



**CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA
REPORT TO THE PLANNING HEARING OFFICER**

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT: Planning Hearing Officer

LOCATION: 707 N Pacific Ave, Glendale, CA 91020,
A portion of Lot B, Glendale Tract 4045
Assessor Parcel Number 5636-016-061

CASE NUMBER: PCUP-003300-2024 & PAUP-004144-2024

APPLICANT: Araz Parseghian & Abraham Stepanian

OWNER: Pacific 2017 LLC (Stergios D Rapis, Agent)

BUSINESS NAME: Grand Manor, Inc.

Approved for: December 4, 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Prepared by:

Alan Lamberg, Planner

Reviewed by:

Roger Kiesel, Senior Planner

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant requests approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, subject to the standards listed in GMC Chapter 5.16, through the adaptive reuse of a former retail building, including a 1,469-SF mezzanine addition, an outdoor patio, an outdoor deck, and a drop-off/pick-up area, and an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) for the on-site sales, service and consumption of alcoholic beverages. The project includes an AB-2097 parking exception to allow 50 in lieu of 243 required off-street parking spaces. The 1.16-Acre project site is in the Community Commercial (C2) Zone.

CODE REQUIRES:

- (1) A banquet hall requires a conditional use permit in the C2 Zone (Table 30.12-A, GMC Section 30.12.020).
- (2) The sales, service and consumption of alcoholic beverages requires an administrative use permit in the C2 Zone (Table 30-12.A, GMC Section 30.12.020).

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

- (1) A conditional use permit to allow establishment and operation of a banquet hall in the C2 Zone (Table 30-12.A, GMC Section 30.12.020).
- (2) An administrative use permit to allow sales, service and consumption of alcoholic beverages in the C2 Zone (Table 30-12.A, GMC Section 30.12.020).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a Class 1 "Existing Facilities" exemption, per Section 15301(e) of the CEQA Guidelines, because the discretionary permit request is to establish a banquet hall use, including alcoholic beverage sales and service, in an existing commercial space. The project involves a mezzanine addition that will not increase the structure's floor area by more than 2,500 square feet.

PERMITS FOR THE PROJECT SITE:

No previous permits for this new project.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Development Department staff affirms all findings of fact for the Conditional Use Permit and Administrative Use Permit and, therefore, recommends approval of these entitlements, subject to Planning Hearing Officer consideration of the attached draft findings of fact and conditions of approval.

SITE CONTEXT:

GENERAL PLAN: Community Services Land Use Designation

ZONE: Community Commercial – C2 Zone Height District II

DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING PROPERTY AND USES:

Size: The project site is a 1.16-acre, irregularly-shaped corner lot. The primary frontage along Pacific Avenue is 240 feet, and the Burchett Street-side frontage is 275 feet.

Characteristics: The site was originally developed for residential uses that were cleared after development of the Ventura Freeway and realignment of Pacific Avenue. In 1976 the site was developed for a restaurant with a parking lot and two curb cuts. In 2017, the site changed use with new construction of a 13,688-SF retail pharmacy, including an 802-SF mezzanine. A segment of Burchett Avenue was widened for traffic circulation. The subject building covers approximately 13,000 SF of its 1.16-acre subject property. The on-site parking lot has 60 spaces. Located in the Freemont Park neighborhood, the entry fronts Burchett Street. The proposed banquet hall will adaptively reuse the single-tenant commercial building addressed at 707 North Pacific Avenue.

NEIGHBORING ZONES AND USES:

	Zoning	Existing Uses
North	Low-Density Residential – R1 and Community Commercial – C2 Zones	One-and-two-story single-family residences, one-and-two-story single-and-multiple-tenant commercial buildings, two-story light manufacturing, two-story supermarket with parking lot, two-story private specialized education and training schools, and three-story multifamily buildings.
South	Moderate-Density Residential – R-3050 and Medium-Density Residential – R-1650 Zones	The State Route 134 freeway, a four-and-five-story multifamily development under construction, and a parking lot for a hotel.
East	Community Commercial – C2, Commercial Planned Development – CPD, and High-Density Residential – R-1250 Zones	A full-service restaurant, a gas station, two commercial strip malls, two-story multifamily building, two-and-six-story medical and dental office buildings, one-story single-family residences
West	Community Commercial – C2 and Low-Density Residential – R1 Zones	Two-story multiple-tenant commercial building, one-story single-family residences, two-and-three-story multifamily buildings,
Project Site	Community Commercial – C2 Zone	One-story single-tenant commercial building with a mezzanine

COMMENTS FROM OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

Exhibit 5 includes detailed comments from Glendale Departments and Divisions. Building & Safety Division will review permits for construction, with potential additional comments. Community Services & Parks stated that park parking is for visitors only. Neighborhood Services noted an open code case (PV-0436-01-2024) with no violations cited. Police provided crime statistics and suggested conditions. Public Works Traffic Engineering commented on the western property line, pedestrian visibility, red curb maintenance, drop-off/pick-up areas, parking demand, and right-of-way use. Urban Forestry emphasized

protecting city-owned and indigenous trees, requiring a street tree permit. Water & Power outlined requirements for electric service, backflow prevention, and potable water. No other departments documented significant concerns. All concerns will be considered, and conditions of approval may be included if the applications are approved.

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT

Pursuant to Section 30.42.030 of the Glendale Municipal Code, a conditional use permit may be granted only if the following findings of fact can be made:

- A. That the proposed use will be consistent with the various elements and objectives of the general plan;
- B. That the use and its associated structures and facilities will not be detrimental to the public health or safety, the general welfare, or the environment;
- C. That the use and facilities will not adversely affect or conflict with adjacent uses or impede the normal development of surrounding property; and,
- D. That adequate public and private facilities such as utilities, landscaping, parking spaces and traffic circulation measures are or will be provided for the proposed use.

E. Pursuant to Section 30.49.030 of the Glendale Municipal Code, an administrative use permit involving the sale, serving or consumption of alcoholic beverages, may be granted only if the above findings of fact in subsections A. through D. can be made above, and the following additional criteria shall be considered in making the findings:

- 1. That where an existing or proposed on-site use is located in a census tract with more than the recommended maximum concentration of on-site uses or that where an existing or proposed off-site use is located in a census tract with more than the recommended maximum concentration of offsite uses, both as recommended by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, such use does not or will not tend to intensify or otherwise contribute to the adverse impacts on the surrounding area caused by such over concentration;
- 2. That where the existing or proposed use is located in a crime reporting district with a crime rate which exceeds 20% of the city average for Part I crimes, as reported by the Glendale Police Department, such use does not or will not tend to encourage or intensify crime within the district;
- 3. That the existing or proposed use does not or will not adversely impact any church, public or private school or college, day care facility, public park, library, hospital or residential use within the surrounding area;

4. That adequate parking and loading facilities are or will be provided for the existing or proposed use, or other reasonable alternatives satisfy the transportation and parking needs of the existing or proposed use; and,

5. That, notwithstanding consideration of the criteria in subsections 1. through 4. above, the existing or proposed use does or will serve a public necessity or public convenience purpose for the area.

ANALYSIS OF THE REQUEST:

Project Background

The applicant requests a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a banquet hall and an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) for on-site alcohol sales and service. The banquet hall includes a stage, dance floor, and is subject to GMC Chapter 5.16 standards. The project features a 3,799-SF outdoor patio, a 3,370-SF outdoor deck, and a 3,000-SF drop-off area. An AB-2097 parking exception would allow 50 instead of 126 required spaces. Parking calculations were corrected for accuracy in the report.

The exterior remodel, which includes raising the parapet roof, modifying the exterior shell, and adding a covered entry and walls for outdoor areas, will undergo a separate design review, per GMC Chapter 30.47.

Nearly all submitted plans, including the landscape plan, inaccurately show the western property line in the parking lot drive aisle. Plan sheets A0.0 and T2.0 more accurately represent it. Prior to plan check, plans must accurately depict property lines.

A banquet hall is defined as a public rental venue for private events with restricted general public access, which may include alcohol sales and a dance floor over 200 square feet. The sale, service or consumption of beer, wine, and/or other alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption is integral to banquet halls, enhancing events and meeting client expectations, and requires a license from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Ensuring Consistency with the General Plan Objectives

The applicant's request to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, alcohol sales, service and consumption, outdoor service areas, and a mezzanine expansion aligns with the Glendale General Plan's elements and objectives by ensuring land use compatibility, adhering to design criteria, and meeting traffic, noise, and other relevant standards.

The subject site is in the Community Commercial (C2) Zone, and the General Plan designates the subject site as Community Services. Goals include improving semi-commercial developments along major streets and safeguarding residential neighborhoods. Areas should offer flexible services, maintain attractiveness, and encourage clustering for mutual benefit. (Land Use Element, pages 8 and 23.) In this zone,

a banquet hall requires a conditional use permit, and accessory alcoholic beverage sales and consumption require an administrative use permit (GMC Section 30.12.020) to ensure compatibility, and to apply special conditions that protect public health, safety, and welfare while minimizing impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

The project aligns with the Circulation Element and is not expected to create adverse traffic effects due to fully developed street infrastructure, with Pacific Avenue as a major arterial and Burchett Street serving local residential needs with low traffic volumes and a segment fronting the subject property includes a painted yellow divider and a widened roadway to facilitate a middle turn lane. Furthermore, the project is within a half-mile of a future high-quality transit corridor (HQTC), which promotes reduced traffic congestion and enhanced public transportation, aligning with SCAG's 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan.

The project is expected to comply with noise limits in the Noise Element. Noise standards for nearby single-family residential uses limit exterior CNEL to 65 and interior CNEL to 45. The Glendale Noise Control Ordinance (GMC Chapter 8.36) limits external noise heard from residential interiors to 45 decibels at night and 55 decibels at other times. As conditioned, the establishment will include noise insulation features to meet building and safety standards. Temporary periodic noise increases during construction shall comply with Noise Control.

The use is consistent with the Housing Element as it does not impact housing availability or quality. Despite being near the affordable housing 515 Pioneer Project, there will be no parking encumbrance due to its dedicated subterranean parking accessible only to residents.

The use aligns with the Recreation Element as Fremont Park, near the project, will enforce no parking for non-park use, close by 10:00 p.m., and have secure gates. As condition, the establishment will post notices to inform customers and valet employees of this restriction.

The applicant's request will not significantly impact other General Plan elements, including Conservation, Historic Preservation, Open Space, and Safety.

Safeguarding Public Health, Safety, Welfare, and the Environment

The applicant's request to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, alcohol sales, service and consumption, outdoor service areas, and a mezzanine expansion will not negatively impact the neighborhood's environment, health, safety, and public welfare. Conditions of approval mandate responsible operation, crime prevention, adherence to police and urban forestry recommendations, compliance with security standards and permits, and regular access for city representatives to verify compliance, ensuring no detriment to the neighborhood.

The subject property is in Census Tract 3017.01, which has a suggested limit of three on-sale establishments; currently, there are none. In 2023, the tract reported 183 crimes, 42%

below the city-wide average of 317. No active or pending Alcoholic Beverage Control license exists for this location. The Glendale Police Department has no concerns with the applicant's request and suggested conditions to minimize potential negative impacts. The location is in a census tract with less than 20% of the city average for FBI Part 1 crimes.

Conditions of approval will balance the banquet hall's benefits with neighborhood well-being. The applicant, owner, and managers must comply with laws and discourage illegal activities. An on-duty manager and security staff will ensure compliance, with a minimum of two security guards for events over 100 customers. Measures will prevent trespassing, loitering, and disturbances, with adequately lit parking areas and a camera surveillance system monitoring common and high-risk areas. Security guards at a banquet hall, under Glendale Police Department supervision, must be licensed, trained, and comply with GMC Chapter 5.72 and the California Business and Professions Code, Division 3, Chapter 11.5 to ensure a safe environment, particularly for entertainment and alcohol service.

The Glendale Neighborhood Services Division has an open code case (# PV-0436-01-2024) for potential work without permits, with no violations cited. The applicant has applied for the necessary permits, including discretionary entitlements and building permits for tenant improvement and exterior remodel.

Urban Forestry recommended protecting city-owned and indigenous trees by accurately representing them on plans, drafting a tree protection plan, obtaining a street tree permit, and coordinating with Public Works Urban Forestry to finalize the permit.

Assessing Impact on Adjacent Uses and Surrounding Development

The applicant's request to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, alcohol sales, service and consumption, outdoor service areas, and a mezzanine expansion is not expected to be detrimental to the community or conflict with nearby businesses and the surrounding neighborhood. Conditions of approval ensure responsible operation, minimal disruption, and no adverse effects on neighboring properties.

With the Ventura Freeway clearing residential dwellings and realigning Pacific Avenue in the 1940s, the subject property transitioned to commercial use in the 1970s with a Marie Callender's restaurant and cocktail lounge. By 2017, it became a retail Rite Aid pharmacy, widening Burchett Avenue for traffic circulation. It now features a vacant commercial building and a 60-space parking lot at the edge of the Fremont Neighborhood, surrounded by retail, restaurants, and offices.

The potential cumulative impacts on this commercial area are negligible due to the buffering of residences, a music school, and a public park behind less-intensive commercial uses. Fremont Park, undergoing renovation and set to reopen in early 2025, is situated on the outskirts of a 500-foot radius to the west. The Lark Musical Society school is 420 feet to the north. There are 20 residences fronting Burchett Street within 400 feet and no day cares, hospitals, libraries, places of worship, or other schools nearby.

Without conditions of approval, a banquet hall with entertainment and alcohol service could disrupt nearby residential areas due to noise, traffic, parking issues, and unruly behavior. These disruptions can disturb residents, especially families and working professionals, making the area less desirable. Persistent noise and safety concerns can also lead to strained community relations, hindering the harmonious development of the area. Conditions of approval will minimize disruption by limiting event scope, prohibiting subleasing for nightclubs or concerts, and restricting outdoor entertainment. Noise will be minimized with self-closing doors, proper maintenance, and adherence to ordinances. Alcohol service will be limited to specific hours with no off-premises consumption. The establishment will provide contact information for community complaints and maintain necessary documents for authority review.

Adequate Provision of Public and Private Facilities for the Proposed Use

The applicant's request to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, alcohol sales, service and consumption, outdoor service areas, and a mezzanine expansion will not result in inadequate public or private facilities. Conditions of approval will ensure the project provides necessary utilities, proper stormwater management, compliance with traffic and parking regulations, accurate parking space calculations, traffic circulation measures, and effective parking management with valet services.

The tenant improvement and related building permits will equip the establishment with necessary amenities like utilities and landscaping. Glendale Water & Power requires the applicant to contact their engineering services for requirements. Existing main-line utilities in the public right-of-way are sufficient for the facility.

The project's new outdoor deck must not affect the site's stormwater drainage devices or basins. A 2016 covenant with the City of Glendale ensures maintenance of these controls. The project will ensure the deck construction does not impede the stormwater basin's function, meeting City Engineer standards.

Traffic Engineering comments include the need for a street-use permit to ensure safe construction practices, preventing blockage of private driveways and streets for loading, designating a loading zone in the parking lot, maintaining landscaping near driveways under 30 inches for visibility, preserving and restoring red curbs, and containing drop-off/pick-up areas within the project site.

The applicant's parking calculation of 213 was incorrect. The accurate calculation should focus only on indoor and outdoor assembly areas. The Planning Division initially calculated 312 spaces. The correct calculation, adhering to GMC Section 30.32.060(C)(4), focuses solely on assembly areas for seating or viewing, totaling approximately 8,500 SF (main room: 4,800 SF, patio: 1,100 SF, deck: 2,600 SF). According to GMC Section 30.32.050, private clubs like banquet halls require 28.6 parking spaces per 1,000 SF of seating or viewing area, thus needing 243 parking spaces. The previous use, a retail pharmacy, required 55 parking spaces, indicating a significant increase in parking demand for the project versus the previous use.

Glendale Traffic Engineering commented increased facility use may affect parking availability on Burchett Street, where unmetered street parking is used by residents and guests. With the project requiring 183 additional spaces beyond the 60 on-site, overflow could strain these spaces, highlighting the need for adequate off-site parking arrangements to prevent negative impacts on the community parking infrastructure. The applicant plans to provide on-site parking, valet services, and additional parking at nearby locations if necessary.

The applicant requested a California Legislature-mandated AB-2097 parking exception for 50 spaces instead of the required 243. Government Code Section 65863.2 eliminates minimum parking requirements near high-quality transit corridors (HQTC) or major transit stops. The project's location is within a half-mile radius of a future HQTC and a major stop serving the North Hollywood to Pasadena Transit Corridor, opening in 2028. This exception aligns with AB-2097 goals, promoting sustainable development, efficient land use, and public transit, benefiting community health and welfare.

An AB-2097 parking exception as mandated by the State of California would eliminate this project's minimum parking requirements. This includes removal of five existing parking spaces for the project's new outdoor patio. However, this discretionary entitlement for a conditional use permit is in place to minimize transportation impacts. As conditioned, the establishment shall require on-site employee parking, and in lieu of a parking use permit otherwise pursuant to GMC Chapter 30.51, provide a vicinity map identifying voluntarily provided spaces for valet and/or customer parking, not on unmetered street parking in the residential neighborhood.

Additional Criteria for Accessory Alcohol Sales, Service, and Consumption

The applicant's request to establish a banquet hall with entertainment, outdoor service areas, and a mezzanine expansion, meets the criteria for an administrative use permit for accessory alcohol sales, service, and consumption. The findings confirm that the proposed use is in a census tract with a permissible concentration of on-site uses, is not in a high-crime area, will not adversely impact surrounding uses (such as places of worship, schools, or parks), and provides adequate parking and loading facilities. Conditions of approval are included to mitigate potential negative impacts, such as controlling alcohol service, managing operating hours, noise, and security. Additionally, the proposed use serves public convenience by promoting economic improvement and offering diverse services and facilities suitable for the commercial zone.

EXHIBITS:

1. Draft Findings of Fact and Conditions
2. Location and Zoning Map
3. Plans
4. Plan Details
5. Photos of Subject Property
6. Departmental Comments