



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

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT: Conditional Use Permit

LOCATION: 317 W. Palmer Avenue

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 5, Berthoud Tract/ APN 5640-009-004

CASE NUMBER: PCUP-003877-2024

APPLICANT: Simon Dovlatyan

OWNER: Lilit Akopian and Stepan Gezalyan

Approved for: May 14, 2025

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Prepared by:
Shoghig Yepremian, Planner

Reviewed by:
Dennis Joe, Principal Planner

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a new private pre-school within an existing 2,773 square foot building (previously occupied by a church and childcare nursery) and to demolish a detached garage at the rear to create a landscaped open space activity area on a 7,279 square foot lot, located in the R-2250 (Medium Density Residential) zone.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a Class 3 “new construction or conversion of small structures”, per Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines, because the project involves a new 2,773 square foot private pre-school within an existing building.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff believes the required findings of fact for the Conditional Use Permit can be made, and therefore, recommends APPROVAL of this application. Staff suggests the Planning Hearing Officer consider the attached draft findings of fact and conditions of approval (Exhibit 1).

SITE CONTEXT:

GENERAL PLAN: Medium Density Residential

ZONE: R-2250 (Medium Density Residential) Zone

DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING PROPERTY AND USES:

The property is located at 317 W. Palmer Avenue between Central Avenue and San Fernando Road. The existing site is 7,279 square feet and was developed by a church building (formerly Glendale Japanese Free Methodist Church) in 1937. The site is surrounded by single family, multi-family and commercial developments.

NEIGHBORING ZONES AND USES:

	Zoning	Existing Uses
North	R-2250	Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Uses along Central Avenue
South	R-2250	Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Uses
East	R-2250	Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Uses along Central Avenue
West	R-2250	Single and Multi-Family Residential uses
Project Site	R-2250	Church building (vacant)

PREVIOUS PERMITS FOR THE SITE

- In 1938, the church building was built by Glendale Japanese Free Methodist Church.
- In 1945, 40 and 90 square foot additions were permitted.
- In 1963, an 882 square foot addition was permitted for 3 classrooms.
- In 1967, a Conditional Use Permit (Case No. 4148-CU) was approved to allow a nursery school up to 15 children within the church operation.
- In 1994, Standards and Setback Variance Case No. 9275-S and Conditional Use Permit Case No. 9274-CU were denied for the construction of 1,298 square foot addition (first and second story).
- March 26, 2025, PAB2097-003878-2024 was approved to reduce the number of parking spaces (8 parking spaces) required by Code for private school.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

Staff received comments from Glendale Water and Power, Public Works Forestry, Public Works Traffic Engineering, Community Development (Neighborhood Services, Building and Safety and Mobility), and Fire Department. The comments are attached to the staff report.

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.
- 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.

ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT RENEWAL REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow a new private pre-school in the R-2250 Medium Density Residential Zone. The site is currently

developed with a church building which was constructed in 1937 and was used as a church until about 2024 when the new owners purchased the property. The proposed private pre-school proposes a maximum of 60 students ages 2 to 5 years old and a total of 6 (5 teachers and 1 director) staff members. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. Drop off and pick up times are proposed to be staggered throughout the day:

Morning Drop off Schedule

7:30 am	15 students
8:00 am	15 students
8:30 am	15 students
9:00 am	15 students

Afternoon Pick up Schedule

12:30 pm to 1:30 pm	10-15 students
4:00 pm	10 students
4:30 pm	10 students
5:00 pm	10 students
5:30 pm	10 students
6:00 pm	5 students

The Zoning Code Section 30.32.050 requires 3 parking spaces for each 1,000 square feet of floor area for private pre-schools, kindergarten and grades 1 through 9. As a result, the proposed private pre-school requires a total of 8 on-site parking spaces for 2,773 square foot building. The applicant has applied for AB2097 application (PAB2097-003878-2024) to reduce the minimum required 8 parking spaces since the subject site is located near high-quality public transit. The request was approved on March 26, 2025 to allow a private pre-school to operate without providing 8 minimum parking spaces required by Code.

The project was routed to various City departments for comments. Public Works Traffic Engineering Section required a Vehicle Trip Generation Technical Memorandum which was prepared by a licensed traffic engineer dated December 30, 2024. Public Works Traffic Engineering staff reviewed the technical memorandum and concluded that a local transportation analysis (LTA) is not required for the project based on the number of students (60) proposed at the school site. The City of Glendale Transportation Impact Study Guidelines specify that local transportation analysis is required for projects that generate 50 or more net-new peak hour vehicle trips. According to the Vehicle Trip

Generation Memorandum, the project is anticipated to generate 47 am peak hour and 47 pm peak hour trips. While Traffic Engineering Section staff indicated that on-street parking is in high demand in the area and any new development that does not meet parking requirements as per code may impact parking availability in the area, the project received AB2097 approval for the school use to operate with less than 8 Code required parking spaces. The project site is 140 feet long and 52 feet wide. The existing driveway (from front property to rear property line) can accommodate 7-8 cars for teachers and the school administrator to park while the school is in session. Therefore, street parking will not be impacted during the school operation Monday through Friday. Public Works Traffic Engineering staff also anticipates potential challenges with student pick up and drop off operation. The Trip Generation Memorandum recommends that the City provide a passenger loading zone along the frontage of the school for student morning drop off. The applicant may apply for a passenger loading zone in the future to the satisfaction of Public Works Traffic Engineering requirements.

Community Development Department also required a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment Technical Memorandum which was prepared by a licensed Traffic Engineer dated March 14, 2025. Staff reviewed the report and determined that there is no significant VMT impact because the proposed preschool is determined to be a local serving neighborhood school land use which has less than significant transportation impact and would not require a detailed VMT analysis under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The proposed private pre-school use will be consistent with the various elements and objectives of the General Plan for the area. The Land Use Element of the Glendale General Plan designates the subject site as Medium Density Residential and private schools are allowed subject to the approval of a Conditional Use Permit. The existing church building, which is also an allowed use subject to a CUP, was built in 1937. In 1967, a Conditional Use Permit (Case No. 4148-CU) was approved to allow a nursery school up to 15 children within the church operation. Palmer Avenue is classified as a Local Street in the Circulation Element which serves the residential needs of the immediate community, carrying low volumes (typically 500-700 vehicles per day but up to 2,500 vehicles per day). Therefore, the change of use from a church to a private pre-school is consistent with the various elements and objectives of the General Plan. Other elements of the General Plan, including the Historic Preservation, Housing, Open Space and Conservation, Recreation, and Safety Elements, will not be negatively impacted as a result of the proposed private pre-school land use.

The proposed use of the property as a private pre-school, and its associated structures and facilities, are not anticipated to be detrimental to the public health or safety, the

general welfare, or the environment, as conditioned. The proposed private pre-school will serve the south Glendale area per Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment Technical Memorandum which indicates that the proposed pre-school has an average VMT of 1.5 miles per student compared to the city of Glendale's average daily VMT per employee estimated to be 17.87 miles. Data on school enrollments also indicated a strong local demand for the proposed pre-school, which supports its role as a local-serving educational facility. Furthermore, based on the Public Works Traffic Engineering Section required Vehicle Trip Generation Technical Memorandum, the proposed private pre-school will not generate more than 50 vehicle trips in both morning and the afternoon peak hours. The proposed private pre-school is not proposing to add new square footage or make major modifications to the existing building except minor interior improvements to accommodate the school operation.

The proposed private pre-school will not impact nearby uses or impede the normal development of surrounding properties. The proposed use meets the intent of the Zoning Ordinance by providing a small educational facility in this neighborhood which will benefit the immediate residents. The subject property is developed with a 2,773 square foot building that was previously occupied by a church and nursery for up to 15 children. This nursery was approved by a separate conditional use permit in 1967. The site is surrounded with single and multifamily development. Some commercial uses are also located across from the subject site and near Central and Palmer Avenues. The school is proposing to stagger morning drop off and afternoon pick up hours to ensure that the immediate properties are not impacted by vehicular traffic. Furthermore, a condition of approval is also proposed to stagger the outdoor play time hours into four shifts throughout the day (15 students during each play time period). Additional conditions are also imposed to ensure that the private pre-school operates in a manner not be detrimental to the adjacent uses.

Adequate public and private facilities such as utilities, landscaping, parking, and traffic circulation measures are provided for the proposed use. The site was utilized as a church use since 1967, including a nursery school since 1967 with limited on-site parking spaces. The proposed private pre-school is not proposing to add any new square footage to the existing church building (2,773 square feet). However, the existing garage located at the rear of the property which provided 4 parking spaces is proposed to be removed to provide open space for outdoor activity. The applicant obtained AB2097 (PAB2097-003878-2024) approval on March 26, 2025 according to California Assembly Bill AB2097 to allow the use to operate with less than the minimum required number of parking spaces because the subject site is located near high quality transit. The subject site has a 140 feet driveway length which can accommodate 7-8 cars. According to the Trip Generation Memorandum dated December 30, 2024,

parking demand will not increase since parents will drop off and pick up the students during the morning and afternoon hours. Furthermore, the pre-school will provide staggered hours for drop off and pick up to minimize traffic impact on Palmer Avenue.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft findings of fact and conditions of approval
2. Location Map
3. Plans
4. Photos
5. Trip Generation Memorandum Dated December 30, 2024
6. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment dated March 14, 2025
7. Departmental Comments