

Zoning Commission

Community Development and Planning Staff Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agenda Item #2

2026-17-REZ

City Council District: 5 – Kenneth Boudreaux

Parish Council District: 5 – AB Rubin

Applicant: Quintin Borel/Plush Syndicate LLC

Request: This is a request to grant a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow a *bar/lounge* in the D (Downtown) zoning district. (Bar name is “Plush”)

Location: 201 Jefferson Street, Suite B (site of former *bar/lounge* “Bliss”)

Note: Please see Attachment No. 1, **CUP Supporting Package**, prepared by the applicant. Attachment No. 2 is the **Projected Bar/Lounge Revenue Model**, prepared by the applicant. Attachment No. 3 is **LPD Conditions**, Attachment No. 4 is **ANC Conditions**, Attachment No. 5 is **LFD Occupancy**, and Attachment No. 6 is **DDA Memo**

Summary of Proposal:

The purpose of the request is to allow Plush Syndicate, LLC to operate a *bar/lounge* and multi-purpose event venue where alcoholic beverage sales, consumed on the premises, are the main source of revenue. This public space, with the *bar/lounge*, is proposed to be located on Floor 1. Floor 2 is proposed as controlled VIP space and will host merchandise and private event functions. The front part of the 2nd floor is described as office space, along with administration, finance, tech support and development (applicant refers to this space as “3rd floor in his CUP Supporting Package”). The LDC recognizes that *bars/lounges* can be a desirable use in the Downtown district, but should be permitted on a case-by-case basis in order to mitigate any adverse effects to nearby uses. This bar will be occupying the space that the former bar “Bliss” occupied as a *bar/lounge* from 2022 until earlier this year, with the addition of the front part of the 2nd floor. “Bliss” did have an approved Conditional Use Permit for a *bar/lounge* in a D (Downtown) zoning district, but Mr. Borel will need to obtain his own CUP for his *bar/lounge*.

Each new owner for a *bar/lounge* Downtown needs to obtain a new Conditional Use Permit for their business.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the request, with the following conditions:

1. No persons under 21 allowed to enter the bar/lounge.
2. No external speakers and windows and doors must be closed at all times. Special care shall be taken to follow Chapter 34 Section 34-366 of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government Code of Ordinances specifying maximum permissible sound levels.
3. Maximum occupancy is estimated to be 325 persons. LFD will reevaluate the occupancy once there is a set layout.
4. Owner/Operator must provide and adhere to the private security plan in the application and coordinate with LPD and ANC once the alcohol beverage permit is issued and prior to opening. If anticipated capacity exceeds 200 patrons, the owner/operator shall contact an LPD representative regarding possible additional security requirements.
5. Open containers of any kind shall not be permitted to leave the premises at any time.
6. The owner/operator shall provide two off-duty uniformed police officers every night the establishment is open for business.

These conditions were compiled from the lists submitted by LCG's Alcohol and Noise Control, the Police Department, the Lafayette Fire Department and Downtown Development Authority. Regarding any future change in ownership, a new CUP would be required for this property because it is zoned "D" (Downtown District).

Although there is no formal recommendation, the limited frontage and a small entranceway to the proposed "Plush", as well as a relatively high occupancy load, brings concern patrons waiting for entry and loitering around the establishment may be problematic to other nearby businesses. There is additional concern loitering may spill over into E Cypress Street for well-attended events.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The proposed *bar/lounge* meets the conditions of this review.

As per the applicant, "The operating plan is designed to separate public assembly from back-of-house activities and to limit off-site impacts through controlled entry, security, sound management, cleanup, and compliance procedures." Mr. Borel/Plush Syndicate LLC has presented a comprehensive Cup Supporting Package in his application for a Conditional Use Permit for a *bar/lounge* in a D (Downtown) zoning district. In attachment No. 1, Mr. Borel states that the Management Approach to the *bar/lounge* is, "Named on-site responsibility, documented event planning, controlled access, safety coordination, and post-event cleanup."

Summary of Public Comment:

At the time of publication of the preliminary report, staff has not received any letters/emails or calls in support or opposition to the rezoning.

Zoning Commission Meeting

September 21, 2026

2026-17-REZ

To: City Zoning Commission

From: Tammy Luke, Director
Neil LeBouef, Zoning and Development Manager

City Council District: 5 – Kenneth Boudreaux

Parish Council District: 5 – AB Rubin

Prepared by: Carol Vermillion Robbins

PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant: Quintin Borel/Plush Syndicate LLC

Request: This is a request to grant a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow a *bar/lounge* in the D (Downtown) zoning district.

Location: 201 Jefferson Street, Suite B (former location of *bar/lounge* “Bliss”)

Description: The petitioned site is located generally north of Lee Avenue, west of East Cypress Street, and south of Jefferson Street. Jefferson Street is classified as an “A” street. An “A” street, as per LDC, “is designed at the highest standards for vibrancy as characterized by human activity and interaction, and public spaces defined by high quality outdoor rooms.” East Cypress Street is a “B” street, which allows “for more flexibility and a limited vehicle interface.”

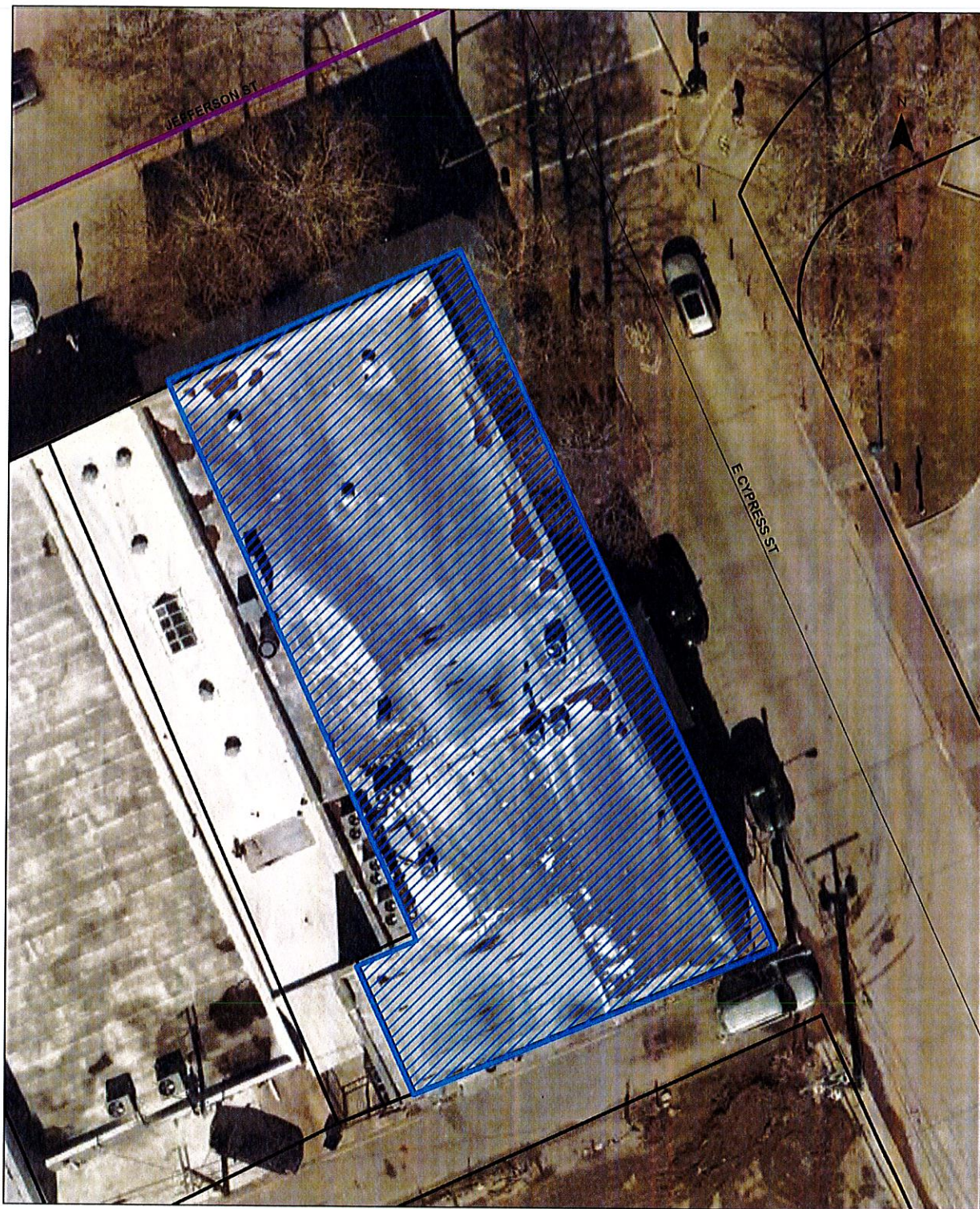
Bar/lounge is listed as a conditional use in the downtown zoning district in *Table 89-21-2 Use Table* in the LDC and requires a conditional use permit. Therefore, in order to legally operate an establishment where there are alcohol beverage sales (from the use definition in the LDC) that are consumed on the premises, and are the main source of revenue, the applicant requires a conditional use permit.

Why is Zoning Commission action required?

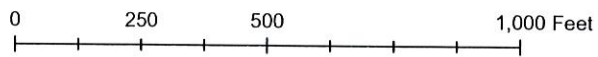
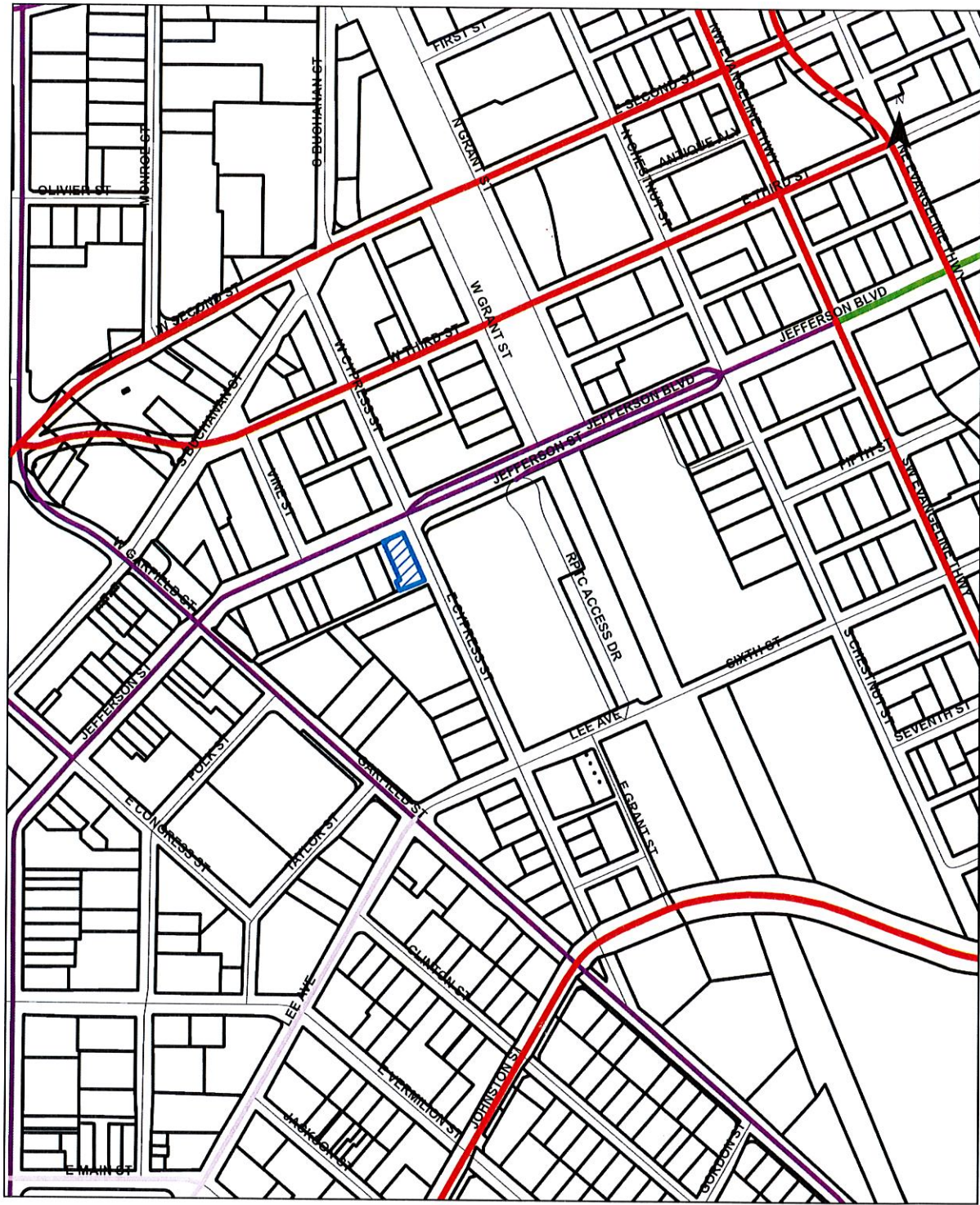
The Zoning Commission is required to make a recommendation relative to the conditional use permit, including its reasons for making the recommendation to the City Council prior to council action, in accordance with Article 4 of the Lafayette Development Code.

The LDC establishes procedures for making land development decisions. In order to obtain a certificate of occupancy, building permit or to subdivide the property, the zoning district must permit the proposed land use and development standards. The city of Lafayette is divided into zoning districts that can be generally categorized by agricultural, residential, mixed-use, commercial and industrial land uses. Each zoning district has a set of permitted and/or conditional uses.

This process applies to any use designated as a conditional use in the applicable zoning district. Article 2 states that a *bar/lounge* is a conditional use in the D (Downtown) zoning district.



Subject property

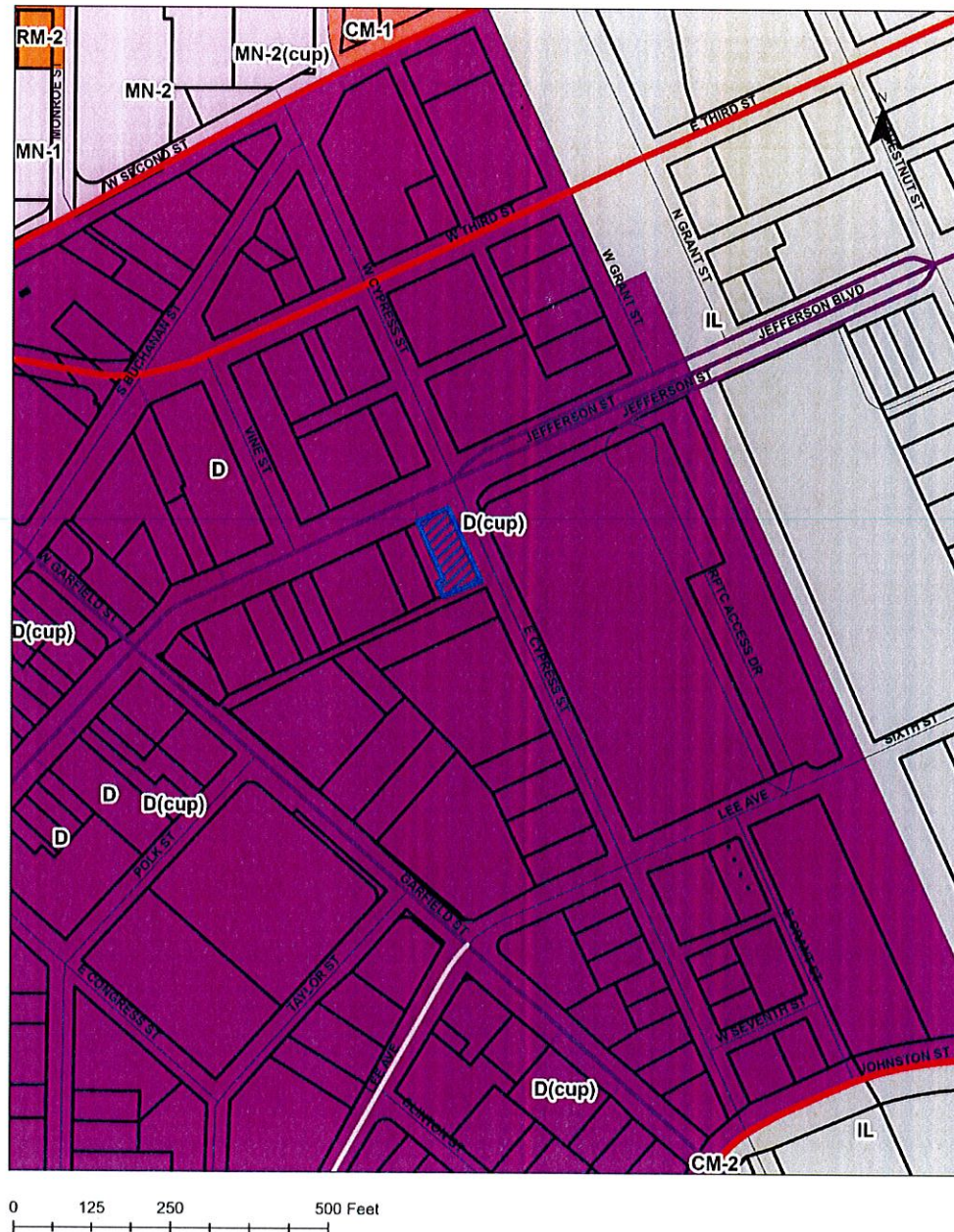


Vicinity Map

II. ANALYSIS

A. Existing conditions

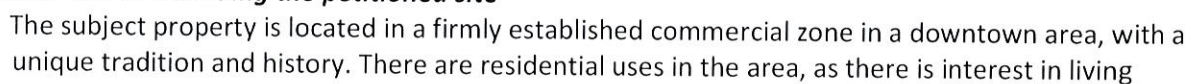
Zoning



Zoning map of the area surrounding the petitioned site

The subject property is located on the northeast end of the "D" Downtown District, and is one of two businesses in the building. The other is a restaurant, Jim Deggys Brick Oven Pizza & Brewery, on the first floor, in the front of the building. The subject property will be classified as a *bar/lounge*,

Land Use



downtown. The Downtown District offers retail, office space, civic space, coffee shops, restaurants, *bar/lounges*, live music and public events. Parc International, which is used for many music events such as Festival International, is located southwest of the subject property.

Infrastructure



Street classification and sidewalk inventory

The subject property is located along a major collector, Jefferson Street, with a sidewalk network. Garfield Street, to the southwest, is also a major collector. West Third Street (and West Second Street), to the north, are both principal arterials. Johnston Street, further south, is also a principal arterial. The rest of the roads around the subject property are local roads. There is a good sidewalk system throughout the downtown area.

B. Recent cases and relevant trends

The ordinance to allow *bars/lounges* as a conditional use in the D (Downtown) zoning district became effective January 2018. As a result, there has been an increase in establishments with alcoholic beverage—and food—sales.

Jefferson Street—classified as major collector, and an “A” street—has the capacity to handle commercial land uses and includes a mix of heavy and light commercial uses. The “Plush” bar actually fronts East Cypress Street, a “B” street; but it is still considered part of “Downtown”. While potentially noxious in the wrong setting, bars such as “Bliss” are desirable near the main street of a downtown area.

There have been a number of bars that have opened with CUPs since the moratorium ended, including **The Grouse Room** (now closed), **Beausoleil Books** (now just a bookstore), the **Legends Annex**, **Bliss** (now closed), **Artmosphere**, **Wurst Biergarten**, **Rooftop 116** and **Le Grenadier** (Although Le Grenadier has since closed, and Wurst Biergarten is now a restaurant). Another new bar approved in 2026 was the **Ashes to Ashes Bar** on South Buchanan Street. There are also bars that were grandfathered in after the moratorium.

Another case, **ZON2018-0026**, bar/lounge **Sawbriar**, to be located at 402 and 406 Garfield Street, was also submitted for a conditional use permit in 2018, but was denied. The proposed bar/lounge **Downtown Daquiri Lounge**, 2025-2-CUP 522 Jefferson Street CUP, was also denied in 2026.

C. Proposal and effect on adjacent land uses

As per CUP Supporting Package, “Event frequency, attendance, staffing, security, and layout will vary by program but will always remain within approved occupancy and permit conditions.”

Hours of operation

Monday through Thursday: 10 AM to 12 AM

Friday: 10 AM to 2 AM

Saturday: 10 AM to 2 AM

Sunday: 10 AM to 12 AM

Estimated building capacity

Fire Marshal Capacity: The Lafayette Fire Department will start with the same occupancy Bliss had: 325 persons. They will reevaluate the occupancy once there is a set layout.

Parking

The applicant is not required to provide parking per the Downtown zoning district. Parking is available on street and in parking lots in the downtown area.

“The applicant will identify lawful public and private parking resources, communicate parking instructions before major events, encourage rideshare and carpooling, and manage curbside arrival

and departure. Parking availability, loading areas, accessible spaces, and any off-site agreements must be verified before filing or opening.” CUP Supporting Package

Security (as per CUP Supporting Package)

- A designated manager will be present for each public event
- Security staffing will be scaled to attendance, event type, alcohol exposure, performer requirements, age restrictions and permit conditions
- Staff-controlled camera and access systems may assist operations. Human staff remain responsible for decisions and emergency response
- Response to incidents will be de-escalation, emergency call procedures, first-aid coordination, preservation of records, and written incident reports
- Weapons, violence, threats, harassment, illegal drug activity, and unauthorized access are prohibited
- Security personnel will operate only within their legal authority and training
- Management will cooperate with Lafayette Police, Fire, EMS, property ownership, and permit officials

Trash (as per CUP Supporting Package)

Trash will be handled with interior collection, secure storage, prompt removal, and post-event inspection of entrances and sidewalks.

D. Plan review (as per CUP Supporting Package)

Staff recommends that an approval of the request to grant a conditional use permit be conditioned with the understanding that the applicant will maintain compliance with the Noise Control code during all hours of operation.

“Complaints will be heard by a management contact and written log for verified noise, parking, sanitation, safety or access concerns. Management will then adjust staffing, programming, sound, arrival procedures, loading or event scheduling when repeated impacts are documented.

The applicant will comply with applicable sound, alcohol, sanitation, smoking, fire, business-license, and public right-of-way requirements. CUP approval will not replace any separately required sound variance or special-event permit.”

Signs

All nonconforming signs must be modified to fully comply with Article 5 89-90 Signs prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

E. External comments

See Attachments Nos. 3-6 for comments from Sally Leger with Alcohol & Noise Control, the Lafayette Police Department, the Lafayette Fire Department, and DDA, Downtown Development Association.

F. Evaluation of approval standards

The proposed use is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

The proposed use is in a targeted area on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and is consistent with the goal for a mix of uses in these areas.

The proposed land use is compatible with the downtown area providing continued day/night activity. In addition, the size of the proposed bar/lounge is appropriately scaled for the properties along the Jefferson Streetscape.

The proposed use is consistent with all applicable requirements of the LDC, including zoning regulations, development standards, and supplemental use regulations.

Yes. The applicant has submitted an application for a certificate of occupancy.

The proposed use is consistent with the general purpose and intent of the applicable zoning district regulations.

The proposed use is consistent with urban centers such as Downtown Lafayette. The Downtown zoning district implements the Mixed-Use Center future land use category, which provides the highest density and intensity in the city and parish and preserves its unique character and function.

The proposed use is compatible with the surrounding areas.

There is a wide range of uses within the Downtown district, including retail, office space, residential uses, restaurants, coffee shops, art galleries and *bar/lounges*. The Downtown district houses several commercial/mixed-use businesses, as well as public/civic/institutional entities. The subject property use, *bar/lounge*, will be compatible with these uses.

Adequate utilities are provided.

Currently, the urban core has adequate infrastructure for commercial uses.

Ingress and egress are designed as to minimize traffic hazards and congestion on public roads.

There is on-street parking along Jefferson, as well as a few on-street parking spaces on East Cypress Street. There is paid parking at the Rosa Parks Transportation Center also. There appears to be adequate parking for the establishment.

The proposed use is not noxious or offensive by reason of emissions, vibration, noise, odor, dust, smoke or gas.

Staff reiterates that the applicant, "Plush", shall maintain compliance with the Noise Control code during all hours of operation. For the last CUPs recent applications, a condition has been added referencing Chapter 34 Section 34-366 of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government Code of Ordinances specifying maximum permissible sound levels.

The proposed use does not injure the use and enjoyment of property in the immediate vicinity for purposes already permitted.

The proposed use would not injure the use and enjoyment of nearby property for purposes already permitted. Although not a recommendation listed by staff, it is noted the entry to the facility is not fronting Jefferson Street, but on E Cypress Street. Crowds along the E Cypress Street waiting to get into the facility and/or patrons loitering along E Cypress St in front of the facility may be problematic and detrimental to immediately adjacent businesses and traffic. The applicant, with the Commission's insistence, may be required to present solutions.

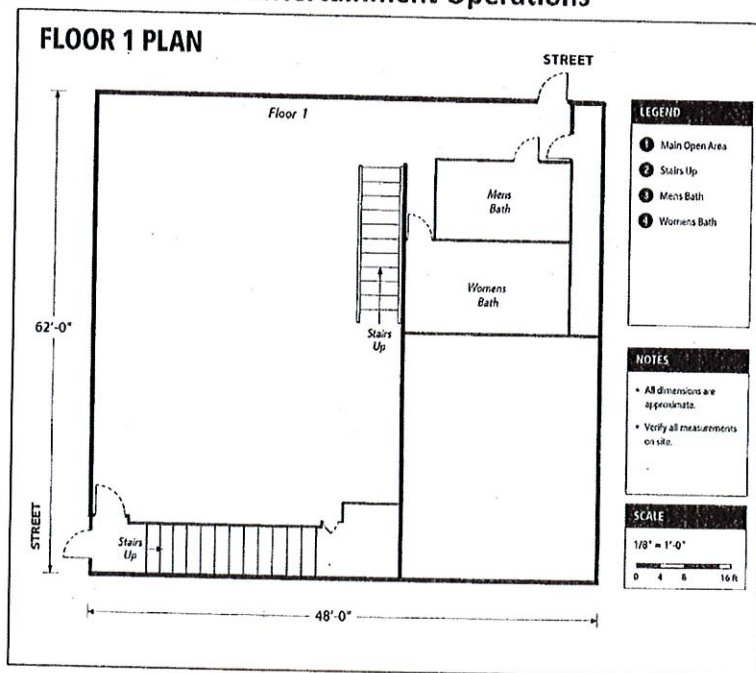
The proposed use does not impede the orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted within the zoning district.

The use is appropriate.

The proposed use is not detrimental to and does not endanger the community's public health, safety, and general welfare.

The use is appropriate; however, LPD, DDA, ANC and LFD have provided commentary and professional insight into operational issues that may be detrimental and should be addressed.

Floor 1 Plan - Public Event & Entertainment Operations



Floor 1 planning diagram - dimensions and layout to be verified on site before construction or lease execution.

PLUSH SYNDICATE LLC | 201 JEFFERSON STREET | CONFIDENTIAL PLANNING DOCUMENT

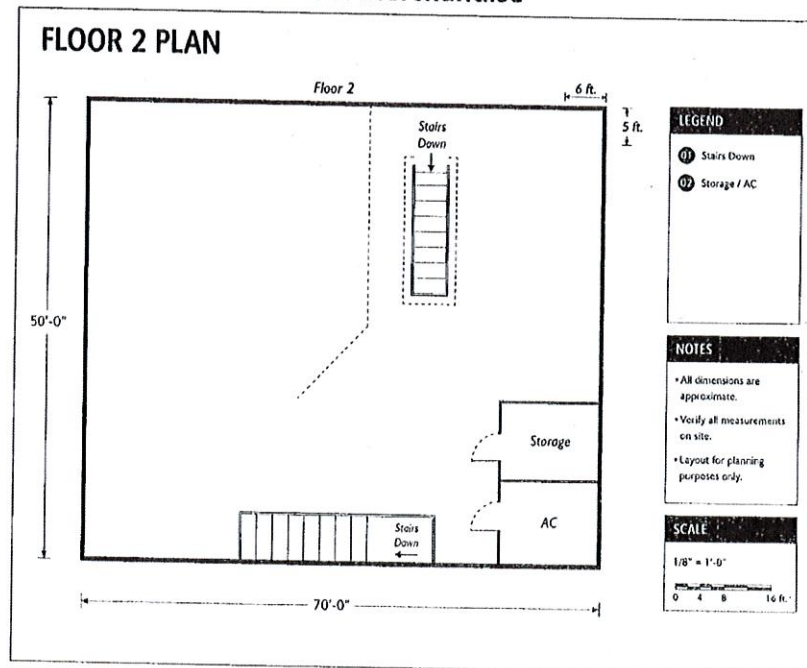
First Floor

Primary public event venue

Reception, stage, dance floor, bar

Restrooms, security storage, performer support
 Performances, networking events, meetings
 Community meetings
2,241 SF

Floor 2 Plan - VIP Entertainment & Merchandise



Floor 2 planning diagram - VIP, merchandise, storage, AC, and stair locations to be field verified.

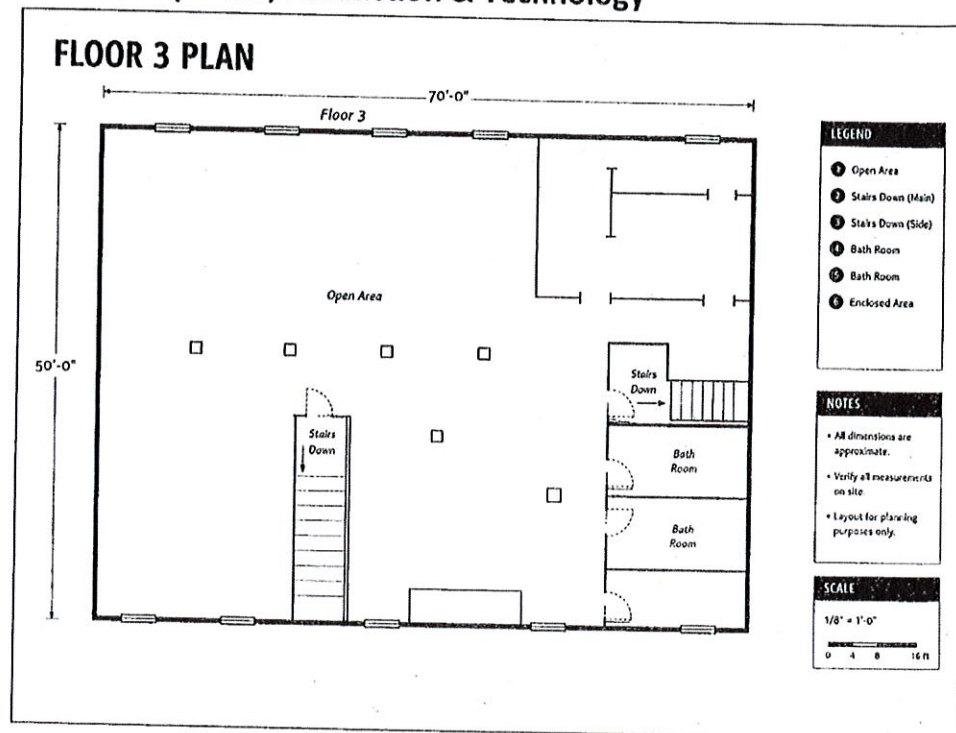
PLUSH SYNDICATE, LLC | 201 JEFFERSON STREET | CONFIDENTIAL PLANNING DOCUMENT

Second Floor

Mezzanine level-open to first floor
 VIP lounge, private events rooms

Product display
2,020 SF

Floor 3 Plan - Corporate, Production & Technology



Floor 3 planning diagram - corporate, production, technology, bathroom, stair, and enclosed areas to be verified.

PLUSH SYNDICATE LLC | 201 JEFFERSON STREET | CONFIDENTIAL PLANNING DOCUMENT

Second Floor (Front of Building-former office space)

Executive offices, conference room
Administration, finance, human resources

Controlled content production areas
3,834 SF

"Plush" to west side of photo, opening onto East Cypress. Restaurant at front, facing Jefferson Street, first floor, and 2nd floor, "Plush" offices





HEADQUARTERS DEVELOPMENT & CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

SUPPORTING PACKAGE

201 JEFFERSON STREET
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA 70501

Permit-focused land-use presentation

PLUSH SYNDICATE LLC

Final consultant-style draft | July 2026



02

SUBMISSION STATEMENT & DOCUMENT CONTROL

A focused land-use package prepared for Conditional Use Permit review.

Applicant	Plush Syndicate LLC
Project	Headquarters Development and Conditional Use Permit
Property	201 Jefferson Street, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501
Document Status	Final consultant-style draft for applicant review
Prepared	July 2026
Primary Purpose	Describe the proposed land use, existing site context, operational controls, and CUP commitments.
Not Included	Internal bylaws, operating agreement, employee handbook, detailed SOPs, investor prospectus, franchise plan, and internal technology governance.

This package is a planning presentation, not a sealed architectural, engineering, fire-protection, accessibility, survey, title, legal, or financial opinion. Final filing exhibits must be verified by the property owner, applicant, licensed professionals, and reviewing authorities.

CORE LIMITATION

Occupant load shall be established by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal and reflected on the Certificate of Occupancy. Event attendance shall never exceed the posted occupant load or any more restrictive permit condition.



03

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Twenty-eight pages centered on the land-use request.

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04

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adaptive reuse of a downtown commercial property as a controlled mixed-use headquarters.

Plush Syndicate LLC requests Conditional Use Permit approval to establish a multi-purpose headquarters at 201 Jefferson Street. The proposed use combines private and ticketed events, VIP hospitality, merchandise, media production, offices, technology development, administration, and e-commerce within a professionally managed three-level operation.

Public activity will be concentrated on Floor 1. Floor 2 will provide controlled VIP, merchandise, and private-event functions. Floor 3 will be restricted primarily to production, office, administrative, and technology work. The operating plan is designed to separate public assembly from back-of-house activities and to limit off-site impacts through controlled entry, security, sound management, cleanup, and compliance procedures.

REQUESTED ACTION

Approve the proposed headquarters and event-related conditional use, subject to applicable CUP conditions, zoning verification, building and fire review, certificate of occupancy, and all separately required permits and licenses.

No claimed event capacity is included in this package. Occupant load, exit capacity, restroom requirements, accessibility, and final room classifications will be determined through professional code review and the required governmental approvals.



05

APPLICANT AND COMPANY OVERVIEW

A creative, event, commerce, production, and technology company.

Plush Syndicate LLC is a Louisiana limited liability company developing a headquarters that supports hospitality, events, media, e-commerce, business services, production, and technology. The proposed location is intended to centralize public-facing activity and corporate operations in one downtown facility.

Company	Plush Syndicate LLC
Primary Headquarters Functions	Events, VIP hospitality, merchandise, media production, offices, administration, technology development, and e-commerce.
Management Approach	Named on-site responsibility, documented event planning, controlled access, safety coordination, and post-event cleanup.
Public-Facing Floors	Floors 1 and 2, subject to approved layouts and occupant load.
Restricted Operations	Floor 3 production, office, administration, and technical work.
Property Relationship	Commercial tenant / proposed lessee; final lease and owner authorization to be supplied.

The applicant will operate only those uses approved through the CUP and any later permits. Separately regulated activities, including alcohol service, food preparation, amplified outdoor activity, sidewalk use, special effects, or street closure, will not occur without the appropriate authorization.



06

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

Preliminary property references to be verified against official records.

Street Address	201 Jefferson Street, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501
Parcel / Assessment Reference	6027152 - preliminary public-source reference; attach official assessor record.
Preliminary Legal Description	NE corner of Mansion Block, McComb Addition, with frontage on Jefferson Street - verify against deed and survey.
Lot Area	Approximately 0.15-0.16 acre in public marketing records; survey controls.
Building Area	Public marketing records report approximately 11,739 square feet; architect or owner documentation controls.
Zoning	Official zoning verification letter required. Public sources describe a Downtown commercial / mixed-use context and use different district labels.
Property Owner	Insert current deeded owner name and mailing address.
Deed / Instrument	Insert recording information.
Survey	Insert surveyor, date, and drawing reference.

VERIFICATION REQUIRED

The official assessor record, deed, survey, legal description, zoning verification letter, and owner authorization should be placed in the final appendix before filing.

Source note: preliminary parcel and property references were compared against public commercial-property materials. They are not substitutes for records issued by the Lafayette Parish Assessor, Clerk of Court, licensed surveyor, or Lafayette Consolidated Government.



07

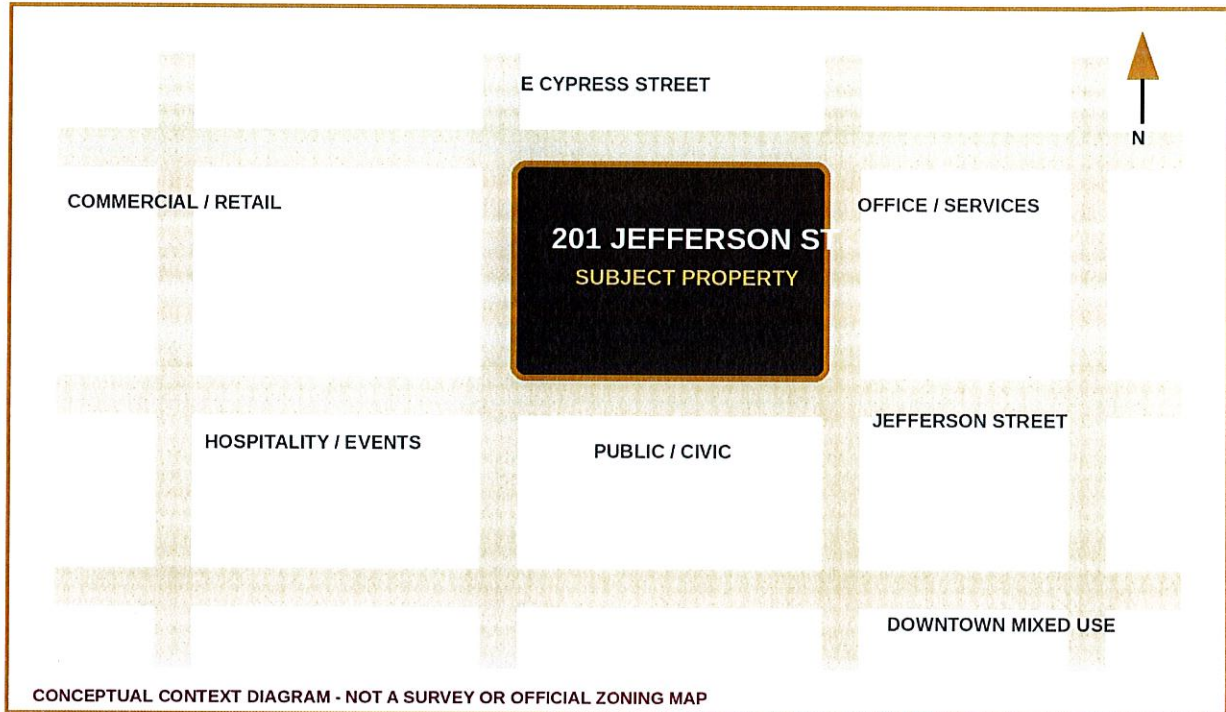
SITE LOCATION AND DOWNTOWN CONTEXT

A prominent corner location within the downtown commercial activity area.



Aerial context image cropped from a 2025 property marketing flyer. Replace or supplement with an official site map before filing.

The property is located on Jefferson Street near E Cypress Street in Downtown Lafayette. The surrounding area contains restaurants, retail businesses, offices, public and civic uses, entertainment venues, transportation facilities, and other mixed-use activity.



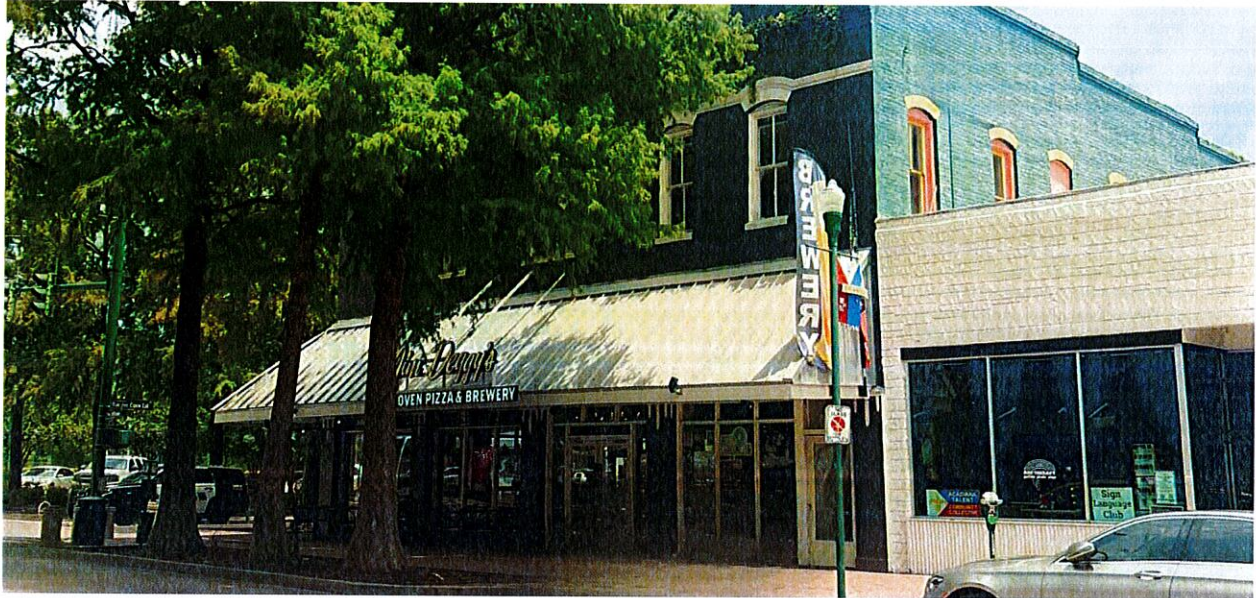
Conceptual block context. Not a parcel map, survey, or official zoning map.



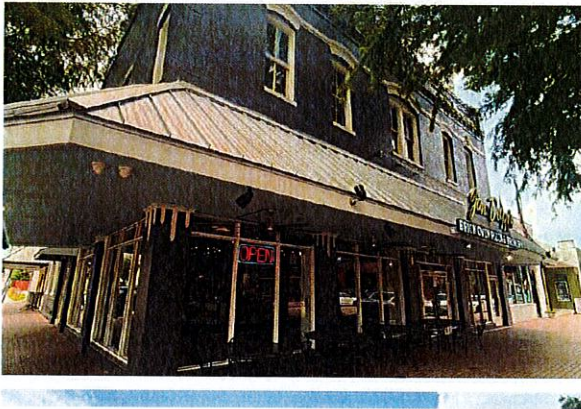
08

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Current building form, street frontage, and corner condition.



Jefferson Street frontage - image source: public property marketing flyer dated July 11, 2025. Applicant should provide current dated photos.



Corner / frontage view



Side / rear condition

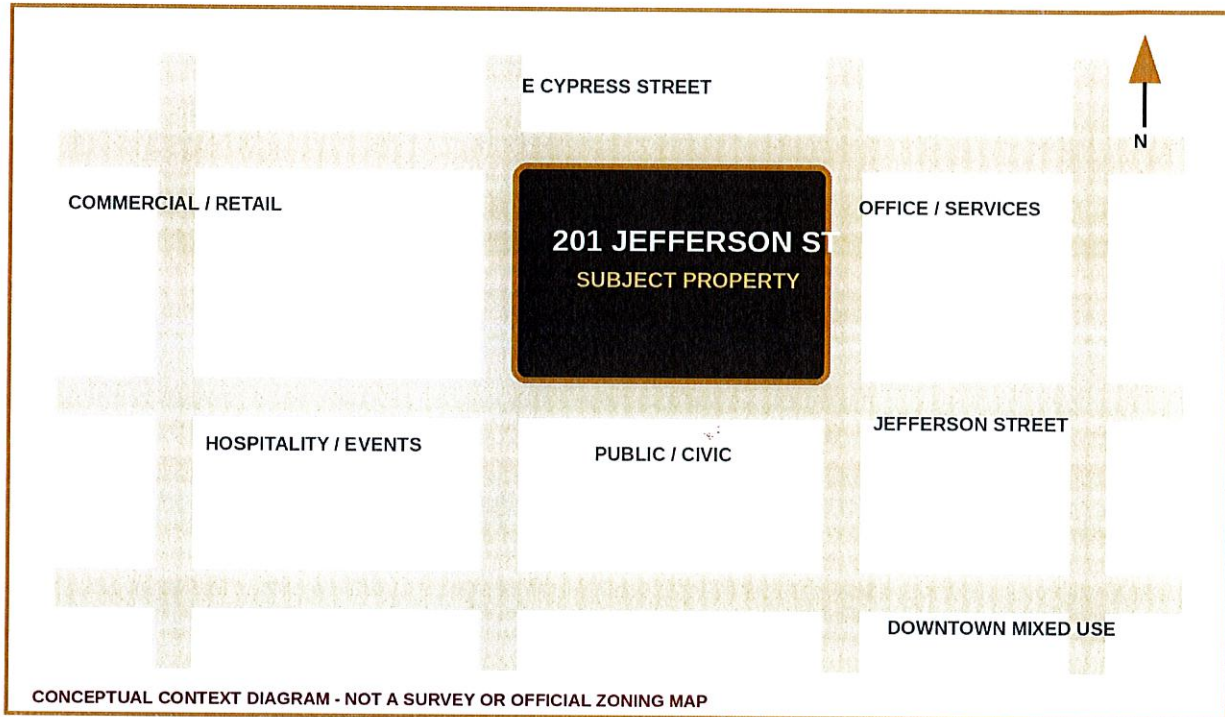
Before filing, the applicant should add current photographs of the building entrance, both street frontages, sidewalks, curb areas, loading points, adjacent properties, existing restrooms, stairs, and each proposed floor.



09

ADJACENT LAND USES AND COMPATIBILITY

A downtown setting with existing commercial, hospitality, civic, and mixed-use activity.



The proposed headquarters is compatible with the general intensity and mixed-use character of Downtown Lafayette because it reuses an existing commercial building, places public activity within an established business corridor, and combines event functions with daytime office, production, merchandise, and e-commerce activity.

- Public entrances and lines will be managed to preserve sidewalk passage.
- Amplified sound will be contained and managed through staff-controlled systems.
- Loading, deliveries, trash handling, and cleanup will be scheduled to reduce disturbance.
- The applicant will respond to verified complaints and adjust operations when repeated impacts are documented.
- No outdoor street event, sidewalk obstruction, or street closure is requested through this package.

PLANNING STANDARD

Final staff review should rely on the official zoning map, zoning verification letter, surrounding-use analysis, and any CUP-specific conditions adopted through the public process.



10

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSED USE

A three-level headquarters with distinct public and restricted operational zones.

Floor 1	Primary public event venue, reception, ticketing, stage, dance floor, bar or beverage service if separately permitted, restrooms, security, storage, and performer support.
Floor 2	Controlled VIP lounge, premium seating, private event rooms, merchandise and showroom areas, hospitality support, content areas, storage, and event management.
Floor 3	Restricted production, office, administration, finance, technology development, e-commerce, editing, storage, and technical support.
Building Systems	Audiovisual equipment, lighting, cameras, music zones, and displays will be centrally managed by authorized staff with manual control and emergency shutdown capability.
Use Limitation	No use is approved merely because it appears in an internal business plan. Only the uses authorized by zoning, CUP conditions, permits, licenses, lease terms, and certificate of occupancy may operate.

The proposal emphasizes adaptive reuse and flexible interior layouts. Any new partitions, stage construction, bar installation, kitchen work, electrical upgrades, fire protection work, accessibility alterations, or technical equipment rooms require the appropriate professional design and permits.



11

HOURS OF OPERATION AND EVENT PROFILE

A flexible schedule with controlled setup, public access, and closing procedures.

Administrative / Office Activity

Generally daytime and early evening, with limited after-hours production as permitted by lease and applicable regulations.

Public Events

Scheduled within the hours approved through the CUP, occupational license, public assembly approvals, and any alcohol or sound permits.

Setup / Breakdown

Scheduled to avoid unnecessary late-night loading, shouting, amplified sound, sidewalk obstruction, or trash activity.

Deliveries

By appointment when feasible, supervised by staff, and coordinated with public access.

Closing

Staged guest departure, sound shutdown, interior sweep, exterior cleanup, door check, incident review, and management sign-off.

The applicant requests operational flexibility rather than a promise of nightly maximum-intensity events. Event frequency, attendance, staffing, security, and layout will vary by program but will always remain within approved occupancy and permit conditions.

NO FIXED CAPACITY CLAIMED

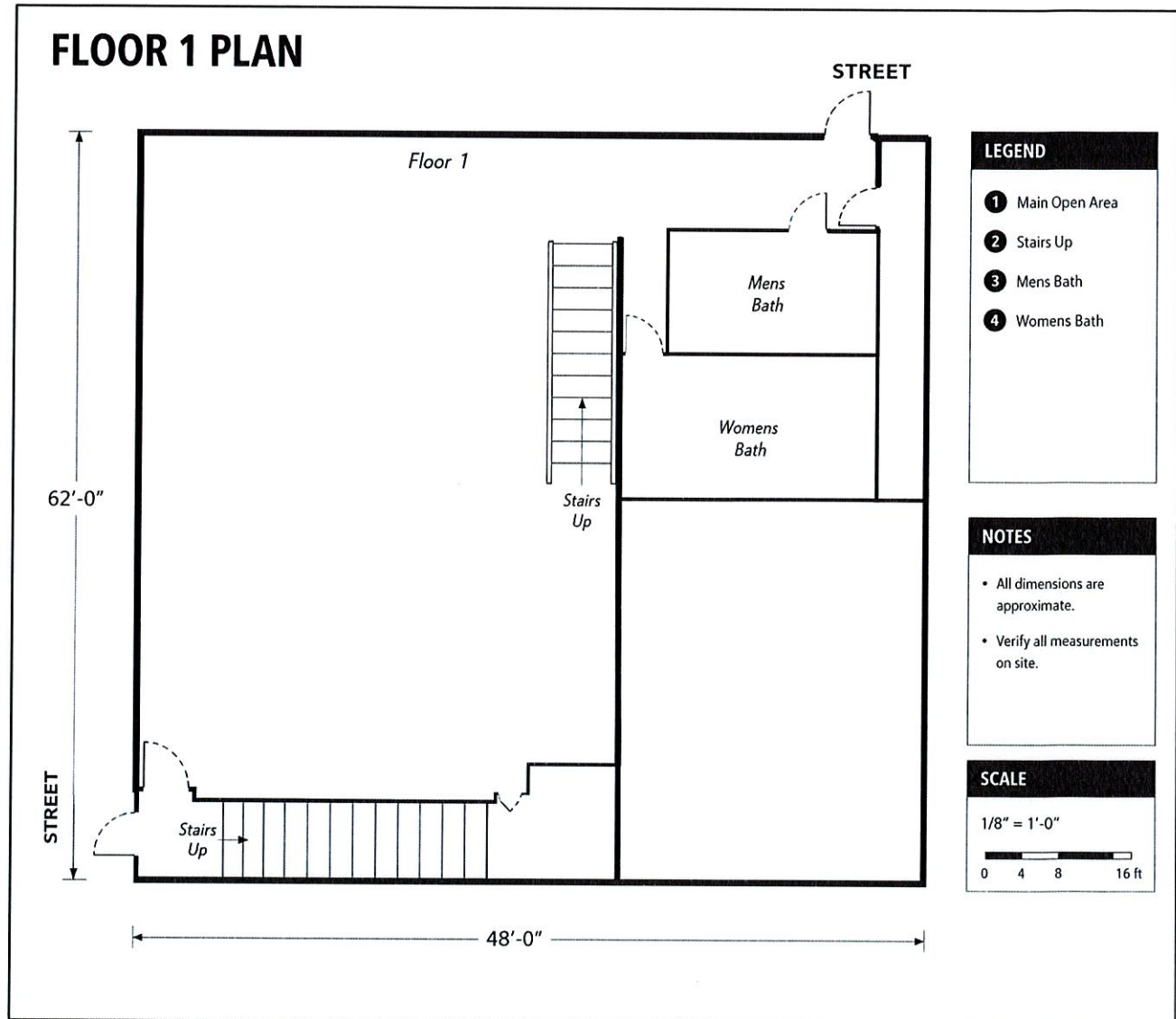
Attendance will be limited to the occupant load established by the State Fire Marshal and shown on the Certificate of Occupancy, or to any lower limit imposed by an event permit or CUP condition.



12

FLOOR 1 EXISTING PLANNING LAYOUT

Applicant-supplied conceptual layout. Dimensions and scale require field verification.



Floor 1 planning layout. Not a sealed architectural drawing and not for construction.



13

FLOOR 1: PUBLIC EVENT AND ENTERTAINMENT USE

Primary public venue and guest-arrival floor.

Principal Function	Public and private events, receptions, performances, networking events, product launches, meetings, and community programming.
Customer Areas	Entrance, reception or ticketing, event hall, stage, dance floor, seating, restrooms, and permitted beverage or food-service areas.
Support Areas	Security, coat check, performer green room, storage, event equipment, loading, digital signage, and emergency operations.
Control Measures	Managed entry, wristband or credential checks when appropriate, clear egress aisles, sound control, event manager on site, documented closing and cleanup.
Capacity	To be established by the State Fire Marshal and Certificate of Occupancy; no proposed numerical load is represented here.

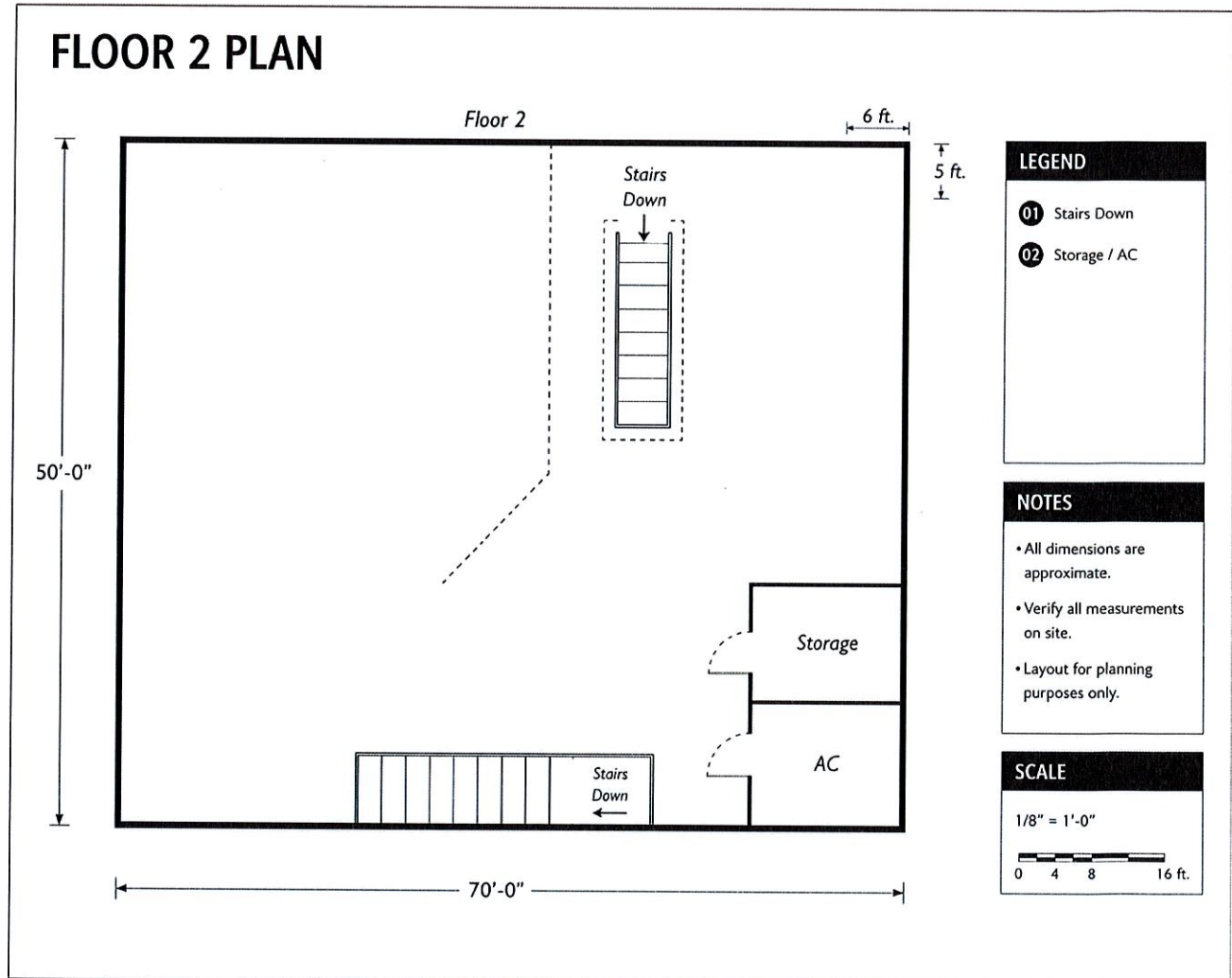
- Furniture, queues, décor, cables, merchandise, and equipment will not obstruct exits, stairs, corridors, fire protection equipment, or accessible routes.
- Event layouts will be prepared in advance and modified when required by code officials.
- Guest arrival and departure will be monitored to reduce sidewalk congestion and unsafe curb activity.



14

FLOOR 2 EXISTING PLANNING LAYOUT

Applicant-supplied conceptual layout. Dimensions and scale require field verification.



Floor 2 planning layout. Not a sealed architectural drawing and not for construction.



15

FLOOR 2: VIP, MERCHANDISE AND PRIVATE EVENTS

Controlled premium hospitality and brand-experience functions.

Principal Function	VIP lounge, private event rooms, premium seating, merchandise, apparel showroom, product display, hospitality, and creator collaboration.
Access	Credentialed, reserved, hosted, or otherwise controlled access during events.
Retail	Merchandise sales and limited product displays consistent with approved occupancy and business licensing.
Private Rooms	Commercial event or meeting use only; not residential sleeping rooms.
Special Activities	Any cigar, hookah, alcohol, food-service, or other separately regulated activity requires independent review and authorization before operation.
Capacity	To be established by the State Fire Marshal and Certificate of Occupancy.

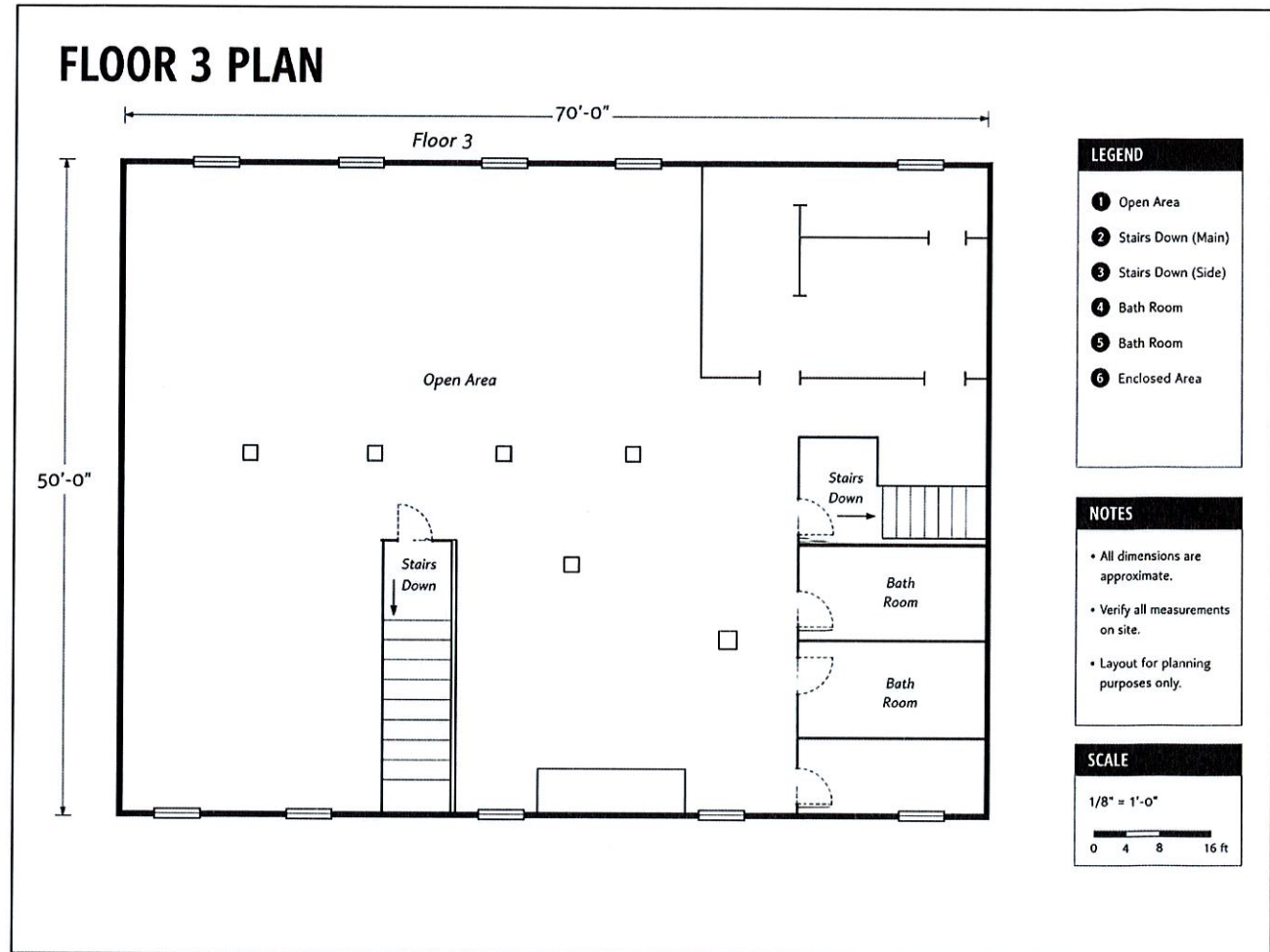
Floor 2 is intended to increase service quality and revenue per guest without becoming unmanaged overflow space. Seating, reservations, host staff, and access controls will be used to maintain an orderly environment.



16

FLOOR 3 EXISTING PLANNING LAYOUT

Applicant-supplied conceptual layout. Dimensions and scale require field verification.



Floor 3 planning layout. Not a sealed architectural drawing and not for construction.



17

FLOOR 3: PRODUCTION, OFFICES AND TECHNOLOGY

Restricted corporate and creative operations above the public venue.



Executive / Administrative

Executive office, conference room, administration, finance, human resources, legal records, and corporate archive.

Production

Video, photography, podcast, audio recording, editing, graphic design, and controlled content-production areas.

Technology

Software development, cybersecurity, network operations, data storage, research, and technical support.

E-Commerce

Order management, customer support, inventory coordination, product photography, shipping coordination, and digital marketing.

Technical Rooms

Any server, electrical, computing, or equipment room will be restricted, professionally designed, adequately cooled and ventilated, and separately reviewed as required.

Public Access

Generally restricted to employees, contractors, scheduled clients, and authorized guests.

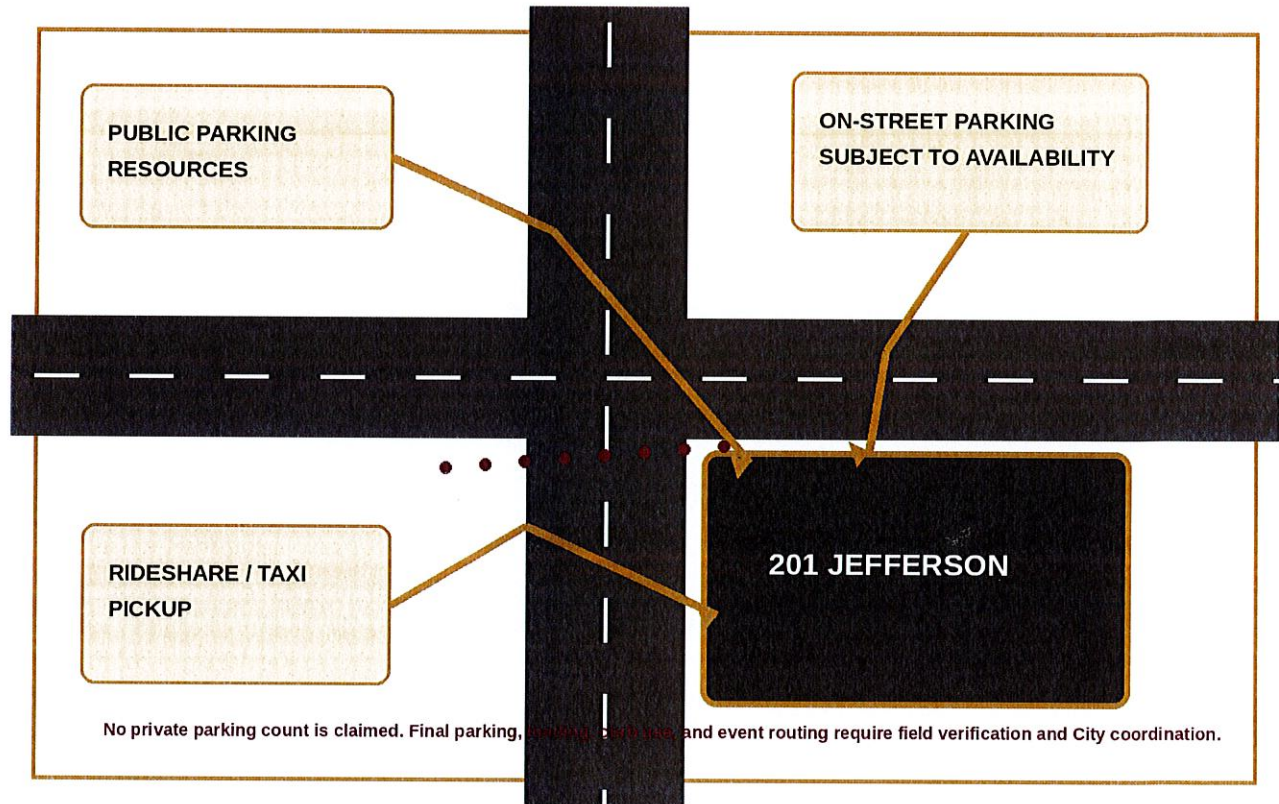
PERMIT FOCUS

Detailed technology workflows and internal data-governance policies are intentionally excluded. The land-use issue is whether the office, production, and technical functions can operate safely and compatibly in the building.



PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A downtown mobility strategy based on walkability, public parking, rideshare, and active guest communication.



Conceptual parking and mobility exhibit. No parking count or exclusive parking right is represented.

The applicant will identify lawful public and private parking resources, communicate parking instructions before major events, encourage rideshare and carpooling, and manage curbside arrival and departure. Parking availability, loading areas, accessible spaces, and any off-site agreements must be verified before filing or opening.

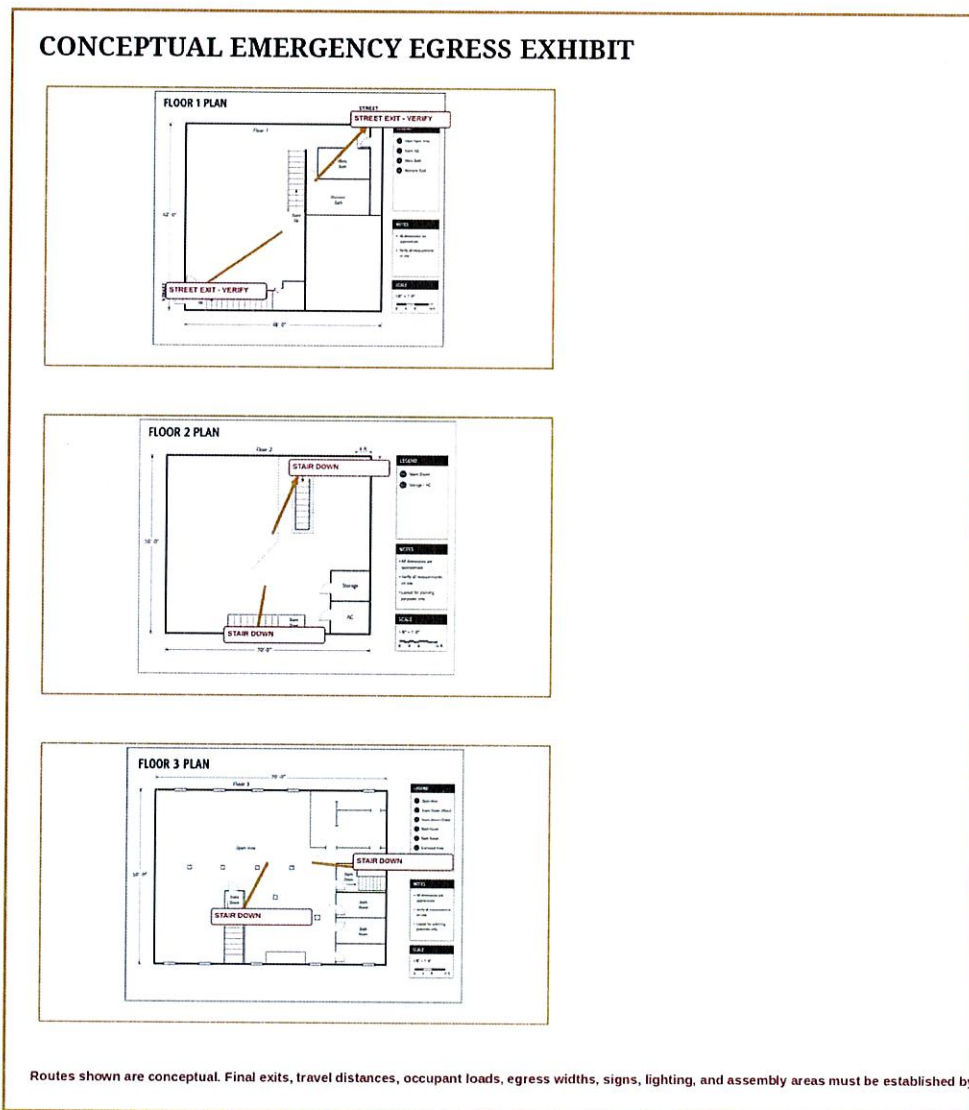
- Do not promise spaces that are not under written control.
- Do not use fire lanes, accessible spaces, loading zones, private lots, or travel lanes without authorization.
- Use staff or security to prevent unsafe stopping and prolonged curbside congestion during high-attendance events.
- Provide accessible arrival information and a verified accessible route from the public way.



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CONCEPTUAL EMERGENCY EGRESS EXHIBIT

Existing doors and stairs shown for planning review only.



Conceptual arrows identify apparent exits and stairs on applicant-supplied plans. Architect and Fire Marshal review controls.

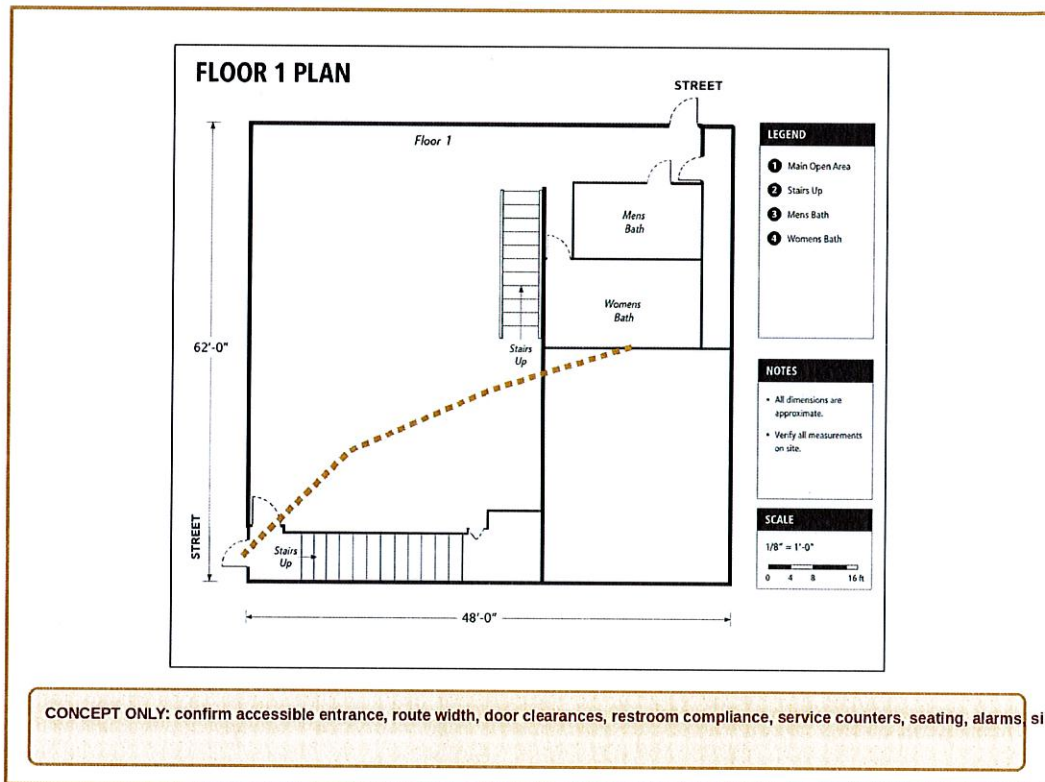
The final code plan must show occupancy classifications, occupant loads by area, exit count, exit separation, egress width, travel distance, common path, stair capacity, exit discharge, emergency lighting, exit signs, fire protection systems, and exterior assembly areas.



20

ADA ACCESS AND ROUTE CONSIDERATIONS

Accessibility must be verified from the public way through all required public spaces.



Conceptual accessible route on Floor 1. Existing conditions and upper-floor access remain to be verified

- Confirm an accessible entrance and continuous route from the public sidewalk.
- Confirm door widths, thresholds, maneuvering clearances, circulation, service counters, seating, and restroom accessibility.
- Determine whether elevator or other vertical-access requirements apply to upper-floor public uses and proposed alterations.
- Provide accessible alarms, signage, event information, and reasonable accommodations.
- Revise layouts or floor uses if required accessibility cannot be achieved through an approved design.

PROFESSIONAL DETERMINATION

This package does not represent that the existing building is ADA-compliant. A licensed architect and the reviewing authorities must establish the required accessibility scope.



SECURITY AND CROWD MANAGEMENT

Layered prevention, controlled entry, trained staff, documentation, and cooperation with public safety.

Responsible Manager	A designated manager will be present for each public event.
Entry Control	Ticket, guest-list, membership, age, bag, and credential procedures as appropriate to the event.
Security Staffing	Scaled to attendance, event type, alcohol exposure, performer requirements, age restrictions, and permit conditions.
Monitoring	Staff-controlled camera and access systems may assist operations. Human staff remain responsible for decisions and emergency response.
Incident Response	De-escalation, emergency call procedures, first-aid coordination, preservation of records, and written incident reports.
Closing	Staged departure, interior sweep, exterior inspection, door check, and management sign-off.

- Weapons, violence, threats, harassment, illegal drug activity, and unauthorized access are prohibited.
- Security personnel will operate only within their legal authority and training.
- Management will cooperate with Lafayette Police, Fire, EMS, property ownership, and permit officials.



FIRE, LIFE SAFETY AND OCCUPANT LOAD

No public opening before required inspections, approvals, and emergency procedures are complete.

OCCUPANT LOAD STATEMENT

Occupant load shall be established by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal and reflected on the Certificate of Occupancy. Attendance shall not exceed that posted load or any lower limit required by permit or layout.

- Obtain required State Fire Marshal plan review, inspection, and public assembly approvals.
- Maintain unobstructed exits, stairs, corridors, fire extinguishers, alarms, sprinklers, and emergency equipment.
- Submit event layouts when required and maintain approved aisle widths and exit access.
- Do not use pyrotechnics, open flame, smoke effects, temporary wiring, tents, or special effects without explicit approval.
- Keep technical, electrical, server, mechanical, and storage rooms clear of combustible clutter and accessible to authorized personnel.
- Train staff on evacuation, emergency communication, severe weather, medical response, and exterior assembly procedures.

The Life Safety Code calculates occupant load based on occupancy classification and applicable gross or net floor-area factors. The floor plans in this package do not contain enough verified information to establish a lawful occupant load.



NOISE, SANITATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD MANAGEMENT

Operational controls designed to keep event impacts within the property and preserve the downtown streetscape.

Sound	Staff-controlled audiovisual systems, indoor sound checks, closed exterior doors during amplified programming, and immediate adjustment when limits or permit conditions require.
Crowds	Timed arrival, controlled entry, managed queues, staged closing, and active sidewalk monitoring.
Trash	Interior collection, secure storage, prompt removal, and post-event inspection of entrances and sidewalks.
Deliveries	Scheduled and supervised to reduce conflict with guests, neighboring businesses, and public rights-of-way.
Complaints	A management contact and written log for verified noise, parking, sanitation, safety, or access concerns.
Corrective Action	Adjust staffing, programming, sound, arrival procedures, loading, or event scheduling when repeated impacts are documented.

The applicant will comply with applicable sound, alcohol, sanitation, smoking, fire, business-license, and public-right-of-way requirements. CUP approval will not replace any separately required sound variance or special-event permit.



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ECONOMIC IMPACT AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Adaptive reuse, employment, local purchasing, and additional downtown activity.

The headquarters is expected to support a diversified operating model that includes event rentals, VIP experiences, merchandise, media production, photography and video services, technology services, e-commerce, sponsorships, and business partnerships. This diversity reduces dependence on maximum late-night attendance and supports daytime as well as evening activity.

- Reuse and continued investment in an existing downtown commercial property.
- Opportunities for event, hospitality, security, production, administration, retail, and technical employment.
- Purchasing from local contractors, vendors, performers, caterers, artists, and service providers.
- Meeting and showcase space for businesses, organizations, creators, and community programming.
- Additional pedestrian activity and customer traffic for nearby downtown businesses.

NO GUARANTEED FIGURES

No specific job count, tax revenue, visitor spending, or economic return is represented as guaranteed. Actual results depend on approvals, funding, build-out, market demand, operations, and lease terms.



CONDITIONAL USE COMMITMENTS

Operational promises offered to support compatibility and enforceable review.

- Operate only within the approved uses, hours, occupant load, permits, licenses, lease terms, and CUP conditions.
- Maintain a responsible manager on site during public events.
- Preserve clear exits, stairs, aisles, accessible routes, fire-protection equipment, and public sidewalks.
- Use controlled entry, appropriate security, incident reporting, and orderly closing procedures.
- Manage amplified sound, loading, trash, and guest departure to reduce off-site impacts.
- Do not conduct outdoor street events, sidewalk obstruction, street closure, pyrotechnics, or special effects without separate authorization.
- Do not begin separately regulated alcohol, food, smoking, or similar activity without all required approvals.
- Provide final professional plans and code documentation when required.
- Maintain a contact process for City staff, property management, emergency responders, and verified operational concerns.
- Modify operations when necessary to comply with code, permit conditions, and documented safety or neighborhood concerns.

BINDING PRINCIPLE

If a concept in an internal business plan conflicts with the approved CUP, certificate of occupancy, fire approval, building code, license, lease, or law, the approved regulatory requirement controls.



PERMIT AND APPROVAL ROADMAP

A CUP is one step in the opening process, not final authorization to construct, occupy, or operate.

1. Property Records	Obtain deed, owner authorization, official assessor record, survey, legal description, and zoning verification.
2. CUP Filing	Submit application, narrative, floor plans, site/context exhibits, parking information, and required fees.
3. Professional Review	Architectural/code review for use classification, occupant load, egress, accessibility, restrooms, structural scope, and building systems.
4. State Fire Marshal	Plan review, occupant load, life-safety approval, inspection, and public assembly requirements.
5. Building Permits	Permits for alterations, partitions, stage, bar, kitchen, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection, signage, or other work.
6. Certificate of Occupancy	Authorization for the approved use and posted occupant load.
7. Business Licenses	Occupational license, alcohol, food, sound, special-event, alarm, signage, and other applicable permits.
8. Opening Readiness	Insurance, staff training, emergency plan, approved event layouts, vendor records, safety checks, and management contacts.

Lafayette Consolidated Government currently directs applicants to its Planning, Zoning and Development Applications page and recommends contact with Planning staff before completing a rezoning or CUP application. Final instructions, fees, deadlines, and submittal formats should be confirmed immediately before filing.



APPENDIX: SUPPORTING EXHIBITS AND SOURCE NOTES

Documents to attach before the final application is filed.

Exhibit	Required content
A. Site Location Map	Official or professionally prepared map showing the subject property and major streets.
B. Parcel / Assessor Map	Official Lafayette Parish Assessor record and parcel exhibit.
C. Zoning Map and Verification	Current official zoning map and zoning verification letter.
D. Deed and Legal Description	Current deed, recording reference, owner name, and legal description.
E. Survey	Current survey showing boundaries, dimensions, improvements, entrances, and relevant site features.
F. Existing Photographs	Current dated photographs of building, streetscape, sidewalks, entrances, stairs, restrooms, and all floors.
G. Parking Exhibit	Verified parking resources, accessible parking, loading, rideshare, and any written off-site agreements.
H. Code / Egress Plan	Professional plan showing occupancy classifications, occupant loads, exits, travel distances, accessibility, and fire protection.
I. Business Records	LLC registration, occupational-license materials, insurance, and property-owner authorization.
J. Application Forms	Completed CUP application, affidavits, public-notice materials, and fee documentation.

Reference agencies consulted for this draft: Lafayette Consolidated Government Development and Planning, Lafayette Consolidated Government Fire Prevention, Lafayette Parish Assessor, and Louisiana Office of State Fire Marshal. Property photographs and preliminary real-estate facts were drawn from a public Scout Real Estate marketing flyer dated July 11, 2025 and should be independently verified.

Official-source topics reviewed: Conditional Use Permit applications, Downtown zoning context, commercial building codes, certificate of occupancy, public assembly permits, State Fire Marshal plan review, and occupant-load calculation.



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APPLICANT CERTIFICATION AND CLOSING STATEMENT

A clear record of the requested use and the limits of this planning package.

Plush Syndicate LLC respectfully submits this package in support of its request to establish a mixed-use headquarters at 201 Jefferson Street. The applicant intends to operate the property in a professional manner consistent with approved land uses, permit conditions, posted occupant load, life-safety requirements, accessibility obligations, and the interests of Downtown Lafayette.

The applicant understands that CUP approval does not authorize construction, occupancy, alcohol service, food service, public assembly, signage, special events, sound variances, sidewalk use, street closure, or any other separately regulated activity. Each authorization must be obtained before the applicable activity begins.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that the information in this package is presented in good faith and agrees to revise or supplement the application when official records, professional plans, or agency determinations require correction.

Applicant / Authorized Representative:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Property Owner Authorization (if required):

Owner Signature: _____

Date: _____

Project: Plush Syndicate LLC Headquarters Development and Conditional Use Permit | Property: 201 Jefferson Street, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501



PROJECTED BAR/LOUNGE REVENUE MODEL

Projected bar/lounge revenue summary for Conditional Use Permit review.

The proposed Bar/Lounge and event operation is projected to generate approximately \$57,000 in monthly gross revenue, or approximately \$684,000 annually, after commencement of full operations. These figures are planning projections and are not guarantees of future performance.

Revenue Source	Monthly Projection	Projected Share
Beverage sales, including alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages	\$25,000	44%
Event admissions and private event rentals	\$20,000	35%
VIP memberships, reservations, and premium experiences	\$12,000	21%
Total projected Bar/Lounge revenue	\$57,000	100%



REVENUE ASSUMPTIONS

Actual revenue will depend on permitted operating conditions, event frequency, customer demand, beverage licensing, approved occupant load, operating schedule, pricing, and the final opening date. Merchandise and media-production revenue are excluded from the dedicated Bar/Lounge model above.



From: Sgt. Matthew Benoit

RE: Lafayette Police Department Recommended Conditions – Plush

To Whom It May Concern:

After reviewing the proposed operation of Plush, the following conditions are recommended from the Lafayette Police Department. These recommendations are based on conditions previously placed upon the former bar/club at this same location, which operated under a similar business model. Maintaining substantially the same conditions provides consistency while addressing public safety, security, and potential impacts on the surrounding area:

1. Open Containers

Open containers of any kind shall not be permitted to leave the premises at any time.

2. Age Restriction

No person under 21 years of age shall be permitted to enter the bar/lounge.

3. Private Security Plan

The owner/operator shall provide and adhere to a private security plan coordinated with the Lafayette Police Department (LPD) and ANC after issuance of the permit and prior to opening. If anticipated capacity exceeds 200 patrons, the owner/operator shall contact an LPD representative regarding possible additional security requirements.

4. Off-Duty Police Officers

The owner/operator shall provide two off-duty uniformed police officers every night the establishment is open for business.

5. Noise and Building Restrictions

No external speakers shall be permitted, and windows and doors shall remain closed during operating hours.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sgt. Matthew Benoit", is written over a horizontal line.

Sgt. Matthew Benoit

Special Events / Emergency Management
Lafayette Police Department

Carol Robbins

From: Sally Leger
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 2:19 PM
To: Carol Robbins
Cc: Azara Bob
Subject: RE: Proposed conditions for "Plush"

Good Afternoon, Carol,

Below are the recommendation for Plush, located at 201 Jefferson St, Ste. B:

1. No external speakers.
2. Windows and doors to remain closed at all times.
3. Owner/operator must provide and adhere to the private security plan in the application and coordinate with LPD and ANC once the Alcoholic Beverage Permit is issued. If anticipated capacity is over 200 patrons, contact a LPD representative for possible additional security requirements.
4. Must be 21 years of age or older to enter the licensed premises.

Also, in the future, can you include Azara Bob (copied here) to all correspondence regarding CUP's?

Sincerely,

Sally Leger | *Manager*

Alcohol and Noise Control Division
Community Development and Planning Department

Carol Robbins

From: Alton Trahan
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 4:49 PM
To: Carol Robbins
Subject: RE: Occupancy for Plush at 201 Jefferson Street

Afternoon Ms. Robbins,

Yes, if all remains the same, we can use those numbers for now. We will reevaluate the occupancy once we have a set layout, providing any changes.

Regards,

Alton Trahan, MPA | Chief of Fire Prevention/*PIO*

Lafayette Fire Department

300 East Vermilion Street / Lafayette, LA 70501

p: 337.291.8705 / c: 337.852.8192 / atrahan@lafayettela.gov / www.lafayettela.gov

From: Carol Robbins <crobbins@LafayetteLA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 2:59 PM
To: Alton Trahan <atrahan@LafayetteLA.gov>
Subject: Occupancy for Plush at 201 Jefferson Street

Mr. Trahan,

I need an occupancy number from you for our Staff Report. When Bliss was open, Forrest set the occupancy level at 325. I believe that the layout of the bar will be very close to what Bliss had, and I assumed we'd have an occupancy level the same as Bliss did.

Do you agree with that? We would like to include the occupancy level in our conditions. Right now we have 325.

Can I stay with that number?

Thank you for your time-

Carol Vermillion Robbins | *Planner II*

Lafayette Consolidated Government

Community Development and Planning Department

Development Division

220 West Willow Street / Lafayette, LA 70501

p: 337.291.8006 / crobbins@LafayetteLA.gov





Councilman Kenneth Boudreaux, Chair
c/o City Council Clerk Joseph Gordon-Wiltz
P.O. Box 4017-C
Lafayette, LA 70502

Lafayette Zoning Commission
c/o Community Development & Planning Department
220 W. Willow St., Building B
Lafayette, LA 70501

Kevin Blanchard, CEO
Downtown Development Authority
207 W. Vermilion St.
Lafayette, LA 70501

September, 11 2026

RE: Memo regarding conditional use permit applications and alcohol permits downtown

Dear Lafayette City Council and Zoning Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the conditional use permit application 2026-17-REZ. For the reasons outlined below, we respectfully request that LCG staff, Zoning Commission, and City Council defer hearing the application until we can have a much-needed community discussion about why, despite the promises made to downtown when LCG removed the moratorium in 2018, downtown continues to experience episodes of dangerous, disorderly behavior after midnight. Adding another 325-person nightclub downtown poses a foreseeable risk to the health, safety, and welfare of our downtown businesses, residents, and visitors.

This application

The applicant at issue would open a large nightclub at the corner of Jefferson and Cypress streets. The nightclub formerly in that space, Bliss, was the subject of a lot of police activity while it was open. Because of that, we know a lot about the issues that location has caused in the past including tailgating and nuisance activity in the several large parking lots that surround that property and the crowding and fights that have occurred in the narrow queuing area along Cypress Street.

Between 2021 and 2026, there were hundreds of 911 calls from that address and the surrounding parking lots—including one owned by the City of Lafayette. Those were noise complaints, complaints related to crowd control issues, and fights. While Bliss was operational from 2022 to the very end of 2025, there was a marked increase in the volume and severity of 911 calls.

911 activity at 201 Jefferson St (Bliss), March 2021 – February 2026

Year	CAD calls	Incident Reports
2021	13	1
2022	15	2
2023	20	5
2024	46	17
2025	47	14
2026	3	0

Serious incidents (all between midnight and 2 AM)

Date	Incident
Feb 26, 2023	Aggravated battery by shooting (4 arrests)
Mar 18, 2023	Illegal carry of gun
Mar 30, 2024	Aggravated battery
Jul 13, 2024	Arson
Dec 28, 2024	Illegal carry of gun
Feb 22, 2025	Illegal firearm discharge
Aug 3, 2025	Illegal carry of gun (2 arrests)
Aug 17, 2025	Illegal carry of gun + fight in progress, same night
Sep 21, 2025	Fight
Oct 5, 2025	Shooting in progress
Dec 26, 2025	Aggravated battery by cutting

These are typical symptoms of a problem that needs to be stated clearly: the conditional use permit process was supposed to prevent these types of thoughtless decisions from happening. We know exactly what issues we had with that property the last time LCG permitted a nightclub to open there; but nothing in the process to date is relying on that information, history, background, or even best practices.

What the 2018 compromise promised

For many years, bars were not allowed downtown. That "moratorium" was not ideal, but it came about because downtown property owners were concerned about the proliferation of large nightclubs and the lack of a plan to keep those nightclubs' foot traffic from overwhelming downtown's resources and reputation. Luckily, from roughly 2015 to 2018, LCG and the DDA worked very closely to undo the moratorium and put the conditional use permit process in place. All of the bar owners and property owners downtown were involved.

They were rightfully concerned about the growing imbalance between nightlife and the rest of the economy downtown. A strong, safe nightlife is part of what makes downtowns lively and vibrant. But when the nightlife starts to predominate, the concentration of drunk patrons, broken bottles, and all the related human drama simply overwhelms the resources we have to deal with the issues. The conditional use permit process was drafted with the intent of restoring and protecting that balance. We do not have to continue to rush headlong into a situation we can all reasonably foresee could end poorly.

The result is that bars downtown are still not allowed by right, but this new conditional use permit system opened up a path: if you have a good plan, a good site, and you are willing to work with your neighbors about how to reduce the negative impacts of a bar, then let's go present that plan TOGETHER to the Zoning Commission and City Council. Downtown and the new club owner. Hand in hand.

What the process has become

We have raised concerns about the process multiple times over the last several years. Applicants are given a meeting date and a set of proposed conditions far too early—before LCG staff has asked the police department or DDA to weigh in, and before anyone has looked at the bigger picture. In at least one case, an applicant was allowed to open a bar and sell alcohol while their conditional user permit was still pending. The process has devolved into a surface-level, bureaucratic check list and does not consider data or community feedback.

That is not what the process was designed to do. Before communicating back to the applicant, we should be asking ourselves: Can we handle more late-night activity on the streets? Is this an operator or location with a history of problems? Right now there is no mechanism to make sure those discussions happen at all. When we have tried to have these discussions on previous applications, the meetings with staff were not very productive, as staff insists that their hands are tied—that there was nothing they could do to stop the application from moving forward, regardless of completeness or appropriateness.

The purpose of the conditional use permit process was to recognize that downtown can have too many bars and nightclubs, so we need a process that would be able to catch a problem application and prevent the worst scenarios from happening. All the current process does is give notice that another bar is coming to downtown, whether we can handle it or not. As it stands, the system has no teeth, and there is therefore no leverage to get applications into better shape.

The need for balance

The intent of the conditional use permit process was to have balance. Large nightclubs can be a major drain on public safety and maintenance resources. Large numbers of inebriated people

can be unruly. Many of our nightclubs do a good job managing folks while they are inside the building. Professional, law-abiding nightclubs help mitigate the issues that large numbers of inebriated patrons can cause: they check IDs, they do not over-serve patrons, and they generally try to discourage trouble. The clubs hire their own security. But outside of the clubs, where the Lafayette Police Department has to cover the sidewalks, alleys, public and private parking lots and parking garages, the police are overwhelmed, and they need help. Meanwhile, we seem intent on blindly permitting more and more late-night activity, adding to an already too-large burden. That's not the kind of balance a healthy, safe, and prosperous downtown needs to survive.

The evidence of this imbalance is most visible in the many videos on social media showing the fights that have started breaking out on the sidewalks after midnight.

The latest such video has been viewed more than 500,000 times in just one week. It depicts a half dozen men in a violent brawl that spills across the sidewalk and impacts dozens of bystanders. When police arrive they only have the ability to break up the fight and disperse the crowd. No one was ticketed or arrested. It seems apparent that the Lafayette Police Department was just trying to keep the situation from escalating by just ordering all the people involved to go home. That is evidence that the problem is bigger than what our current resources can manage.

When the police department is concerned about the situation on the streets, why would we rush into a new 300 person nightclub without first talking about how to re-establish that balance?

The cost to the rest of downtown

The chaos on the streets of downtown on some weekends after midnight should not be an indictment of the bars downtown. All of our businesses are hurt by this negative perception of danger and disorder. Our daytime businesses are very much harmed by this perception. Our residential properties are likewise threatened by this environment. And with a new 83-room hotel currently under construction, this is a threat to our future economic development as well. Our organization has worked for decades to improve the image of downtown and support our small businesses. But all that hard work cannot compete with viral videos that reach 500,000 people in a week.

And what is tragic is that the negative perception is only correct on big nights out after midnight. Downtown Lafayette is open for business 168 hours every week, but those two or three really chaotic hours that happen a few times a semester are what dominates the public discussion. That is a solvable problem.

The facts are clear: During the day, the addition of our Downtown Ambassador program (funded by the EDD and the DDA, not LCG) has been a game changer in building a cleaner, safer Downtown. We have built a record number of new homes in the downtown area in the last several years as well. As a result, our restaurants and retailers are busy. Our daytime foot traffic is at an all-time high. Downtown has never had this much economic activity: the Economic Development District collections are breaking records every month (ten of the last 12 months have set a new collections record for that month). But those facts don't get much attention over a viral video of drunk people.

Where we go from here

Downtown property owners, businesses, and residents need LCG's commitment to work with us to develop a downtown bar permitting system that is professional, predictable, and designed to actually vet applications by working closely with applicants and the DDA. Nightclubs can add to the life and vibrancy of a downtown, but when they are over-sized, or over-concentrated geographically, they can overwhelm a downtown just by sheer volume. We are currently "over-served" by large nightclubs downtown. Help us restore balance.

We are requesting this process be paused and that downtown interests be allowed to give further feedback to LCG, the Zoning Commission and City Council about how to proceed in a way that benefits everyone.

There is precedent for a temporary pause. Recently, LCG halted work on adjudicated properties, effectively hitting the pause button on roughly 200 pending applications. Today we have only one (1) pending application for a night club. So a pause in processing applications, while never ideal, would only affect a single applicant, prior to the time when they have an entitlement. There is no need for the pause to last longer than the end of the year. We are not re-inventing the wheel.

We do have some preliminary thoughts to get the discussion started:

- **Close the BYOB loophole, or codify it.** We would respectfully request that LCG pause the practice of issuing Bring Your Own Beverage "BYOB" permits as a way to circumvent the need to get a bar permit to allow the sale of alcohol. The recent Ashes II Ashes decision illustrates the current problems caused by the BYOB loophole:
 - The LCG staff rationale for allowing the Cigar Bar (not the Cigar Lounge) to get a CUP was that the bar did not allow smoking on their side of the wall and our local "go cup" ordinance allowed people to "leave" the bar business and bring their open drinks into the lounge, smoking-only side of the business (through an interior doorway).
 - But what neither the Zoning Commission nor the City Council was told was that the BYOB permit affidavit that the Cigar Lounge had to sign in order to allow people to bring their open containers into the bar says the permit holder (that's the Cigar Lounge): "shall not allow any person to enter with an OPEN CONTAINER of alcoholic and/or non-alcoholic beverages from any other business." There's a glitch in the loophole: the bar can allow people to leave with open containers but the cigar lounge is prohibited from letting them enter. It's not clear how LCG is resolving this conflict.
 - We have pointed out previously to LCG staff that this kind of staff-endorsed loophole doesn't hold up under its own logic. This conflict should illustrate that this "hybrid arrangement" was not the intent of either the alcohol code or the zoning code. But LCG staff has told us that this same BYOB loophole has now been allowed in other cigar shops across the city to open and sell alcohol. If this loophole is a policy that the City Council supports, then we should use this pause to codify it. Conversely, if this loophole is not a policy that the City Council supports and does not wish to spread citywide, then we should use this pause to close the loophole.

- Earlier this year, the City Council denied a conditional use permit application for a bar on Jefferson Street, based in part on the feedback from the DDA and Lafayette Police Department about the historic issues in that area of Jefferson Street with street crowding and fights, as well as issues with the operator at other locations downtown in not complying with the terms of a conditional use permit for a bar. Last month, LCG issued that operator a BYOB permit to allow the sale of alcohol at a hookah lounge that will be located in that same building. We were told that LCG staff and the legal department felt they had no choice other than to issue that BYOB permit.
- **Professionalize the CUP administrative process.** The Conditional Use Permit administrative process needs to be professionalized and based on data and best practices, with a goal of maintaining the right balance of night uses so that our resources to keep downtown clean and safe are not overwhelmed.
 - We need to lay out a detailed conditional use permit process that is much more careful about not setting bad expectations for applicants: bars are not allowed downtown by right. Giving people the impression otherwise has led to a lot of anger and hurt feelings and political fights at council meetings.
 - We need to keep a "running count" of nightclub capacity downtown and compare that to the resources we have available to manage the thousands of people who will be part of any nightlife scene. The Police Department has been incredibly flexible and innovative, but their budget is constrained. Until we have found a way to increase our capacity to control large nightlife crowds (like expanding the Downtown Ambassador program to put more eyes on the street during nightlife hours), it's not wise to continue to invite more risk by increasing the number of visitors.
 - It is not clear who, if anyone, is responsible for ensuring compliance with CUP conditions to ensure that they are being followed, enforced, and most importantly, that the conditions are working as intended for all involved. To that end, conditional use permits downtown should have to be revisited on a regular basis to make sure that someone is checking in on occasion.
- **Move the open container cutoff to 9 p.m.** The "Go-Cup" ordinance needs to be amended to reduce the amount of tailgating and public disorder downtown by moving the cutoff time for being allowed to carry an open container of alcohol downtown from midnight to 9 p.m.
 - Open containers are against the law, except Downtown or on the Simcoe Street strip—and in no case can you have an open container after midnight. That's the law. The intent was to try to bridge some restaurant to bar activity, to try to encourage foot traffic.
 - In practice, however, the open container rule just takes an important tool away from police. Anywhere else in the city, if a patron outside a bar is causing trouble and carrying an open container, they can be ticketed for the open container or asked to bring it back inside the bar. Go cups also make it much, much harder to police underage drinking.
 - Go cups also play a big role in another growing problem: tailgating in public and private parking lots, including the parking garage. A growing number of people

are coming downtown with their liquor from home, mixing a walking drink, having a party in the parking lot, and playing music loudly. These are not people who are the responsibility of any one business: in fact, often, they congregate in LCG-owned properties, as those properties are usually not supervised closely late at night.

- o This solution would generally provide some time after 9 p.m. for the streets to quiet down before the midnight weekend rush.
- o A side benefit of this policy would be to greatly reduce the litter and broken glass we pick up each morning.

To recap, Downtown Lafayette has never been more bustling with activity, but our streets after midnight are still unnecessarily chaotic and dangerous. We are raising the flag in hopes that the decision-makers: the Zoning Commission and the City Council, ask for a pause in the process so that we can have a discussion about how this can work better. We are asking that this application and any subsequent applications for CUPs downtown be paused by the LCG staff, or deferred for action by the council or commission, until such time as we can re-evaluate the process. The DDA, City Council, and Zoning Commission need to be a part of that discussion. Addressing the BYOB permit loophole and go cup ordinance would also be a necessary part of mitigating the amount of chaos on the streets after midnight. We all have a responsibility to make this process work for everyone. Thank you for your service.

Respectfully submitted,



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