

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING  
FINDINGS OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
AND ORDER  
PROJECT NO. R2006-01160-(2)  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 200600261

**RECITALS**

1. **HEARING DATE(S).** The Los Angeles County (“County”) Regional Planning Commission (“Commission”) conducted a duly-noticed public hearing in the matter of Conditional Use Permit No. **200600261** (“CUP”) on October 2, 2024.
2. **HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** *Reserved.*
3. **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.** Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the Permittee chose to have the complete CUP application be subject to the zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on October 26, 2006. Therefore, all subsequent County Code Section references in these findings relate to the County Code Sections in effect on October 26, 2006, except where otherwise noted. A CUP was required at that time pursuant to County Code Section 22.32.160 (Permitted Uses for Heavy Manufacturing Zones). A CUP was also required at that time for outdoor businesses located within 250 feet of a Residential Zone or a sensitive use pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.138.D.7.b (Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards). The Florence-Firestone Community Standards District (“CSD”) was repealed in conjunction with the adoption of the Florence-Firestone Transit-Oriented District Specific Plan on February 7, 2023.
4. **ENTITLEMENT REQUESTED.** The Permittee, Paul Madick ("Permittee"), requests the CUP to establish three businesses, two pallet yards and one recycling collection business, that have outdoor operations located within 250 feet of residential zones (“Project”) on one property located at 9401 South Alameda Street in the unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone ("Project Site") in the M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) Zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.138.D.7.b (Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards)
5. **ENTITLEMENT REQUIRED.** The CUP is required to establish the operation of three businesses, two pallet yards and one recycling collection business, that have outdoor operations located within 250 feet of residential zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.138.D.7.b (Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards).
6. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENT(S).** Special Permit No. 1087-(2) approved a junk yard on the northeast portion of the Project Site on November 8, 1955.

Special Permit No. 1433-(2) approved scrap metal sales on the southern portion of the Project Site on July 19, 1960.

An application for Special Permit No. 1571-(2) was submitted on August 24, 1964, which requested a scrap metal sales and storage facility. The application was subsequently withdrawn before the approval of Special Permit No. 1618-(2).

Special Permit No. 1618-(2) approved a scrap metal yard, a salvage yard, and a paper, cardboard, and cloth rag bailing business on September 13, 1965.

An application for Plot Plan No. 200600689 was submitted on April 13, 2006, which requested to legalize a pallet yard and an automobile glass repair business on the Project Site. The application was withdrawn, and a CUP application was filed, on October 26, 2006, because the Florence-Firestone CSD required that all outdoor businesses within 250 feet of a residential zone obtain a CUP.

7. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the I (Major Industrial) land use category of the 1980 General Plan (“General Plan”) Land Use Policy Map, which was in effect at the time that the complete CUP application was submitted.
8. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Stark Palms Zoned District and is currently zoned M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing). Pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.138.D.7.b (Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards), a CUP is required for businesses activities conducted outside an enclosed structure within 250 feet of a Residential Zone in the Florence-Firestone CSD.

**9. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING.**

| <b>LOCATION</b>  | <b>1980 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE POLICY *</b>       | <b>2006 ZONING*</b>                                    | <b>EXISTING USES</b>  |
|------------------|--|--|---|
| SUBJECT PROPERTY | I (Major Industrial)                             | M-2  | Two pallet yards and one recycling collection business                                      |
| NORTH            | I  | M-2  | Outside storage, automobile dismantling   |
| EAST             | P (Public and Semi-Public), City of South Gate   | M-2, and residential zoning in the City of South Gate. | Alameda Railroad Corridor, and single and multi-family residences in the City of South Gate |
| SOUTH            | I  | M-2  | Outside storage, automobile dismantling   |
| WEST             | I (Industrial), MDR (Medium Density Residential) | M-1 (Light Manufacturing) and                          | Outside storage, automobile dismantling, pallet   |

|  |  |                                  |   |
|--|--|----------------------------------|---|
|  |  | R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence) | yards, single and multi-family residences |
|--|--|----------------------------------|---|

\* Note: Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the Permittee chose to have the complete CUP application be subject to the zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on October 26, 2006, which included the 1980 General Plan. The zoning was changed to SP (Specific Plan) on February 7, 2023, in conjunction with the adoption of the Florence-Firestone Transit-Oriented District Specific Plan on February 7, 2023.

**10. PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.**

**A. Existing Site Conditions**

The Project Site is 1.49 gross acres in size and consists of one legal lot. The Project Site is rectangular in shape with level topography and is developed with two pallet yards and one recycling collection business.

**B. Site Access**

The Project Site is accessible via two driveways on Alameda Street to the east. Primary access to the Project Site will be via an entrance/exit on Alameda Street. Secondary access to the Project Site will be via two driveways and an entrance/exit on 95<sup>th</sup> Street.

**C. Site Plan**

The site plan depicts the Project Site divided into three areas:

The first area is the northern half of the Project Site, which is occupied by A and I Pallets. A 971-square-foot office building with three standard sized parking spaces is located at the Alameda Street entrance. There is a dedicated vehicle circulation lane that runs from the Alameda Street entrance to the Laurel Street exit, so delivery trucks can enter and exit the Project Site without backing up onto Alameda Street. A pallet work area with canopy shades is located north of the circulation lane and the pallet storage area is located south of the circulation lane.

The second area is the southwestern portion of the Project Site, which is occupied by Matthews Pallets. There is an entrance on 95<sup>th</sup> Street with space dedicated for a delivery truck to turn around within the Project Site. The remainder of this area is occupied by open/outdoor pallet storage.

The third area is near the southeastern portion of the Project Site closest to Alameda Street, which is occupied by the R and C Recycling Center. A recycling sorting and storage area is located in the far southeast corner of this area and a parking and recycling drop-off area is located between the R and C Recycling Center and Matthews Pallets. The Project will provide a total of 13 vehicle parking spaces of which one vehicle parking space that is dedicated for use by people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”).

The Project Site will be secured by a new 15-foot-tall metal panel solid perimeter fence, and two new wrought iron gates along Alameda Street, that will be set back three feet from the property lines to allow for the installation of landscaping with a permanent irrigation system.

D. Parking

The Project will provide a total of 13 vehicle parking spaces. Three standard sized parking spaces are located next to the office building at the Alameda Street entrance. The remaining vehicle parking spaces are located in a shared parking area that is accessible from 95<sup>th</sup> Street and adjoins all three businesses. This shared parking area has nine standard sized vehicle parking spaces and one vehicle parking space that is dedicated for use by people with disabilities in accordance with the ADA. These vehicle parking spaces are for employee and customer use.

11. **CEQA DETERMINATION.** Prior to the Commission's public hearing on the Project, County Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") staff ("Staff") determined that the Project qualified for Class 1, Existing Facilities, and Class 3, New Construction Conversion of Small Structures, categorical exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000, et seq.) ("CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines for the County, because the Project is the continuation of three existing businesses and new development is limited to replacing dilapidated fencing with new solid metal fencing, revising the parking layout, and installing new perimeter landscaping with a permanent irrigation system.

12. **COMMUNITY OUTREACH.** The property owner emailed the Florence-Firestone Community Organization and the South Gate Chamber of Commerce introducing the project. Staff is not aware of any other community outreach conducted by the Permittee that occurred prior to September 19, 2024, when Staff provided the Report to the Commission.

13. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** No public comments were received regarding the Project.

14. **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**

A. Department of Public Works: Recommended clearance to public hearing with conditions in a letter dated December 23, 2019.

B. Fire Department: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated January 9, 2020.

C. Department of Public Health: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 21, 2020.

15. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** Pursuant to current County Code Section 22.222.120 (Public Hearing Procedure), the community was properly notified of the public hearing by mail, and newspaper [The Sentinel and Daily News], Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On August 22, 2024, a total of 111 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 500-foot radius from the Project Site, as well as five notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for the Stark Palms Zoned District and to any additional interested parties.

### **GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS**

16. **LAND USE POLICY.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the 1980 General Plan because the I (Major Industrial) land use designation is intended for industrial uses, including manufacturing of all types, warehousing, and storage of products. The Commission further finds that the Project promotes employment and enhanced compatibility between industrial land uses and residential land uses.
17. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the following goals and policies of the 1980 General Plan:

#### Land Use and Urban Development Pattern

Revitalize declining portions of existing urban development, with particular attention to deteriorated industrial and low-income residential areas.

#### Economic Development

Encourage a strong diversified economy that will provide business opportunities, an adequate number of jobs for this county's labor force and an improved standard of living.

Encourage the retention of jobs and investments in older urban areas and prevent losses to other counties, regions, and states.

Promote jobs within commuting range of urban residential areas in order to reduce commuting time, save energy, reduce air pollution, and improve public convenience

The Project Site is located on the Alameda Corridor, which is dedicated for industrial uses. There are residential properties located within 250 feet of the Project Site both to the west and east. However, the Project Site does not adjoin these residential uses and is buffered to the west by other industrial uses and Laurel Street and is buffered to the east by the Alameda Rail Corridor. The Project supports a diversified economy because it provides jobs to 16 people in an older urban area and strengthens the county's labor force. The proposed upgrades to the Project Site will revitalize these three businesses, which are in an area that needs investment. Approval of the CUP will

ensure that jobs will remain along the Alameda Corridor and not be lost to other counties or states.

The Project has been reviewed and conditioned to mitigate negative impacts to ensure compatibility with residential uses located within 250 feet. The Project was referred to the Department of Public Health, which reviews noise issues, and they determined that the pallet yards and recycling collection business would not have noise impacts beyond the limits established by County Code Chapter 12.08 (Noise Control). Pallet yards are not normally associated with odors, but sometimes recycling collection businesses can emit an odor. The recycling collection business is located on the southeastern portion of the Project Site, which is the section of the property furthest from any residential use, and the odors from the recycling collection business are not expected to emit beyond the buffered areas. Pallet yards and recycling collection businesses are not land uses that are normally associated with emitting air pollution. Additionally, the Department of Public Works reviewed the Project to determine compliance with Low Impact Development standards, which are for stormwater control, and they determined that the Project complies, so water pollution is expected to be appropriately mitigated. Regarding aesthetics and urban design, the Project Site complies with development standards that require fencing to screen activities in the outdoor business areas and also complies with development standards that require landscaping.

On January 19, 2017, the CUP was assigned to the newly formed Industrial Use Task Force (“IUTF”), which is a cooperative effort between LA County Planning’s Current Planning Division and Land Use Regulation Division to bring industrial land uses along the Alameda Corridor into compliance. At that time, there were illegally established land uses, including automobile dismantling, pallet yards, scrap metal processing, and recycling. Additionally, there were multiple zoning violations for these land uses related to parking, signage, landscaping, fences/walls, and operations within the public right-of-way. Through the efforts of the IUTF, working in cooperation with the Permittee, several of the illegal uses, such as the automobile dismantling and the scrap metal recycling, have been removed and the remaining land uses, which are two pallet yards and one recycling collection business, are now able to comply with all relevant development standards, as depicted on the approved Exhibit “A.”

**18. PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the M-2 zoning classification because the two pallet yards and one recycling collection business are permitted in such zone with a CUP pursuant to County Code Section 22.22.138.D.7.b (Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards).

**19. PARKING.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.52.1140 (Industrial Vehicle Parking Spaces), which requires that one parking space be provided for each vehicle used in conjunction with the business and one parking space for every two employees on the shift having the greatest number of employees. There are 16 employees onsite. Therefore, eight parking spaces are required and 13 are provided. Twelve (12) parking spaces are

standard sized and one parking space is accessible to persons with disabilities in compliance with the ADA.

20. **SIGNS.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.52.880 (Wall Business Signs). A maximum of three square feet of sign area is allowed for every linear foot of building frontage. A maximum of 194 square feet of sign area is allowed on “Building C” and a maximum of 221.5 square feet of sign area is allowed on “Building B.” There is one wall sign on the main office building “Building C” that is 128 square feet in size, which complies with the maximum sign area allowance.

The Commission finds that the Project is also consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.52.890 (Roof and Freestanding Business Signs). This County Code Section allows up to 150 square feet of sign area, plus one three-fourths of one square foot of sign area, for each one foot of street or highway frontage in excess of 100 feet. Therefore, the maximum area for a freestanding business sign on the Project Site is 248 square feet. There is one freestanding business sign on the northeastern portion of the Project Site for A and I Pallets that is 175 square feet in size, and there is one freestanding business sign sign on the southeastern portion of the Project Site for the R and C Recycling Center that is 175 feet in size. Both of these signs comply with the maximum sign area allowance.

21. **OUTDOOR STORAGE FENCES AND WALLS.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.52.610 (Specifications for Fences and Walls), which is related to fence and wall materials, height, and uniformity. This County Code Section requires that all fences and walls be of a uniform height between eight and 15 feet and states that all fences and walls may be constructed of metal panels at least 0.024 inch thick, of masonry, or of other comparable materials, provided those comparable materials are new and constructed in a workman-like manner. This County Code Section also states that all fences and walls must be painted a uniform color, excluding black, and must be free of painted signs and posters, and also requires all fences and walls that exceed a height of 10 feet, and which are located on street frontages, shall be set back at least three feet from the property line. The Project includes 15-foot-tall, 0.24-inch-thick, metal solid walls along the Project Site’s perimeter with a three-foot-deep landscaping buffer, in compliance with these requirements.

22. **OUTDOOR STORAGE LANDSCAPING.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.52.630 (Landscaping Requirements), which requires that a three-foot-deep landscaping buffer be maintained with the installation of a permanent irrigation system. A total of 2,237 square feet of landscaping is required and will be provided on the perimeter of the Property Site along all four street frontages. A permanent watering system will be provided to satisfactorily irrigate all planted areas. If the watering system consists of hose bibs alone, the bibs will be located no more than 50 feet apart within the required landscaped area. Sprinklers used to satisfy the requirements of this provision will be spaced to assure complete coverage of the required landscaped areas.

23. **STORAGE RESTRICTIONS.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.52.640 (Storage Restrictions). This County Code Section requires that all outdoor storage areas have adequate grading and drainage and be continuously maintained. The Project Site will be enclosed by a 15-foot-tall solid perimeter wall. If pallets and recyclables are stored within 10 feet of any property line, they will not be stored above the height of the perimeter wall. Pallets and recyclables will not be stored outside of the perimeter wall and will not be stored in a manner that causes these materials to be blown away off the Project Site. The pallets will remain outdoors in the storage yard that is enclosed by fences and walls and the recycling collection business will use storage bins for sorting that do not exceed the height of the solid wall.
24. **COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.44.138.D.9 (Florence Firestone Community Standards District Zone Specific Development Standards). The Project is consistent with the following applicable standards of the CSD:

The Project Site is approximately 64,904 square feet in gross area and is above the CSD's minimum lot size requirement of 15,000 square feet. The Project does not adjoin a residential zone or a sensitive use and it is not explicitly prohibited in the M-2 Zone. The CSD's community-wide development standards addressing graffiti, material colors, and site maintenance are included in the Project's conditions of approval. On industrially zoned properties with multiple street frontages, truck access is only allowed between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Friday, and only on the street furthest away from any nearby residential zone. The hours of operation of all three businesses are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and the recycling collection business also operates from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and truck access is provided on Alameda Street, which is the street that is furthest away from the nearby residential zone.

The CSD was repealed in conjunction with the adoption of the Florence-Firestone Transit-Oriented District Specific Plan on February 7, 2023. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the Permittee chose to have the complete CUP application be subject to the zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on October 26, 2006.

### **CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS**

25. **The Commission finds that the proposed use at the site will not adversely affect the health, peace, comfort, or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area; will not be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment, or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site; and will not jeopardize, endanger, or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety, or general welfare.** The Project Site is located on the Alameda Corridor, which is predominately zoned for heavy and light industrial land uses and commercial manufacturing land uses, such as pallet yards and recycling collection businesses. The Project Site is buffered from residential uses by Laurel Street to the west and the



Project does not otherwise constitute any threat to, and will not endanger, the persons in the nearby vicinity, nor will the Project constitute a menace to the public health, safety, or general welfare. All three businesses are long-term tenants and have operated onsite for 15, 20, and 28 years, respectively. All unpermitted land uses that were unable to comply with required development standards have been removed. The Project has been reviewed and is conditioned to mitigate negative impacts, including noise, odor, and aesthetic impacts.

26. **The Commission finds that the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in Title 22, or as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area.** Unpermitted uses on the Project Site that could not comply with required development standards in Title 22 have been removed. The remaining land uses, the two pallet yards and the recycling collection business, have demonstrated that they can comply with development standards related to walls, parking, circulation, landscaping, signage, and screening of outdoor operations, as depicted on the approved Exhibit "A." All operations are conducted onsite and no operations will spill over into the adjoining public-rights-of way.
27. **The Commission finds that the proposed site is adequately served by highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate, and by other public or private service facilities as are required.** The Project Site is located on Alameda Street, which is a primary transportation corridor between Downtown Los Angeles and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Alameda Street is designated as a Secondary Highway in the currently adopted General Plan, has two lanes in each direction, and is sufficiently capable of serving the existing land uses. No public infrastructure improvements in the immediate vicinity are necessary to enable the two pallet yards and recycling collection business to continue operating.
28. The Commission finds that to ensure continued compatibility between the Project and the surrounding land uses, it is necessary to limit the CUP to 15 years.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

29. The Commission finds that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 and 15303 (Class 1, Existing Facilities, and Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, categorical exemptions). The Project is the continuation of three existing businesses and new development is limited to replacing dilapidated fencing with new solid metal fencing, revising the parking layout, and installing new perimeter landscaping with a permanent irrigation system.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS**

30. **LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS.** The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Commission's decision is based in this matter is at LA County Planning, 13th Floor, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple

Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. The custodian of such documents and materials shall be the Section Head of the Metro Development Services Section, LA County Planning.

**BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CONCLUDES THAT:**

- A. The proposed use with the attached conditions will be consistent with the 1980 General Plan, which was in effect at the time the complete CUP application was submitted.
- B. The proposed use at the site will not adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area, will not be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site, and will not jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare.
- C. The proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in Title 22, or as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area.
- D. The proposed site is adequately served by highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate, and by other public or private service facilities as are required.

**THEREFORE, THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION:**

- 1. Finds that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities categorical exemption); and 15303 (Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures categorical exemption).
- 2. Approves **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 200600261**, subject to the attached conditions.

**ACTION DATE: October 2, 2024**

MG:CS:EMR

September 19, 2024

c: Each Commissioner, Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety