

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
200 NORTH SPRING STREET, ROOM 395
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

(PRC Section 21152; CEQA Guidelines Section 15062)

Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21152(b) and CEQA Guidelines § 15062, the notice should be posted with the County Clerk by mailing the form and posting fee payment to the following address: Los Angeles County Clerk/Recorder, Environmental Notices, P.O. Box 1208, Norwalk, CA 90650. Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21167 (d), the posting of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to reliance on an exemption for the project. Failure to file this notice as provided above, results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

PARENT CASE NUMBER(S) / REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

DIR-2025-1066-ADJ / Adjustment

LEAD CITY AGENCY

City of Los Angeles (Department of City Planning)

CASE NUMBER

ENV-2025-1067-CE

PROJECT TITLE

2326 ½ West Riverside Drive

COUNCIL DISTRICT

CD 13 – Soto-Martinez

PROJECT LOCATION (Street Address and Cross Streets and/or Attached Map)

2326 ½ West Riverside Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90026

Map attached.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Additional page(s) attached.

The project is a like-for-like rebuild of an existing two-story, single-family dwelling on an irregularly-shaped lot that is comprised of approximately 1,840 square-feet of lot area. A Director's Adjustment is requested to permit a zero-foot front yard setback in lieu of the 8 feet and 9 inches otherwise required and a 4 foot and 10 inch southeasterly side yard setback in lieu of the 7 feet and 3 inches otherwise required by LAMC Section 12.09. The project does not propose to remove any existing trees from the site.

NAME OF APPLICANT / OWNER:

Diana Berberian

CONTACT PERSON (If different from Applicant/Owner above)

(AREA CODE) TELEPHONE NUMBER

EXT.

(818) 624-2222

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check all boxes, and include all exemptions, that apply and provide relevant citations.)

STATE CEQA STATUTE & GUIDELINES

STATUTORY EXEMPTION(S)

Public Resources Code Section(s) _____

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION(S) (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15301-15333 / Class 1-Class 33)

CEQA Guideline Section(s) / Class(es) CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 / Class 3

OTHER BASIS FOR EXEMPTION (E.g., CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) or (b)(4) or Section 15378(b))

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION:

Additional page(s) attached

The project is exempt because it involves the development of one (1) two-story single-family residence. None of the exceptions to the Categorical Exemption Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies to the proposed project. (a) Location: Although the project is located within a hillside area and within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone, as analyzed in the JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION REPORT (dated April 2, 2026), the subject site does not contain an officially mapped environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. (b) Cumulative Impact: there are no concurrent approved or pending projects or haul routes within the same place of the project site according to ZIMAS, the LADBS Haul Route Status Table, and Navigate LA. The proposed Project will not result in significant cumulative impacts from successive projects of the same type in the same place. (c) Significant Effect: The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Surrounding properties are developed with a dirt trail, single-family and two-family dwellings, and the subject site is of similar size and slope to nearby properties. The project site is located in a typical urbanized area of the Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley Community Plan, and the project would be consistent with the designated zoning and would adhere to all requirements of the LAMC, with the approval of an Adjustment. The project is not unusual for the vicinity of the site and is similar in scope to other existing residential uses in the area. Furthermore, there is not a reasonable possibility that the project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The subject site is located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and will comply with the specific requirements for landscaping and brush clearance. (d) Scenic Highways: The project is not in the vicinity of a state scenic highway and will not damage scenic resources in a state scenic highway. (e) Hazardous Waste Sites: The subject site is not on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 related to hazardous waste sites. (f) Historical Resources: The subject site has not been identified as a historic resource by local or state agencies, and the Project Site has not been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, the Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments Register, and/or any local register. The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

None of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption(s) apply to the Project; no unusual circumstance is found.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATING THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOUND THE PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT.

If different from the applicant, the identity of the person undertaking the project.

CITY STAFF USE ONLY:

CITY STAFF NAME AND SIGNATURE

Erick Morales



STAFF TITLE

Planning Assistant

ENTITLEMENTS APPROVED

Adjustment

DISTRIBUTION: County Clerk, Agency Record **Rev. 9-17-2025**

The City has considered whether the Proposed Project is subject to any of the six (6) exceptions that would prohibit the use of a Class 3 categorical exemption as set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. The six (6) exceptions to this Exemption are: (a) Location; (b) Cumulative Impacts; (c) Significant Effect; (d) Scenic Highways; (e) Hazardous Waste Sites; and (f) Historical Resources.

Location. *Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

The subject site is presently developed with an existing two-story, single-family dwelling and consists of one (1) irregularly-shaped lot with approximately 1,840 square feet of lot area. The applicant is requesting a Director's Adjustment to allow a front yard setback of zero feet and a southeasterly side yard setback of 4 feet and 10 inches. The front yard and side yard setback reduction is requested to permit the like-for-like rebuild of the existing single-family dwelling. The project proposes no tree removal and all trees will remain in place. The project is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ), a BOE Special Grading Area (Basic Grid Map A-13372), and a Hillside Area and is subject to specific Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs) in the City of Los Angeles that regulate the grading and construction of projects in these particular types of "sensitive" locations. The RCMs will reduce any potential impacts to less than significant. Specifically the following RCMs would apply:

- **Regulatory Compliance Measure RC-GEO-1 (Seismic):** The design and construction of the project shall conform to the California Building Code seismic standards as approved by the Department of Building and Safety.
- **Regulatory Compliance Measure RC-GEO-2 (Hillside Grading Area):** The grading plan shall conform with the City's Landform Grading Manual guidelines, subject to approval by the Advisory Agency and the Department of Building and Safety's Grading Division. Appropriate erosion control and drainage devices shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Building and Safety Department. These measures include interceptor terraces, berms, vee-channels, and inlet and outlet structures, as specified by Section 91.7013 of the Building Code, including planting fast-growing annual and perennial grasses in areas where construction is not immediately planned.

These RCMs have been historically proven to work to the satisfaction of the City Engineer to reduce any impacts from the specific environment in which the Project is located. Thus, in conjunction with the above RCMs and compliance with other applicable regulations, the Project will not result in a significant impact based on its location.

Cumulative Impacts. *All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

The applicant is requesting a Director's Adjustment to allow a front yard setback of zero feet and side yard setback of 4 feet and 10 inches. The front yard and side yard setback reductions are requested to permit the like-for-like rebuild of the existing single-family dwelling. The project proposes no tree removal and all existing trees will remain in place.

There are no concurrent approved or pending projects within the same place of the project site according to ZIMAS and Navigate LA. Furthermore, no similar projects were found within a 500-foot radius. The proposed Project will not result in significant cumulative impacts from successive projects of the same type in the same place. In conjunction with Citywide Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs) and compliance with other applicable regulations, no foreseeable cumulative impacts are expected.

Significant Effect. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

The subject site is presently developed with a single-family dwelling and consists of one (1) irregularly-shaped lot with approximately 1,840 square feet of lot area. The applicant is requesting an adjustment to allow a front yard setback of zero feet and side yard setback of 4 feet and 10 inches. The front yard and

side yard setback reductions are requested to permit the like-for-like rebuild of the existing single-family dwelling. The project proposes no tree removal and all existing trees will remain in place.

The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Surrounding properties are developed with a dirt trail to the southwest and residential uses along the project site's northwesterly, northeasterly, and southeasterly frontages. The project site and all surrounding lots are zoned R2-1VL and are designed for Low Medium I Residential land uses by the Silver Lake – Echo Park – Elysian Valley Community Plan. Lots immediately to the northeast and southeast are developed with single-family dwellings while the lot immediately to the northwest is developed with a multi-family dwelling.

The project site is located in a typical urbanized area of the Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley Community Plan, and the project would be consistent with the designated zoning and would adhere to all requirements of the LAMC with the approval of an Adjustment. The project is not unusual for the vicinity of the site and is similar in scope to other existing residential uses in the area. Furthermore, there is not a reasonable possibility that the project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The subject site is located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). This does not support an unusual circumstance as the City has thousands of similar developments of the same size and scale in VHFHSZ. Additionally, the existing regulatory compliance measures will ensure there is no potential for an impact. Such areas are subject to existing emergency plans and regulations that govern development in fire hazards areas:

- Adopted emergency response plans and emergency evacuation plans applicable to the City of Los Angeles, include the City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Plan and the Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan (OAERP). The OAERP defines responsibilities and provides guidance to agencies and jurisdictions within the County Operational Area on how to interface with the Operational Area Coordinator during emergencies and disasters.¹ The City's Emergency Operations Plan and Annexes identify roles, responsibilities and required actions for various City departments, particularly LAFD and the LAPD. In addition to their emergency response plans, both the City and County also designate Disaster Routes, which are freeway, highway or arterial routes pre-identified for use during emergencies. Disaster routes are not the same as evacuation routes. The Evacuation Annex of the City's Emergency Operation Plan provides that "[p]rimary evacuation routes consist of the major interstates, highways, and primary arterials within the City and Los Angeles County."² Disaster routes are used to bring emergency personnel, equipment, and supplies to impacted areas, while evacuation routes are used to move an affected population out of an impacted area. The closest County-designated primary (i.e. freeway) Disaster Route to the project site is the U.S. Route 101.³
- Fire, Building, and Zoning Code. Properties in VHFHSZs must comply with the requirements of Fire Code Section 57.322, which requires brush clearance within 200 feet of any structure. LAFD performs microenvironment weather analysis to check for irregular weather patterns and changes, which alerts LAFD to conditions such as windy days combined with low humidity. LAFD uses a Burning Index⁴ to determine when to call a Red Flag Day.⁵ A Red Flag Day is when the potential for a fast-moving brush fire is extremely high, when wind speeds are 25 mph or more and the humidity is 15 percent or less. On those days, illegally parked cars in VHFHSZ areas may be towed if their presence would prevent roadway access needed by LAFD. LAFD also has a significant air response ready to deploy, including water-dropping helicopters, and the mission of LAFD Air Operations includes brush fire suppression.⁶ LAFD also has access to additional helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft, bulldozers, and fire engines through mutual aid agreements with the state, County, and other cities in the region. In addition to attacking wildfires from the sky, LAFD also has ground resources such as fire engines and trucks.

¹ OAERP, p. 20

² Los Angeles Base Emergency Operations Plan 2023, October 2020 [Evacuation Functional Support Annex](#) p. 17

³ <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/dsg/DisasterRoutes/map/Los%20Angeles%20Central%20Area.pdf>

⁴ A Burning Index is a number used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to describe the potential amount of effort needed to contain a single fire in a particular fuel type within a rating area

⁵ LAFD, <https://ers.lafd.org/redflag/>, accessed March 4, 2025

⁶ LAFD, <https://www.lafd.org/about/special-operations/air-operations>, accessed March 4, 2025.

Chapter 33 of the City's Fire Code provides requirements designed to reduce risk of fire ignition during construction. These include, but are not limited to, prohibition of smoking except in areas

approved by the LAFD, refueling of equipment in appropriate locations, preparation of a fire prevention program, and designation of fire watch personnel during occurrence of hazardous construction activities. The Fire Code (LAMC Section 57.4906.5.2) also requires the management of hazardous vegetation and fuel, as well as maintenance of defensible space in wildland-urban interface areas. The Fire Code also includes regulations that address building materials and construction methods for construction in VHFHSZs, that are intended to reduce exterior wildfire exposure.

Thus, there are no unusual circumstances which may lead to a significant effect on the environment, and this exception does not apply.

Scenic Highways. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.*

The project is not in the vicinity of a state scenic highway and will not damage scenic resources in a state scenic highway. The only state scenic highway within the City of Los Angeles is the Topanga Canyon State Scenic Highway, State Route 27, which travels through a portion of Topanga State Park, located approximately 26.5 miles to the west of the site. Therefore, the project will not result in damage to any scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway, and this exception does not apply.

Hazardous Waste. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

According to Envirostor, the State of California's database of Hazardous Waste Sites, neither the Subject Site, nor any site in the vicinity, is identified as a hazardous waste site. The subject site is not on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 related to hazardous waste sites.

Historic Resources. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

The subject site has not been identified as a historic resource by local or state agencies, and the Project Site has not been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, the Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments Register, and/or any local register. The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, this exception does not apply.