



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 04/02/2025
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Planning and Development Department

2025-121

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBJECT:

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2023-0015 FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RELIGIOUS FACILITY (MOSQUE) WITHIN AN EXISTING 4,330 SQUARE-FOOT RESIDENTIAL DWELLING, ON 1.37 ACRES LOCATED AT 2460 SOUTH MAIN STREET IN THE R-1-8.4, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, ZONE (APPLICANT: ALI RAZA RIZVI, SAJJADIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to affirm the decision by the Planning and Housing Commission in granting Conditional Use Permit 2023-0015 (CUP2023-0015) for the establishment of a religious facility on 1.37 acres within an existing residential dwelling. The dwelling is 4,330 square feet and the interior of the structure will be converted to support prayer services, religious teachings, and an administrative office. The exterior of the property will be improved with a parking lot and landscaping. The R-1-8.4 zone is intended for single family residential, but allows religious facilities by a conditional use permit, which is the reason for CUP2023-0015.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Take no action, thereby affirming the Planning and Housing Commission's action granting CUP2023-0015, based on the finding contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

OR

- b. Set the item for review at a subsequent meeting.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The applicant and current owner of the property is the Sajjadia Islamic Society, an organization that provides religious learning programs and a prayer hall for the Shia Islamic community. The Society is currently operating within the Corona North Mall at 425 Corona Mall. The applicant purchased the property at 2460 S. Main Street with the intent of relocating, establishing and operating a mosque. As with other various religious organizations in the City, the Sajjadia Islamic Society would operate the new facility and learning center with its own specific prayer times.

According to Section 17.92.040(B), religious facilities may be permitted by CUP only if the use is located on a site with primary access and at least one frontage on a major, secondary or fully improved collector street. Main Street is a four-lane, Major Arterial.

ANALYSIS:

Site Plan

The property is bordered by single family residential dwellings to the north and west, a church to the south, Nanner's Way (street) to the northwest, and Main Street to the east. The existing dwelling and an attached two-car garage are centrally located on the property. Two driveways are located at the property's east perimeter which provides vehicular access from Main Street. A third driveway is located at the northwest perimeter which provides access from Nanners Way.

No expansion is proposed to the existing building. However, new paved parking spaces with associated drive aisles and landscaping are proposed around the building. The perimeter of the property will be fenced and the new parking lot will be gated.

To facilitate the capture and infiltration of surface runoff, a landscaped bioretention basin is proposed on the northeastern corner of the project site. Minimal grading is proposed and will be limited to leveling the site for the parking lot and providing proper onsite drainage patterns.

Pursuant to the R-1-8.4 zone, the project site requires a 25-foot front-yard building setback, a side yard setback of five feet on one side and 10 feet on the other side, and when adjacent to a street, a 15-foot rear-yard building setback. Per the CMC, when a lot abuts more than one street, the lot's front yard is considered the narrowest portion abutting the street. As the narrowest portion of the project site fronts Nanners Way, this area is considered the front yard for the purpose of determining the front yard setback area, which makes the portion of the property that abuts Main Street the rear setback area. The existing structure meets the setback requirement of the R-1-8.4 zone.

Elevations

The conversion of the existing single story residential dwelling to its new use as a mosque will include minimal exterior alterations. At the building's east elevation, one existing window will be demolished, and a new door will be added, coupled with the removal of gates (located forward of the building's entryway). The building's existing stucco surfacing, earthtone-colored concrete roof tiles, and general form (gabled roofs, single-story, etc.) will be unchanged.

Operation

The interior of the new mosque will include two prayer halls totaling 1,675 SF, two reading rooms totaling 495 SF, a breakroom totaling 232 SF, and three restrooms totaling 443 SF. The remaining area consists of a two-car garage (for use by staff), various hallways and storage. New ramps are proposed on the west and east sides of the building that provide pedestrian access from the exterior to the prayer halls. The overall building footprint will be unchanged.

Prayers will be conducted inside the building five times daily, from sunrise to sunset. While the timing of prayer sessions will vary by time of the year/season (primarily occurring daily at sunrise and sunset), the applicant has provided the current prayer times, shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Prayer Times

Day of the Week	Prayer Time
Morning Prayer	5:07 AM
Noon Prayer	12:02 PM
Afternoon Prayer	3:20 PM
Sunset Prayer	5:49 PM
Evening Prayer	6:57 PM

From Saturday through Thursday, the applicant anticipates approximately zero to 10 people in attendance during specified prayer times, with larger gatherings on Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings where the average occupancy inside the building is expected to be between 50 to 75 individuals. Approximately 75 percent of the individuals will be adults, aged 18 and above; 20 percent will be children, aged 12 to 17; and the remaining five percent will be young children under the age of 5 years.

Access And On-Site Circulation

Patrons of the mosque will use the property's two existing driveways from Main Street. Driveways will be modified to meet current city standards but maintained in their current locations. The northerly driveway is proposed as the site's primary entrance and will allow for vehicles traveling southbound on Main Street to make right turns into the site. Northbound vehicles on Main Street are restricted from making left turns into the site due to an existing raised concrete center median located on Main Street. The southerly driveway is proposed as an exit-only driveway, and vehicles are limited to right turns onto Main Street due to the existing center median on Main Street.

Nanners Way is a local street and the driveway from this street is currently closed off by existing gates. The driveway from Nanners Way will remain gated during all hours of use

on the project site, and only available for use as secondary access for emergency vehicles. As such, the mosque meets the city’s siting criteria for religious facilities as the project site will have primary access from a major arterial street and will not have daily access from streets used by residential neighborhoods.

The parking lot entrance will be gated by an electric automatic gate that is offset from the site’s northerly driveway. As shown on the site plan, this driveway can accommodate the queuing of up to three vehicles from the onsite gate. The gates will remain open when the mosque has prayer services or other religious gatherings. When there are no events, the gates will remain closed. The applicant has agreed, and as required as a condition of approval added by the Planning and Housing Commission, to provide through-access from the on-site drive lane extending from the northerly driveway to the project site’s back drive aisle to allow left turns. This is to allow vehicles to circulate further into the site should any potential stacking occur from the northerly driveway.

No public improvements are required within the right-of-way, as the segments of Main Street and Nanners Way adjacent to the project site are fully developed according to the ultimate right-of-way widths for both streets, including curb and gutter, sidewalk and parkway.

Traffic Trip Generation

Because the mosque will spread out its prayer five times throughout the day, the use is not expected to exceed 50 trips during peak hours. The largest occupancy is expected on Friday afternoon, when approximately between 50 to 75 individuals (including children) would be in attendance. The City’s Traffic Division evaluated the number of p.m. peak hour trips expected on Friday and concluded that the project would result in 18 peak hour trips within one hour between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Also, the use of the mosque on Sunday would be outside of peak traffic times. As such, the proposed mosque is not expected to create traffic impacts on Main Street or other surrounding roadways.

Parking

Per CMC Section 17.76.030, a religious facility is required to have at least one parking space for every 25 square feet of assembly area for the prayer hall. Like other religious facilities, the required parking is based on the floor area used for prayer services, which is the most conservative parking ratio at any given time. Since other uses within the building are during opposite times of the prayer services, the parking spaces normally used for the prayer services are shared with the other uses in the structure.

The mosque requires 67 parking spaces, with 68 parking spaces proposed. The project’s parking compliance is summarized below in Table 2.

Table 2: Parking Requirement

Use	Square Footage	Parking Requirement	Parking Required	Parking Provided
Prayer Hall	1,675 SF	1 space/25 SF	67 spaces	68 spaces
Men’s Reading Room*	213 SF	--	--	--

Ladies Room*	Reading	282 SF	--	--	--
Breakroom*		232 SF	--	--	--
Office*		99 SF	--	--	--
*Uses the opposite time of prayer services.					

Walls and Fences

A total of 258 linear feet of new wrought-iron fencing and two metal gates, standing a maximum of six feet in height, are proposed along the easterly perimeter of the property. An existing block wall along the north property line, chain-link fencing on the south property line, and a block wall along the west property lines would remain.

Landscaping

Landscaping will be provided throughout the site, including around the perimeter, throughout the parking lot, and within a bioretention basin proposed at the lot’s northerly extent. In total, the site will have approximately 19,000 SF of landscaping, including 9,076 SF within the bioretention basin.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The applicant paid the application processing fees of \$3,874 to cover the cost of the Conditional Use Permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Per Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities) of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Section 3.21 of the City’s Local CEQA Guidelines, a Notice of Exemption has been prepared for the project because the project qualifies as a Class 1 (Existing Facilities) categorical exemption. The project involves minor exterior alterations on a site that is 1.37 acres and interior improvements to the inside of an existing building.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting on March 10, 2025, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Vernon/Alexander) and carried, with Commissioner Siqueland absent, that the Planning and Housing Commission find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities), adopt Resolution No. 2661 granting CUP2023-0015, based on the findings contained in the staff report, the conditions of approval and the added conditions of approval. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 4.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit 1 – Locational and zoning map

2. Exhibit 2 – Site plan for Conditional Use Permit 2023-0015
3. Exhibit 3 – Planning and Housing Commission staff report
4. Exhibit 4 – Draft minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of March 10, 2025