



Planning Commission
Agenda Report
May 14, 2025

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Alex Hamilton, Interim Director of Community Development
Nancy Lee, Development Services Manager

BY: Matthew Morales, Planning Intern

SUBJECT: Director Approval Request No. 2025-04 to allow the sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption (Type 41 ABC license) in an existing 1,400 square foot bona fide restaurant located within an approximately 1.39-acre commercial shopping center. Subject Site: 12227 Norwalk Boulevard (APN: 8024-024-023).
Environmental: Consider and find that the proposed use is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

Recommendation:

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt Resolution No. 25-07 to approve Director Approval Request (DAR) No. 2025-04 subject to the Conditions of Approval contained in Exhibit "A"; and
2. Find that the proposed use is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

Authority:

Section 17.02.203.B of the Norwalk Municipal Code ("NMC") authorizes the Director of Community Development ("Director") to permit the on-sale alcohol sales within bona fide restaurants as defined in NMC Section 17.04.140. The Director may at his or her discretion refer any request to the Planning Commission for review and determination.

Background:

The subject site, located at 12227 Norwalk Boulevard, is located within an existing 1.39-acre commercial shopping center, more commonly known as Paddison Square, at the southwest corner of Norwalk Boulevard and Crewe Street in the General Commercial (C-3) zone with a General Plan land use designation of General Commercial.

Per Los Angeles County Assessor records, the multi-tenant commercial building was constructed in 1968 and is approximately 19,800± square feet (SF) in size. The Norwalk Taco Factory is a permitted “by-right” restaurant use within the subject tenant space and C-3 Zoning district in which the property is located in.

The subject property is located within a fully developed area and surrounded by Single-Family Residential (R-1) zone to the north and east and General Commercial (C-3) zone to the south and west.

Request:

The applicant is requesting approval to allow the on-site sale and consumption of beer and wine under a Type 41 State of California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) license within an approximately 1,400 SF bona fide restaurant (Norwalk Taco Factory). Norwalk Taco Factory will be open daily. As part of the project, the applicant is proposing the following hours of operation:

- Monday through Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The sale of alcohol is proposed to begin at 11:00 a.m. and end 60 minutes before closing time at 7:00 p.m.

There are no tenant improvement plans proposed for the existing, active bona fide food establishment. The layout of the dining area shall remain the same (see Attachment C for existing restaurant layout). The Norwalk Taco Factory is intending to complement its food selection by offering a range of beer options to dine-in customers. Alcohol beverages are proposed to be stored in an existing cooler used for bottled drinks. The operating restaurant currently has a total of 13 employees, with five (5) to six (6) employees per shift.

Analysis:

Subject Site Conditions Relating to Alcohol Sales

The following information is for Planning Commission consideration: 1) concentration of on-site alcohol sales establishments, 2) neighborhood crime statistics, and 3) other alcohol establishments within a quarter mile radius:

1. Concentration of on-site alcohol sales establishments – The request is to establish beer and wine sales for on-site consumption at an existing restaurant within Census Tract No. 5553. The ABC issues Type 41 licenses for on-sale beer and wine, which allows for the sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption at the premises where sold. In this case, minors are allowed on the premises. Currently, there are six (6) active on-sale alcohol establishments within Census Tract No. 5553 and

ABC does not recommend more than four (4) on-sale licenses within this census tract. The proposal would increase the number of establishments with on-sale licenses from six (6) to seven (7), which will be above the maximum concentration threshold.

However, staff believes that the proposed use will contribute to the long-term economic development goals of the City, provide an overall positive upgrade in the area and City through the aesthetic character and ambiance of the proposed use, and result in an increase in business taxes. Generally, beer and wine are expected offerings for restaurants such as the Taco Factory and their beverage offerings will be enhanced.

The following is a table listing of all on-site alcohol sales establishments within Census Tract No. 5553:

Existing On-Sale Alcohol Establishments Within Census Tract No. 5553			
No.	Business Name	Address	License Type
1	El Taco Locco	12341 Imperial Hwy, Norwalk	41
2	So Cal Pizza	12253 Imperial Hwy, Norwalk	41
3	Applebee’s Neighborhood Grill and Bar	12129 Imperial Hwy, Norwalk	47
4	Kung Pao Bowl	12331-12335 Imperial Hwy, Norwalk	41
5	Mountain Mike’s Pizza	12539 Imperial Hwy, Ste. 102, Norwalk	41
6	California Fish Grill	12539 Imperial Hwy, Ste. 101 Norwalk	41

2. Neighborhood crime statistics – The subject site is located within the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Reporting District No. 0452. According to a report issued by ABC, the number of Part 1 crime incidents (Part I crimes are defined by the Federal Government as criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, theft, grand theft auto, and arson) was 157 in the 2024 crime dataset. The City of Norwalk’s district average is 69.5, and a high crime district is any area with 20% above average Part I crime rate. Therefore, the reporting district in which Norwalk Taco Factory proposes the sale of alcohol for on-site consumption is considered a high-crime reporting district. However, staff findings indicate the proposed use to provide a net positive to the City through economic benefit, opportunity, and ambiance.

3. Alcohol establishments within a quarter mile radius – The subject site is located at the southwest

corner of Norwalk Boulevard and Crewe Street. Within a quarter mile radius of the subject site, there are four (4) establishments with an on-site alcohol beverage license and three (3) establishments with an off-site alcohol beverage license for the consumption of beer, wine or distilled spirits.

In consideration of the current activity related to the site and proximity of surrounding uses, staff recommends approval with conditions that address the following issues:

- Limiting hours of operation;
- Providing surveillance system and lighting for the site; and
- Training and education for employees regarding alcohol sales.

The sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption within the bona fide restaurant is consistent with the General Plan's policies related to the General Commercial Land Use category. The project encourages economic growth of a local business and enhancement of a commercial center, which is important for providing adequate local-serving commercial uses.

Off-Street Parking and Site Circulation

The proposed on-site sale of beer and wine is ancillary to the existing bona fide restaurant and does not intensify off-street parking requirements. Additionally, the existing floor area, at 1,400 square feet is not proposed to be intensified. As such, additional off-street parking spaces are not required as part of the proposed use.

Public Notification:

Public hearing notices were published in the Norwalk Patriot on May 2, 2025, and posted at locations set forth in NMC Section 1.08.030 as well as mailed to 103 property owners within 500 feet of the property. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any correspondence regarding the proposed project.

Environmental Assessment:

Pursuant to CEQA, this project will not have a significant effect on the environment per Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the CEQA Guidelines. Section 15301 Class 1 consists of operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing use. The project involves on-site sale and consumption of beer and wine within an existing bona fide restaurant.

Summary:

The proposed project complies with all applicable regulations and, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of surrounding uses. The request for approval of the sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption (Type 41 ABC license) will create a more vibrant commercial center and promote the economic viability of the existing restaurant. The alcohol service will be ancillary to the existing bona fide restaurant and limited to hours of operation that will not negatively impact the community. The project is consistent with the General Plan vision of providing

adequate local-serving commercial uses. Staff recommends approval of the proposed project subject to the conditions of approval.

Attachments:

- A. Resolution No. 25-07 (Director Approval Request No. 2025-04)
- B. Location and Vicinity Map
- C. Site Plan, Floor Plan, and Operations Narrative dated April 30, 2025
- D. Code Requirements Letter