



Agenda Item

Planning Commission

Item #: 4.2.

1/22/2026

File #: 26-0009

TO: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission

THRU: Hayden Beckman, Planning Manager

FROM: Arlen Beck, Associate Planner

1. SUBJECT

Public Hearing to consider a request to serve beer and wine for on-site consumption in association with a proposed restaurant, Car-nnoisseur Café, located at 426 W Almond Avenue, Suite C and finding of CEQA exemption (ENT25-0048).

2. SUMMARY

The applicant is requesting to serve beer and wine with a State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control Type 41 license (On-Sale Beer and Wine - Eating Place) in conjunction with the service of food within a proposed restaurant, Car-nnoisseur Café.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Conduct and close the Public Hearing.
2. Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. PC 02-26 approving ENT No. 25-0048, allowing the sale of beer and wine for onsite consumption in conjunction with a State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control Type 41 license (On-Sale Beer and Wine - Eating Place) within a proposed restaurant located at 426 W. Almond Avenue, Suite C.
3. Find the request categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

4. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Property Information	
Applicant	Arturo Zelaya representing Car-nnoisseur Café
Property Owner	Al Ricci (Orange Packing House, LLC)
Property Location	426 W. Almond Avenue., Suite C
Existing General Plan Land Use Element Designation	Old Towne Mixed Use 15, 0.5 - 1.0 FAR (C)
Existing Zoning Classification	Old Towne Mixed Use-15 (OTMU-15)

Old Towne	Yes
Specific Plan/PC	Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan
Site Size	Parcel: 86,115 sq ft Tenant Space: 9,520 sq ft
Circulation	Access to the property is from W. Almond Avenue on the north side of the property and from W. Palmyra Avenue on the south side of the property.
Existing Conditions	The site is the location of a historic packing house building on W. Almond Avenue. and W. Palmyra Avenue. The building has a tenant space to the north of the proposed restaurant space currently occupied by Friends Church Orange County. The building is used for storage purposes.
Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning	North: Old Towne Mixed Use-15 (OTMU-15) across the street from Almond Avenue. with a historic industrial building which is currently vacant, but proposed for future home of the Friends Church Orange County. South: Multiple-Family Residential (R-3) across the street from Almond Avenue. with Multi-Family Residences. East: Duplex Residential (R2-6) across the street from Almond Avenue. with duplexes. West: Single-Family Residential (R1-6) with single-family residences & Old Towne Mixed Use-15 (OTMU-15) with industrial work spaces.
Previous Applications/Entitlements	None.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a 9,520 sq ft restaurant, Car-nnoisseur Café, with a State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Type 41 License (On-Sale Beer and Wine - Eating Place). The restaurant includes a total of 155 indoor seats (Attachment 3). Much of the interior space is occupied by three cars that are on display platforms for decoration as well as two areas with couches and chairs for passive dining. The doors along the west elevation are to be sealed shut and eventually replaced with windows, and the doors at the east elevation will be the main entrance to the restaurant. No outdoor seating is proposed. The applicant's letter of explanation is included with the following proposed hours of operation (Attachment 4):

Proposed Operating Hours	
Daily	7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

6. PROJECT ANALYSIS

Adaptive Re-use of the Structure:

The adaptive re-use of the vacant tenant space of a historic packing house to a restaurant use is logical and appropriate given the site's location in the Old Towne Historic District and the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan. Reusing the structure allows for new uses, such as a restaurant, bakery, and

café, within a non-traditional space and is consistent with the goals and policies of the Specific Plan, which emphasize the preservation and rehabilitation of historic industrial properties for continued use. The project retains and preserves key historic features, including large open interior spaces with wood truss ceilings supported by steel beams, a sawtooth roof with multi-paned windows, wood floors, and brick masonry walls.

The adaptive re-use of the structure creates operating conditions that are outside the scope of traditional restaurant spaces, such as oversized floor layouts, lounge areas, cars on display for decoration, and a mix of fast-casual and full-service restaurant operations. As such, a CUP is warranted for the consideration of the proposed alcohol sales in relation to nearby sensitive receptors, existing alcohol licenses, and crime statistics to provide more tailored conditions of approval and greater enforcement should operations change outside of what is approved.

Sensitive Receptors:

For the findings, the Planning Commission shall consider whether the proposed use will:

1. Adversely affect the welfare of the surrounding community.
2. Result in an undue concentration of premises for the sale of alcoholic beverages.
3. Detrimentially affect nearby residentially zoned districts after giving consideration to the proposed hours of operation.
4. Detrimentially affect the proximity to the following:
 - A. Residential buildings.
 - B. Churches, schools, hospitals, public playgrounds, and other similar uses.
 - C. Other establishments dispensing, for sale or other consideration, alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine.

There are no other establishments selling alcoholic beverages within the vicinity (600-foot radius) of the subject property. Other sensitive receptors within the vicinity include single-family and multi-family residences, and a church (see Attachment 5). Below is a list of sensitive receptors identified within the vicinity of the subject property as outlined by Orange Municipal Code Section 17.30.040:

Sensitive Receptors

Establishment Name	Address	Distance to Project Site
<i>Single-Family Dwellings</i>	W. Marietta Pl. & S. Cypress St.	50 - 600 feet
<i>Multi-Family Dwellings</i>	S. Foley Pl.	50 - 600 feet
<i>Friends Church Orange</i>	426 W. Almond Avenue., Suite A & B	0 feet

While there are sensitive land uses in the vicinity of the site, approval of the CUP for alcohol sales, with the proposed conditions of approval, is unlikely to impact the sensitive receptors identified above given that all the seats are indoors, and no outdoor seating is proposed.

Census Tract Concentration:

The business is located within Census Tract 759.02. This Census Tract is considered overconcentrated with On-Sale Licenses.

Alcohol Licenses in Census Tract 760.01

License Type	Allowed	Existing
On-Sale Licenses	8	28
Off-Sale Licenses	3	3

Crime Statistics for Reporting District 22e:

Orange Police Department (OPD) crime statistics show the subject site is located within a high crime area, because reported crimes are more than 20% above the Avenuerage of reported crimes citywide. The table below shows the OPD crime statistics for RD-22e compared to the citywide Avenuerage.

Crime Statistics

Reporting District	Reported Crimes and Arrests	Citywide Avenuerage Crimes and Arrests	Percent Difference
61	121	87	39%

The sale of alcohol at a restaurant in this location is not expected to contribute to crime in the area or create an undue burden on public safety resources with the recommended conditions of approval. Staff does not anticipate that the use will create a negative impact on neighboring land uses, because the restaurant, as conditioned, is compatible with the mix of uses within the surrounding area, has defined hours, and will be adequately staffed, and operated as a restaurant use.

Project Conditions

The applicant's request for a Type 41 ABC License provides the City with an opportunity to impose standards and conditions of approval for restaurants serving alcoholic beverages in conjunction with food to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the nearby neighborhood and overall community which include, but are not limited to:

- A one-year review of the subject site and operations to identify uniquely adverse issues such as curfew, loitering, vandalism, criminal activity, noise, or nuisance (Condition No. 6).
- Gross sales of alcohol shall not exceed non-alcohol sales (Condition No. 7).
- Alcohol shall only be consumed within the defined dining areas (Condition No. 12).
- Alcoholic beverages are only to be served in conjunction with food (Condition No. 17).
- Food service must be made available until closing time on each day of operation (Condition No. 18).
- Live entertainment on the premises is prohibited (Condition No. 30)

7. AUTHORIZING GUIDELINES

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Table 17.08.020 and Sections 17.10.030.C and 17.30.030 authorize the Planning Commission to review and take action on a request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in conjunction with a restaurant.

8. PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice was provided to owners and tenants within 300 feet of the project and posted at the project site on or before January 8, 2026.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorical Exemption: The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15301 (Class 1 - Existing Facilities) because the project consists of licensing the sale of alcoholic beverages at a proposed restaurant in an existing building that results in negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the City's determination.

10. ADVISORY BOARD ACTION

None required.

11. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Planning Commission Resolution No. PC 02-26
- Attachment 2 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 3 Project Plans
- Attachment 4 Applicant Business Narrative Letter
- Attachment 5 Planning Commission Evaluation Map
- Attachment 6 Security Plan
- Attachment 7 Proposed Menu for Car-nnoisseur Restaurant