

FINDINGS

1. Conditional Use Findings.

- a. **That 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 school site consists of a three-story classroom/administration building fronting Beverly Boulevard with a surface parking area located behind the existing three-story building. The school has been in operation since August 2019. The proposed project is the redevelopment of the existing surface parking area at an existing charter elementary school (Citizens of the World Charter School) to accommodate a one-story 2,500 square-foot two-classroom building and approximately 5,700 square-foot outdoor play space. The proposed enrichment classroom building is approximately 20-feet in height and would maintain the required side yard along Coronado Street (20-feet) and rear yard set-back of 10-feet. The project will be developed in two phases with the first phase consisting of primarily landscape and hardscape renovations and the second phase to incorporate a new classroom building and bicycle parking.

The proposed project will provide more substantial outdoor play space for the students and allow the school to extend the curriculum beyond core classes to include enrichment activities for the students. The reconfigured parking lot will provide one-way circulation to allow more efficient circulation and minimize congestion on and off the site. All student drop-off will continue to be conducted on the parking lot. The parking lot will be reconfigured to maximize cueing on the site and to allow efficient student drop-off and pick-up. The driveway at the northern boundary of the site, furthest from Beverly Boulevard, is and will continue to be utilized for ingress to minimize potential back-up on Beverly Boulevard. The southerly driveway is and will continue to be used for egress only. The parking plan will accommodate cueing for up to 13 cars on-site.

Allowing an additional classroom building and outdoor play spaces to serve the existing elementary school also provides an essential function and service that benefits the local community. Allowing students ample outdoor areas to exercise and stimulate their minds and bodies with interactive play structures, sporting games, and other outdoor activities. The two-classroom building will mostly be used for enrichment classes including programs such as learning earth sciences, foreign languages, drama, art, technology, adventure learning or physical education. These educational enrichment programs extend and enhance the learning in the classroom and are tied in to the schools constructivist curriculum. The school encourages socioeconomically diverse children in the neighborhood and surrounding community, giving children an opportunity to attend a local tuition-free public elementary school in a small class size school environment that emphasizes high academic standards in a new, state-of-the-art classroom building. The continued operation of the school allow students in the community to receive a high quality education, and thereby provide an essential function and service that benefits the local community.

- b. **That 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 project's location, size, height, operations, and other significant features will continue be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and will not adversely affect

or degrade adjacent properties. The subject property is an approximately 0.75-acre, (32,669 square-foot) rectangular-shaped lot located at the northeast corner of Beverly Boulevard and Coronado Street and is developed with the Citizens of the World Charter Elementary School. The school site consists of a three-story classroom/administration building fronting Beverly Boulevard with a surface parking area located behind the existing three-story building. Surrounding uses consist of single-family and multi-family uses to the north, east and west, and commercial and mixed use multi-story buildings across Beverly Boulevard to the south and to the east and west along the Beverly Boulevard frontage.

The proposed project is the redevelopment of the existing surface parking area to accommodate a one-story 2,500 square-foot classroom building and approximately 5,700 square-foot outdoor play space. The proposed enrichment classroom building would maintain the required side yard along Coronado Street (20-feet) and rear yard set-back of 10-feet. The project will be developed in two phases with the first phase consisting of primarily landscape and hardscape renovations and the second phase to incorporate a new classroom building and bicycle parking. The proposed project will provide more substantial outdoor play space for the students and allow the school to extend the curriculum beyond core classes to include enrichment activities for the students.

The reconfigured parking lot will provide one-way circulation to allow more efficient circulation and minimize congestion on and off the site. All student drop-off will continue to be conducted on the parking lot. The parking lot will be reconfigured to maximize cueing on the site and to allow efficient student drop-off and pick-up. The driveway at the northern boundary of the site, furthest from Beverly Boulevard, is and will continue to be utilized for ingress to minimize potential back-up on Beverly Boulevard. The southerly driveway is and will continue to be used for egress only. The parking plan will accommodate cueing for up to 13 cars on-site. The fencing and wall requirements approved under Case No. ZA-2017-4489-CU-ZV-F-1A will continue to provide security for the parking and students and shield the parking lot.

The school's location, size, height, and a majority of the operations will remain unchanged from their existing operation. The operation of the charter school will be subject to conditions regulating operating hours, events, parking, and student enrollment caps to minimize impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. The fencing and wall requirements approved under Case No. ZA-2017-4489-CU-ZV-F-1A will continue to provide security for the parking and students and shield the parking lot.

Thus as conditioned, 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.

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

The proposed project is the redevelopment of the existing surface parking area to accommodate a one-story 2,500 square-foot classroom building and approximately 5,700 square-foot outdoor play space, on conjunction with an existing charter elementary school (Citizens of the World Charter School). The project is consistent with the following General Plan and Westlake Community Plan and education related objectives and policies:

Framework Element. The Framework Element for the General Plan (Framework Element) was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element includes the following goal relevant to the instant request:

Schools:

GOAL 9N: Public schools that provide a quality education for all of the City's children, including those with special needs, and adequate school facilities to serve every neighborhood in the City so that students have an opportunity to attend school in their neighborhoods.

The proposed project is consistent with the goal of the Framework Element for schools, as it will provide an educational opportunity for students in the area. The approval of the Conditional Use would allow the Citizens of the World Charter Elementary School to add two-classrooms to the existing 26-classroom campus expanding the educational opportunities to the surrounding community. Citizens of the World Charter Elementary School provides a comprehensive educational experience to up to 650 students at full capacity in grades TK-5.

The Mobility Element. The Mobility Element of the General Plan is not likely to be affected by the recommended action herein. Any necessary dedication and/or improvement of adjacent streets to the Plan designation standards assures compliance with this element of the General Plan. However, pursuant to under LAMC Section 12.37, no street dedications are required for projects located in the RD5.1 Zone. No dedication or improvement requirements have been conditioned herein.

The Sewerage Facilities Element of the General Plan will not be affected by the recommended action. While the sewer system might be able to accommodate the total flows for the proposed project, further detailed gauging and evaluation may be needed as part of the permit process to identify a specific sewer connection point. If the public sewer has insufficient capacity then the developer will be required to build sewer lines to a point in the sewer system with sufficient capacity. A final approval for sewer capacity and connection permit will be made at that time. Ultimately, this sewage flow will be conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant, which has sufficient capacity for the project.

Community Plan. The Westlake Community Plan Map designates the C2-1 zoned lots (the lots along the Beverly Boulevard frontage) for Highway Oriented Commercial land uses, corresponding to the C2, C1, CR, RAS3, RAS4 and P zones, and designates the balance of the property, the RD5-1 lots fronting on Coronado Street, for Low Medium residential density, corresponding to the RD1.5, 2, 3, 4, 5, RU, 2.5, 3, 4, 5 zones. The provisions of the C2 zone permit public schools by right and public parking areas are also allowed in the RD5 zone through the conditional use process under LAMC Section 12.24.W.37. The conditional use for the public parking areas were approved in May 2018 on appeal by the Central Area Planning Commission under Case No. ZA-2017-4489-CU-ZV-F-1A. As the school is proposing to construct facilities on the RD5-1 Zone portion of the property, the proposal is requesting a Conditional Use pursuant to LAMC Section 12.24-U. The Los Angeles Municipal Code permits the use of a school within the R Zones with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

The project is consistent with the following Westlake Community Plan and education related objectives and policies:

Objectives:

1. To secure appropriate locations and adequate facilities for schools to serve the needs of the existing and future population.
2. To site schools in locations complementary to existing land uses and in locations which will enhance community identity.

Policy

Encourage compatibility in school locations, site layout, and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character, and as appropriate, use schools to create a logical transition and buffer between different uses.

The continued use of the property for a public charter elementary school would further the Community Plan's objectives and policies for schools by locating a school within a dense residential area that is close to transit facilities located along Beverly and Rampart Boulevards and is served by Metro bus lines, with bus stops located in close proximity.

The school will continue to be complementary and compatible with existing land uses and community character in the area. With the imposition of conditions, the school will continue to be compatible with existing land uses and community character. Conditions include requirements to adhere to a drop—off/pick-up plan and the provision of monitors to ensure smooth operations. The minor expansion of the elementary school facilities will support innovative programs and will continue to provide students with state-of-the art services and resources to establish a basic foundation for comprehensive learning.

The Los Angeles Municipal Code permits the use of a school within the RD5-1 Zone with the approval of a Conditional Use. The approval of the Conditional Use will not change the land use designation or zone of the project site and will not restrict or prohibit the use of the site for residential development if the school is no longer in operation. As conditioned herein, the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent, and provisions of the General Plan and Westlake Community Plan.

Environmental Findings

2. **Determine** Determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 1, Class 14, and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies. The construction, use, and maintenance of a new 2,500 square-foot classroom and approximately 5,700 square-foot outdoor play space serving an existing public charter school. The project will not result in the increase in enrollment.
3. **Flood Insurance.** 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.