

Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe
16050 E Dartmouth Ave, Unit 2, Aurora, CO 80013
Bridget Leahy
720-951-0786

Letter of Introduction

Due to the neighborhood zoning of 16050 E Dartmouth Ave, Unit 2, Aurora, CO 80013, I am requesting a conditional use permit to establish a hookah lounge in the respective space. I encourage you to review my business plan, vision, goals, and ability to meet the appropriate conditional use criteria to see why Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe should be permitted to operate at the Meadowood Shoppette and receive a conditional use permit.

Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe is a concept developed by myself, Bridget Leahy. I am a 24 year old from Long Island, New York. Currently, I am a research assistant and office manager for a university. In 2014, I relocated to Parker, Colorado with my family and pursued my higher education at the University of Denver. With a Bachelor's degree in International Studies, I focused most of my education on the politics and international relations related to the Middle East, leading me to learn the Arabic language.

In my journey to learn Arabic, I fell in love with the language and the culture. Fortunately, I was presented with the opportunity to study abroad in Amman, Jordan during my time at the University of Denver. It was in Jordan where I was introduced to a hookah. Hookah is traditionally a custom in the Jordanian culture; households bond with family and friends over hookahs; members of the community gather in hookah cafes throughout the city; and restaurants serve hookah alongside meals. It is a staple of many and eventually I grew fond of the custom.

I spent a lot of my time in cafes during my trip to Jordan. I went after classes to study and do homework, and I would go with a friend or few in the evenings. In an immersive setting, I learned more about not only the Jordanian culture, but the hookah culture itself. I assimilated myself: I learned to play backgammon and card games. I conversed with the staff and customers. I even preferred going to a cafe to smoke hookah with a Jordanian instead of going to a bar with the other Americans studying there. As I tried out new cafes, it was easy to see what each one did well or poorly, which ones were worth returning to. In the last year, I did the same thing while living in Virginia as I frequented the hookah lounges in the area. I was highly dissatisfied with most of them. I am not new to the hookah community in Colorado either. I am a regular at one or two of the lounges here, but I still find there are improvements to be made.

I mention these anecdotes to affirm my knowledge of and involvement in the hookah communities. I began my research of hookah lounges in 2016. Throughout the years I documented various hookah lounges; statistics; operations; finances; costs of products; products provided and their prices; the quality of their hookah and service; the types of charcoals used; restrictions; the customer traffic on different nights; how many hookahs were running at one time; the turnover rate of new customers and hookahs each hour; how many drinks per hookah were ordered; the size of the cafes; their seating arrangements; their staff and hours of operation; their accessibility; their music; and their customers and who they attract.

It has been my dream to open my own hookah cafe. Inspired by my experiences in Amman, this is what I am set out to achieve. With a passion for hookah and a hard work ethic, I am committed to building a successful hookah cafe, right here in Aurora, Colorado.

I have worked hard to get to this point, invested a lot of time and money, and I was failed by the City of Aurora in their due diligence to provide me with accurate information regarding my business license and the respective space. I am not writing to fight against this unfortunate and disappointing situation. I am writing in an effort to

enlighten you of my efforts to establish a hospitable, relaxed, and authentic hookah lounge in a neighborhood that I believe would greatly benefit from its presence, and request permission to operate at this location. During my time getting my space ready, I was approached by several members of the community who were excited to see a hookah lounge at the Meadowood Shoppette, all expressing how beautiful it was and how successful it could be.

I am aware of the concerns with typical modern hookah lounges that become clubs or create a rowdy and disruptive environment. This is not the environment I have envisioned nor intend to create. My vision is to create a comfortable lounge, with tabletop games like cards and chess, a few TVs for watching soccer games etc, internet accessibility for people to do work and use laptops, and non-alcoholic refreshments as guests enjoy their hookah. We have fully intended on closing at 12am and will remain respectful to our neighbors, as we desire guests who are respectful inside and outside of our establishment. I do not believe that other hookah lounges should reflect what our hookah lounge is destined to be. Hookah traditions are grounded on a family, friend, and community culture. We are here for the community and strive to fulfill this hookah tradition.

The best way I can introduce you to the purpose and goals of Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe is to state our concept from our comprehensive business plan:

We blend more than shisha:

Hookah enthusiasts derive from two main categories: traditional hookah smokers, and social smokers. Our cafe aims to serve both markets of the hookah culture. Thus, Amman Hookah is a blend of the traditional cafe and modern social lounge.

The Traditional Café:

- To provide a realistic, traditional cafe of the Middle East, inspired by the hookah cafes and restaurants in Amman, Jordan
- To provide the community a place of comfort and superb hookah service, encouraging card games, backgammon, and other traditional table games to be played
- To provide the community a place to watch soccer games during the day and evening
- To supplement their experience with traditional light refreshments such as Turkish coffee, tea, and fresh juices
- To provide a relaxed atmosphere to socialize with friends

The Space for Young Professionals:

- To provide a traditional style Middle Eastern cafe space conducive for young professionals to be able to do personal and professional work
- To provide a comfortable environment during the day and early evening
- To provide attentive service during their stay

Your Neighborhood Bar Alternative:

- To provide a comfortable and entertaining alternative to the bar scene
- To provide a sophisticated and cozy space for friends to come together
- To provide a mix of Arabic music and modern hip hop

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Conditional Use Criteria

Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe will comply with all necessary mandates to establish itself at 16050 E Dartmouth Ave, Unit 2. This includes meeting the conditional use criteria to the best of our abilities. However, these criteria are not fully applicable to our establishment in an already existing multi-modal building. The cited criteria is aimed at new development and rezoning of land in the neighborhood.

A hookah lounge is permitted by the City of Aurora and State of Colorado to be zoned in a Retail Zoned space, which is applicable to our location. The establishment of our business at this location will not disrupt or curtail the already developed building and its compliance with the UDO, city guidelines for development, and the conditional use criteria. Additionally, for reassurance, we will fully meet criteria C, D, and F as it is described in our Operations Plan (document for submittal).

To further elaborate on these criteria, the size of the space is approximately 1,000 square feet within a 1-story multi-tenant building within the Meadowood Shoppette. We expect a steady flow of customers throughout the day with a more dense customer traffic in the evening. Our space comfortably accommodates 40 seats for our customers.

Our intentions and goals for Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe will be an asset to the community and its members. It will not be a disturbance to the neighborhood or its residences: Traffic impact should remain regular as with any other neighboring business in the Meadowood Shoppette. Hours of operation will be in compliance with city guidelines to not operate between 12:00 AM and 5:00 AM. We recognize that we are located in a residential neighborhood with a park nearby and children in the area. We will uphold the law in not servicing any person under the age of 21 per the State of Colorado law. Our presence in the City of Aurora and Meadowood neighborhood is to be a beneficial part of the community. Our business is a desired asset for the neighborhood as many of the residents in Aurora and near Meadowood smoke hookah. In Meadowood, Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe would be a convenient location for local residents to smoke hookah both during the day and after work; provide a woman owned business in the neighborhood; and be a growing part of the economy in Aurora.

Our application does not hinder the neighborhood or create adverse effects on the surrounding area. As explained in our operations plan, our business plan and functions mitigates any disruptions to the neighborhood.

I hope you find that Amman Hookah Lounge and Cafe is a suitable establishment for the neighborhood and grant a conditional use permit to operate at the Meadowood Shoppette.