

## Purrs in Paradise - Project Description Letter

To: City of Costa Mesa  
Planning Department  
77 Fair Drive  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Dear Planning Department,

We would like to formally ask for consideration for our proposed business, **Purrs in Paradise**, to operate at 2981 Bristol St, 1st Floor, Ste B3, Costa Mesa, CA (The CAMP), which lies within a C1 (Local Business District) zoning designation. While the inclusion of a cat lounge may traditionally be permitted in a C2 zone, we believe our business qualifies for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) within a C1 zone due to its primary identity as a retail and entertainment establishment.

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### Project Overview

Purrs in Paradise is a premium, family-friendly retail shop and cat lounge serving high-quality prepackaged desserts including ice cream treats, plant-based options, cookies, and macarons, along with cat themed merchandise.

Guests may choose to spend time in a small, separately enclosed cat lounge with up to 15 adoptable cats. This experience is by reservation or walk-in (when capacity allows), with a separate time-limited entry fee, and is designed for entertainment and therapeutic engagement, rather than as an animal boarding or shelter operation.

The cat lounge and the retail and dessert area will remain fully separated by a wall with a large glass viewing window, allowing patrons in the dessert area to enjoy watching the cats at play. Entry into the cat lounge will be through a designated double-door vestibule system that provides controlled access and prevents cats from freely entering the retail area. When cats need to be brought in or out for intake or adoption, staff will carefully transport them through the retail space using secure carriers to ensure safety for both the animals and patrons. Additionally, all customers will be required to remove their shoes before entering the cat lounge to maintain cleanliness.

We are partnering with a local animal rescue organization, Friends of Normie, that will handle all aspects of the adoption process, including vetting, applications, fees, approvals, and any medical issues that may arise with the cats. This partnership ensures that animal welfare and legal compliance are fully managed by experienced professionals.

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## Primary Retail and Entertainment Use

- **Revenue from Retail Sales:** We anticipate a large portion of our revenue will be generated from dessert and merchandise sales, aligning with traditional C1 retail establishments such as cafes and dessert parlors.
  - **Entertainment-Oriented Cat Lounge:** The cat lounge is an ancillary, time-limited entertainment feature that enhances the customer experience. It is similar in nature to play areas in family-oriented cafes or art studio lounges.
  - **Minimal Cross-Contamination:** There is a strict separation between the retail food sales area and the cat lounge.
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## Addressing Kennel & Overnight Stays

We recognize that overnight stays typically prompt kennel classification concerns. However, we respectfully submit that our use is fundamentally different:

- **Cats Only:** We will only have cats on premises and not any other animals such as dogs, birds, or reptiles. There will be no barking or any other issues with noise.
- **Indoors Only:** There will be no animals outdoors at any time. All cats will be kept indoors in a temperature-controlled, quiet environment.
- **Low Impact Overnight Stays:** Cats will remain onsite overnight and will not be transported daily to reduce stress and risk. While they will be unaccompanied at night, they will be continuously monitored via audio and video security systems and in their own individual kennels in the cat resting and litter room.
- **No Public Access After Hours:** There is no foot traffic or noise generated at night.
- **Use of Kennels for Health and Safety:** Cats will remain onsite overnight in individual kennels located within the dedicated cat resting and litter room. These kennels are designed to provide each cat with adequate space, ventilation, and comfort while ensuring their safety and preventing conflicts between animals. During operating hours, cats will have supervised free access to the lounge area to interact with visitors and each other. At closing, cats will be transitioned into their kennels in the resting and litter room for the night. This approach ensures a secure and low-stress environment overnight, while still allowing the cats freedom and socialization during the day. Additionally, kennels will be used to separate any cats that require temporary isolation due to illness or for acclimation to the new space.
- **No Animal Boarding or Public Drop-Offs:** We are not a boarding facility. Cats are not accepted from the public, and no temporary housing services are offered.
- **Pre-Screened Cats Only:** All cats are temperament-tested and selected by our rescue partner to ensure they are highly socialized and well-suited to a lounge environment.
- **Quiet, Predictable Environment:** Unlike typical kennels that may house noisy or stressed animals, our facility is limited to calm, quiet cats in a peaceful space.

- **Strict Capacity Limits:** A maximum of 15 cats will be onsite at any time—no fluctuations during holidays or peak times like kennels.
- **No Overnight Staffing Required:** Cats will remain onsite overnight in secured kennels to ensure their safety and well-being. The cat lounge and kennel area will be continuously monitored by a security system with video, audio, motion, and sound detection. The system is capable of sending real-time alerts not only if motion is detected but also if unusual or loud noises are captured, such as a cat in distress. While there will not be a staff member physically present overnight, the owners will have remote access to the monitoring system at all times. If an alert is triggered, or if unusual behavior or sound is observed, one of the owners will respond immediately if necessary. If we are unavailable, a trusted staff member or our designated rescue partner contact will provide assistance. This layered approach—with kenneling, surveillance, motion and sound alerts, and a defined response plan—ensures that the cats are secure, supervised, and able to receive timely assistance in the event of an emergency. In the event of an emergency, cats will be taken to a local 24 hour emergency animal hospital (such as Central Orange County Emergency Animal Hospital) for immediate care.
- **Therapeutic, Recreational Purpose:** The cat lounge is meant to provide guests with a unique, therapeutic experience—not to serve as a functional animal holding space.
- **Dedicated Rescue Partner Management:** We work solely with one cat rescue partner, Friends of Normie, who handles all animal logistics, care, adoption processing, and medical oversight. In addition to this primary rescue partnership, we also plan to reach out to the Costa Mesa Animal Shelter (Priceless Pet Rescue) to explore ways we can support their efforts and collaborate on shared animal welfare goals.

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## Cleanliness, Sanitation, and Air Quality Measures

- **Cleanable Materials and Furnishings:** All furnishings and materials used in the cat lounge will be carefully selected for their durability and ease of cleaning. Surfaces will be non-porous and washable, allowing us to maintain strict cleanliness and sanitation protocols.
- **HEPA Air Purifiers:** Commercial-grade HEPA air purifiers will be used in both the cat lounge and the litter room to eliminate dander, odor, and airborne particles.
- **Double Door Entry System:** Entrance into the cat lounge is through a vestibule with two doors; interior doors will be sensor-enabled so only one can open at a time.
- **No Smell or Noise Disturbance:** Through our design, ventilation, and strict sanitation protocols, we will ensure there is no detectable odor inside or outside the premises. The building is constructed with standard commercial walls that meet current building code requirements for separation between tenant spaces. While the walls are not specially treated with added soundproofing materials, they provide adequate acoustic separation, as evidenced by the fact that no neighboring noise is audible within our

space. Cats, unlike dogs or other animals, are not typically a significant noise source. Their vocalizations (meowing, purring, or play sounds) are intermittent and low-volume, and do not rise to a level considered disruptive under municipal noise standards. To further minimize potential sound, cats will be kenneled during non-operational hours, reducing both movement and activity overnight. Based on the building's construction, the quiet nature of cats, and our operational protocols, we do not anticipate generating noise levels that would exceed thresholds defined in Costa Mesa's Municipal Code for commercial zones or that would disturb adjacent businesses.

- **No Outdoor Seating or Animals:** All activity will take place indoors with no animals or customers congregating outdoors.
- **Cat Litter Box Maintenance:** Cat litter boxes will be cleaned throughout the day and sanitized and disinfected as often as once per week or more frequently as needed to ensure optimal sanitation and odor control.
- **Dedicated Mop Sink and Equipment:** A mop sink will be installed near the cat litter room. We will use separate mops for the cat lounge and the retail area to prevent cross-contamination.

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## Predictability, Safety, and Minimal Impact

- **Structured Visits:** Access to the cat lounge is time-limited (30 minute & 60 minute bookings) and available by reservation or walk-in (as long as reservations are not full), creating predictable and monitored foot traffic.
- **Limited Capacity:** The lounge will host no more than 12 guests at a time, with a maximum of 15 cats on-site.
- **Noise Control:** The lounge is designed for quiet, therapeutic interaction and is not a high-energy or noisy environment.
- **Adoption Window Hours:** Adoptions will be facilitated during our regular business hours. Our rescue partner does not need to be present on site or off site for the adoption process. Instead, all adoption applicants will be pre-screened and approved in advance by our rescue partner. Once approved, the adoption pickup can take place directly at our location during business hours. This ensures that adoptions are coordinated efficiently, with all necessary approvals completed ahead of time, while still providing flexibility and accessibility for adopters.
- **Blinds Installed:** Windows will be outfitted with blinds to reduce visual stimulation and will be drawn down only at night once the shop is closed.
- **Proposed Hours of Operation:** Operating hours will be daily from 10am-9pm (subject to change depending on demand)

- **Employees:** We plan to have two employees working at all times; one for the retail side and one in the cat lounge to interact with guests. An estimated five part-time employees will be working in rotation upon business opening.
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## **Commitment to Compliance and Community**

- **Professional Drafting and Design:** We are working with experienced interior designers, architects, and draftspeople to ensure plans meet city expectations.
  - **Community-Oriented:** Our goal is to build a positive, neighborhood-friendly destination that enriches the local commercial environment.
  - **No Impact to Surrounding Businesses:** Our business is thoughtfully designed to operate quietly and cleanly, with no negative impact on adjacent tenants. We will maintain strict noise control within the cat lounge, which will host only calm, temperament-tested cats. No amplified sound or high-energy activities will occur on-site. Odor mitigation will be ensured through commercial HEPA air purifiers, and regular litter maintenance. All operations, including animal access, will be conducted indoors, and no animals or guests will congregate outside. We are committed to managing customer flow in a way that avoids congestion or disruption to nearby businesses. Our controlled, predictable schedule and limited occupancy will ensure our presence remains harmonious with the surrounding commercial environment.
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We kindly ask for your support and consideration in granting a Conditional Use Permit so that we may bring this thoughtful, community-driven concept to Costa Mesa. We believe Purrs in Paradise will be a source of delight, social good, and economic activity for the city.

Warm regards,  
Michelle and Ben Lioe  
Co-Founders, Purrs in Paradise