

To: Chair Hackett, Vice Chair Ungoco, and Commissioners Sistos, Tokashiki, Treygerh

CC: City Manager Mirzakhonian, Mr. Finestone, and Ms. Kuvhenguhwa

**Subject: 309 Manhattan Beach Boulevard (Esperanza)**

**Honorable Planning Commissioners,**

As a resident on the 11th Street walkstreet just south of Manhattan Beach Boulevard, I am writing to express concern regarding the long-term viability of the extended operating hours adopted by the Planning Commission during the original public hearing in 2025.

The Outdoor Dining Task Force spent several months evaluating the potential impacts associated with second-story outdoor dining areas, including the effects of commercial restaurant operations on nearby residential properties. Their conclusion was that a 10:00 p.m. closure of second-story outdoor dining space was appropriate. The original staff report presented during the public hearing reached the same conclusion and recommended a 10:00 p.m. closing time for second-story outdoor operations. Even the applicant only asked for a 12:00 midnight closing time for the indoor portion of their operations.

Noise generated from amplified music, particularly low-frequency bass energy, propagates differently than typical conversational noise. Low-frequency sound waves experience less atmospheric attenuation, can travel greater distances, and readily penetrate building materials such as windows, doors, and exterior walls. The narrow corridor created by the closely spaced residential structures along the walkstreet can also create localized sound reflections and channeling effects that increase the perceived intensity of music and bass vibrations at nearby homes.

Several residential units have living areas and bedrooms with a direct line of sight to the second-story outdoor dining area at 309 Manhattan Beach Boulevard. During the past year, there were multiple occasions when amplified music levels were unnecessarily high and low-frequency bass vibrations were readily perceptible within nearby residences as a result of the extended operating hours.

The Newman Group ownership, operations executives, and senior leadership team are highly respected and have successfully operated restaurants throughout California, from Santa Barbara to San Diego. They clearly understand restaurant operations and customer experience. For that

reason, several residents and I were surprised when the Planning Commission chose to go beyond the recommendations contained in the staff report, went beyond the conclusions reached by the Outdoor Dining Task Force after months of study, and even beyond the operating hours requested by the applicant. In effect, the Commission modified the publicly distributed resolution during the hearing and approved operating parameters that exceeded all prior recommendations.

Residents are simply requesting a reasonable closing time and, specifically, amplified music cease by 10:00 p.m. It is important for the Planning Commission to recognize that low-frequency bass vibrations are significantly more intrusive than typical ambient noise because they readily penetrate residential structures and can adversely affect sleep and quality of life. In addition, sound becomes more noticeable later in the evening as background ambient noise levels decrease, resulting in a greater contrast between entertainment-related noise and the surrounding environment.

To be fair to Mr. Newman and his entire Esperanza Team, residents also hear unwanted noise associated with both Hennessy's and Culture Brewing, although the character and intensity of those sound sources are often substantially different. We recognize that these two additional entities are not part of the decision before the Commissioners on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jim Burton, P.E.  
Resident Representative  
Smalltown Downtown, Inc. 501(c)(3)



Attach – Google Earth Aerial Image



Direct line of sight from Second Story Outdoor Patio (309 MBB) to 3<sup>rd</sup> Story Residential.