

City of Hesperia STAFF REPORT



DATE: August 13, 2026

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Orlando Acevedo, Director of Development Services

BY: Ryan Leonard, Principal Planner
Leilani Henry, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Conditional Use Permit CUP26-00007; Applicant: Victor Valley Gospel Church;
APN: 0399-011-50)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. PC-2026-10, approving CUP26-0007.

BACKGROUND

Proposal: A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) has been filed to allow for the conversion of an existing single-family residence into priest living quarters and the construction of a 4,995-square-foot church building on approximately 5 gross acres. (Attachment 1)

Location: The project is proposed on an existing residential lot located at 11767 Orchid Avenue, on the east side of Orchid Avenue approximately 230 feet north of Pepper Avenue. (Attachment 2).

Current General Plan, Zoning and Land Uses: The subject site is zoned Limited Agriculture (A1) and is developed with an existing 1,806-square-foot single-family residence. The property to the south is also zoned Limited Agriculture (A1) and is developed with a single-family residence. The properties to the west are zoned Rural Residential (RR-20,000) and are each developed with a single-family residence. The property to the north is zoned Neighborhood Commercial (C2) and is currently vacant. The Mojave River is located immediately east of the subject site. (Attachment 3)

ISSUES/ANALYSIS

Conditional Use Permit: The proposed project consists of the conversion of an existing single-family residence into priest living quarters and the construction of a 4,995-square-foot church building. Pursuant to the City's Development Code, a church within all zoning designations, including Limited Agriculture (A1), are subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

Conformance with Development Standards: The project complies with all applicable development standards of the Development Code, including building setbacks, landscaping, parking, and site design requirements. Although the Development Code does not establish specific development standards for churches adjacent to residential uses, the proposed project has been designed to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood through the placement of the building, site layout, landscaping, circulation, parking, and operational characteristics.

The proposed church building is located toward the rear of the property while maintaining the existing single-family residence at the front of the site. The proposed building height is 23.5 feet, which is below the maximum permitted height of 35 feet within the A-1 (Limited Agriculture) zoning district. The building would be setback approximately 52 feet from the nearest adjacent residential dwelling to the south, providing additional separation between the proposed institutional use and surrounding residences. This separation is further enhanced by a proposed 6-foot-high decorative masonry wall and a 6-foot-wide landscaped planter buffer along the shared property line, which would provide visual screening, enhance compatibility, and reduce potential privacy and aesthetic impacts to neighboring residential properties.

Landscaping is incorporated throughout the development, including an 8-foot-wide landscaped planter along the street frontage. Overall, landscaping comprises approximately 10.8 percent of the project site, exceeding the minimum landscaping necessary to soften the appearance of the development and provide an attractive transition to adjacent uses.

A 26-foot-wide drive aisle accommodates two-way vehicular circulation and emergency vehicle access throughout the site. Based on the proposed sanctuary seating capacity, the Development Code requires one parking space for every four seats, resulting in a minimum parking requirement of 32 parking spaces. The site plan provides 38 off-street parking spaces, exceeding the minimum requirement and ensuring adequate parking is available during regular church operations and related activities.

Conditions of approval have been included requiring the church to comply with the noise and glare standards of the Development Code at all times. These conditions prohibit the project from generating noise that exceeds the City's allowable noise limits at adjacent residential property lines and require all exterior lighting to be designed, installed, and maintained in compliance with the Development Code to prevent glare or light spillover onto adjacent properties. In addition, any outdoor activities or events conducted on the site shall require approval of a Temporary Special Event Permit in accordance with the Development Code. These requirements ensure that future outdoor activities are reviewed for potential impacts and that the project remains compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. (Attachment 4)

Access/Roadway Improvements: Access to the site will be provided via a 32-foot-wide driveway approach from Orchid Avenue. The project will be responsible for constructing half-width street improvements along the project frontage on Orchid Avenue, consistent with the City's 60-foot Local Roadway Standard. The design shall be based upon an acceptable centerline profile extending a minimum of three hundred (300) feet beyond the project boundaries where applicable.

Architecture: The proposed church building is consistent with the architectural requirements of the Development Code and is compatible with both the surrounding residential neighborhood and adjacent nonresidential property. The building is proposed as a pre-engineered metal structure, which is consistent with the types of accessory and nonresidential buildings commonly permitted within the A-1 (Limited Agriculture) zoning district. While metal construction is utilized as the primary building material, the structure incorporates a traditional gabled roof form and residential-scale architectural elements that reduce the perceived mass of the building and complement the character of the existing single-family residences in the area. The building also features a prominent, defined main entrance accented with stone veneer, vertically oriented windows, decorative wall-mounted lighting, color accents, and consistent architectural detailing on all elevations, creating an attractive institutional appearance. Architectural treatments are carried around the entire building, eliminating expansive blank wall planes and providing visual interest

from all public and private viewpoints. Collectively, these design elements create an appropriate transition between the surrounding residential neighborhood and adjacent nonresidential development while providing the level of architectural quality envisioned by the Development Code for institutional uses. (Attachment 5 & 6)

Water and Sewer: The development will connect to an existing 12-inch water line located within Orchid Avenue to serve the project site. Sewer service will not be required unless an on-site septic system is determined to be inadequate in meeting Regional Water Quality Control Board or City standards. The project may utilize an approved on-site septic system, subject to satisfactory percolation testing and review and approval by the Building and Safety Division.

Drainage: Any additional runoff created on-site will be detained in an approved storm drain storage system. A stormwater retention basin is proposed at the west of the site, and an additional underground retention basin is proposed at the east of the site to store the necessary volume. Upon completion of the on-site drainage improvements, the impact of the project upon properties downstream is not considered significant.

Environmental Analysis: The project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by Section 15332, In-fill Development Projects. This exemption applies to developments on sites no larger than five acres, which are consistent with the General Plan and are substantially surrounded by urban uses. The site contains Joshua trees. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the applicant shall obtain any required authorization from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, including an incidental take permit if applicable. In addition, a pre-construction biological survey for burrowing owls shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine whether the species is present on the site. If burrowing owls are identified, all applicable state and federal regulations shall be complied with prior to commencement of grading or construction.

CITY GOAL SUPPORTED BY THIS ITEM

Future Development: Facilitate balanced growth to ensure cohesive community development and pursue economic development.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed development shall be subject to the payment of all applicable permit, development impact, and certificate of occupancy fees in accordance with the City's adopted fee schedule.

ALTERNATIVE(S)

1. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Site Plan
2. Aerial
3. General Plan Land Use Map
4. Floor Plan
5. Elevations
6. Colored Renderings
7. Resolution No. PC-2026-10 & Conditions Of Approval