

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. PC 2024-24
Design Review DR-2024-0008

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HAWTHORNE, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) AND APPROVING DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION NO. DR-2024-0008 FOR THE EXTERIOR FACADE IMPROVEMENTS OF THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 14043 HAWTHORNE BOULEVARD, WITHIN THE C-2 (LOCAL COMMERCIAL) ZONE, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND MAKING FINDINGS IN SUPPORT THEREOF

WHEREAS, The Commercial Façade Rehabilitation Program for the City of Hawthorne, (Applicant), on behalf of the property owner, Victor M. Alvarez and Maria E. Alvarez, requested approval of a Design Review for the exterior facade improvements for an existing mixed-use commercial & residential building at 14043 Hawthorne Blvd. (Property), which is zoned C-2 (Local Commercial); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Hawthorne Municipal Code (HMC) Chapter 17.99 – Design Review, the City of Hawthorne established a design review procedure for all applicable projects not exempted per Section 17.99.030 – Exceptions. No exceptions were identified and the proposed improvements encompass more than 1,000 sq. ft. of building and the property is adjacent to residential uses. Therefore, the subject project is not exempt from the design review process and must obtain approval by the DRB; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Hawthorne Specific Plan designates the Property as Commercial (C), which is intended for a wide range of commercial uses, such as retail stores, restaurant and other retail establishments that support patrons, businesses and both local and regional markets. The proposed facade improvements will beautify the property and surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission determines that said Design Review will not have an adverse effect, either individually or cumulatively, on surrounding neighborhood, and that on the basis of this determination finds the proposal will not be potentially injurious to the public health, safety and welfare. This is an update to an existing building which will not be enlarged and will maintain its existing square footage; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hawthorne wishes to protect and preserve the quality of the local business areas and quality of life throughout the City and to ensure uses are managed through effective land use planning and design; and

WHEREAS, the applicant presented evidence that the proposed use complies with all applicable local, state, and federal laws; and

WHEREAS, on November 6, 2024, a duly noticed public hearing on the Project was held before the Planning Commission where all interested parties were given an opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, based upon the information received and Staff's review and assessment, the project was determined not to have a significant impact on the environment and is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Class 1 Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15301, (Existing Facilities) of CEQA; and

WHEREAS, evidence was heard and presented from all persons in favor of the application, from all persons opposed to the application and from members of the City staff; and that the Planning Commission having heard and received all of said evidence, testimony and statements and being fully informed of the application, approves Resolution No. 2024-24.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HAWTHORNE DOES HEREBY FIND, DETERMINE AND RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Planning Commission finds that all of the facts set forth in the Recitals are true and correct, and are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. Based upon independent review and consideration of the information contained in the Staff Report and the Notice of Exemption for the Project, Staff has determined Design Review DR-2024-0008 is Categorically Exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, for Existing Facilities, which involves the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alterations to an existing facility involving negligible or no expansion of use. The project would not involve an expansion to the existing building nor additional height and only involves exterior facade improvements (exterior architectural building facade and new signs). The proposed project is consistent with the general plan designation and general plan policies as well as all zoning designations and regulations. The project site is within the C-2 zone and the Downtown Hawthorne Specific Plan, which encourages and permits restaurant uses. The proposed project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available. The existing development was built in 1949 and improvements to public services and facilities have since improved. The property is well within an urbanized location with access to all required services and facilities. The project provides negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the City's determination. The project is not proposing any expansion of its current footprint nor height. Further, no exceptions identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 are applicable; Staff will file the Notice of Exemption with the Los Angeles County Clerk's office in compliance with CEQA.

SECTION 3. Based upon substantial evidence presented to the Planning Commission during the May 15, 2024, public meeting, including public testimony and written and oral staff reports, the Planning Commission finds as follows:

Design Review Findings:

1. The location, size, design and characteristics of the proposed project will be compatible with and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare of persons residing in or working in or adjacent to the proposed project;

The property is located on the northeast corner of Hawthorne Blvd. and 141st St. and is surrounded by a mix of commercial, single-family and multi-family residential uses.

The proposed architectural facade will update and modernize the property and enhance surrounding area. The style of this building is compatible within this area, such as area is dotted with different building types and eclectic facades. The proposal itself will not be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood nor cause a public health, safety, or welfare issue to adjacent properties as this is an update to an existing building which will not be enlarging its existing square footage.

2. The proposed design is suitable for its purpose, is harmonious with and relates properly to, the surrounding neighborhood, contiguous parcels, and the site itself.

The proposed design will update and modernize the property by introducing a modern style and attractive facade. These improvements are compatible with the surrounding area. The development is located in the appropriate zone and is adjacent to similar uses.

3. The overall design will be of quality that will preserve the integrity of, and upgrade, the existing neighborhood.

The proposed development will upgrade and modernize an existing parcel. The on-site parking will be sufficient to accommodate the use and potential parking conflicts to the adjacent uses are not anticipated. The facade and existing landscaping will beautify and enhance the pedestrian experience along this section of the City.

The architectural design and height is of a scale that fits within the parcel and therefore, the preservation and integrity of the neighborhood, specifically of those residential properties directly adjacent to the subject site is achieved. The building contains two stories and will not increase in height as only a façade improvement is proposed.

4. The design of the proposed project is in accordance with the general plan and all applicable provisions of the zoning ordinance.

The proposed project is consistent with the Downtown Hawthorne Specific Plan designation, Commercial (C), of the site for the following reasons:

- The Downtown Hawthorne Specific Plan designates the property as Commercial, which is intended for a wide range of commercial uses, such as stores, restaurants, and other retail establishments that support patrons and business.
- The facade will be renovated and continued to be occupied by the existing restaurant. The use is compatible with the Local Commercial (C-2) zone and the existing specific plan.
- Goal 1 of the Land Use Element of the General Plan encourages efforts to expand, attract, and enhance commercial development.
 - Policy 1.4 specifies that the City shall support and encourage the rehabilitation or renovation of existing buildings or structures or the conversion of obsolete and/or chronically vacant storefronts from their original or most recent use to a new compatible, economically viable, and sustainable use.
 - The existing building facade is obsolete due to the cloth awnings and fading color scheme and in need of modernization. Therefore, the proposed development will update the site and will meet the goal of this policy in that the new exterior is in keeping with the modern facades developed throughout the South Bay area.

- Goal 2 of the Land Use Element dictates that every effort shall be made to ensure both existing and future development will remain compatible in character, scale, and size to surrounding uses.
- Policy 2.2 discourages the construction of very large buildings where such structures are incompatible with surrounding residential development.
- The property will be undergoing a facade renovation that does not include additional square footage or height and will be compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. In addition, it is in keeping with the scale and size of the surrounding area due to its location within a residential and commercial area.

SECTION 4. Based on the forgoing, the Planning Commission hereby grants Design Review Application No. DR-2024-0008 subject to the conditions set forth in Exhibit “A” attached hereto.

SECTION 5. This resolution shall become effective ten days after its adoption, unless within that period of time it is appealed to the City Council. In the event of an appeal, this Resolution shall not become effective unless reinstated by the City Council after the hearing on the appeal. The City Council Resolution determining the appeal shall be controlling, and unless the matter is remanded to the Planning Commission, the Resolution of the City Council shall be final.

SECTION 6. A copy of this Resolution shall be mailed to the applicant and copies shall be filed with the City.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 6th day of November 2024.

ATTEST:

RYAN RICHARD, CHAIRPERSON

GREGG MCCLAIN, SECRETARY

EXHIBIT A
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
DESIGN REVIEW DR-2024-0008

Failure of the applicant to comply with conditions as set forth shall be cause for the Planning Commission to institute a Public Hearing for revocation purposes.

1. The applicant shall comply with all applicable requirements and provisions set forth by the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code, Hawthorne Municipal Code (HMC), and any additional requirements by the Fire Department, Director of Building and Safety, or Director of Planning, as related to this application.
2. The property shall be developed in substantial conformity with the plans approved by the Planning Commission on November 6, 2024, as conditioned by the requirements contained in the resolution of approval for Design Review DR-2024-0008. Any more intensive use of the property, or deviation from said plans, shall first be reviewed as a modification of this permit.
3. The applicant and subsequent property owners/tenants must conform to all Business License regulations and maintain a current city license at all times.
4. All signs, banners, or other outside advertising materials or structures on the property must be approved by the City and shall comply with Chapter 17.35 of the HMC.
5. Signs shall be posted on the site per CA Penal Code Sections 552 through 555.5 and 11532 to prohibit loitering on the property.
6. Graffiti shall be removed within 24 hours of its discovery.
7. Property owners must keep parking lot clean at all times.
8. All direct lighting produced by the development must be contained onsite. The Owner of the property shall ensure any exterior night lighting and illuminated signage installed on the project site is of low intensity, low glare design, minimum height, and shall be hooded to direct light downward onto the subject lot and prevent spill-over onto the adjacent residential lots.
9. All County Fire Department requirements must be met before any building permits will be released.
10. Off-street parking shall be provided at all times in accordance with the originally approved site plan and, Per Municipal Code Chapter 8.16, shall be maintained in a clean and attractive manner (striping maintained, pot-holes and cracks repaired and trash, litter, or other materials shall be removed regularly).
11. Per Municipal Code Chapter 8.14, all landscaped areas shall be maintained in accordance with approved landscaped plan and in a healthy and well-kept condition and kept weed free.
12. The approved conditions of approval shall be included on building plans upon submission.
13. Commencement of facade improvements by this approval shall be within three years of the effective date of this approval. Failure to commence within that three-year time period shall render this approval null and void and any attempt to commence construction or establish the use thereafter

shall first require approval of a new application. Applications for a time extension to the commencement date as specified herein must be filed a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date. The Planning Director may renew the approval for a single one-year period if a request is received at least 30 calendar days before approval lapses. Requests for a time extension must be accompanied by a formal application, all required exhibits and plans, and the required application fees. Any additional requests for extension shall require Planning Commission approval.

14. The Applicant/property owner must submit payment for all outstanding fees payable to the City prior to issuance of any permit, including building, grading, or demolition.
15. The Applicant shall pay the applicable public facility impact fees to the Building and Safety Department in the amount that is in effect at the time such fees are to be collected.
16. No outside display of goods, wares, or merchandise shall be permitted, unless approved by the Planning Director.
17. The applicant shall ensure all exterior noise generated by the project will comply with Section 9.34.030 Exterior Noise Standards of the Hawthorne Municipal Code. This section provides for an allowable noise level of 70 dBA between 7:00 am and 10:00 pm and 65 dBA between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.
18. The applicant must comply with all Public Works Department, Building and Safety, Los Angeles County Fire Authority, business license requirements, signage, noise, and nuisance regulations. In addition, the site will comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations