEAD/RBS Program, age verification, and security cameras, have been imposed by the Zoning Administrator in conjunction with this approval. Public safety measures to minimize nuisance and criminal activities have been incorporated into the grant to assure better oversight. Further conditions may be imposed by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control as conditions on the alcohol license. In addition, at its meeting of September 24, 2024, the Central Area Planning Commission modified Condition No. 7a to limit the opening hours from 5:00 p.m. to

12:00 a.m., Sunday to Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., Friday-Saturday; modified Condition No. 8 to require the applicant file a Plan Approval within 18 months from the date of this approval; modified Condition No. 46 to include communications with the Neighborhood Council regarding questions and concerns; and modified Conditions Nos. 49-51 to increase the security guards to three security guards to address concerns related to hours, outreach, and noise/security to further minimize impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, which help ensure safety of patrons, and deal with potential loitering and noise issues associated with previous operations. Therefore, as conditioned, the use is not expected to contribute to the area's crime rate or generate any nuisance activity and will not result in an undue concentration of establishments providing alcoholic beverages.

6. **The proposed use will not detrimentally affect nearby residentially zoned communities in the area of the City involved, after giving consideration to the distance of the proposed use from residential buildings, churches, schools, hospitals, public playgrounds and other similar uses, and other establishments dispensing, for sale or other consideration, alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine.**

The project site is zoned for commercial uses and will continue to be utilized as such with the proposed restaurant and karaoke use. The following sensitive uses are located within a 1,000-foot radius of the site:

Residential	
Multi- and Single-Family Residences	
Schools/Daycares	
New Open World Academy	3201 W. 8 th Street
Ambassador School of Global Education	3201 W. 8 th Street
God's Hands Academy Corp. (Day Care Center)	727 Irolo Street
Joy Academy After School Program	3242 W. 8 th Street
Angeles College Nursing School	3440 Wilshire Boulevard, # 310
Fremont College	3440 Wilshire Boulevard, 10 th Floor
Center for Caregiver Advancement	2910 Beverly Boulevard
New Village Girls Academy High School	147 N. Occidental Boulevard
Language Systems – Downtown Los Angeles Language School	3450 Wilshire Boulevard, #900
School for the Visual Arts and Humanities	701 S. Catalina Street
Los Angeles High School of the Arts	701 S. Catalina Street Unit #A414
Religious Institutions	
Obang Full Gospel Church	715 Irolo Street
Prajna Gate Buddhist Temple	939 Irolo Street
Parks	
Seoul International Park	3250 San Marino Street

Consideration has been given to the distance of the subject establishment from the above-referenced sensitive uses. The grant has been well conditioned, which should protect the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding neighbors. The potential effects of excessive noise or disruptive behavior have been considered and addressed by imposing conditions related to noise and loitering. The project is consistent with the zoning and in keeping with the existing uses adjacent to the development. The proposed project will contribute to the neighborhood and will serve the neighboring residents and the local employees as well as visitors. In addition, at its meeting of September 24, 2024, the Central Area Planning Commission modified Condition No. 7a to limit the opening hours from 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., Sunday to Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., Friday-Saturday; modified Condition No. 8 to require the applicant file a Plan Approval within 18 months from the date of this approval; modified Condition No. 46 to include communications with the Neighborhood council regarding questions and concerns; and modified Condition Nos. 49-51 to increase the security guards to three security guards to address concerns related to hours, outreach, and noise/security to further minimize impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, which help ensure safety of patrons, and deal with potential loitering and noise issues associated with previous operations. Therefore, as conditioned, the project will not detrimentally affect residentially zoned properties or any other sensitive uses in the area.

FLOOD HAZARD FINDING

7. The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone C, areas of minimal flooding.