

CONDITIONAL USE ATTACHMENT – 1
“Firestone Walker”
3205-3223 N. Washington Blvd.

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REQUEST:

- 1) Pursuant to LAMC 12.24 W1, the applicant is requesting a new conditional use to permit the on-site sales of beer and wine including on-site sales of beer brewed on-site in conjunction at an existing 8,401 sq. ft. restaurant/brewpub facility with 207 seats located at 3205 N. Washington Blvd.**
- 2) Pursuant to LAMC 12.24 W1, the applicant is requesting a new conditional use to permit the off-site sales of beer brewed on and off-site at a proposed 928 sq. ft. retail facility contained within an existing 4,580 sq. ft. office building located at 3223 N. Washington Blvd.**
- 3) Requesting a change of use from office to office/retail at 3223 Washington Boulevard.**
- 4) Pursuant to LAMC 12.24 W24, requesting a conditional use to allow hours of operation beyond 7am-11pm in a Commercial Corner Development.**

BACKGROUND:

It began innocently enough: a couple of brothers-in-law sitting around debating the subject of good and bad beer. Instead, their search for a decent ale led them to brew their own. Given Mr. Firestone’s winemaking bias and Mr. Walker’s complete lack of fermentation experience, they believed 60-gallon oak barrels were the appropriate vehicle in which to create their perfect elixir.

The initial attempts may be forgettable. But like so many great ideas, out of what was first a disaster was born a wonderful partnership—the Firestone Union. Based on classic brewing traditions from Burton-Upon Trent, this bizarre and unlikely system of linked barrels has the ability to produce rich and complex ales. In 1996, the accidental duo shelved their endless discussion on better beers and settled for building a world-class brewery that bore their names on California’s Central Coast. Responsible and experienced operators of the acclaimed Firestone Walker Brewery in Paso Robles, CA, and Taproom restaurants located in Buellton and Paso Robles, Mr. Firestone and Mr. Walker hope to bring their products closer to their largest customer base in Los Angeles.

GENERAL CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS:

- 1. That the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region.**

The proposed project will enhance the built environment and provide a beneficial service to the surrounding community by enhancing the streetscape of Washington Blvd. near the crucial Lincoln Blvd. intersection. The restaurant and brewpub facility will provide a mid-priced, high quality concept that focuses on exceptional food, customer convenience, and a unique design aesthetic and ambience, bringing Firestone Walker's renowned craft beers in a unique setting to the Venice area. The restaurant and brewpub will be a unique offering to the Venice community, and will allow patrons to experience high quality dining as well as craft beers produced on-site. The project's presence during both daytime and later nighttime hours will help revitalize this portion of Washington and Lincoln Boulevards by keeping the streetscape light and bright and providing a comfortable dining and community gathering space. The provision of this quality establishment with the addition of beer and wine sales, effectively maintained and operated, will serve to enhance the aesthetics, convenience, livability, and security of the area. The project will provide ample lighting and highly trained staff, contributing positive activity to the streetscape activity and character of the boulevard. In light of these factors, the applicant states that the proposed location is admirably suited for the addition of alcohol sales, in that it promotes livability and convenience for the residents and employees of the neighborhood and furthers community and economic development in the Venice neighborhood.

- 2. That the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety.**

The addition of alcohol sales to the proposed "Firestone Walker" restaurant and brewpub facility will be compatible with the adjacent properties and will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The size and height of the building are similar to the other structures on the block, and fit in with the context of the streetscape. There will be no structural changes to the exterior of the building, only aesthetic alterations that will enhance the built environment and update the building. The most recent use of the building at 3205 Washington is a restaurant and the features will remain compatible with the surrounding area. The conversion of office to retail will remain compatible with the surrounding environment by creating congruity with the surrounding commercial uses along Washington and Lincoln Boulevards, and maintaining the existing exterior form. With the extensive experience in the hospitality industry offered by Firestone Walker, the restaurant and brewpub will be run in a responsible and conscientious manner, putting a focus on patron safety, cleanliness, and security while offering highly-acclaimed beers and a varied menu. Public safety will increase as a result of the increased positive activity along the streetscape and extended hours of activity along this portion of Washington

Blvd. The premises' responsible operations will ensure that no adverse impacts are felt by adjacent properties or the surrounding neighborhood. Rather than degrading the public health, welfare, and safety, this project will contribute towards these goals by maintaining a positive presence on Washington Blvd. throughout daytime and evening hours.

3. That the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.

The General Plan designates the subject property as General Commercial with a corresponding zone of C2-1. Policy 2-1.1 of the Community Plan outlines that "New commercial uses shall be located in existing established commercial areas or shopping centers." This property is an existing, vacant and underutilized established commercial area, and this project will add a viable use to the property. Restaurants and entertainment venues are permitted in the underlying zone and are in conformance with the type of development normally permitted in a regional center, which normally contains a mix of uses. The subject property is located in the Venice area which focuses on tourism, hospitality, and commercial uses. The sale of a full line of alcoholic beverages will not alter the site's conformance with the General Plan and/or with any elements or objectives of the Plan. With conditions and limitations imposed by the Zoning Administrator, if approved, the surrounding properties would be protected from the predictable impacts of the proposed use. Therefore the proposed project is in harmony with the General Plan.

Additionally, the subject property lies within the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan which favors community commercial development with neighborhood storefronts. As the neighborhood and commercial area have grown, so has the need for this particular type of use. This project directly contributes towards the objective of the Venice Specific Plan by helping to maintain, enhance and, where feasible, restore the overall quality of the Coastal Zone environment (*Venice Specific Plan 3*), by providing an essential service in great demand by the neighborhood.

The proposed project substantially conforms with the goals established in the Oxford Triangle Specific Plan by creating a viable commercial property that respects the residential zones yet draws economic growth into the commercial corridor. No adverse impacts or changes will be felt by the surrounding residential uses.

Furthermore, the proposed project conforms with the goals established in the Coastal Transportation Corridor Specific Plan. Approval of this request will not significantly increase the number of trips in the area.

Additionally, the proposed project substantially conforms with the Venice Community Plan. The project encourages pedestrian activity by re-activating a vacant lot that is at a critical intersection in a commercial area. The project complies with the goals of the Community Plan to "invigorate commercial areas" and to increase their viability. The proposed restaurant/brewpub facility will in fact greatly contribute to economic growth and stability in the area and provide a high-quality, diverse menu of food and quality

beers that will encourage residents from nearby commercial areas to visit by foot and by bicycle. Additionally, for patrons from greater distances, there is ample parking provided in an off-street, on-site lot that will help to mitigate any possible traffic congestion that would potentially be caused by the proposed project. The creation of an inviting, open storefront will engage pedestrians and bring the streetscape to a more human scale, along what is currently a scale that is daunting for pedestrians.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS:

a. Explain how the proposed use will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community.

The proposed project will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community by committing to the responsible operation of the establishment and increasing positive activity in the immediate area. The restaurant will provide a much needed service to the community in the form of a full service restaurant that provides jobs to local residents and enhances the dining options available in this part of the Venice community. The applicant is committed to working with the community to mitigate any foreseeable adverse impacts. The intent of this project is to provide quality service and products to the community while respecting the current character and activity of the neighborhood. The addition of a respected establishment along the Washington Blvd commercial corridor will provide a location for surrounding residents and visitors from around the area to dine at and will encourage commercial activity at surrounding properties, strengthening the local economy and positively impacting the surrounding community. Furthermore, if approved, the Zoning Administrator will impose conditions and limitations, which would protect the surrounding properties from the predictable impacts of the proposed use.

b. Explain how the approval of the application will not result in or contribute to an undue concentration of such establishments.

The approval of the conditional use will not result in or contribute to an undue concentration of such establishments. The proposed use is for a highly-acclaimed brewery that will create an establishment of a unique caliber to the greater Los Angeles area. The expertise and craftsmanship of the operators will ensure a viable and long-standing venue that will bring positive activity to Washington Blvd and contribute to the long-term growth of the area. There is not currently a concentration of alcohol-serving establishments in the surrounding area, and thus the approval of this application will not further contribute to the concentration of such establishments. The one-of-a-kind brewery operation by Firestone Walker will be unmatched in the Venice community and will bring a diverse use to Venice. The establishment of a high quality restaurant and brewpub with a family-friendly menu allows the proposed project to serve as a neighborhood locale but garner the attention and respect of critics. Beer service and tasting will only serve as an added amenity to the restaurant, and the separate retail facility will allow customers to bring home tastes of the delicious beers enjoyed in the restaurant.

c. Explain how the approval of the application will not detrimentally affect nearby residential zones or uses.

The approval of the application will not detrimentally affect nearby residential zones. The proposed location is along a bustling commercial corridor and therefore is already a part of a vibrant community. The addition of a well-known brewery and restaurant will benefit the surrounding residents by providing a quality dining location within the neighborhood. The proposed project will also benefit the nearby residents by bringing positive pedestrian traffic and presence to the commercial corridor, activating the streetscape and increasing economic activity in the Venice community. The proposed project will create a dining locale for surrounding residents that serves an affordable, family-friendly menu and will therefore directly benefit the surrounding neighborhood. The properties along Washington on either side of the subject property are currently zones as Commercial as well, therefore, this use will not be further detrimental to the residential zones.

COMMERCIAL CORNER FINDINGS

a. That the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region.

The proposed project will enhance the built environment and provide a beneficial service to the region. The proposed project is located along the commercial corridor of Washington Boulevard in the vibrant Venice neighborhood. The addition of a brewery will help to activate the local economy, and the establishment of a responsibly operated venue is advantageous for the surrounding community and region. The added amenity of beer sales and tastings to complement the dining experience for patrons will further benefit the region by creating a highly desirable dining establishment in the area. The combined use of the brewery, restaurant, and pub location will directly cater to today's diverse Venice lifestyle.

b. That the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety.

The proposed project's location, size, height, and operations will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties or the surrounding area. The proposed project will remain compatible with adjacent properties along the Washington Boulevard commercial corridor. The increased pedestrian presence both throughout the day and into the evening will be beneficial to the public welfare and safety of the surrounding area by putting more eyes on the street. The addition of a responsibly operated property along the Washington Boulevard commercial corridor will benefit the community by increasing economic viability in the area and bringing patrons from

around the region to this highly respected restaurant and brewery. With the extensive operating experience of Firestone Walker, the restaurant will be run in a conscientious manner, focusing on patron safety and security and benefiting the surrounding community by re-introducing a restaurant to this property with the added amenity of beer service and tastings. The restaurant operators will take measures to ensure that no adverse impacts are felt by the surrounding neighborhood, particularly adjacent residential uses, and any foreseeable adverse impacts will be mitigated by conditions set forth by the Zoning Administrator.

c. That the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.

The General Plan designates the subject property as General Commercial with a corresponding zone of C2-1, which encourages commercial activity. A restaurant and brewery usage will not disturb nearby residents due to the number of surrounding commercial zones. Restaurants and retail are permitted and encouraged along this stretch of Washington Boulevard and are in conformance with the general uses of the surrounding area. The implementation of a bona fide restaurant in this commercial corridor will help to diversify the current uses and provide an establishment that operates at extended hours, increasing patron presence during more hours and increasing public safety. The proposed alcohol sales will not alter the site's conformance with the General Plan and/or with any elements or objectives of the Plan.

Additionally, the subject property lies within the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan which favors community commercial development with neighborhood storefronts. The addition of the proposed restaurant with the added amenity of alcohol sales will encourage community commercial development and provide a space for local community residents to gather. This project directly contributes towards the objectives of the Venice Specific Plan by helping to maintain, enhance and, where feasible, restore the overall quality of the Coastal Zone environment (*Venice Specific Plan 3*), by providing an essential service in great demand by the neighborhood.

In addition to the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan, the subject site lies within the Oxford Triangle Specific Plan and the Los Angeles Coastal Transportation Corridor Specific Plan. The proposed project substantially conforms with the goals established in all three Specific Plans by mitigating traffic impacts by providing ample on-site parking, reactivating a vacant block along a bustling commercial avenue, and incentivizing community engagement and positive pedestrian traffic by implementing a restaurant, brewpub, and retail space that is accessible to the community members. There are no foreseeable adverse impacts on the coastal zone as the project lies within the Oxford Triangle Subarea rather than a coastal zone.