

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER
AND ORDER
PROJECT NO. PRJ2025-000279-(2)
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. RPPL2025000390

RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATE(S).** The Los Angeles County (“County”) Hearing Officer conducted a duly-noticed public hearing in the matter of Conditional Use Permit No. **RPPL2025000390** (“CUP”) on December 16, 2025.
2. **HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** *Reserved*
3. **ENTITLEMENT REQUESTED.** The Permittee, Kevin L. Pickett ("Permittee"), requests the CUP to authorize the continued operation and maintenance of an existing motel (“Project”) on a property located at 5005 South La Brea Avenue in the unincorporated community of Ladera Heights/View Park-Windsor Hills ("Project Site") in the C-1 (Restricted Commercial) Zone pursuant to Los Angeles County Code ("County Code") Section 22.20.030 (Land Use Regulations for Commercial Zones).
4. **ENTITLEMENT REQUIRED.** The CUP is a request to authorize the continued operation and maintenance of a motel in the C-1 Zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.20.030 (Land Use Regulations for Commercial Zones).
5. **LOCATION.** The Project is located at 5005 South La Brea Avenue within the Baldwin Hills Zoned District and Westside Planning Area.

6. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENTS.**

| CASE NO. | REQUEST | DATE OF ACTION |
|---|---|-------------------|
| CUP-88368-21311 | A CUP was denied for the expansion from a 28 to 61 unit motel. | December 13, 1989 |
| CUP 97-129 (on Project Site, but not part of the motel) *Note: this CUP has had subsequent approvals thereafter. | CUP to authorize the construction, operation, and maintenance of an unmanned wireless telecommunication facility in the C-3 (Unlimited Commercial) Zone | December 16, 1997 |
| PP41689 (on Project Site, but not part of the motel) | Commercial/Retail 6,772 square feet | June 24, 1992 |
| Permit #12297 | Illuminated Billboard Sign | January 12, 1967 |

7. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the CG (General Commercial) land use category of the General Plan Land Use Policy Map.

8. **ZONING.** The Project Site is in the Baldwin Hills Zoned District and is currently zoned C-1. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.20.030 (Land Use Regulations for Commercial Zones) a CUP is required for motels.

9. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

| LOCATION | GENERAL PLAN 2035 LAND USE POLICY* | ZONING | EXISTING USES |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| NORTH | OS-PR (Parks and Receptions) MR (Mineral Resources) | O-S (Open Space) and A-2 (Heavy Agricultural) | State Recreation Park and Oil Wells |
| EAST | CG (Commercial)OS-PR H9 (Residential 9) | C-1 (Restricted Commercial), O-S, and R-1 (Single-family Residences) | Retail spaces, County Recreation Park, and single-family residences |
| SOUTH | MR (Mineral Resources) and P (Public and Semi-Public) | A-2 | Oil Wells and Public Utilities Substation |
| WEST | MR and P | A-2 | Oil Wells and Public Utilities Substation |

*Note: On April 11, 2025, the Westside Area Plan, a component of the General Plan became effective. Pursuant to Chapter 2 (Applicability) of the County General Plan and County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the applicant chose to have the complete CUP application be subject to the land use policies, zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted on November 11, 2024.

10. PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.

A. Existing Site Conditions

The Project Site is 1.07 gross acres in size and consists of two legal lots. However, one of the parcels is a smaller lot measuring approximately 217 square feet located within the larger parcel and has its own accessor parcel number. The Project Site is irregular in shape with a flat topography and is developed with a motel, a WCF, a billboard and a retail building with a paved surface parking lot.

B. Site Access

The Project Site is accessible via La Brea Avenue to the east. Primary access to the Project Site will be via an entrance on La Brea Avenue.

C. Site Plan

The project consists of a 28-unit motel approximately 6,691 square feet which also includes a storage area, office space and laundry space. The 5,127 square foot commercial building has four retail stores which include a Nail Salon, a Tax Service, Hair Salon, and Discount Clothing Store. The total property is a 1.07-gross acre lot.

D. Parking

The project provides a total of 56 vehicle parking spaces of which 33 vehicle parking spaces are reserved for the Motel. The retail parking area has a total of 23 standard vehicle spaces of which one is a compact vehicle space and one vehicle parking space is accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). Access to the parking lot is via two 39-foot and 36-foot-wide driveways on La Brea Avenue.

11. CEQA DETERMINATION.

Prior to the Commission's public hearing on the Project, LA County Planning staff determined that the Project qualified for a Class 1, Existing Facilities, categorical exemption 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 to permit the continued operation and maintenance of 28-unit motel with no new construction or expansion. There are no exceptions to the exemption because the Project is not located in an environmentally sensitive area, there are no historical resources on the Project Site, and the Project Site is not listed in the State Department of Toxic Substances Control's list of hazardous waste or clean up sites. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer determine that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

12. COMMUNITY OUTREACH. Prior to the publication of the Report to the Hearing Officer, Staff was unaware of community outreach.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS. Prior to the publication of the Report to the Hearing Officer, Staff received no public comments.

14. AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.

- A. County Department of Public Works: No review was required because no new improvements were proposed.
- B. County Fire Department: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 1, 2025.
- C. County Department of Public Health: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated September 24, 2025.
- D. Los Angeles County Sheriff Department: Recommended approval of Conditional Use Permit in a letter dated November 6, 2025.

15. LEGAL NOTIFICATION. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.222.120 (Public Hearing Procedure) the community was properly notified of the public hearing by mail, and newspaper [Daily Journal] and property posting. Additionally, the Project was noticed, and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On October 27, 2025, a total of 31 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 eight notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for the Baldwin Hills Zoned District and to any additional interested parties.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

16. LAND USE POLICY. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan because the CG land use designation is intended for local-serving commercial uses, including retail stores, restaurants, and personal and professional services, such as motels. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project supports the local economy because the motel provides overnight accommodation in the Ladera Heights/View Park-Windsor Hills community.

17. GOALS AND POLICIES. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following goals and policies of the General Plan:

- Goal LU 5: (Land Use Element) *Vibrant, livable and healthy communities with a mix of land uses, services and amenities.*

This Project is consistent with Goal LU5, which seeks to provide a mix of land uses, services, and amenities. The motel contributes to a mix of uses by offering short-term rental options for visitors of the area.

- Policy LU 5.2: (Land Use Element) *Encourage a diversity of commercial and retail services, and public facilities at various scales to meet regional and local needs.*

This Project is consistent with Policy LU 5.2, which encourages a diversity of commercial and retail services. The Project maintains a variety of uses available by providing lodging options for people visiting the area and includes some retail stores that provide services and amenities for the patrons of the motel and the community.

- Goal LU 7: (Land Use Element) *Compatible land uses that complement neighborhood character and the natural environment.*

The Project is consistent with Goal LU 7, because it contributes to the variety of uses and services in the community. The Project is located along the center of a five-point intersection which centers between recreation, commercial, and residential uses.

ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

18. PERMITTED USE IN ZONE. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the C-1 zoning classification, because motels are permitted in such zones with a CUP pursuant to County Code Section 22.20.030 (Land Use Regulations for Commercial Zones).

- 19. REQUIRED YARDS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.20.050 (Development Standards for Commercial Zones) as the Project meets the required front yard setback of 20 feet for a lot fronting on a major highway. No rear and interior side yards are required for non-residential in commercial zones.
- 20. HEIGHT.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.20.040 (Development Standards for Commercial Zones) which limits the height of structures to 35 feet. The existing height of the motel building is nine feet three inches.
- 21. PARKING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.112.070 (Required Parking Spaces). A total of 56 vehicle parking spaces are provided onsite. The required vehicle parking space for a motel is one space per guest room. The motel provides 28 guest rooms and 33 vehicle parking spaces are provided. One vehicle parking space is required for every 250 square feet of commercial floor area. The retail building is 5,127 square feet and requires 21 vehicle parking spaces and 23 are provided of which one is a compact space and one is accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”).
- 22. SIGNS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.114.120 (Freestanding Business Signs Height Permitted). There are two freestanding business signs on the Project Site, both signs are less than 30 feet in height and 36 square feet in size. There is one illuminated billboard sign facing La Brea, which was permitted on January 12, 1967, by Permit No. 12297.
- 23. MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in the General Plan, which allows a maximum Floor Area, Ratio (FAR) of 1.00. The proposed FAR is 0.25.
- 24. LOT COVERAGE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.20.040 (Development Standards for Commercial Zones), because the maximum allowed lot coverage is 90 percent. The existing lot coverage is 41 percent.
- 25. LANDSCAPING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is inconsistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.20.040 (Development Standards for Commercial Zones), because the minimum required landscaping is 10 percent of the total lot area. The existing landscaping is 633 square feet which is 1.36 percent of total lot area. The 10% landscaping requirement for commercial zones was first adopted by Ordinance 83-0161, effective October 14, 1983, after the construction of this Motel. Therefore, the Project is legally nonconforming with respect to this standard.

CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS

- 26. The Hearing Officer 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 is developed with an existing 28-unit motel that was originally constructed in 1948 and has continuously operated as a legal non-conforming use. The property is located within the C-1 Zone where motels are conditionally permitted subject to approval of a CUP. The site provides a total of 56 parking spaces, including 33 spaces designated for motel guests. The motel has operated for decades without record of complaints or any code enforcement actions. The use does not generate excessive noise, traffic, or lighting that would adversely affect nearby residences or businesses. The continued operation of the motel under a new CUP will bring the use into conformance with current zoning requirements and ensure ongoing compliance with regulations.
- 27. The Hearing Officer 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.** The Project will not involve any physical alterations or modifications to any of the rooms or buildings and will continue to operate as it currently exists. The Project Site includes a designated parking area with 33 spaces which exceed the minimum required parking for motel use. These parking spaces adequately service guests and prevent parking overflow into adjacent properties or public streets. The existing driveways are sufficient to accommodate traffic associated with the motel and the retail shops, ensuring safe and efficient ingress and egress without the need for modifications. Additionally, the Project does not propose any increase in capacity or intensity, further supporting its compatibility with the existing site layout and surrounding area. The motel's long-standing presence demonstrates its ability to operate effectively without adverse impacts on surrounding properties. The subject site is adequate in size with a lot area of 46,609 square feet. The shape and layout to support the continued operation of the existing motel is compatible with surrounding land uses.
- 28. The Hearing Officer 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 has access via La Brea Avenue, which is designated as a Major Highway on the County Master Plan of Highways. The Project is located within an existing building and does not include any new improvement or expansions. The Project does not include any physical expansions or modifications that would increase traffic demand beyond its current levels. Additionally, the existing site layout, including parking and access, has functioned historically without creating traffic or circulation concerns in the surrounding area. The Project is located within an established community that features

a mix of residential, commercial, open space, and agricultural development, providing a lodging option that serves local residents, local businesses, and visiting guests. The Project's location along La Brea Avenue provides easy access to major roadways and public transportation, enhancing its convenience for guests without adding significant traffic congestion. The existing street improvements, including paved roadways, sidewalks, and curb cuts are adequate to serve the site. Given that the motel has operated successfully at this location since 1948 without adverse transportation issues or impacts the Project has demonstrated to be sufficient and will not be materially detrimental to for the use and the continued operation of a motel.

- 29.** The Hearing Officer 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

- 30.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities categorical exemption). The Project is to permit the continued operation and maintenance of 28-unit motel with no new construction or expansion.

ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

- 31. LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS.** The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Hearing Officer'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 Section, LA County Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE HEARING OFFICER CONCLUDES THAT:

- A. The proposed use with the attached conditions will be consistent with the adopted General Plan.
- 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 HEARING OFFICER:

1. Finds that the Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities categorical exemption); and
2. Approves **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. RPPL2025000390**, subject to the attached conditions.

ACTION DATED: December 16, 2025

EMR:SZ

December 4, 2025

c: Hearing Officer, Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety