



# STAFF REPORT – PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

---

**TO:** Honorable Chair and Commissioners

**FROM:** Jen Dart, Deputy Director of Community Development

**PREPARER:** Joe Mateer, Senior Planner

**DATE:** July 22, 2025

**TITLE:** Consider Approval of a Use Permit for Baker, dba Hounds of Humboldt at 148 South G Street, Suite 1; File No. 245-036-UP and adoption of a Class 3 CEQA exemption

---

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Planning Commission open the public hearing, receive public comments and consider approving the Use Permit for a commercial dog park with alcohol sales by adopting: 1) a California Environmental Quality Act, Class 3, Section 15303(c) Conversion of Small Structures categorical exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines; and then; 2) the Action with Findings of Approval, Conditions of Approval and project description and plan set.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The applicant is proposing to develop and operate a tavern and indoor-outdoor commercial dog park. The project is in a portion of a 4.4-acre light industrial site with multiple tenants. Interior and exterior improvements include the creation of dog play areas, the bar and seating areas, bathrooms, an office, and supply room. A Use Permit is required for the alcohol sales and a Minor Use Permit is required for the indoor / outdoor commercial recreation portion of the project. The Planning Commission is the review authority for both uses. The property is in the coastal zone, with State coastal development permit authority. The Planning Commission's approval would authorize the proposed commercial dog park with alcohol sales.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The project is on South G Street across from the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife. The proposed business is within a portion of an existing industrial complex with multiple buildings and tenants. The unique project is a first of its kind in Arcata and the greater Humboldt Bay area. The business will appeal to a niche clientele with dog ownership or interests. The business will operate similarly to a membership club; however, it is open to the public. The various memberships types appeal to visitors for a one-time visit or local community members that may have limited access to outdoor play areas for their pets. The business appeals to clients as there are various designated areas with play structures; dogs can be off leash; and the socialization between pets and their owners.

Community Development staff identified noise, water quality, odor, access, fencing, and other department or agency concerns that required further analysis by the applicant. After meeting with the applicant, City staff chose to forward the project to the Planning Commission with Conditions of Approval to address these areas of concern. The Planning Commission may adopt, modify, or continue the item to allow the applicant to address any areas of concern the Commission may have.

Project specific Condition of Approvals include:

- noise management from excessive barking and the music from the business;
- water quality and odor controls due to concentration of dog urine and feces in outdoor/indoor areas;
- access, sidewalk, bicycle/vehicle parking, directional signs or striping on a legacy industrial location with multiple structures and businesses;
- addresses non-compliant fencing installed without prior review;
- County Health Department, CA Alcoholic Beverages Control, and CA Water Board comments or standards;

Community Development Department staff recommends the Commission review and consider approving the Use Permit by adopting the environmental exemption and then the proposed Action including the Findings of Approval and Conditions of Approval.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

The project qualifies for the following California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Categorical Exemption: Section 15303, Class 3 – Conversion of Small Structures. This determination is based on the proposed development and operation of a tavern in conjunction with an indoor/outdoor commercial dog park. As noted in the Use Permit Findings of Approval (Attachment A), the site development and business operations are consistent with the City of Arcata General Plan 2045 and complies with applicable Land Use and Development Guide (coastal) and Land Use Code (citywide) standards.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

A. PC Action 245-036