



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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October 30, 2025

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

TO: City of Laurel Planning Commission

FROM: Monta Burrough, Deputy Director

CASE: **Special Exception No. 976**
14600 Laurel Place,
Laurel, MD 20707

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Fidel Rincon

OWNER: Chidos Tex Mex Grill
14600 Laurel Place
Laurel, MD 20707

LOCATION: 14600 Laurel Place
Laurel, MD 20707

ZONE: O-B w/ conditions

REQUESTED ACTION: Special Exception Approval for live entertainment, DJ, and a small band.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Applicant is seeking special exception approval to have live entertainment, DJ, and a small band. The property is zoned Office Business with conditions (O-B w/ Conditions). Chido's Tex & Mex Grill currently operates on this property.

The adjacent property zoning designations are as follows:

- North: C-SH (Commercial Shopping Center)
- South: C-G (Commercial General)
- East: Not in the City's Jurisdiction
- West: P-I (Public Institution)

The following Departments and Agencies were notified of the application and comments were requested. See below for responses:

Department of Agency	Comments Received
City of Laurel Department of Public Works	Comments Below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No music on days when the City has events in the Park. 2. Ensure their site is following ADA requirements, handicap ramps, handicap signage, handicap spaces properly marked and rumble pads at crossing into traffic area. 3. Repair any potholes, broken sidewalks, tripping hazards, handrails, missing landscaping or other sight amenities as needed. <p>(11.6.25)</p>
City of Laurel Police Chief	No issue with proposal.(11.13.25) The Security plan was reviewed and approved in September to add a DJ (live entertainment) on Friday and Saturday nights.
City of Laurel Department of Parks and Recreation.	No comments received. (10.30.25)
City of Laurel Fire Marshal	No issue with the proposal. (10.30.25)
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)	No comments received .
Prince George's County Health Department	No comments received. (10.30.25)
Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)	No comments received.
Maryland Department of Planning	No comments received.

Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (MNPPC)	No comments received.
Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE)	No comments received.
Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE)	No comments received.
Verizon	No comments received.
Prince George's County Public Schools Capital Programs	No comments received.

ANAYLSIS:

The Applicant is seeking special exception approval to have live entertainment, a DJ, and a live band to be located at 14600 Laurel Place, Laurel, MD 20707.

Chido's Tex-Mex Grill goals are to enhance the overall dining and social experience for our guests, attract new patrons while retaining existing customers, increase food and beverage sales through extended evening activity, and provide a safe and enjoyable entertainment option for adults in the Laurel community.

The applicant proposes the following hours of entertainment:

Friday: 9:00 PM – 1:00 AM (Possible Private Event if Scheduled)

Saturday: 9:00 PM – 1:00 AM (Possible Private Event if Scheduled)

The applicant states that the city will be notified immediately if there are any proposed changes to these hours. If so, the special exception must be amended to reflect the proposed changes.

Operational Measures:

- **Indoor Entertainment Only:** DJs will perform exclusively inside the designated bar area to minimize external noise.
- **Sound Management:** Volume levels will be actively monitored to avoid disruptions to nearby businesses and residents.
- **Enhanced Security:** Surveillance cameras are installed throughout the premises to ensure safety and maintain accountability.

The applicant will employ security officers (including off-duty Laurel Police Department personnel) who will be on-site during entertainment hours to ensure the safety of guests and staff on entertainment nights. The following are duties and assignments of security personnel:

- a) Monitoring Entrances and Exits
- b) Checking 's
- c) Ensuring Underage Patrons Do Not Access Restricted Areas
- d) Reporting intoxicated/unruly guests to public officials

- e) Directing/enforcing parking policy
- f) Surveillance of property for suspicious activity
- g) Notifying public safety officials if a crime is committed, or if public safety support is needed.
- h) Prevent criminal activity by constant foot and mobile patrol

The Laurel Police Department and Fire Marshal will be consulted to ensure all public safety measures are in place.

The below photograph illustrates the building for the proposed Chido's Tex Mex Grill location.



Parking:

Chido's Tex-Mex Grill offers on-site parking for 144 vehicles, with spaces located at the front, side, and rear of the building. The parking lot is equipped with multiple pole-mounted exterior lights, providing ample illumination to ensure that security personnel can monitor activity throughout the area. Additionally, Chido's has submitted a camera layout diagram featuring 18 indoor surveillance cameras to support interior monitoring.

Sec. 20-21.1

(a) A special exception may be granted when the Board of Appeals, as the case may be, finds from a preponderance of the evidence of record that the proposed use:

(1) The proposed use is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the comprehensive master plan, as embodied in this chapter and in any master plan or portion thereof adopted or proposed as part of such comprehensive master plan.

The proposed live entertainment use is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the City of Laurel's comprehensive master plan. Chido's Tex-Mex Grill is an established restaurant within a designated commercial area, consistent with the master plan's goals of promoting economic vitality and creating an active, mixed-use environment. The addition of live entertainment will enhance the area's social and cultural atmosphere without altering its character or purpose.

(2) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area;

The proposed live entertainment will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area. The entertainment will be held indoors, within the bar area, and all safety protocols—including occupancy limits, emergency exits, and fire safety requirements—will be observed. Security will be provided by off-duty Laurel Police officers during entertainment hours

(3) Will not be detrimental to the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value, or development of surrounding properties or the general neighborhood; and will cause no objectionable noise, vibrations, fumes, odors, dust, glare or physical activity.

The entertainment will not be detrimental to the peaceful enjoyment, economic value, or development of surrounding properties. All music and entertainment will be contained inside the restaurant with no external speakers, minimizing any potential noise impact. The establishment's walls and structure are sound-insulated, and no objectionable noise, vibrations, or disturbances will be created

(4) Will not, in conjunction with existing development in the area and development permitted under existing zoning, overburden existing public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage and other public improvements; and

The proposed use will not overburden existing public services or infrastructure. Adequate parking, sanitation, and security are already in place for normal business operations. The entertainment hours are limited to weekends and late evening periods, which will not conflict with nearby uses or strain police, fire, or public works services.

(5) Meets the definition and specific standards set forth elsewhere in this article for such particular use.

The proposed live entertainment meets the definitions and specific standards for such uses as provided in the City's zoning ordinance. The activity will take place within a commercial

establishment that serves food and beverages, with all conditions and operational standards adhered to.

(b) The applicant for a special exception shall have the burden of proof which shall include the burden of going forward with the evidence and burden of persuasion on all questions of fact which are to be determined by the Board of Appeals.

The applicant acknowledges and accepts the burden of proof in providing evidence to demonstrate compliance with the applicable standards. All supporting documentation, including a security plan, floor plan, lighting plan, and public safety review, are or will be provided for the Board of Appeals' review.

Sec. 20-22.38 – Entertainment uses.

(a) Within the C-G—Commercial General, S-SH—Commercial Shopping Center, C-V—Commercial Village, I-CS—Industrial-Commercial Services, and as required, within an M-X-T—Mixed Use-Transportation Oriented Zone, and specified Revitalization Overlay Areas.

Chido's Tex-Mex Grill is located within the Office Business with conditions (O-B w/ conditions) zoning district, where restaurant and entertainment uses are permitted subject to special exception approval.

(b) Access:

- 1. If freestanding, buffering by a wall and/or landscaping will be provided in a manner, which physically separates and restricts access from the establishment, and it is required parking area to nearby Residential Zones or areas.**

The restaurant is freestanding and separated from nearby residential zones by adequate distance and buffering.

- 2. All patron entrances will be well lit and clearly visible to patrons from the parking lot or a public street.**

All patron entrances are well-lit and clearly visible from both the parking lot and adjacent streets, ensuring safe and convenient access.

(c) The applicant has provided written evidence that all sound resulting from business activities will be contained within the building.

All sound from entertainment will be fully contained within the building. No exterior speakers or sound systems will be used.

(d) The applicant shall provide hours of operation for the establishment and shall notify the City if the operating hours are changed.

Live entertainment is proposed only on Fridays and Saturdays from 9:00 PM to 1:00 AM. The City will be notified immediately if any changes to these hours are proposed, and if so, this special exception must be amended to reflect the changed hours.

(e) **The applicant has provided a written public safety plan which the City Police Department and the City Fire Marshal have recommended and submitted as part of the application, as well as hours of operation.**

A written public safety plan has been developed. During entertainment hours, off-duty Laurel Police Department officers will provide on-site security. The establishment also has interior and exterior surveillance cameras and will comply with recommendations from the City Fire Marshal.

(f) **The applicant has provided a written lighting plan, which addresses exterior lighting on and surrounding the property.**

Exterior lighting adequately illuminates all parking and entry areas. The lighting plan ensures safety for patrons and compliance with city standards without creating glare or disturbance to neighboring properties.

(g) **The applicant shall provide a written exterior refuse control plan, which must be approved by the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Public Works.**

The restaurant maintains an approved refuse collection area enclosed and located to the rear of the property, serviced regularly to prevent litter and odor impacts.

(h) **The applicant has provided a floor plan, which identifies the areas for primary use and for ancillary functions, which include but are not limited to patron dancing areas and/or stages for performances.**

A detailed floor plan has been submitted identifying the bar area as the location for the DJ setup and patron dancing. The entertainment will occur only in this designated area.

(i) **The plan shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Director of the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Director of the Department of Public Works, that the level of service on all streets accessed by the use shall be acceptable and not cause a reduction in the levels of service (LOS) identified within the required traffic study submitted in conjunction with the special exception application.**

The establishment provides sufficient on-site parking, and traffic circulation patterns will not be affected. The proposed entertainment use will not reduce the level of service on nearby streets.

(j) **If the Director of the Department of Economic and Community Development determines that additional parking analysis is necessary the applicant shall provide a detailed parking needs study based on comparable establishments.**

Should the Department of Economic and Community Development determine that additional analysis is necessary, the applicant will provide a parking study comparing similar establishments offering live entertainment.

(k) **The applicant has provided any additional information required by City staff in order to evaluate the impacts of the proposed use upon the area.**

The applicant is prepared to provide any additional information requested by City staff to assist in evaluating the potential impacts of the proposed use.

(l) The following operational standards must be met by the use throughout its operations:

1. All exterior doors will remain closed but not locked during business hours.
2. No external speakers will be used.
3. The applicant will comply with all approved plans and city requirements.
4. Any nonconformance with the special exception terms will be corrected promptly upon notice from City staff.
5. The applicant will comply with all applicable laws and ordinances of the City of Laurel and any other agency with jurisdiction.

The Applicant understands the operational standards that come with the Special Exception approval process. The Applicant has sufficiently addressed the criterion for granting a Special Exception of the proposed use. According to Section 20-21.1 and Section 20-22.38 of the *Unified Land Development Code*, the proposed use would meet the requirements for Special Exception approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of Special Exception Application No. 976, to the City of Laurel Board of Appeals, with the following conditions:

1. The Applicant shall obtain all required City of Laurel permits.
2. The Applicant shall comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations related to the use of the property.
3. The Applicant shall adhere to the regulations set forth by the City of Laurel Noise Ordinance at all times of operation.
4. Neither external speakers for live or prerecorded entertainment, nor any outdoor entertainment shall be permitted.
5. The Applicant shall adhere to the approved hours of operation of 9:00 pm to 1:00 am on Fridays and Saturdays only, unless this application is amended to reflect a different timeframe.
6. Surveillance cameras throughout the premises shall remain installed and operational at all times.

7. The following operational standards must be met by the use throughout its operations:
 - a. All exterior doors will remain closed but not locked during business hours.
 - b. No external speakers will be used.
 - c. The applicant will comply with all approved plans and city requirements.
 - d. Any nonconformance with the special exception terms will be corrected promptly upon notice from City staff.
 - e. The applicant will comply with all applicable laws and ordinances of the City of Laurel and any other agency with jurisdiction.
8. Security personnel shall be on duty upon the premises during all hours of live entertainment, for the purpose of:
 - a. Monitoring Entrances and Exits
 - b. Checking ID's to Ensure Underage Patrons Do Not Access Restricted Areas
 - c. Reporting intoxicated/unruly guests to public officials
 - d. Directing/enforcing parking policy
 - e. Surveillance of Property (Indoor and Outdoor) for Suspicious Activity
 - f. Notifying public safety officials if a crime is committed, or if public safety support is needed.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Floor Plan
2. Application
3. Statement of Justification
4. Security Plan

REVIEWED

Jay Meashey

Jay Meashey,

Director of Economic & Community Development