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Title: PLANNING APPLICATION 22-17 FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOL (RENASCENCE SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL) IN THE C1 ZONE FOR THE PROPERTY AT 1600 ADAMS AVENUE AND 2850 MESA VERDE DRIVE EAST

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Attachments: 1. Agenda Report, 2. 1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution, 3. 2. Applicant Letter, 4. 3. Vicinity Map, 5. 4. Zoning Map, 6. 5. Reciprocal Parking Agreement, 7. 6. PA-85-102 Staff Report, 8. 7. Residential Distance Exhibits, 9. 8. Project Plans, 10. 9. Council-Adopted Outdoor Play Area Guidelines

| Date | Ver. | Action By | Action | Result |
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TITLE:

PLANNING APPLICATION 22-17 FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOL (RENASCENCE SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL) IN THE C1 ZONE FOR THE PROPERTY AT 1600 ADAMS AVENUE AND 2850 MESA VERDE DRIVE EAST

DEPARTMENT: ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT/PLANNING DIVISION

PRESENTED BY: Patrick Achis, Assistant Planner

CONTACT INFORMATION: Patrick Achis, 714.754.5276, Patrick.Achis@costamesaca.gov

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution to:

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15301 (Class 1) Existing Facilities and Section 15332 (Class 32) Infill; and
2. Approve Planning Application 22-17, subject to conditions of approval.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

The applicant is Carrie Mizera with Renascence School International (RSI), for the property owners,

Mesa Verde Associates and C J Segerstrom & Sons.

BACKGROUND:

Zoning, Project Setting and Surrounding Uses

The subject property has a General Plan Land Use Designation of General Commercial (GC) and is zoned Local Business District (C1). The approximate 1.2 acre site contains a vacant, two-story, 23,000-square-foot building with a 46-space parking lot that was constructed in 1978 for the operation of a gym. Project implementation would repurpose and modify the existing gym building for the operation of a new private K-12 school. The project site is located between Elm Avenue to the immediate north, Adams Avenue to the south, Royal Palms Drive to the east and Mesa Verde Drive to the west.

Three other commercial properties are located generally to the west of the property and include an existing surgical center (1650 Adams Avenue), a dance studio (1640 Adams Avenue) and a pre-school (1620 Adams Avenue). The aforementioned adjacent three commercial properties and the subject proposed school property (1600 Adams Avenue) maintain a private agreement with an adjacent property owner for the use of a parking lot (2850 Mesa Verde Drive) that is located to the north of the proposed school site. The parking lot is a stand-alone parking lot with no other development on-site. To the immediate east of the subject property is a United States Post Office facility (1590 Adams Avenue) and a City Fire Station (1570 Adams Avenue). (See the below Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1 - Project Vicinity.



The subject property is outlined in red, including the shared surface parking lot.

Prior Land Use Approvals

In 1972, a private reciprocal access and parking agreement was recorded among the properties at 1600 - 1650 Adams Avenue, and the property at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East. The 1972 access/parking agreement has been provided as Attachment 2. At one time, these properties were all owned in common by a single property owner. Although the parking lot is technically a separate

parcel, the titles for the properties at 1600 (subject site), 1620, 1640 and 1650 Adams Avenue include allowed use of the common parking lot for access and parking. Further and as indicated below, the City has also permitted entitlements based on reciprocal access and parking between the aforementioned properties and the parking lot property at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East.

On June 10, 1985, the Planning Commission approved Conditional Use Permits for reciprocal access and compact parking spaces for the three existing commercial buildings located at 1600, 1640, and 1650 Adams Avenue (Planning Application PA-85-102). The staff report and resolution for PA-85-102 has been provided as Attachment 3.

On August 30, 2022, the Director of Development Services approved Development Review 21-08 and Minor Modification 21-21 to allow the demolition of an existing medical office building and the construction of a 17,424-square-foot new medical office building at 1650 Adams Avenue and reduced landscaped building side setback along Mesa Verde Drive. The staff report and resolution for Development Review 21-08 and Minor Modification 21-21 has been provided as Attachment 4.

Non-Conforming Development

The existing development is legal-nonconforming in terms of setback and floor area ratio (FAR). The applicant does not propose additional floor area or to expand the existing nonconforming setback and all proposed improvements will comply with the current C1-zone development standards.

DESCRIPTION:

Proposed Project

The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to operate a private K-12 school (Renaissance School International) in the existing 23,000-square-foot building. A maximum of 210 students would attend the school on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Approximately 32 teachers and staff members would be employed at the school. To prepare the building for the proposed use, a tenant improvement would create classrooms, administrative offices, breakrooms, two external playgrounds, a multi-purpose gym, and equipment/storage space. Please reference the applicant's project description included as Attachment No. 5 for specific project details.

Pursuant to Table 13-39 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code (CMMC), a school use requires Planning Commission approval of a conditional use permit (CUP) in the C1 - Local Business District. In order to approve a CUP, the CMMC requires that the Planning Commission make specific findings related to neighborhood compatibility, health and safety, and land use compatibility. The analysis regarding CUP findings is provided below in this report. Lastly, staff has drafted specific conditions of approval, included in the Resolution, to ensure site-specific land use compatibility.

ANALYSIS:

Exterior Modifications

The proposed architectural changes to the existing building focus on repurposing the previous fitness use (gym) to facilitate the new school. The design includes new fenestrations, colors, and materials that visually enhance the building. Mechanical equipment proposed for the building will be completely screened from the public right-of-way and neighboring properties. The applicant also proposes the development of two exterior playground areas that would replace an existing landscape area and 15 existing parking spaces. The northerly playground area is proposed to be approximately 4,000 square feet, and the southerly playground area is proposed to be approximately 2,600 square feet.

Both playground areas would include grass and playground equipment. In addition to the outdoor play areas, a 3,290-square-foot multi-purpose room will also be used as a play area.

On March 4, 2002, City Council adopted review criteria, guidelines, and conditions of approval for private school outdoor play areas. Staff have reviewed the conceptual play area plans for consistency with the guidelines, which are provided as Attachment No. 9. At this time, the outdoor play areas have been designed conceptually and the applicant intends to submit detailed play area plans at a later date. Based on the conceptual plans, the design complies with the guidelines, with the exception of minimum exterior play area. Based on the total number of students, the minimum exterior play area per the guidelines is approximately 22,000 square feet; the conceptual proposal provides for 6,600 square feet of exterior play area. However, additional indoor play areas are provided and recess schedules are staggered such that no more than 30 students would utilize each play area at a time. Staff believes that the play areas are adequate given the operating conditions, but will also continue to work with the applicant on the final design. Condition of Approval No. 10 is included to require the final design of the playground areas to be reviewed by staff and forwarded to the Planning Commission for final approval. Consistency with the guidelines will be evaluated in detail at that time.

The existing front stairwell and other landscape around the building is not proposed to change. All proposed alterations comply with the C1 Development Standards. See Exhibit 2 below which depicts the proposed project's east facing façade elevation.

Exhibit 2 - Project Rendering of the East-facing Façade



Interior Modifications

Only tenant improvements with no floor area additions are proposed to the existing interior of the facility, which includes a 17,119-square-foot lower main floor and a 5,274-square-foot second-floor level. The first floor is proposed to include 11 student classrooms, a multi-purpose gym/basketball court, a fitness area, a media and computer room, facility bathrooms, kitchen facilities and a teacher's lounge. The second floor level is proposed to include one classroom, an administrative office, a student multi-use room and additional bathrooms. The second-floor existing hallway will

remain which provides for required emergency ingress/egress.

School Operations

Renascence School International (RSI) has operated a private school in the City of Costa Mesa for approximately 11 years. Until recently, the school was located at 2990 Mesa Verde Drive East and as a result of a lease not being continued, the school temporarily operates on a short-term lease now at 1701 Baker Avenue. Both the former and current site of the school are approximately 0.6 miles from the proposed permanent project location at the subject property.

Current and proposed hours of school operation are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. During the school year from September to June, the school is in session weekdays from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and extended childcare is offered outside of instruction hours from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The school currently operates with 220 students that include pre-kindergarten to 9th grade. The school is modifying their operations to decrease their student capacity to 210 with the elimination of pre-kindergarten, and the addition of grade levels 10th - 12th. Once established, the School anticipates a future growth in student numbers to approximately 350 students (staff has informed the applicant that additional entitlements would be necessary to increase student capacity beyond 210 students).

Students are provided one 30 minute lunch break and two 15-minute recess breaks per school day. Recess and lunch breaks may be indoors (inside the gymnasium) or outdoors (inside the playgrounds) at staggered times with approximately 30 students in one area. There will be adult supervision during breaks. The student to teacher ratio is 18:1 during academic instruction time with a 30:1 ratio during breaks. The school currently operates with 52 employees (including staff and teachers) and is proposing to reduce the facility staff and teachers to 32 total.

Circulation and Student Pick-up and Drop-off

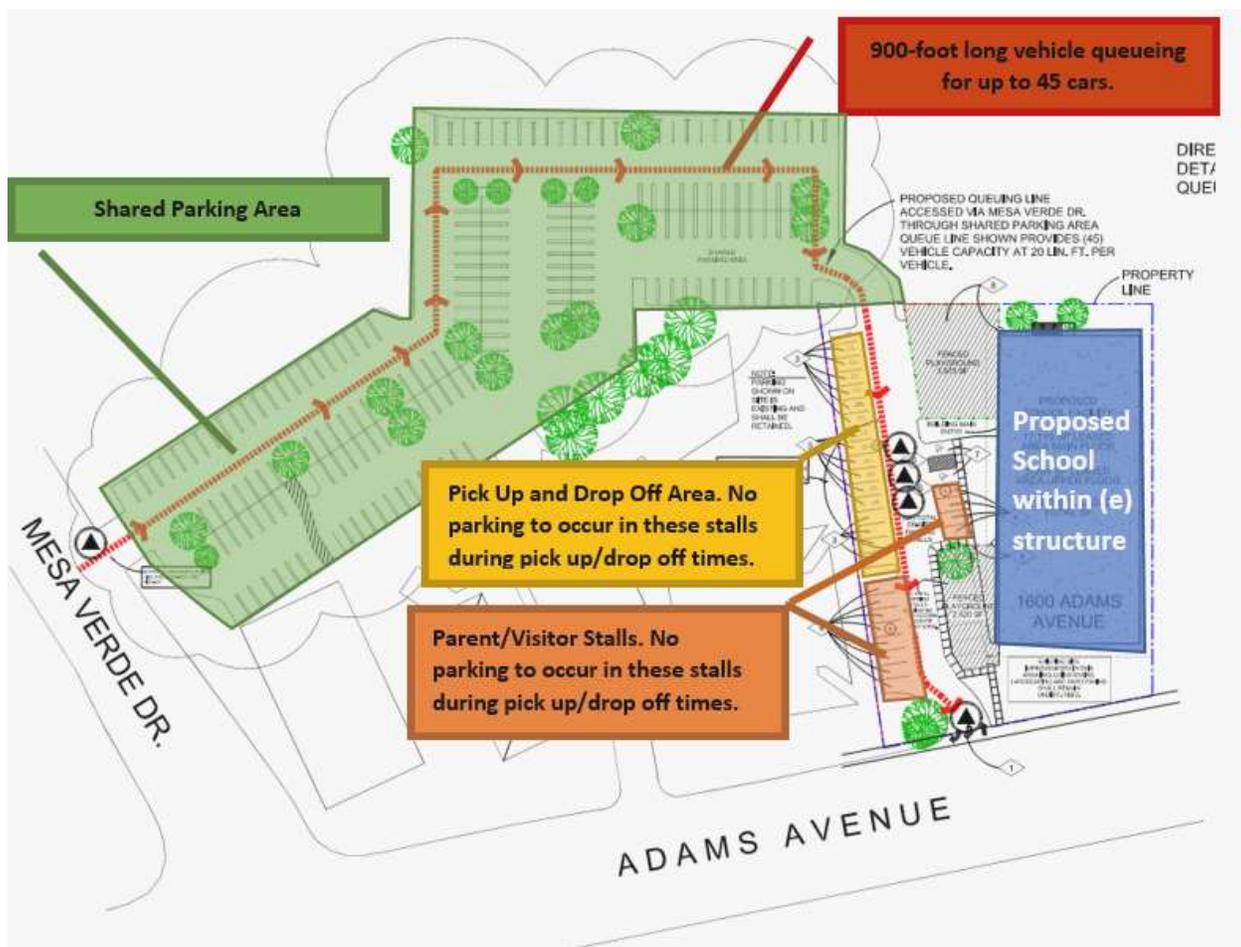
The subject site currently includes direct site access (ingress and egress) from Adams Avenue, and indirect access (ingress and egress) from Mesa Verde Drive East. Vehicular ingress to the site is from Adams Avenue for vehicles traveling northbound with right-turns into the site, and southbound traveling vehicles on Adams Avenue via left-hand turns from a dedicated center median turn-lane. Vehicles exiting the site can currently make both left-hand or right-hand turns onto Adams Avenue; however, a Condition of Approval 29 has been added to limit vehicle movements from this driveway to right-hand turns only. Indirect access to the subject site is provided from Mesa Verde Drive East, via the property at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East (through the existing parking lot). As previously indicated, a private reciprocal access and parking agreement was recorded in 1972 between the subject property and the parking lot property for access and use of parking. In addition, in 1985, the Planning Commission approved a CUP for similar purposes as the aforementioned private access/parking agreement.

Similar to the schools existing operating conditions, all students attending the school are transported by car and according to school records, 18 percent of the school attendees have other siblings that attend the school, and thus carpool in a single vehicle. According to the applicant's project description, the proposed student pick-up and drop-off activity will be coordinated by school staff through the on-site parking lots. The school assigns each student an arrival/departure time slot by grade levels allowing a 15 minute grace period before drop-off time and after pick-up time to control traffic and vehicle stacking. The morning arrival window is from 7:45 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Parents are required to arrive and depart within that timeframe and organized into groups of approximately 40 students during each arrival time window. According to the applicant, prior to each school year,

parents will be required to attend a school orientation which will provide instruction and hand-outs regarding student drop-off/pick-up.

As indicated in the below Exhibit 3, with the use of the school parking area on-site (1600 Adams Avenue), and the parking lot at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East, the capacity for student drop-off/pick-up queuing is approximately 900 linear feet, and allows a vehicle stacking area for approximately 45 cars, which is consistent with the amount of cars expected during each group drop-off/pick-up time.

Exhibit 3 - Queuing and Drop-off/Pick-up Plan



The applicant proposes that student drop-off/pick-up vehicles would turn right from Mesa Verde Drive East into the parking lot at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East and follow a specified queuing path until reaching the drop-off/pick-up area located in front of the school. The applicant further indicates that on-site circulation will be controlled by four staff members and additional volunteers to expedite the flow of vehicles through the shared parking lot to the drop-off zone. The vehicle queuing and drop-off/pick-up areas will be coned, identified by signage, and have specific dedicated staff to assist drivers from Mesa Verde Drive East to the front of the school.

As required by the City's Traffic Division and previously indicated, the applicant is conditioned to re-design the parking lot ingress/egress on Adams Avenue to allow right-hand turn exits only. Several other Conditions of Approval will ensure the pick-up and drop-off plan is implemented to avoid

conflicts with neighboring tenants and surrounding uses, such as:

- Condition of Approval No. 6 requires the applicant to maintain and enforce the pick-up and drop-off schedule set forth in the “Applicant’s Operation Plan” to prevent adverse traffic conditions;
- Condition of Approval No. 7 requires the applicant to evaluate site access during peak times to identify any operational issues with vehicle parking and queueing. If operational problems arise, the applicant shall contract with a qualified professional to prepare a traffic circulation study identifying causes and solutions. Recommended actions from the traffic circulation study shall be implemented to the satisfaction of the Public Works Department; and
- Condition of Approval No. 31 requires the applicant to submit a “Circulation and Final Drop-off/Pick-up Plan” to the Public Works Department for review and approval. The Final Plan shall show the location of proposed directional signage, striping, and provide the proposed number and location of staff assisting with circulation and drop-off/pick up operations.

ANALYSIS:

Parking

As indicated in the “Background” section of this report, in 1972, a private reciprocal access and parking agreement was recorded among the properties at 1600-1650 Adams Avenue and the property at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East. The agreement provided the subject property, along with the several other adjacent commercial properties exclusive shared access and use of parking at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East. At that time, the aforementioned properties were all owned in common and have subsequently been sold to individual owners; with the exception of the property at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East (parking lot). In 1986, the Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit for “consolidation of the use of the parking lot” at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East with the adjacent properties that front Adams Avenue (1600, 1620, 1640 and 1650 Adams Avenue).

The total number of parking spaces provided for the commercial buildings at 1600, 1620, 1640 and 1650 Adams Avenue, and shared parking is 294 spaces. The current mix of uses that share parking include a montessori school (1620 Adams Avenue), a dance studio (1640 Adams Avenue), and a medical office (1650 Adams Avenue). The subject site (1600 Adams Avenue) has been used as a gym since its development, and has been vacant for several years.

The below Table 1 provides the required parking ratio for the current uses/properties that share the parking lot at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East (not including the proposed subject school property at 1600 Adams Avenue). In summary, Table 1 concludes that when comparing the required parking for the currently operating uses (1620, 1640 and 1650 Adams Avenue) and the parking provided on site and within the shared parking lot, there are 135 parking spaces remaining and available to the proposed school.

Table 1

| Table 1: Parking Requirements 1620-1650 Adams Avenue | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Address | Square Footage | Use | Parking Requirement | Required Parking |
| 1620 Adams | 9,852 SF | Montessori School | PA-07-25 | 26 |
| 1640 Adams | 4,500 SF | Dance Studio | 10 spaces per 1,000 SF | 45 |
| 1650 Adams | 14,597 SF | Medical Office | 6 space per 1,000 SF | 88 |
| Total Required: | | | | 159 |
| Total Provided: | | | | 294 |
| Parking Available: | | | | 135 |

While parking requirements for colleges and trade schools are outlined in the Municipal Code, parking ratios for K-12 schools are not specified. In such cases, the CMMC (Section 13-90 - “Parking for uses not specified”), allows the Planning Division to determine required parking for unlisted uses.

As previously mentioned, the School requires that all students be driven to school and dropped off, which negates the potential parking demand created by students/parents. In addition, the School’s upper grade students older than 16 (driving age) are also restricted from driving. However, staff believes that it is likely that there will be a small percentage of parents that will park for administrative and/or other student related school purposes, and therefore a certain amount of parking is needed even though student drop-off/pick-up is required. In addition, as with generally any use, the School will require parking for staff, delivery and other associated visitors. In consideration of the School’s total potential parking demand, the Planning Division believes an appropriate amount of parking for the proposed school use would be 78 spaces. The 78 parking spaces accounts for 32 staff members requiring one parking space each, ten-percent of the student capacity requiring daily parking for administrative/other purposes, and an additional 25 parking spaces for daily deliveries and other non-contemplated visitor parking demand.

As indicated in Table 1 above, after subtracting the required parking for the adjacent uses, there are 135 parking spaces available for the School’s use. The 135 spaces includes 89 shared parking spaces at 2850 Mesa Verde Drive East and 46 on-site spaces at 1600 Adams Avenue.

The applicant will remove 15 of the 46 on-site spaces at 1600 Adams Avenue for the installation of two outdoor playground areas. As a result, the total surplus parking for the project is 42 spaces as shown in the calculation of Table 2:

Table 2

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Parking Available w/o School | 135 |
| Project-Required Spaces | -78 |
| On-Site Parking Removed | -15 |
| | |
| Total Parking with Project | 42 Surplus Spaces |

During student pick-up/drop-off, the school will restrict use of a majority of the 31 on-site spaces to facilitate vehicle flow. However, adequate parking would be still be available for the use.

Traffic

CMMC Section 13-275(a), specifies that “a traffic impact study shall be required for all development projects estimated by the Public Works Department to generate one hundred (100) or more vehicle trip ends during a peak hour.” The morning peak hour period is generally considered to be 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and the evening peak hour is 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Since proposed classes end at 3:30 p.m. and before the evening peak hour, this analysis only considers the morning peak hour trip generation. As part of the analysis, staff considered the potential morning peak hour period traffic demand of the students being dropped-off starting at 7:45 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. The City’s traffic review focuses on net trip increase and therefore the previous use’s trips (gym) are credited (subtracted) from the proposed use estimated peak hour trip generation. Additionally, according to current student records, approximately 18 percent of the school families have multiple siblings (multiple students) that attend the school, and therefore staff discounted a limited amount of trips related to carpooling. Based on this analysis, staff determined that the proposed use does not meet the threshold for requiring a traffic study. Additionally, pursuant to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) 11th Edition Trip Generation Manual, the previous use of the gym generated more average daily trips (ADT) than the proposed school; therefore, the change in use reduces average daily trips from the site and therefore no traffic impact fee is required.

Compatibility with Adjacent Residential Land Uses

The project is designed and conditioned to minimize potential impacts to neighboring residential uses that are located across Adams and Elm Avenues, and on Lido Place. Specifically, the existing site walls, roadways, and orientation of the project, minimize impacts and ensure the school use does not interfere with the adjoining residential neighborhoods. “Residential Distance Exhibits” are included as Attachment 6 and illustrates the proximity of the project site to the nearest residential uses. The Exhibits observe the following relationships between the project and nearby residential uses:

Adams Avenue. On Adams Avenue, the project is separated from residences by a six-lane arterial roadway. Existing mature trees, an eight-foot block wall, and the rear yard orientation of the residences serve to adequately address potential conflicts with these residential properties.

Lido Place. The school is over 250 feet away from these residences, which are also separated from the shared parking area by an eight-foot high block wall. However, several residential properties on Lido Place abut the project’s shared parking lot and at this location during drop-off and pick-up times, increased traffic is anticipated to occur. To minimize potential impacts such as vehicle noise (doors opening and closing and engine start-up) the

project is conditioned that this area only be used for queuing of vehicles. Further, school parking monitors are required to direct drivers away from this area towards the school. The parking lot monitors will also ensure that vehicle radio volume cannot be heard from outside of the car and horns shall not be used. As conditioned, staff anticipates that the parking lot will operate similar to existing conditions.

Elm Avenue. Residences along Elm Avenue are located over 160 feet from the project site. Existing tall trees and a four-foot high block wall serve to screen the project. Elm Avenue does not provide direct access to the project site, and this will remain unchanged by the project.

Project compliance with noise control standards pursuant to Chapter 13 of the Zoning Code is required. In the event that the noise level exceeds the City's noise standard, conditions of approval have been added to require that the project provide a six-foot high wall around playground areas for sound screening or other similar solution to address the issue. Additionally, Condition No. 6 includes a limitation of 30 students in each outdoor play area to minimize potential noise.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE:

The Costa Mesa General Plan establishes the long-range planning and policy direction that guides change and preserves the qualities that define the community. The 2015-2035 General Plan sets forth the vision for Costa Mesa for the next two decades. This vision focuses on protecting and enhancing Costa Mesa's diverse residential neighborhoods, accommodating an array of businesses that both serve local needs and attract regional and international spending, and continuing to provide cultural, educational, social, and recreational amenities that contribute to the quality of life in the community. Over the long term, General Plan implementation will ensure that development decisions and improvements to public and private infrastructure are consistent with the goals, objectives and policies contained in this Plan. The following analysis evaluates the proposed project's consistency with applicable policies and objectives of the 2015-2035 General Plan.

- 1. Policy LU-1.1:** Provide for the development of a mix and balance of housing opportunities, commercial goods and services, and employment opportunities in consideration of the needs of the business and residential segments of the community.

Consistency: The project will allow for the relocation of an existing private school that has operated in the City for over 11 years. The proposed school would maintain and provide a local educational opportunity that supports the City's goals of providing high quality and diverse services to residents.

- 2. Policy LU-3.1:** Protect existing stabilized residential neighborhoods, including mobile home parks (and manufactured housing parks), from the encroachment of incompatible or potentially disruptive land uses and/or activities.

Consistency: The project has been designed to ensure that potential conflicts with residential land uses are minimized. Surrounding land uses share compatibility with the project including a preschool, dance studio, and medical office. The project upgrades the existing vacant building with articulation and building modulations to enhance the urban environment. Queuing, driveways, parking and loading spaces have been reviewed by the Public Works Department for adequacy, efficiency, and safety. Lastly, the project has been designed and conditioned to protect the character and enjoyment of nearby

residences.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

Pursuant to Title 13, Section 13-29(g)(2), Conditional Use Permit Findings, of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, in order to approve the project, the Planning Commission must find that the evidence presented in the administrative record demonstrates that the proposed project substantially meets specified findings. Staff recommends approval of the request, based on the following assessment of facts and findings, which are also reflected in the draft resolution.

- *The proposed development or use is substantially compatible with developments in the same general area and would not be materially detrimental to other properties within the area.*

The proposed private school improvements and operating characteristics are compatible with the allowed commercial, public/private institutional, and residential uses in the vicinity. Physical alterations to establish the school conform to all current building and safety standards. The School's parking demand will not exceed the parking available within the shared parking lot and will not interfere with the access agreement for the surrounding properties. All rooftop equipment will be screened and hidden from view. The development would be required to comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The proposed school improvements will comply with the development standards for the C1 (Local Business District), and the architectural design creates visual interest through building articulation, window treatments, and landscaping.

- *Granting the conditional use permit will not be materially detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the public or otherwise injurious to property or improvements within the immediate neighborhood.*

The School's operations, including circulation, parking, operational hours and playground location are designed to avoid conflicts with surrounding properties. Additionally, the operation of the school will be required to comply with all local, State, and federal regulations. Pedestrian and vehicular access would be provided from Mesa Verde Drive East via an existing on-site two-way driveway. The Adams Avenue driveway would be reconstructed as a one-way right-hand turn exit only. The on-site driveway will be re-constructed pursuant to City Standards and reviewed and approved by the Public Works Department. The proposed site design includes the provision of adequate emergency vehicle access and public services and utilities.

- *Granting the conditional use permit will not allow a use, density or intensity which is not in accordance with the general plan designation and any applicable specific plan for the property.*

The project, as proposed and conditioned, complies with the General Plan, and with approval of the CUP, the standards prescribed in the Zoning Code. The proposed use as a private school is consistent with the General Commercial General Plan land use designation and Local Business District zoning classification. The proposed project does not increase the building square footage and does not otherwise change the site's existing density or intensity. There are no Specific Plan's applicable to this site.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (Class 1) "Existing Facilities" and 15332 (Class 32) "In-Fill Development Projects".

The Class 1 CEQA exemption exempts minor alterations to existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of the existing or prior use. The proposed new private school involves negligible to no expansion of the existing or prior use because it will have little or no impact on the surrounding area since all parking required by the private school use will be accommodated at the project site. The project involves tenant improvements to convert a gym space into a private school for up to 210 students, and there will be no increase in existing floor area. Lastly, average daily traffic of the private school is considered less than the previous use of the gym.

The Class 32 CEQA exemption applies to projects characterized as in-fill development provided that the project is consistent with the general plan designation and applicable general plan policies, as well as with applicable zoning designations and regulations. Further, the Class 32 Exemption requires that the project development occurs within the City limits, on a project site of no more than five acres, the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, and that the approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. Lastly, the site must be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The proposed project site is approximately 1.2 acres in size, is located within an urban area, and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. The project is consistent with the General Plan designations and policies, and is consistent with all applicable zoning regulations upon approval of the requested entitlement. The project site and adjacent areas have no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species. Lastly, as designed and conditioned, the project will not have significant environmental impacts related to traffic, noise, air quality, and water quality.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Planning Commission has the following alternatives:

1. Approve the project. The Planning Commission may approve the project as proposed, subject to the conditions outlined in the attached Resolution.
2. Approve the project with modifications. The Planning Commission may suggest specific changes that are necessary to alleviate concerns. If any of the additional requested changes are substantial, the item should be continued to a future meeting to allow a redesign and/or additional analysis. In the event of significant modifications to the proposal, staff will return with a revised Resolution incorporating new findings and/or conditions.
3. Deny the project. If the Planning Commission believes that there are insufficient facts to support the findings for approval, the Planning Commission must deny the application, provide facts in support of denial, and direct staff to incorporate the findings for denial into a Resolution for denial. If the project were denied, the applicant could not submit substantially the same type of application for at least six months.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The draft resolution has been reviewed and approved as to form by the City Attorney's Office.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Pursuant to Title 13, Section 13-29(d), of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, three types of public notification have been completed no less than 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing:

1. **Mailed notice.** A public notice was mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius of the project sites. The required notice radius is measured from the external boundaries of the property. (See attached Notification Radius Map.)
2. **On-site posting.** A public notice was posted on the street frontage of the project sites.
3. **Newspaper publication.** A public notice was published once in the Daily Pilot newspaper.

As of the date of this report's publishing, no public comments have been received. Any public comments received prior to the September 26, 2022 Planning Commission meeting will be provided separately to the Planning Commission.

CONCLUSION:

The applicant proposes to relocate an existing private school that is currently operating in the City less than one-mile away. The school has operated in the City for the last 11 years. The school is proposed between an existing montessori school and a United States Post Office, and would replace an existing gym. The school will be located on one of the City's major commercial corridors, is compatible with surrounding commercial uses and is designed and conditioned to avoid and minimize potential impacts to nearby residential properties. The project meets the required findings for approval of a Conditional Use Permit, and therefore staff recommends approval of the project subject to conditions of approval.