

REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

DATE ISSUED: April 16, 2026
HEARING DATE: April 28, 2026 AGENDA ITEM: 4
PROJECT NUMBER: 2018-003320-(2)
PERMIT NUMBER: Nonconforming Review ("NCR") RPPL2018005166
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 2
PROJECT LOCATION: 1258 E. 68th Street, Florence-Firestone
OWNER: Heung K. Park
APPLICANT: Heung K. Park
CASE PLANNER: Pauline Monroy, Senior Planner
pmonroy@planning.lacounty.gov

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is made prior to the public hearing and is subject to change based upon testimony and/or documentary evidence presented at the public hearing:

LA County Planning staff ("Staff") recommends **APPROVAL** of Project Number 2018-003320-(2), NCR Number RPPL2018005166, based on the Findings (Exhibit C – Findings) contained within this report and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval).

Staff recommends the following motions:

CEQA:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.

ENTITLEMENT:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, APPROVE NONCONFORMING REVIEW NUMBER RPPL2018005166 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Entitlement Requested

- An NCR to authorize the continued operation and maintenance of an existing neighborhood market known as Star Market ("market") ("Project") at 1258 E. 68th Street within the unincorporated Florence-Firestone community ("Project Site") in the R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence) Zone pursuant to former County Code Section 22.52.1550 (Nonconforming Uses, Buildings and Structures – Review of Amortization Schedule or Substitution of Use).

B. Project

The Project is the continued operation and maintenance of an existing 1,086-square-foot market located on the southwest corner of Hooper Avenue and East 68th Street. The market is in a one-story building and attached to a single-family residential unit, with a second detached single-family residential unit at the rear of the market facing Hooper Avenue. There are no proposed changes, expansions, or improvements to the Project Site.

The market currently sells essential groceries and household items such as soft drinks, pre-packaged snacks, canned goods, paper goods, school supplies, household items and cleaning products, condiments, and alcoholic beverages (beer and wine) for off-site consumption. The sale of alcoholic beverages for off-site consumption is “deemed-approved” because it was established before 1992. A Conditional Use Permit is not required for the continued sale of alcoholic beverages for off-site consumption pursuant to former County Code Section 22.52.3660 (Deemed-Approved Uses).

According to County Assessor Records, the market was established in 1923, prior to the R-3 zoning standards that took effect in 1945, and is legal nonconforming with respect to use and with respect to the current development standards for required yards, fencing, and landscaping in the R-3 Zone and the Florence-Firestone Community Standards District. Pursuant to former County Code Section 22.56.1550 (Nonconforming Uses, Buildings and Structures – Review of Amortization Schedule or Substitution of Use), a nonconforming use can continue to operate if an NCR is approved.

On May 20, 2003, the market was previously authorized by NCR No. 03-006, which did not include a condition related to the market’s hours of operation. The market's current hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Staff recommends a condition of Project approval that will limit the market’s hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., daily, with all loading and unloading occurring within the hours of operation. This condition is consistent with the current Metro Planning Area Standards District ("MPASD") performance standard for Accessory Commercial Units ("ACUs") regarding operating hours.

In a letter dated February 10, 2026, the County Sheriff's Department, Century Sheriff Station ("Sheriff's Department"), recommended approval of the Project. There were zero

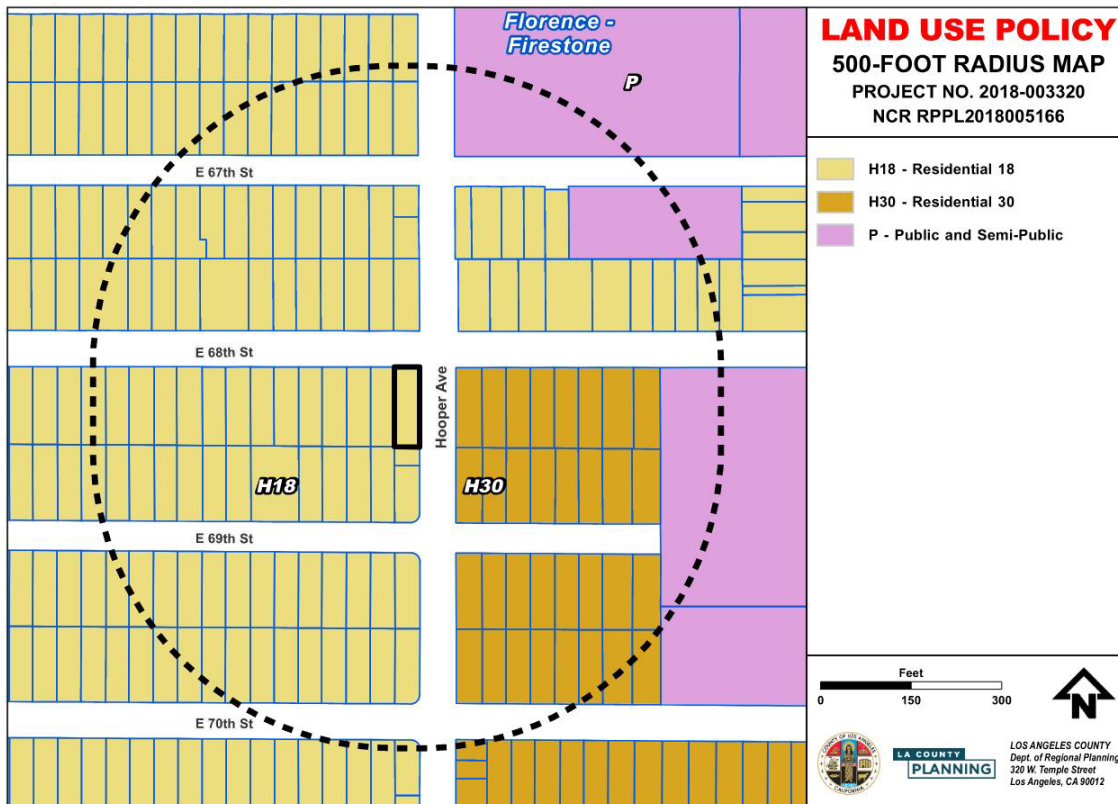
calls for service generated at the Project Site over the last five years. The correspondence also indicated that the market has not been a problem.

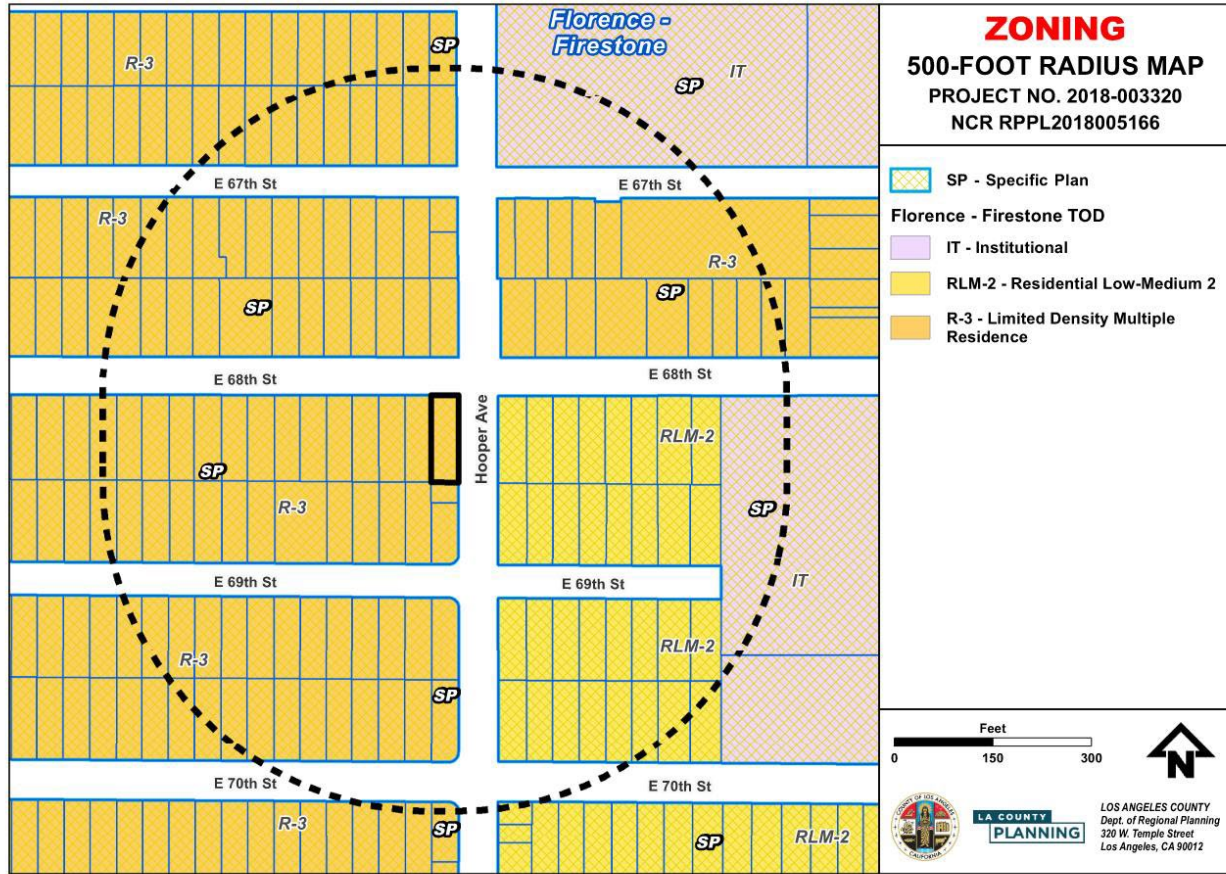
SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDINGS

The following chart provides property data within a 500-foot radius:

LOCATION	GENERAL PLAN LAND USE POLICY	ZONING*	EXISTING USES
SUBJECT PROPERTY	H18 (Residential 18)	R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residence)	Neighborhood market and two single-family residences ("SFRs")
NORTH	H18, P (Public and Semi-Public)	R-3, IT (Institutional)	SFRs, Multi-family residences ("MFRs"), School
EAST	H30 (Residential 30), P	R-3, IT	SFRs, MFRs, School
SOUTH	H18, H30	R-3	SFRs, MFRs, Church
WEST	H18	R-3	SFRs, MFRs, Church

*Note: The R-3 zoning of the subject property was changed to SP (Specific Plan) R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residence) on February 7, 2023, in conjunction with the adoption of the Florence-Firestone Specific Plan, which repealed the Florence-Firestone Community Standards District. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments) and Chapter 2 (Applicability) of the General Plan, the applicant chose to have the complete NCR application be subject to the land use policies, zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on October 3, 2018.





*Note: The R-3 zoning was changed to SP (Specific Plan) R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residence) on February 7, 2023, in conjunction with the adoption of the Florence-Firestone Transit-Oriented Specific Plan, which repealed the Florence-Firestone Community Standards District. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments) and Chapter 2 (Applicability) of the General Plan, the applicant chose to have the complete NCR application be subject to the land use policies, zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on October 3, 2018.

PROPERTY HISTORY

A. Zoning History

ORDINANCE NO.	ZONING	DATE OF ADOPTION
4562	R-3	October 23, 1945
20230014z	SP (Specific Plan) R-3	February 7, 2023

B. Previous Cases

CASE NO.	REQUEST	DATE OF ACTION
NCR No. 03-006	Continued operation of existing market	Approved May 20, 2003
NCR No. 92194	Continued operation of existing market	Approved March 17, 1993

NCR No. 205	Continued operation of existing market	Approved August 11, 1982
NCR No. 102	Authorization of existing market	Approved 1977

C. Violations

CASE NO.	VIOLATION	CLOSED/OPEN
RPCE2024002574	Unpermitted store - nonconforming use without LA County Planning approval	Opened May 9, 2024, will be resolved by approval of this NCR
RPZPE2018004500	Expired NCR for existing grocery market	Opened August 20, 2018 Closed July 1, 2024

ANALYSIS

A. Land Use Compatibility

The market is a low intensity commercial use with minimal disruption to the surrounding residential area. The market offers essential groceries, allowing residents to meet their daily needs without extensive travel. The market’s established presence since 1923 demonstrates its compatibility with, and positive contribution to, the neighborhood’s character. The Project does not propose any changes, expansions, or improvements to the Project Site. The Project Site is in the General Plan’s H18 (Residential 18) land use designation, which identifies areas suited predominantly for single-family residences and two-family residences. The Project Site consists of a market, one residential unit that is attached to the market, and one detached residential unit.

B. Neighborhood Impact (Need/Convenience Assessment)

The market has operated at the Project Site since 1923, according to County Assessor records. The longevity of the existing business demonstrates that it serves a need for the local community. The Project Site is conveniently located at a corner, provides residents with access to commercial services, and creates small business opportunities. The market is a neighborhood commercial use providing convenient access to a wide range of goods, including soft drinks, pre-packaged snacks, canned goods, paper goods, school supplies, household items and cleaning products, condiments, and alcoholic beverages (beer and wine) for off-site consumption pursuant to a “deemed-approved” status. The market helps meet the local demand for essential groceries in a convenient manner, providing residents with an option to purchase essential groceries without extensive travel.

No changes are proposed to the current layout or building footprint. The economic welfare of the nearby community should not be affected by the sales of goods at a market. Due to the market’s long history of operation at the Project Site, the continued operation and maintenance of this market is not anticipated to result in substantial adverse effects.

C. Design Compatibility

There are no proposed changes, expansions, or improvements to the Project Site. The existing one-story building is similar in bulk and mass to the adjacent residential uses. The height of the existing one-story building is 12 feet. There is an existing single-family residential unit attached to the market and one detached single-family residential unit at the rear of the market. The front entrance to the market faces east along Hooper Avenue. The applicant is proposing one (1) new wall sign which will not exceed six square feet in area and is consistent with former County Code Section 22.52.930 (Building Identification Signs) and the current MPASD signage requirements for ACUs.

D. Grant Term

Staff recommends no grant term for the NCR due to the following reasons:

- The market was established in 1923, prior to the adoption of the R-3 zoning designation in 1945. The first NCR that approved the market as a nonconforming use expired in 1981, and the market has continued operations pursuant to other previously approved NCRs.
- The existing market's endurance over time shows its compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and demonstrates the need it fulfills by serving as a neighborhood market.
- The MPASD was adopted on May 21, 2024, and supports small businesses and local entrepreneurship by allowing ACUs in residential zones with a Ministerial Site Plan Review, including neighborhood-serving grocery stores, corner stores, and meat markets, excluding slaughtering and alcoholic beverages sales. The market is not an ACU because it has a "deemed-approved" status with regard to alcoholic beverage sales and the applicant is not willing to abandon or discontinue alcoholic beverage sales. However, the market's current hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, which is consistent with the MPASD performance standard for ACUs that limits hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., daily, with all loading and unloading occurring within the hours of operation. Staff recommends a condition of Project approval that will limit the market's hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., daily, with all loading and unloading occurring within the hours of operation, to ensure ongoing compliance with this performance standard.
- The building in which the existing commercial use is located was legally built. No extension, expansion, or enlargement of the area of the lot devoted to the existing commercial use, or of the area within the building devoted to the existing commercial use, is being proposed. There are no proposed changes, expansions, or structural improvements to the Project Site.
- The Project does not demolish, vacate, or convert any dwelling units.

If the NCR is approved with no grant term, the Regional Planning Commission or a Hearing Officer, after conducting a public hearing, can subsequently revoke or modify the NCR if the business violates the NCR conditions or if the business is otherwise detrimental to the public's health or safety or operates as a nuisance.

E. Other Permitted Uses

Staff recommends a condition of Project approval that will allow the market's 1,086-square-foot tenant space to be occupied by any other permitted use listed in County Code Table 22.364.070-A, which relates to ACUs in the MPASD, with the approval of a Revised Exhibit "A." As noted above, the market is not an ACU because it has a "deemed-approved" status with regard to alcoholic beverage sales and the applicant is not willing to abandon or discontinue alcoholic beverage sales. However, the market is attached to an SFR and is functionally equivalent to an ACU, which is defined by County Code Section 22.14.010-A as "a commercial use that is subordinate to the principal use and contained within, attached to, or detached from a residential structure on a residential-zoned lot and is open to customers, clients, or patrons." Therefore, Staff believes it is appropriate to allow other uses that could be allowed in an ACU without a new NCR, which supports small businesses and local entrepreneurship.

GENERAL PLAN/COMMUNITY PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Project is consistent with applicable goals and policies of the General Plan. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

The Project complies with all applicable zoning requirements. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

BURDEN OF PROOF

The applicant is required to substantiate all facts identified by County Code Section 22.172.060.C.2. The Burden of Proof with applicant's responses is attached (Exhibit E – Applicant's Burden of Proof). Staff is of the opinion that the applicant has met the burden of proof.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Staff recommends that this Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 1, Existing Facilities Categorical Exemption) under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and the County environmental guidelines. The Project is the continued operation and maintenance of an existing neighborhood market with no expansion of the existing use. The Project does not qualify for any exceptions to a Categorical Exemption because it is not located on a scenic highway or a hazardous waste site, is not known to contain historic resources, and will not have a significant or cumulative environmental impact. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Hearing Officer determine that the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA. An environmental determination (Exhibit F – Environmental Determination) was issued for the Project.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

A. County Department Comments and Recommendations

The Sheriff's Department, in a letter dated February 10, 2026, recommended that the Project proceed to public hearing and recommended approval of the NCR.

B. Public Comments

Prior to the publication of the Report to the Hearing Officer dated April 16, 2026, Staff received two phone calls.

On March 24, 2026, Staff received a call from a community member who received a postcard notification about the upcoming public hearing for this Project. The caller asked Staff questions about the postcard. Staff informed the caller that the public hearing was regarding an NCR that would allow the continued operation and maintenance of a neighborhood market in a Residential Zone and that the Project had previously approved NCRs to operate. Staff also informed the caller that the postcard was to inform property owners within the notification radius of the Project Site that they have an opportunity to attend the upcoming hearing, either virtually or in person, to voice their support or opposition regarding the Project. The caller thanked Staff for their explanation and ended the call.

On March 31, 2026, Staff received a call from a resident who lives near the Project Site. The caller had questions about the public hearing and wanted to ensure that the market would remain open. Staff explained to the caller that the public hearing is for the market to request its continued operation and maintenance with an NCR.

Report Reviewed By: *Elsa M. Rodriguez*
Elsa M. Rodriguez, Acting Supervising Regional Planner

Report Approved By: *M. Glaser*
Mitch Glaser, Assistant Deputy Director

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A	Plans
EXHIBIT B	Project Summary Sheet
EXHIBIT C	Findings
EXHIBIT D	Conditions of Approval
EXHIBIT E	Applicant's Burden of Proof
EXHIBIT F	Environmental Determination
EXHIBIT G	Informational Maps
EXHIBIT H	Photos
EXHIBIT I	Agency Correspondence