



Larkin Hoffman

8300 Norman Center Drive
Suite 1000
Minneapolis, MN 55437-1060

General: 952-835-3800
Fax: 952-896-3333
Web: www.larkinhoffman.com

December 6, 2021

Mr. Nick Johnson
City of Bloomington
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, MN 55431-3027

**Re: 1701 American Boulevard East – Afrique Hospitality Group
Cultural Campus Conditional Use Permit Application**

Dear Mr. Johnson:

We represent Afrique Hospitality Group LLC ("Afrique"), which is seeking to develop the property at 1701 American Blvd East ("Property"), in the city of Bloomington (the "City") as a business hub ("Project") for the south-metro East African business community. Please accept this letter, together with the enclosed materials, as an application (the "Application") for a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow a Cultural Campus at the Property in the FD-2 Freeway Development District.

Proposed Use

Afrigue is actively working to develop a portion of the Property as a restaurant, an existing permitted use in the FD-2 District. The Project will also include several other community-oriented uses within the Project, including an event center, business incubator/makerspace, and a multipurpose space. A critical element of the Project will be a small-business training and incubator center ("Business Center"). Afrique will act as a community development finance corporation that will use the Business Center to educate, train, and develop African and African diaspora entrepreneurs from A through Z of the business startup process. Entrepreneurs will be provided office space, access to critical resources, and space in a curated indoor East African business plaza, with a limited number of retail shops, professional, and medical services. Afrique, in association with the building owner, is actively seeking a \$1.4 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to aid in the development of the Business Center and to allow Afrique to serve as a workforce development partner.

The proposed mix of uses within the Cultural Campus, including floor area and parking calculations is described in Exhibit A, as well as the accompanying floor plan. This Project is consistent with City of Bloomington's equity and inclusion initiatives, which include building a diverse skilled workforce, growing diverse businesses, and eliminating barriers to equity.

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Parking

Afrique is seeking flexibility in the calculation of the off-street parking requirements due to the nonconcurrent nature of both the existing and proposed uses of the Property. The Property has approximately 205 off-street parking spaces available. The Project will include an event center that will operate only on nights and weekends. The existing list of tenants is identified in Exhibit B and the parking calculations for all uses are detailed in Exhibit A. During the typical daytime hours of operation of Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., when the event center is not in operation, the Property will have an excess of 30 parking spaces per the City's off-street parking requirements. The event center will operate during nights and weekends, outside of the normal hours of operation for the existing tenants. During those times, the Property will have an excess of approximately 19 parking spaces, based on the City's minimum off-street parking requirements.

Required Findings

The Project meets the required CUP findings under City Code Section 21.501.04(e), as follows:

1. The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan;

The Project is not in conflict with the City's Comprehensive Plan, rather it furthers and supports several of the Comprehensive Plan policies and priorities. The Property is guided in the Comprehensive Plan with a future land use of Office (OFC). The OFC designation allows professional and business offices and related accessory retail and restaurant uses serving the needs of office building or hotel tenants. The Project is consistent with this designation and will provide offices and makerspace within the Business Center, as well as a range of complementary land uses to support them. The Project also furthers the following goals, strategies, and actions:

Goal 1: Encourage an efficient, desirable arrangement and distribution of land uses.

Strategy 1.1: Encourage a balance of uses.

Carefully evaluate proposals to amend land use designations to ensure that an appropriate mixture and distribution of uses is maintained citywide.

Establish a range of land uses that support a diverse employment base and diversified local economy

Strategy 1.5: Manage parking to meet demand in a flexible manner that maximized efficient use of land and mitigates impacts on adjacent uses and traffic patterns

Goal 4: Promote continued economic development for the City and region.

Strategy 4.4: Leverage partnerships and funding tools to foster public and private investment in infrastructure, economic development, and community services.

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Strategy 4.6: Foster entrepreneurship, job growth and business retention, expansion, and recruitment.

Encourage small business opportunities, through provision of access to resources and creation of business incubators.

Facilitate coordination between public and private educators and employers to promote workforce development; invest in education, job training, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship.

2. The proposed use is not in conflict with any adopted district plan for the area;

The Property is not located within an area of the City subject to an adopted district Plan. Accordingly, the Project is not in conflict with any adopted district plan for the area.

3. The proposed use is not in conflict with city code provisions or state law;

The Project is not in conflict with any provision of the City Code or state law.

4. The proposed use will not create an excessive burden on parks, schools, streets and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the planned development; and

The Project will not create an excessive burden on city parks, schools, streets, or other public facilities. The Property is located on American Boulevard and is served by adequate utilities and public services. The Project will serve residents from the community and will not result in an excessive burden on City resources, but rather it will revitalize the existing office/industrial Property that has ample on-site parking. The Project will result in the addition of increased pedestrian connectivity to American Boulevard, a major transit corridor.

5. The proposed use will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.

The proposed use will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety, or welfare. The Property is an existing office/warehouse that was constructed in the 1980s. Due to the nonconcurrent nature of the proposed uses, the Property will have sufficient off-street parking and is appropriately buffered from the residential properties to the south. The Project will result in improved pedestrian safety and include the addition of a pedestrian walkway from the building to the sidewalk on American Boulevard.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,



1701 American Boulevard**Parking Requirement Calculations based on City of Bloomington Zoning Ordinance**

Use	Parking Requirement		Basis of calculation		Spaces required
	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Unit	Total
Afrique Development (current suites 15 & 16)					
Restaurant	1 per	3 seats	66 seats		22.0
Family Dining	1 per	3 seats	36 seats		12.0
Private Dining	1 per	3 seats	24 seats		8.0
Coffee Café	1 per	3 seats	24 seats		8.0
Business incubator/makerspace	1 per	180 SF	6,666 SF		37.0
Subtotal of parking required above					87.0
Afrique Offices	1 per	285 SF	3,595 SF		12.6
Afrique Event Hall	1 per	3 seats	296 seats		99.0
Subtotal of parking with ALL Afrique Development Spaces					198.6
Other Tenant Spaces (suites 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 8A, 11, 12, 13, 15A)					
Offices	1 per	285 SF	19,559 SF		68.6
Warehouse Space	1 per	1,000 SF	6,278 SF		6.3
Subtotal of other tenants					74.9
Total parking required for Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm					
Total for Afrique Development					87.0
Afrique Offices					12.6
Total for Other Tenant Spaces					74.9
					174.5
Total parking required for Evenings/Weekends					
Total for Afrique Development					87.0
Afrique Event Hall					99.0
					186.0
Total parking spaces available on existing site					205.0
Excess spaces for Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm					30.5
Excess spaces for Evenings/weekends					19.0
Total Parking required on site if all uses are simultaneous					273.5
Shortfall if all uses simultaneous					-68.5

Exhibit B
1701 American Boulevard - Existing Tenants

Lease Name	Unit Name	Total Area	Typical Hours of Operation
Hired, INC	1	3543.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Canvas Health, Inc	4	2265.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Sakan Community Resources Inc.	6	2051.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Metro Sales, Inc	7	3227.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Bon Appetit Management	8	2143.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Total Sports Enterprises, LLC	8A-15A	6107.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Star Health Services LLC	11	2392.0	8am-5pm, M-F
DRN Enterprises Inc.	12	2171.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Mayle Trans LLC	13	1938.0	8am-5pm, M-F
Afrique Hospitality Group LLC	15,16,17,20	15482.0	See Application
Al Jazari Institute	19 and 16	7857.0	8am-5pm, M-F

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Jacob W. Steen, for
Larkin Hoffman

Direct Dial: 952-896-3239

Direct Fax: 952-842-1738

Email: jsteen@larkinhoffman.com

cc: Mukhtar Shariff
Mahad Ibrahim
Mohamed Omar
Glen Markegard