

REQUEST & FINDINGS
CLASS 2 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

8214 MELROSE AVENUE

REQUEST

The instant request is a Class 2 conditional use permit for the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with a proposed restaurant/bar/bookstore, pursuant to LAMC Ch. 1A, Sec. 13B.2.2.

BACKGROUND & PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property comprises a level, rectangular parcel of land with a 40.5-foot frontage on the south side of Melrose Avenue and a depth of 110 feet, according to ZIMAS. The property contains 4,455 square feet of lot area. It is developed with a two-story commercial building containing 4,500 square feet of floor area according to the submitted exhibits.

The property is located in the C4-1XL Commercial Zone, with the Height District permitting a maximum building height of 30 feet. The Hollywood Community Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Office Commercial, with corresponding zones including the C4 Zone. The subject site is located within a Restaurant Beverage Program Eligible Area (General – RBPA) and an AB 2097 parking-exempt area. The site is within a Methane Buffer Zone, Liquefaction Area and the Hollywood Fault Zone. The property is located within the Los Angeles Police Department West Wilshire Division, in Reporting District No. 701.

Melrose Avenue adjoining the subject property to the north is designated in the Mobility Plan as an Avenue II Modified, with a designated 86-foot right of way and a 56-foot roadway. Melrose Avenue directly fronting the subject site has an existing 80-foot public right of way (40-foot half right of way) and an approximately 65-foot-wide roadway. The street is improved with curbs, gutters and sidewalks. There also exists a public alley 15 feet in width along the south side of the subject property.

The commercial properties along both sides of Melrose Avenue from La Cienega Boulevard to the west to Fairfax Avenue to the east are located within the C41XL Zone.

Properties to the north of Melrose Avenue are located in the R2-1XL and [Q]R3-1XL residential zones, and the properties to the south of Melrose Avenue, south of the subject property, are located in the R1V3 single family residential zone (although the records of the Los Angeles County Assessor indicate that those properties are developed with duplexes). The commercial properties along Melrose Avenue are typically one- and two-stories in height, with some properties greater in height.

The existing building on the subject property will remain and will undergo primarily interior remodeling. There exists a small parking area on the rear (southerly) portion of the site, with access from the public alley.

Proposed Project. The proposed project comprises tenant improvements for a new restaurant/bar/bookstore within the existing building located on the subject property. The restaurant/bar and the bookstore will have separate entrances from the public street, but will be connected internally. Food and alcoholic beverage service will be served/consumed in all parts of the building, on both floors.

The proposed project is a new public bookstore with full-service café and private restaurant with bar – offering on-site sale and service of food and alcoholic beverages within a controlled, literary-themed environment. The space is intended to operate as a destination centered on reading, dining and social connection. The restaurant will offer a full bar serving beer, wine, and craft cocktails. Food and beverage service will be available throughout the premises.

Integrated across the premises are themed reading rooms, designed as comfortable, immersive areas where guests may read, relax, and enjoy food and beverages. These rooms reflect various literary genres—such as a star-ship setting, a romance-inspired library, or a garden-themed room.

The ground floor will contain 2,315 square feet of floor area, and will comprise the restaurant/bar, bookstore and related facilities. The restaurant/bar will contain 33 seats, 11 of which will be located at the bar. The bookstore will contain 11 seats and include a coffee bar area, which will also serve alcohol. The ground floor will also include a kitchen, office and exterior patio with seating for 10. Total seating on the ground floor level, interior and exterior, will be 54 seats.

The second floor will contain 2,185 square feet of floor area, and will comprise five reading rooms, varying in floor area from 172 square feet to 590 square feet. Each reading room may be devoted to a specific genre of reading materials. The second floor will also contain an office (the Green Room). There will be a total of 48 seats on the second floor.

The site qualifies for zero parking pursuant to State Law AB 2097. It is proposed to provide three standard parking stalls plus one accessible stall (suitable for van parking), located in the rear portion of the site abutting the public alley.

The applicant is requesting approval of a Class 2 conditional use permit for the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with the proposed restaurant/bar/bookstore. While the site is located within a Restaurant Beverage Program Eligible Area (General – RBPA), the applicant is applying for a conditional use, to provide greater flexibility in the manner and location of facilities/operations within the project.

**FINDINGS FOR
CLASS 2 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
LAMC CH. 1A SEC. 13B.2.2**

FINDING NO. 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. (13B.2.2.E.1.a)

The subject property is located within a long-established commercial area extending along Melrose Avenue. The land uses on surrounding properties comprise a variety of retail/commercial uses. The immediately abutting and facing commercial activities include clothing stores, a furniture store and a jewelry store. The proposed new use will be highly compatible with existing development. It will be consistent with the existing C4-1XL zoning on the subject site and with neighboring areas, and consistent with the community plan, which designates the subject property and surrounding area for Neighborhood Office Commercial land use.

The proposed project is a new public bookstore with full-service café and private restaurant with bar – offering on-site sale and service of food and alcoholic beverages within a controlled, literary-themed environment. The space is intended to operate as a destination centered on reading, dining, and social connection.

Integrated across the premises are themed reading rooms, designed as comfortable, immersive areas where guests may read, relax, and enjoy food and beverages. These rooms reflect various literary genres—such as a star-ship setting, a Regency era-inspired library, or a garden-themed room.

The approval of this request will enable the subject site to be redeveloped with a suitable use, i.e. the proposed bookstore and restaurant/bar. The proposed use of the subject site will provide an uncommon, creative and convenient service to the community. Additionally, the proposed combination restaurant/bar/bookstore establishment will contribute to the local economy, including providing job opportunities within the community.

While the site is located within a Restaurant Beverage Program Eligible Area (General – RBPA), the applicant is applying for a conditional use, to provide greater flexibility in the manner and location of facilities/operations within the project.

As is normally the case with requests for zoning entitlements, the requirement that it “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” requires interpretation, since most such actions are sought for the primary benefit of a private property owner. The threshold consideration is that such a request must have no adverse impacts upon the surrounding neighborhood or community. That is the case here, as described in the preceding and following findings.

FINDING NO. 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. (13B.2.2.E.1.b)

The project will not modify the exterior of the building except for cosmetic/identification changes. The footprint and height of the building will remain as it presently exists. The proposed operation of the building will be similar to activities on nearby properties which comprise commercial uses.

The subject property is located within a long-established commercial area. It will be highly compatible with existing development and will be in basic compliance with the established zoning for the property. The scale, height and operations of the project will be complementary to the existing commercial development within the area. The majority of commercial buildings within the vicinity are one- and two-stories in height.

The land uses on immediately surrounding properties comprise retail/commercial uses, including a furniture store and, across the street, clothing stores, a jewelry store and a European style café. The proposed new use is consistent with the existing zoning on the subject site and neighboring areas, and consistent with the community plan. It will be fully compatible with the surrounding uses.

Therefore, 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.

FINDING NO. 3: THE PROJECT SUBSTANTIALLY CONFORMS WITH THE PURPOSE, INTENT AND PROVISIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN, THE APPLICABLE COMMUNITY PLAN, AND ANY APPLICABLE SPECIFIC PLANS. (13B.2.2.E.1.c)

There are eleven elements of the General Plan. Each of these elements establishes policies 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 in the form of code requirements within the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). Except for the entitlement described herein, the project does not propose to deviate from any of the requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

The request is consistent with General Plan Framework Element objectives:

Objective 7.2: Establish a balance of land uses that provides for commercial and industrial development which meets the needs of local residents, sustains economic growth, and assures maximum feasible environmental quality.

Policy 7.3.2: Retain existing neighborhood commercial activities within walking distance of residential areas.

The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the City into 35 Community Plan areas. The subject property is located within the Hollywood Community Plan, which designates the subject property for Neighborhood Office Commercial land uses, with corresponding zones including the C4 Zone.

The General Plan does not specifically designate uses permitted by conditional use or similar quasi-judicial approvals, such as the instant request. The request is therefore consistent with the use permitted in the adopted plan.

The existing and proposed use of the subject site is consistent with and advances the following policies, and objectives identified in the Hollywood Community Plan:

Objective 1: To further the development of Hollywood as a major center of population, employment, retail services, and entertainment; and to perpetuate its image as the international center of the motion picture industry.

Objective 4: To promote economic well-being and public convenience through:

- a. Allocating and distributing commercial lands for retail, service, and office facilities in quantities and patterns based on accepted planning principles and standards.

As such, the Community Plan's purpose is to "promote an arrangement of land use, circulation, and services which all encourage and contribute to the economic, social and physical health, safety, welfare, and convenience of the Community." The proposed

restaurant would enhance the economic health, welfare and public convenience of the community, thereby meeting the objectives of the Community Plan.

FINDING NO. 4: THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE WELFARE OF THE PERTINENT COMMUNITY. (LAMC Sec. 12.24-W,1(a)(1))

The subject property is located within a long-established intensely commercial area. The land uses on surrounding properties comprise retail/commercial uses, including a furniture store and, across the street, clothing stores, a jewelry store and a European style café. The proposed new use is consistent with the existing zoning on the subject site and neighboring areas, and consistent with the community plan. It will be fully compatible with the surrounding uses.

The approval of this request will enable the subject site to be redeveloped with a suitable use, i.e. the proposed bookstore and restaurant/bar. The proposed use of the subject site will provide a creative and convenient service to the community. Additionally, the proposed combination restaurant/bar/bookstore establishment will contribute to the local economy, including providing job opportunities within the community.

FINDING NO. 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. (LAMC Sec. 12.24-W,1(a)(2))

According to the State ABC licensing criteria, there are currently 33 on-sale and two off-sale active licenses in Census Tract 1944.02. Within a 1000-foot radius of the subject property, there are six on-sale active licenses, three of which are allocated to the Hollywood Improv comedy club, and one active off-sale license.

However, within 1000 feet of the subject property, the only operational establishment for the sale and dispensing of alcohol which has been identified is the Hollywood Improv comedy club, which is located approximately 350 feet east of the subject site. The most recent conditional use approval for the Improv was in October, 2022, to allow a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with the comedy club and an existing restaurant, and a variance for reduced parking.

Concentration can be undue when the addition of a license will negatively impact a neighborhood. However, concentration is not undue when the approval of alcoholic beverages will be accessory to the basic use of the property as a sit-down restaurant/bar and bookstore, as is the case in this instance; and when the license is consistent and compatible with the land uses in the immediate area. Further, concentration is not undue when it benefits public convenience and the general welfare of the community, and where operations are not solely centered on the sales of alcohol. In this case, the granting of the application will not result in an undue concentration for the reasons described.

According to statistics provided by the Los Angeles Police Department, which has jurisdiction over the subject property, within Crime Reporting District No. 701, a total of 277 crimes were reported in 2020, compared to the citywide average of 141 crimes and the high crime reporting district average of 169 crimes for the same period. In 2020, Part 1 Crimes for the reporting district included: Homicide (0), Robbery (12), Aggravated Assault (20), Burglary (72), Auto Theft (21), and Larceny (152). Part 2 Crimes for the reporting district include: Other Assaults (5), Narcotics/Drug Violations (2), DUI Related (4), and Misc. Other Violations (15).

FINDING NO. 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. (LAMC Sec. 12.24-W,1(a)(3))

The following sensitive use is located within a 1,000-foot radius of the project site: West Hollywood Baptist Church, a religious institution, addressed as 8265 Melrose Avenue. However, there is no corroborating online evidence that the church actually exists.

The area includes a wide variety of commercial uses. Being located in a commercial area, the diversity and proximity to sensitive uses would not be uncommon. However, records indicate there are no sensitive uses within 1,000 feet, or, at most, one such use as indicated.

The project site is in the heart of a commercial area. Residential neighborhoods, primarily single family zoned areas south of Melrose Avenue and multifamily areas north of Melrose Avenue, have long existed. Similarly, the commercial community along Melrose Avenue has long existed. Both the residential and commercial areas are in a stable relationship with each other. The subject property abuts the rear yard area of one single family zoned dwelling (described in the records of the Los Angeles County Assessor as a duplex), south of the public alley at the rear of the site. As such, and in consideration of the longstanding duration of both uses, and that no exterior changes other than cosmetic/identification are proposed for the subject site, the project will not detrimentally affect nearby residentially zoned communities, schools, parks, libraries, or any other sensitive uses in the area.

RESPONSES TO FORM CP-13-7773
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALCOHOL (CUB) ESTABLISHMENTS

Following uses within 600 feet of the site:

- Residential uses and type (single family, apartment, etc.):
 - *Sweetzer Avenue: multifamily: 614-650, 714-742, 711-735*
 - *Harper Avenue: single family zoning: 602-658, 601-657*
 - *Harper Avenue: multifamily: 716-756, 715-757*
 - *La Jolla Avenue: single family zoning: 603-659, 602-656*
 - *La Jolla Avenue: multifamily: 715-755, 720-754*
 - *Kilkea Drive: single family zoning: 626-658, 619-657*
 - *Kilkea Drive: multifamily: 717-741, 714-722*
- Churches:
 - *West Hollywood Baptist Church, 8465 Melrose Avenue (there are no online records that this church exists)*
- Schools, including nursery schools and child-care facilities: *None.*
- Hospitals: *None.*
- Parks, public playgrounds and recreational areas: *None.*
- Establishments dispensing, for consideration, alcoholic beverages for consumption on or off premises:
 - *Crossroads, 8282-86 Melrose Avenue (on-site full line)*
 - *Improv Theater, 8162 Melrose Avenue (on-site full line, caterer's permit & event permit)*

Questions Regarding the Physical Development of the Site:

1. What is the total square footage of the building or center the establishment is located in? *4,500 square feet.*
2. What is the total square footage of the space the establishment will occupy? *4,500 square feet.*
3. What is the total occupancy load of the space as determined by the Fire Department? *For the ground floor, 58 people; for the second floor, 30 people.*
4. What is the total number of seats that will be provided indoors? Outdoors? *92 seats will be provided indoors and 10 seats outdoors.*
5. If there is an outdoor area, will there be an option to consume alcohol outdoors? *Yes.*

6. If there is an outdoor area, is it on private property or the public right-of-way, or both? *It is on private property.*
7. If an outdoor area is on the public right of way, has a revocable permit been obtained? *The outdoor area is not in the public right-of-way.*
8. Are you adding floor area? If yes, how much is enclosed? Outdoors? *Floor area is not being added.*
9. Is the site located within 1,000 feet of any schools (public, private, or nursery), churches or parks? *West Hollywood Baptist Church, addressed as 8265 Melrose Avenue. However, there is no corroborating online evidence that the church actually exists.*
10. For massage parlors and sexual encounter establishments, is the site within 1,000 feet of any other Adult Entertainment Businesses as defined by LAMC 12.70 B.17 of the Code? *The proposed uses is not a massage parlor or sexual encounter establishment.*

Parking:

11. How many parking spaces are available on the site? *Four parking spaces are being provided – three standard spaces and one handicap accessible.*
12. Are they shared or designated for the subject use? *They are designated for the subject use.*
13. If you are adding floor area, what is the parking requirement as determined by the Department of Building & Safety? *No floor area is being added, however, the subject property qualifies for zero required parking pursuant to State Law AB 2097.*
14. Have any arrangements been made to provide parking offsite? *No.*
15. Will valet service be provided? Will the service be for a charge? *No valet service will be provided.*

Questions Regarding the Operation of the Establishment:

16. Has the use been discontinued for more than a year? *The instant request is for a new conditional use permit.*

17. What are the proposed hours of operation and which days of the week will the establishment be open? *The restaurant/bar will operate 5 PM – 10 PM Monday – Thursday; 5 PM – 12 AM Friday; 10 AM – 12 AM Saturday; and 10 AM – 10 PM Sunday. The bookstore will operate 9 AM – 6 PM seven days a week. The reading rooms will operate from 10 AM until the closing times for the restaurant/bar, seven days a week.*

18. Will there be entertainment such as a piano bar, dancing, live entertainment, movies, karaoke, video game machines, etc.? Please specify: *No.*

19. Will there be minimum age requirements for entry? *No.*

20. Will there be any accessory retail uses on the site? What will be sold? *Yes, there will be a bookstore.*

Security:

21. How many employees will you have on the site at any given time? *eight (8) employees weekdays and 12 – 18 employees weekends.*

22. Will security guards be provided onsite? If yes, how many and when? *Security personnel will be provided on an as-needed basis.*

23. Has LAPD issued any citations or violations? *No citations have been issued by LAPD.*

Alcohol:

24. Will there be beer and wine only, or a full line of alcoholic beverages available? *A full line of alcoholic beverages.*

25. Will “fortified” wine (greater than 16% alcohol) be sold? *No.*

26. Will alcohol be consumed on any adjacent property under the control of the applicant? *No.*

27. Will there be signs visible from the exterior that advertise the availability of alcohol? *The applicant doesn't plan to have exterior advertising for alcohol.*

Food:

28. Will there be a kitchen on the site? *Yes.*

29. Will alcohol be sold without a food order? *Some alcohol will be dispensed without being directly in conjunction with a food order.*

30. Will the sale of alcohol exceed the sale of food items on a quarterly basis? *No*

31. Provide a copy of the menu if food is to be served. *To be provided.*

Onsite:

32. Will a bar or cocktail lounge be maintained incidental to a restaurant? *Yes.*

33. Will offsite sales of alcohol be provided accessory to onsite sales ("Take Out")? *No.*

34. Will discounted alcoholic drinks ("Happy Hour") be offered at any time? *Yes.*

Offsite:

35. Will cups, glasses or other containers be sold which might be used for the consumption of alcohol on the premises? *No.*

36. Will beer or wine coolers be sold in single cans, or will wine be sold in containers less than 750 ml? *No.*