



Agenda Item No: 2.a

PLACENTIA PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: June 9, 2026

Submitted by: Andrew Gonzales

From: Development Services

Subject:

USE PERMIT NO. UP 2026-05 FOR THE ONSITE SALE AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES (TYPE 47) IN CONJUNCTION WITH A TWO-STORY RESTAURANT, BAR, AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUE LOCATED AT 202 W. SANTA FE AVENUE

Summary:

A request to establish and operate a two-story restaurant and bar with onsite alcohol service and consumption (Type 47 ABC License), accessory live entertainment, accessory event programming, and late-night operating hours within an existing two-story commercial building located at 202 W. Santa Fe Avenue within the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea of the Old Town Zoning District. The proposed operation, known as Placentia Exchange and The Loft at Main & Rail, includes a ground-floor food hall and restaurant component and a second-floor restaurant, bar, and event space, subject to the Conditions of Approval contained in Resolution No. PC-2026-10.

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Open the public hearing concerning Use Permit No. UP 2026-05; and
2. Receive the staff report and consider all public testimony; and
3. Close the public hearing; and
4. Adopt Resolution PC-2026-10, a resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Placentia making findings that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities) and the City of Placentia Environmental Guidelines, and approving Use Permit No. UP 2026-05 to establish and operate a two-story restaurant and bar with onsite alcohol service and consumption, accessory live entertainment, accessory event programming, and late-night operating hours within an existing two-story building located in the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea of Old Town Placentia.

Strategic Plan Statement:

This item is consistent with the City Council approved 5-Year Strategic Goal to:

- Foster a thriving local economy by supporting business growth and attracting new businesses as stated in the Economic Development Strategic Goal.
- Ensure long-term financial health by responsibly managing resources, investing wisely,

and maintaining a balanced budget that supports high-quality services for the community as stated in the Fiscal Sustainability Strategic Goal.

Discussion:

Project Background and Description

The subject property is located at 202 W. Santa Fe Avenue, at the southwest corner of W. Santa Fe Avenue and S. Main Street, within the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea of the Old Town Zoning District. The property consists of an approximately 0.13-acre parcel developed with a two-story commercial building that serves as a prominent corner property within the historic core of Old Town Placentia. The surrounding area is characterized by a mixture of restaurant, retail, office, entertainment, and mixed-use developments that contribute to the pedestrian-oriented character and ongoing revitalization of Old Town.

On June 11, 2024, the Development Services Department approved Site Plan Review No. SPR 2024-01 for the remodeling of the existing ground floor and construction of a new 5,500-square-foot second-story addition to the building. As approved, the building contains approximately 11,000 square feet of commercial floor area, consisting of approximately 5,500 square feet on each floor. The project incorporated substantial architectural enhancements intended to complement the historic character of Old Town Placentia and facilitate the adaptive reuse of the property for restaurant, food service, and hospitality-oriented commercial uses.

The applicant, Gevork Martirosian, representing property owner Vartan Martirosian, has submitted Use Permit No. UP 2026-05 to establish and operate a two-story restaurant and bar with onsite alcohol service and consumption in conjunction with a food hall concept and associated dining areas. The proposed operation is intended to function as a mixed-use hospitality venue known as "Placentia Exchange," with a ground-floor food hall and restaurant component and a second-floor restaurant, bar, and gathering space known as "The Loft at Main & Rail." The project includes the sale and service of alcoholic beverages pursuant to a Type 47 Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) license.

The ground floor is intended to accommodate multiple food service operators, dining areas, kitchen facilities, and associated back-of-house functions. The second floor is proposed to include restaurant seating, a bar area, and space for accessory live entertainment and accessory event programming. The facility is intended to operate as a professionally managed dining and hospitality venue with centralized management, food service operations, alcohol service controls, and security oversight.

As conditioned, the primary use of the premises shall remain a food hall, restaurant, bar, and dining establishment. Food service shall remain the principal component of the operation at all times. While accessory live entertainment and private events may occur as accessory uses, the approved operation shall not function as a nightclub, dance club, banquet hall, event center, concert venue, private membership club, or other entertainment-focused establishment. Additionally, the approved Conditions of Approval prohibit dance floors, valet parking operations, and other activities that would intensify the entertainment component of the use beyond that evaluated as part of this application. As a safeguard to ensure the operation remains consistent with the approved use and Conditions of Approval, the operator shall return to the Planning Commission approximately six (6) months following commencement of alcohol service for a public review of the establishment's operations.

The applicant is requesting approval of Use Permit No. UP 2026-05 to allow the proposed restaurant, bar, alcohol service, accessory live entertainment, accessory event programming, and associated operational characteristics within the existing building, subject to the Conditions of Approval contained in Resolution No. PC-2026-10.

Applicable Code Section: Placentia Municipal Code

The subject property is located within the Old Town Zoning District, Main Street (4-Story) Subarea. The project is subject to the development standards and use regulations contained within Chapter 23.112 (Old Town Placentia Revitalization Plan Development Standards) of the Placentia Municipal Code (PMC).

The purpose of the Old Town Zoning District is to preserve and enhance the City's historic core while promoting a mix of commercial, dining, entertainment, and residential uses within a pedestrian-oriented environment. The proposed project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable provisions of the PMC and the Old Town Placentia Revitalization Plan.

Subject Site and Surrounding Land Uses

The proposed location is at the southwest corner of W. Santa Fe Avenue and S. Main Street. To the south of the site is a public parking lot and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad right-of-way. The table below shows surrounding land uses, zoning designations, as well as General Plan Land Use designations.

Surrounding Land Uses:

Location	Existing Land Use	Land Use Element General Plan Designation	Zoning Map Designation
Subject Site	Two-Story, Commercial Building.	Old Town	Old Town (Main Street – 4 Story)
North (across Sante Fe Avenue)	Two-Story, Commercial Building	Old Town	Old Town (Main Street – 2 Story)
West	Two-Story, Mixed-Use	Old Town	Old Town (Main Street – 4 Story)
South (across alley)	Public Parking Lot & BNSF Railroad Right-of-Way	Old Town	Public Facilities (6 Story)

Zoning Compliance Analysis

Site Development Standards

The project is located within the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea of the Old Town Zoning District. The subject building was previously approved under Site Plan Review No. SPR 2024-01 for the remodeling of the existing structure and construction of a second-story addition, resulting in an approximately 11,000-square-foot commercial building. The current request does not propose any modifications to the approved building envelope, site layout, parking configuration, or architectural design. Rather, the request is to establish and operate a two-story restaurant, bar, and hospitality venue with onsite alcohol service and consumption,

accessory live entertainment, accessory event programming, and late-night operating hours within the existing building.

The project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable development standards and use regulations of the Old Town Zoning District. Subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval, staff finds that the proposed use is consistent with the intent of the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea and complies with the applicable provisions of the Placentia Municipal Code.

Other Departments' Concerns and Requirements

The Divisions of Planning and Building, the Police Department, and the Fire and Life Safety Department have reviewed the proposed application. Staff comments primarily focused on operational characteristics, including alcohol service, security measures, live entertainment, occupancy limitations, and hours of operation. These comments and requirements have been incorporated into the recommended Conditions of Approval contained within Resolution No. PC-2026-10.

Alcohol License Review

Planning staff reviewed active California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) licenses located within the vicinity of the subject property. The review identified several existing alcohol-serving establishments operating within Old Town Placentia, including restaurants, bars, and other hospitality-oriented uses. These establishments contribute to the area's established dining and entertainment environment and are generally concentrated within the Old Town commercial district.

Business Name	Address	License Type
Tlaquepaque Restaurant	101 W. Santa Fe Avenue	Type 47
La Biblioteca	128 W. Santa Fe Avenue	Type 42
Tony's Original Deli & Bottle Shop	132 S. Bradford Avenue	Type 47
San Sushi Japanese Restaurant	161 W. Santa Fe Avenue	Type 41
El Farolito Restaurant	201 S. Bradford Avenue	Type 47
El Taco Sabroso	214 W. Santa Fe Avenue	Type 41
American Legion Post 277	230 S. Bradford Avenue	Type 52 / Type 58
301 Café	301 W. Santa Fe Avenue	Type 41

The Placentia Police Department reviewed the proposed request and provided recommendations related to alcohol service, security measures, entertainment activities, occupancy, and hours of operation. These recommendations have been incorporated into the Conditions of Approval. Subject to compliance with the adopted Conditions of Approval, the Police Department generally supports the proposed request.

The concentration of existing alcohol-serving establishments within Old Town Placentia is reflective of the area's established commercial, dining, and entertainment character. The proposed Type 47 license would be consistent with the existing mix of uses and would not represent a substantial deviation from the land use pattern anticipated within the Old Town Zoning District. Accordingly, staff does not believe the proposed Type 47 license would adversely affect the character of the Old Town commercial district.

Issues Analysis

General Plan Consistency

Land Use Element

- GOAL LU – 1: Provide a well-balanced land use pattern that accommodates existing and future needs for housing, commercial, industrial, and open space/recreation uses, while providing adequate community services to City residents.
- Policy LU – 1.3: Provide sites for a range of commercial uses, including shopping, dining, entertainment, and offices that provide a strong employment base and offer local services. Encourage the redevelopment of aging commercial centers.

Economic Development Element

- GOAL ED – 4: Promote the revitalization of target areas and focus development to create vibrant destinations for the community.
- Policy ED – 4.2: Focus economic development efforts for growth and new businesses in heavily traveled areas, such as along major transportation corridors.

The proposed project is consistent with the goals and policies of the Placentia General Plan. The establishment of a two-story restaurant, bar, and food hall within an existing commercial building supports the continued revitalization of Old Town Placentia by introducing a new dining and entertainment destination within the City's historic core. The project promotes the adaptive reuse of an existing commercial property, expands local dining and hospitality options, and contributes to the economic vitality of the area through increased commercial activity, employment opportunities, and visitor patronage.

The project is located within an established commercial district specifically intended to accommodate a mix of retail, dining, entertainment, and commercial uses. As conditioned, the proposed use is compatible with the surrounding Old Town environment and supports the City's ongoing efforts to strengthen Old Town as a vibrant commercial, cultural, and community gathering destination.

PMC Consistency

The proposed project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable provisions of the Placentia Municipal Code, including Chapter 23.112 (Old Town Placentia Revitalization Plan Development Standards). As conditioned, the proposed restaurant, bar, food hall, and accessory entertainment uses are consistent with the intent of the Old Town Zoning District and the Main Street (4-Story) Subarea.

Adoption of the recommended Conditions of Approval will ensure the project operates in a manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses and complies with all applicable operational and development standards of the Placentia Municipal Code.

Land Use Compatibility

The proposed project will be compatible with surrounding land uses because it is located within the commercial core of Old Town Placentia, an area intended to accommodate dining, entertainment, retail, office, and mixed-use development. The proposed restaurant, bar, and food hall will activate an existing commercial building and expand dining and hospitality opportunities within Old Town. Subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval relating to alcohol service, security, entertainment activities, occupancy, noise, and hours of operation, staff finds the project will be compatible with surrounding uses and consistent with the

character and objectives of the Old Town Zoning District. Additionally, the Placentia Police Department reviewed the proposal and recommended operational conditions related to alcohol service, security, entertainment activities, and occupancy limitations, which have been incorporated into the Conditions of Approval. Furthermore, a six-month operational review by the Planning Commission has been incorporated into the Conditions of Approval to allow for evaluation of the establishment's compliance with the approved operational characteristics and to address any concerns that may arise following commencement of alcohol service.

CEQA:

The proposed application was reviewed by staff in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq., the State CEQA Guidelines, 14 C.C.R. §§ 15000 et seq., and the Environmental Guidelines of the City of Placentia. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission exercise its independent judgment and find that UP 2026-05 is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15301 Class 1-Existing Facilities as it applies to the operation, repair, leasing or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, of facilities or features involving "negligible or no expansion of use".

Public Notification:

Legal notice was published in the Placentia News Times on May 28, 2026, and legal notices were sent to property owners of record within a 300-foot radius of the subject property and posted at the Civic Center on May 28, 2026, pursuant to all applicable provisions of the PMC. As of June 4, 2026, staff has received no comments in support or opposition of the request.

Attachments

1. [PC Resolution No. 2026-10.docx](#)
2. [Vicinity Map.docx](#)
3. [Project Floor Plans.pdf](#)
4. [Operations Narrative & Request.pdf](#)
5. [Legal Hearing Notice, Radius Map, & Mailing List.pdf](#)