

SUPPLEMENTAL
REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

DATE ISSUED: August 20, 2026

HEARING DATE: August 25, 2026 AGENDA ITEM: 4

PROJECT NUMBER: 2020-000267-(3)

PERMIT NUMBER(S): Minor Coastal Development Permit ("Minor CDP")
No. RPPL2020000457
Variance No. RPPL2020000459

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 3

PROJECT LOCATION: 1034 Henry Ridge Motorway, Topanga

OWNER: Gemma Marshall

APPLICANT: Larry Goodwin

CASE PLANNER: Tyler Montgomery, Principal Regional Planner
TMontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is made prior to the public hearing and is subject to change based upon testimony and/or documentary evidence presented at the public hearing:

LA County Planning staff ("Staff") recommends **APPROVAL** of Project Number 2020-000267-(3), Minor CDP No. RPPL2020000457 and Variance No. RPPL2020000459, based on the revised Draft Findings (Exhibit C-1 – Revised Findings) attached to this Supplemental Report, and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval) attached to the Report to the Hearing Officer dated August 13, 2026.

Staff recommends the following motions:

CEQA:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.

ENTITLEMENTS:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, APPROVE MINOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NUMBER RPPL2020000457 AND VARIANCE NUMBER RPPL2020000459 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.

BACKGROUND

This agenda item is a request for:

- A Minor CDP to construct a 3,827-square-foot ("SF") single-family residence and a 1,067-SF three-car attached garage with a maximum height of 18 feet above natural grade. Other proposed improvements include a 576-SF pool house, a new OWTS, a swimming pool, and patios.
- A Variance for the single-family residence and related improvements that are located within 50 feet of a designated significant ridgeline that runs adjacent to the Project Site along Henry Ridge Motorway pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Staff visited the Project Site on August 10, 2026 to view the required story poles and site postings for the Project. During this visit, Staff noted that the northeastern corner of the proposed patio appeared to encroach into the canopy of a southern California black walnut tree (see attached Exhibit B-1 – Site Photos). On the Project's fuel modification plan—part of Exhibit A attached to the Report to the Hearing Officer dated August 13, 2026—this tree was labeled as Tree 31 and was shown approximately 10 feet from the proposed patio. After comparing submitted plans to aerial photos, Staff has determined that Tree 31 was incorrectly located on these plans. Should the Project be constructed as depicted on the previous Exhibit A, the Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Program ("LIP") would require mitigation for these impacts to a black walnut tree. As a result, the applicant has submitted conceptual plans showing a shortening of the northeastern portion of the patio by 50 feet (Exhibit A-1 – Revised Site Plans). This would avoid all impacts to Tree 31 as well as reduce the building site area for the Project from 9,890 SF to 8,960 SF. Should the Hearing Officer approve the Project, Staff recommends instructions be given to the applicant to provide a complete set of revised plans incorporating this change by October 26, 2026, in accordance with Condition 14.

Staff also received a memo from the Hearing Officer dated August 14, 2026 requesting changes and clarifications to the Project's draft findings and conditions of approval ("Hearing Officer Memo"). Staff has made changes to the original draft findings to incorporate several minor corrections listed on pages five and six of the Hearing Officer Memo. References to height were also changed throughout the draft findings to refer to the structures' maximum height as 18 feet rather than "less than 18 feet." These tracked changes may be found in the attached Exhibit C-1 – Revised Findings.

In addition to these minor corrections, the Hearing Officer Memo requested additional analysis regarding compliance with several specific aspects of the Project with the LIP. This included the following:

- a. Revising the language and analysis of the necessary variance findings to be consistent with the requirements of County Code Section 22.44.1150.H.1 (Variances) (Findings No. 31-35).
- b. Revising Finding No. 27 to include additional justification for placement of structures on the significant ridgeline, including the consideration of alternative locations.
- c. Providing additional analysis as to how development within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone and H1 Quiet Zone constitutes the minimum development necessary to make economic use of the property, as required by the LIP (County Code Section 22.44.1890 [Permitted Uses]) (Finding No. 25).
- d. Providing additional analysis as to how development within H2 Habitat represents the development alternative with the fewest impacts to H2 Habitat, as required by the LIP (County Code Section 22.44.1910 [Land Planning and Development Standards] and 22.44.1950 [Mitigation]) (Finding No. 25).
- e. Providing additional analysis as to why a building site area of 9,890 SF is appropriate for a site on a significant ridgeline and within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone and H1 Quiet Zone. The building site area has since been reduced to 8,960 SF (Findings No. 24 and 25).
- f. Providing additional analysis as to why the Project is not subject to the exceptions to CEQA Class 3 and Class 4 Categorical Exemptions pertaining to environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern and regarding the removal of healthy, mature scenic trees (Finding No. 11).
- g. Providing further explanation as to why the cited grading quantities include an overexcavation and recompaction volume (1,900 cubic yards) that is not shown on the submitted grading plans (Finding No. 20).

Additional information and analysis were added to each of the above cited findings and are included as tracked changes within the attached Exhibit C-1 – Revised Findings.

Finally, the Hearing Officer Memo requested several changes to notes found on the Project's Exhibit "A." Staff would have no objection to instructing the applicant to make these changes as part of the complete set of revised plans referenced above.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tyler Montgomery of the Coastal Development Services Section at tmontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov.

Report
Reviewed By: M. Glaser for Robert Glaser
Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner

Report
Approved By: M. Glaser
Mitch Glaser, Assistant Administrator

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A-1	Revised Site Plans
EXHIBIT B-1	Site Photos
EXHIBIT C-1	Revised Findings

FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN FM# 6924

FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN NOTES

Zone A Setback Zone

Extends 20 feet beyond the edge of any combustible structure, accessory structure, appendage or projection. Overhangs or other parts of the structure not accurately reflected on the plans may negate the approval of plant location on the approved plan.

Irrigation by automatic or manual systems shall be provided to landscaping to maintain healthy vegetation and fire resistance.

Landscaping and vegetation in this zone shall consist primarily of green lawns, ground covers not exceeding 6 inches in height, and adequately spaced shrubs. The overall characteristics of the landscape shall provide adequate defensible space in a fire environment.

Plants in Zone A shall be inherently highly fire resistant and spaced appropriately. Species selection should be made referencing the Fuel Modification Plant List. Other species may be utilized subject to approval. Final or revised Plans submitted after 6 months from the initial submittal will have plants in all zones evaluated based on the most current Fuel Modification Plant List available from the Fuel Modification Unit.

Except for dwarf varieties or mature trees small in stature, trees are generally **not recommended** within Zone A.

Target species will typically not be allowed within 30 or more feet of combustible structures and may require removal if existing on site.

Vines and climbing plants shall not be allowed on any combustible structure requiring review.

Zone B Irrigated Zone

Extends from the outermost edge of Zone A to 100 feet from structure.

Irrigation by automatic or manual systems shall be provided to landscaping to maintain healthy vegetation and fire resistance.

Landscaping and vegetation in this zone shall typically consist primarily of green lawns, ground covers, and adequately spaced shrubs and trees.

Unless otherwise approved, Ground covers shall be maintained at a height not to exceed 6 inches in Zone B, 12 inches is acceptable within 50 feet of a structure and 18 inches beyond 50 feet in Zone B if it is on a slope. The overall characteristics of the landscape shall provide adequate defensible space in a fire environment. Specimen native plants may be approved to remain if properly maintained for adequate defensible space. Annual grasses and weeds shall be maintained at a height not to exceed 3 inches.

Plants in Zone B shall typically be fire resistant and spaced appropriately. Species selection should be made referencing the Fuel Modification Plant List. Other species may be utilized subject to approval.

Vegetation in this zone may consist of modified existing native plants, adequately spaced ornamental shrubs and trees, or both. There may also be replacement landscape planting with ornamental or native species to meet minimum slope coverage requirements of City or County agencies or other Landscape or Hillside ordinances. In all cases the overall characteristics of the landscape shall provide adequate defensible space in a fire environment.

Target species will typically not be allowed within 30 or more feet of combustible structures and may require removal if existing on site. This distance may extend to 50 feet if the situation dictates.

Irrigation systems are not required for this zone if it consists entirely of native plants. (Native plants are generally not compatible with regular, un-seasonal supplemental water.)

All trees, unless otherwise approved, shall be planted far enough from structures and Fire Department accesses as to not overhang any structure or access at maturity.

Zone C Native Brush Thinning Zone

Extends from the outermost edge of Zone B up to 200 feet from structure.

Required thinning and clearance will be determined upon inspection. Required clearance may increase to the maximum allowed by the Fire Code as needed because of vegetation growth.

Irrigation systems are not required for this zone if it consists entirely of native plants. (Native plants are generally not compatible with regular, un-seasonal supplemental water.)

Vegetation in this zone may consist of modified existing native plants, adequately spaced ornamental shrubs and trees, or both. There may also be replacement landscape planting with ornamental or native species to meet minimum slope coverage requirements of City or County agencies or other Landscape or Hillside ordinances. In all cases the overall characteristics of the landscape shall provide adequate defensible space in a fire environment.

Plants in Zone C shall be spaced appropriately. Existing native vegetation shall be modified by thinning and removal of those species constituting a fire risk. These species include, but are not limited to chamise, sage, sage brush, and buckwheat.

Annual grasses and weeds shall be maintained at a height not to exceed 3 inches.

General spacing for existing native shrubs or groups of shrubs is 15 feet between canopies. Native plants may be thinned by reduced amounts as the distance from development increases.

General spacing for existing native trees or groups of trees is 30 feet between canopies. This distance may increase or decrease depending on the slope, arrangement of the trees in relation to slope, and the species of tree.

Fire Access Road Zone

Extends a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of any public or private roadway that may be used as access for fire-fighting apparatus or resources.

Clear and remove flammable growth for a minimum of 10 feet on each side of Fire Access Roads. (Fire Code 325.10) Additional clearance beyond 10 feet may be required upon inspection.

Fire access roads, driveways and turnarounds shall be maintained in accordance with fire code. Fire Access Roads shall have unobstructed vertical clearance for a width of 20 feet. (Fire Code 503.2.1)

Landscaping and native plants within the Fire Access Road Zone shall be appropriately spaced and maintained to provide safe egress in wildland fire environments.

All trees, unless otherwise approved, shall be planted far enough from structures and Fire Department accesses as to not overhang any structure or access at maturity.

Maintenance

Routine maintenance shall be regularly performed in all zones. Requirements include but are not limited to those items in the Fuel Modification Guidelines and those outlined below:

Removal or thinning of undesirable combustible vegetation and removal of dead or dying landscaping to meet minimum brush clearance requirements.

Pruning and thinning to reduce the overall fuel load and continuity of fuels.

Fuel loads shall be reduced by pruning lower branches of trees and tree-form shrubs to 1/3 of their height, or 6 feet from lowest hanging branches to the ground, to help prevent fire from spreading and make maintenance easier. Trees with understory plants should be limbed up at least three times the height of the underlying vegetation or up to a height of 40 feet, whichever is less, to help prevent fire from spreading upward into the crown.

Accumulated plant litter and dead wood shall be removed. Debris and trimmings produced by thinning and pruning should be removed from the site or chipped and evenly dispersed in the same area to a maximum depth of 6 inches.

All invasive species and their parts should be removed from the site.

Manual and automatic irrigation systems shall be maintained for operational integrity and programming. Effectiveness should be regularly evaluated to avoid over or under-watering.

Compliance with the Fire Code is a year-round responsibility. Enforcement will occur following inspection by the Fire Department. Annual inspections for brush clearance code requirements are conducted following the natural drying of grasses and fire fuels, between the months of April and June depending on geographic region. Inspection for compliance with an approved Fuel modification Plan may occur at any time of year.

Brush Clearance enforcement issues on adjacent properties should be directed to the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Brush Clearance Unit at (626) 969-2375.

All future plantings shall be in accordance with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department Fuel Modification Guidelines and approved prior to installation. Changes to the approved plan which require an additional plan review will incur a plan review fee.

Questions regarding landscape planting and maintenance with regard to fire safety should be directed to the Fire Department's Fuel Modification Unit at (626) 969-5205.

Approval of this Fuel Modification Plan constitutes approval for only those Codes reviewed as part of the Fuel Modification process and does not replace the needed approval of any other office or agency with jurisdiction and review responsibility for those items which may or may not be illustrated on the plan.

TREE LEGEND

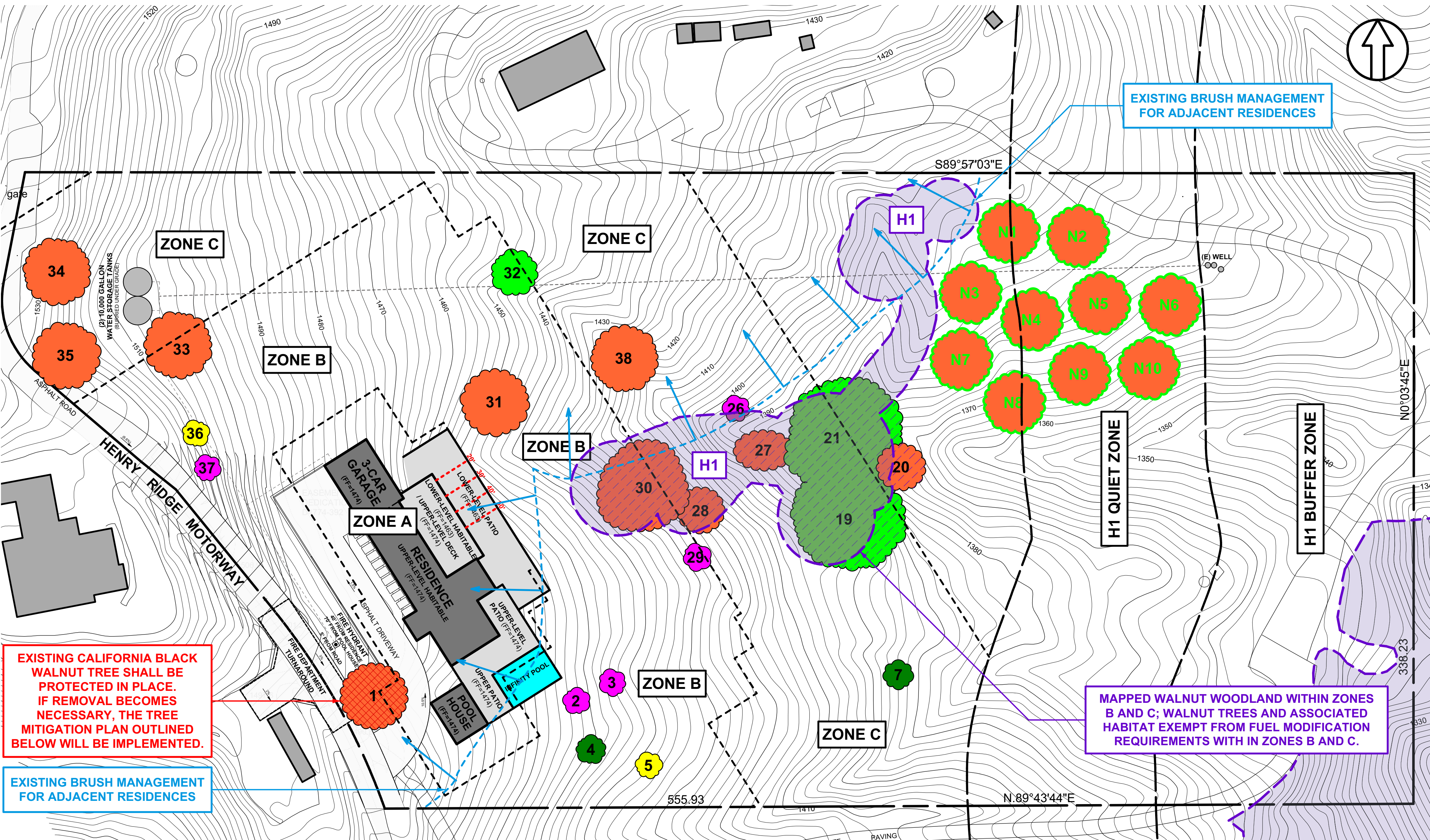
Tree ID*	Tree Name / Species	DBH Trunk 1	DBH Trunk 2	Combined DBH	Comments
1	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	6.75"	4.75"	11.5"	Tree located near Construction Footprint TREE TO BE PROTECTED IN PLACE
2	Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	5.50"	5.00"	10.5"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
3	Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	4.63"	3.88"	8.5"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
4	Scrub Oak (<i>Quercus berberidifolia</i>)	4.10"	5.20"	9.3"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
5	Greenbark Ceanothus (<i>Ceanothus spinosus</i>)	4.25"	4.00"	8.25"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
7	Scrub Oak (<i>Quercus berberidifolia</i>)	6.00"	5.13"	11.13"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
19	Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	20.25"	-	20.25"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
20	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	10.88"	-	10.88"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
21	Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	20.00"	16.00"	36"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
26	Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	7.75"	-	7.75"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
27	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	13.75"	-	13.75"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS

* Please see Biological Assessment Report for APN 4438-017-021 (dated April 9, 2019) for additional information.

TREE LEGEND

Tree ID*	Tree Name / Species	DBH Trunk 1	DBH Trunk 2	Combined DBH	Comments
28	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	5.75"	3.38"	9.13"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
29	Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	8.50"	-	8.50"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
30	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	11.50"	12.00"	23.5"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
31	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	10.75"	9.75"	20.5"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
32	Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	7.50"	6.50"	14"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
33	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	10.00"	7.50"	17.50"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
34	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	7.00"	7.75"	14.75"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
35	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	15.00"	-	15"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS
36	Greenbark Ceanothus (<i>Ceanothus spinosus</i>)	6.25"	-	6.25"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
37	Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	5.50"	4.50"	10"	Tree located within 100' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'B' REQUIREMENTS
38	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	28.1"	19.4"	47.5"	Tree located within 200' Fuel Mod Buffer Zone SEE FUEL MOD ZONE 'C' REQUIREMENTS

* Please see Biological Assessment Report for APN 4438-017-021 (dated April 9, 2019) for additional information.



TREE MITIGATION PLAN (IF REQUIRED)

Tree ID*	Tree Name / Species	Quantity	Size	Comments
N1 - N10	Claifornia Black Walnut (<i>Juglans californica</i>)	10 Trees	15 Gallon	If the existing California Black Walnut Tree (Tree ID-1) is removed, 10 new California Black Walnut Trees shall be planted - see plan for location.

HYDROSEEDING OF DISTURBED AREAS

All on-site areas disturbed by construction shall be hydroseeded using a County of Los Angeles Environmental Review Board approved blend. The hydroseeding application should involve a "two pass" or 2-step application process. The two-pass system ensures that seeds are in direct contact with the soil and are not suspended in the mulch material. Also, it is recommended that mycorrhizae be included in the hydroseed mix at a rate of at least 60lbs per acre during the first pass of the 2-step application.

- First Pass: Seeds (twice the indicated palette amount), 60 lbs. of mycorrhizae inoculum per acre, 500 lbs. mulch per acre, organic binder (e.g., Ecology Control M-Binder) at minimum rate to facilitate application.
- Second Pass: 1,500 to 2000 lbs. mulch material per acre, 80 to 100 lbs of organic binder per acre.

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PLAN EXPEDITOR
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Project Name:

THE MARSHALL RESIDENCE
1034 HENRY RIDGE MOUNTAINWAY
TOPANGA, CA 90290
APN: 4438-017-021

Architect of Record:



LEED ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL

Drawing Notes:

Property of Goodwin Design. DO NOT SCALE DRAWINGS.

Revisions:

1	March 9, 2019 (Initial Fuel Mod Submittal)
2	December 12, 2019 (Fuel Mod Revisions #1)
3	June 25, 2021 (Fuel Mod Revisions #2)
4	April 5, 2022 (Fuel Mod Revisions #3)
5	May 5, 2022 (Fuel Mod Revisions #4)
6	December 14, 2022 (Fuel Mod Revisions #5)
7	February 6, 2023 (Fuel Mod Revisions #6)
8	February 22, 2023 (Fuel Mod Revisions #7)
9	February 6, 2024 (Fuel Mod Revisions #8)
10	January 15, 2026 (Regional Planning Rev)

Drawn By: TBC, C/JG

Checked By: C/JG

Date: January 15, 2026

Scale: 1" = 40'-0"

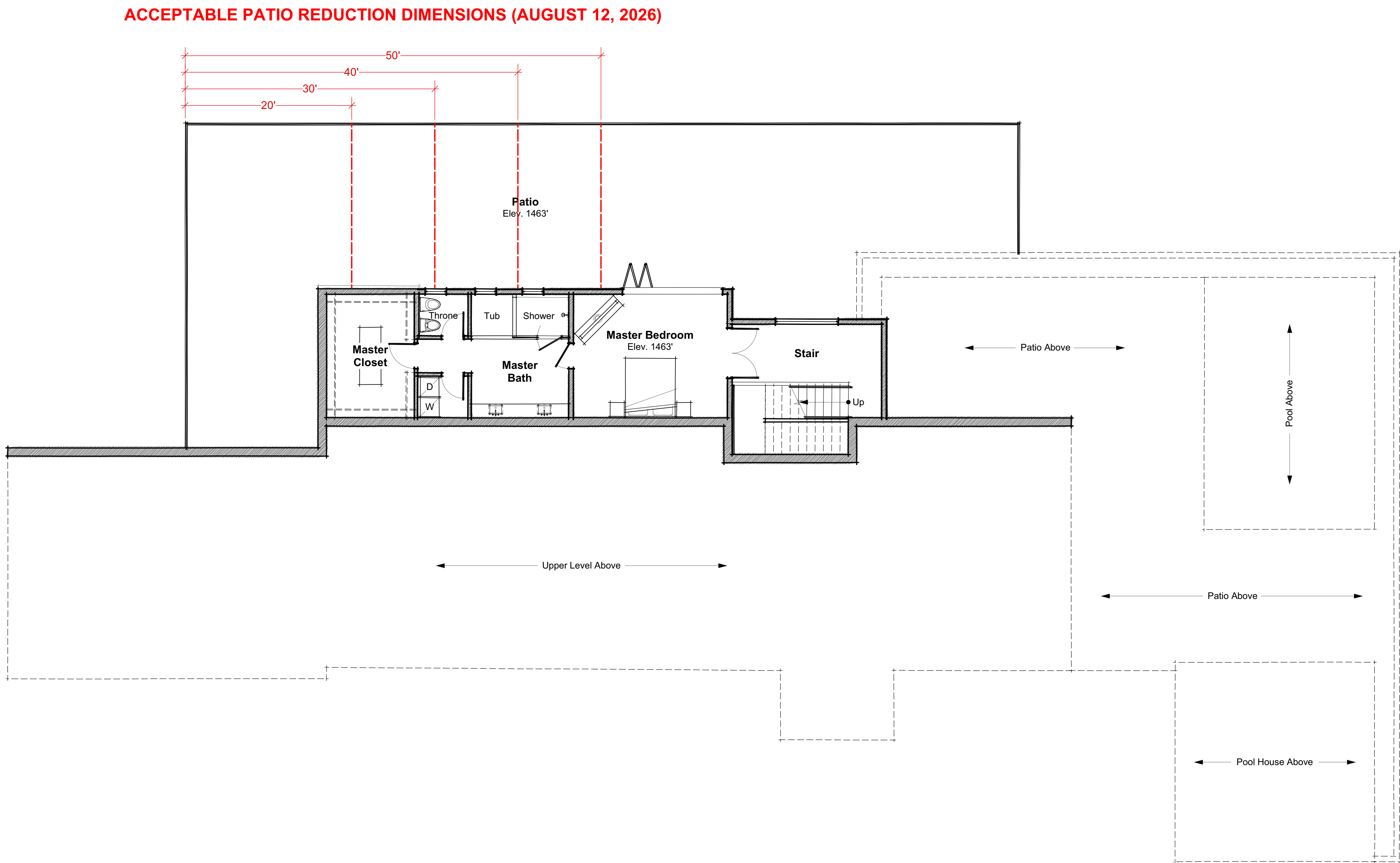
Job No.: 194-01-2017

Sheet Title:

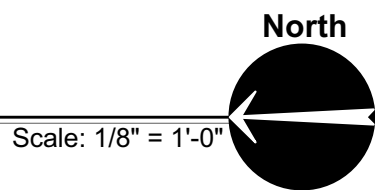
FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN

Sheet No.:

F-1.0



Lower Level Floor Plan



Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Contacts:

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Project Name:

THE MARSHALL RESIDENCE
1034 HENRY RIDGE MOUNTAINWAY
TOPANGA, CA 90290
APN: 4438-017-021

Architect of Record:



LEED ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL

Drawing Notes:

These plans are property of Goodwin Design. Use or copy is permitted by contract only. Any revisions to these plans, regardless of scope, without written permission of Goodwin Design, is prohibited and shall thereby absolve Goodwin Design from any liability claims, suits, or litigation by any interest parties in the project.

DO NOT SCALE THESE DRAWINGS.

The General Contractor shall verify all construction documents, site dimensions and conditions, and all existing utility locations and shall notify Goodwin Design of any discrepancies or inconsistencies prior to starting work.

Revisions:

1	March 9, 2018 (Planning Submittal #1)
2	September 5, 2019 (Planning Submittal #2)
3	May 1, 2020 (Public Works Submittal #2)
4	October 24, 2024 (Planning Submittal #3)
5	April 16, 2026 (Planning Submittal #4)

Drawn By: TBC

Checked By: C.J.G

Date: April 16, 2026

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Job No.: 194-01-2017

Sheet Title:

**LOWER-LEVEL
FLOOR PLAN**

Sheet No.:

A-1.2











**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER
AND ORDER
PROJECT NO. 2020-000267-(3)
MINOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. RPPL2020000457
VARIANCE NO. RPPL2020000459**

RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATE.** The Los Angeles County (“County”) Hearing Officer conducted a duly noticed public hearing on August 25, 2026, in the matter of Project No. 2020-000267-(3), Minor Coastal Development Permit No. RPPL2020000457 (“Minor CDP”) and Variance No. RPPL2020000459 (“Variance”).

2. **HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** [RESERVED]

3. **ENTITLEMENTS REQUESTED.** The applicant, Larry Goodwin ("Permittee"), requests the Minor CDP for the proposed construction of a single-family residence and accessory structures with a new onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) (“Project”). The Project would be located on a 5.2-acre property located at ~~1035~~1034 Henry Ridge Motorway (Assessor’s Parcel Number 4438-017-021) in the unincorporated community of the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone (“Project Site”).

The Permittee requests the Variance for development within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a significant ridgeline pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards).

4. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUIRED.**

A. The Minor CDP is a request for construction of a 3,827-square-foot (“SF”) single-family residence with a maximum height of 18 feet above grade. Other proposed improvements include a 1,067-SF three-car garage, a new OWTS, a swimming pool, and a 576-SF pool house. Per the requirements of the Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Program (“LIP”), a Minor CDP is required for any project that results in grading of more than 50 cubic yards and less than 5,000 cubic yards of earth (County Code Section 22.44.1260 [Grading]). A Minor CDP is required because the Project proposes 4,900 cubic yards of grading (2,500 cubic yards of cut; 500 cubic yards of fill; 1,900 cubic yards of overexcavation and recompaction; and 2,000 cubic yards of export) within a disturbed area of ~~9,890~~8,960 SF.

B. The Variance is requested for the single-family residence and related improvements less than 50 feet from a designated significant ridgeline, which runs along Henry Ridge Motorway west of the Project Site, pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards).

5. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the Rural Lands 20 (RL20 – one dwelling unit per 20 acres maximum density) land use designation of the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program Land Use Policy Map (“LUP”).
6. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area and is zoned R-C-20 (Rural Coastal—20 Acre Minimum Required Lot Area). Pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1750 (R-C Rural Coastal Zone), a single-family residence is the principal permitted use within the R-C Zone. However, County Code Section 22.44.1260 (Grading) requires a Minor CDP for any development that proposes between 50 and 5,000 cubic yards of grading, which the Project does. In addition, a Variance is requested for the construction of a single-family residence and related improvements that are located within 50 feet of a designated significant ridgeline (County Code Section 22.44.2040.B [Development Standards]).

7. **PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.**

A. Existing Site Conditions

The vacant 5.2-acre Project Site is immediately east of Henry Ridge Motorway, which generally follows the course of a designated significant ridgeline. Its topography slopes downward toward the east, with an average 30 percent grade and elevation that ranges between approximately 1,500 feet at its western boundary to 1,300 feet at its eastern boundary. Two adjacent single-family residences are situated to the north and west of the Project Site and much of the surrounding area has been affected by fuel modification and brush management practices. The parcel is biologically mapped in the LUP as H1, H2, and H3 Habitat areas. A stream is located approximately 80 feet to the east of the Project Site, with some H1 riparian habitat extending onto the eastern extremity of the property.

B. Site Access

The Project Site is accessed by Henry Ridge Motorway, a 20-foot-wide private road immediately to the west that connects to Greenleaf Canyon Road, a 20-foot-wide public road one mile to the south, and to Adamsville Avenue, a 60-foot-wide public road two miles to the north.

C. Site Plan

The applicant is currently requesting a Minor CDP for the proposed construction of a 3,827-SF single-family residence with a maximum height of 18 feet above grade. Other proposed improvements include a 1,067-SF, three-car attached garage, a new OWTS, a swimming pool, and a 576-SF pool house. In addition, a Variance is requested for the single-family residence and related improvements that are located within 50 feet of a designated significant ridgeline, which runs along Henry Ridge Motorway immediately west of the Project Site pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards).

Grading associated with these improvements includes a total of 4,900 cubic yards (2,500 cubic yards of cut; 500 cubic yards of fill; 1,900 cubic yards of overexcavation and recompaction, and 2,000 cubic yards of export) and a building site area of 9,8908,960 SF. One Southern California black walnut on the western portion of the Project Site would be removed and mitigated with 10 replacement trees on the eastern portion of the Project Site.

8. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** No public comments regarding the Project were received.

9. **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**

- A. County Fire Department ("Fire Department"): Recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing with specific conditions regarding access to the site and the water system in a letter dated February 4, 2020. The Fire Department conditions have been included within the Project's conditions of approval.
- B. County Department of Public Health: Recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing in a letter dated February 26, 2025.
- C. County Department of Public Works: Recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing in a letter dated July 11, 2024.
- D. County Department of Parks and Recreation: Stated that the Project would have no impact on its facilities in a letter dated February 25, 2020.

10. **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.** The Environmental Review Board ("ERB") reviewed potential biological resource impacts related to the proposed Project at their ~~November 20~~December 18, 2023, meeting and made recommendations, as required per County Code Section 22.44.1840 (Development Consistency Review) because the Project is less than 200 feet from H1 and H2 Habitat. A single Southern California black walnut tree would be removed, as it is within the proposed driveway construction footprint. The applicant has volunteered mitigation at a 10:1 replacement ratio with ~~five~~ 10 black walnut trees being planted in openings abutting a drainage with a five-year monitoring period. This mitigation plan was accepted by the ERB, which also recommended the use of native plant palettes in fuel modification zones A, B, and C. Other recommendations from the ERB included additional fuel modification zone requirements to preserve native vegetation where possible, runoff/drainage plan measures, reflective glass and lighting restrictions, biological monitor requirements during construction, and other measures to protect native vegetation, wildlife crossing areas, and nesting birds. All of the ERB recommendations have been included within the Project's conditions of approval.

11. **CEQA DETERMINATION.** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures and Class 4 – Minor Alterations to Land) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County

environmental guidelines. Pursuant to Section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes accessory structures for a single-family residence and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because it includes the construction of a single-family residence and associated infrastructure.

Pursuant to Section 15304(i) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 4 Categorical Exemption includes alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for fuel management purposes. No healthy, mature, or scenic trees will be removed by the Project with the exception of one southern California black walnut tree. The removal of this tree is covered by the Class 3 Categorical Exemption, as its removal is due to the placement of the single-family residence. Pursuant to the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, the Class 4 Categorical Exemption also allows for proposed grading associated with the single-family residence and driveway. The proposed Project would not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation to surface waters and therefore qualifies for the Class 4 Categorical Exemption.

Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines discusses how projects located within particularly sensitive environments may have a significant impact on the environment and are therefore not eligible for certain CEQA exemptions, including the Class 3 Categorical Exemption mentioned above. Exceptions to the exemptions include project impacts to an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where officially designated, precisely mapped, and adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. Exceptions to the exemptions also apply where a project may result in damage to scenic resources or where a project includes activities that will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Additionally, an exception to the exemption applies where a project may result in damage to scenic resources. However, the proposed Project is not subject to an exception to the CEQA exemptions. While development is proposed within mapped H2 Habitat, as well as within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone and the H1 Quiet Zone, ~~because a specific~~ biological inventory of the area of Project disturbance did not indicate the presence of ~~an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern~~ sensitive biological resources that would be impacted by implementation and operation of the Project, as described in detail below.

The applicant completed a biological inventory that was reviewed and confirmed by the County Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") Staff Biologist. A single southern California black walnut tree would be removed in order to provide access to the proposed residence. To compensate for this impact, ten black walnut trees would be planted in openings abutting a drainage. No other specifically mapped sensitive resources would be affected.

The Project is not expected to significantly impact scenic resources due to unusual circumstances, such as the designated ridgeline along Henry Ridge Motorway, as the improvements will be located partially below the roadway with portions of the residence visible from the roadway. It is also not likely to have a cumulative or significant effect on the environment, as it consists of one single-family residence in an area with existing development and infrastructure, and no hazardous waste sites or historic resources would be affected.

12. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.990 (Notice Requirements), the community was properly notified of the public hearing by mail, newspaper (*Malibu Times*), and property posting. Additionally, the Project was properly noticed, and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On July 14, 2026 a total of 15 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 1,000-foot radius from the Project Site, as well as 22 notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for The Malibu Zoned District and additional interested parties.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

13. **LAND USE POLICY.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the LUP because the RL20 land use designation is intended for single-family residential uses on relatively large lots. The proposed single-family residence as well as the driveway and proposed accessory uses are permitted under this designation.
14. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following policies of the LUP:

Conservation and Open Space Element

Policy CO-108:

Site and design new development to minimize the amount of grading and the alteration of natural landforms.

Policy CO-109:

Site and design new development to protect natural features and minimize removal of natural vegetation.

The Project would be located mainly on a portion of the Project Site adjacent to Henry Ridge Motorway that was previously disturbed by fuel modification/brush clearance practices. The Project Site is irregularly shaped, and the parcel is mapped in the Santa Monica Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan ("LUP") as H1, H2, and H3 Habitat areas. The variance is requested to allow development to occur closer to the ridgeline

in order to minimize potential fuel modification impacts to H1 and H2 Habitat areas, which are located less than 200 feet to the east. To further minimize impacts to these habitat types, the fuel modification plan includes provisions for avoidance of any thinning of vegetation within areas designated as H1 Habitat due to the presence of stands of native oak and walnut trees. This approach balances the protection of biological resources and scenic resource protection measures. Grading quantities would also be reduced by allowing the residence and related driveway access closer to the ridgeline, as this is the location of the access road (Henry Ridge Moorway) and the least steep portion of the Project Site. In addition, the proposed residence would be less than 18 feet in height as required by County Code Section 22.44.2040.B.4(2) (Development Standards) and conform to the natural contours of the slope to further reduce grading impacts.

Conservation and Open Space Element

Policy CO-110:

The height of structures shall be limited to minimize impacts to scenic resources.

Policy CO-131:

Site and design new development to minimize adverse impacts on scenic resources to the maximum extent feasible. If there is no feasible building site location on the proposed project site where development would not be visible, then the development shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts on scenic areas through measures that may include, but not be limited to, siting development in the least visible portion of the site, breaking up the mass of new structures, designing structures to blend into the natural hillside setting, restricting the building maximum size, reducing maximum height, clustering development, minimizing grading, incorporating landscape and building material screening elements, and where appropriate, berming.

Land Use Element

Policy LU-33:

Require that new development be compatible with the rural character of the area and the surrounding natural environment.

Policy LU-38:

Limit structure heights to ensure protection of scenic resources and compatibility with surrounding settings.

The Project Site is visible from Henry Ridge Motorway, a designated ridgeline adjacent to and west of the property. As a result, the Project Site is located within a Scenic Resource Area ("SRA") per County Code Section 22.44.2000 (Identification of Scenic

Resource Areas). Therefore, the Project would have a height limit of 18 feet above grade. The home is designed to step down the slope and conform to the natural contours of the Project Site. The design of the new single-family residence would also be in conformance with all requirements of the LIP and would be compatible with the surrounding community. This compatibility is indicated by the applicant's submitted architectural elevations and grading plans.

ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

15. **PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the R-C-20 zoning classification because the proposed new single-family residence is permitted in such zone with an Administrative CDP pursuant to County Code Sections 22.44.860 (Application—Types of Coastal Development Permits and Review Procedures) and 22.44.1750 (R-C Rural Coastal Zone). However, County Code Section 22.44.~~1620~~1260 (Grading) requires a Minor CDP for projects proposing between 50 and 5,000 cubic yards of grading. Since the Project proposes 4,900 cubic yards of grading, a Minor CDP is required instead of an Administrative CDP.

A Variance is required for the proposed development pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards) because it is within 50 feet of a significant ridgeline. Thus, a Minor CDP and a Variance are required for the activities involved with this request.

16. **REQUIRED YARDS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Sections 22.44.1750 (R-C Rural Coastal Zone) and 22.44.1375 (Yards), as the Project would meet all required setback standards.

17. **HEIGHT.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards), which limits the maximum height for a single-family residence that is within 50 vertical and horizontal feet of a significant ridgeline to 18 feet above grade. The maximum height of the proposed single-family residence is ~~below~~ 18 feet.

18. **COLORS/MATERIALS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project would utilize construction materials that are appropriate for the surrounding area. Roofing materials are not glossy or reflective, and siding materials include concrete board aluminum cladding and smooth plaster that would utilize earth tones and no bright or white colors pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1320 (Construction Colors, Materials, and Design).

19. **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the biological resource requirements of County Code Section 22.44.1800 (Purpose) et. seq. The ERB reviewed potential biological resource impacts related to the proposed Project at their ~~November 20~~December 18, 2023, meeting and made recommendations, as required per County Code Section 22.44.1840 (Development

Consistency Review) because development would occur less than 200 feet from H1 and H2 Habitat. A single Southern California black walnut tree would be removed, as it is within the proposed driveway construction footprint. The applicant has volunteered mitigation at a 10:1 replacement ratio with ten black walnut trees being planted in openings abutting Drainage 1 with a five-year monitoring period. This mitigation plan was accepted by the ERB, which also recommended the use of native plant palettes in fuel modification zones A, B, and C. Other recommendations from ERB included additional fuel modification zone requirements to preserve native vegetation where possible, runoff/drainage plan measures, reflective glass and lighting restrictions, biological monitor requirements during construction, and other measures to protect native vegetation, wildlife crossing areas, and nesting birds. All of the ERB recommendations have been included within the Project's conditions of approval. All of the ERB recommendations have been included within the Project's conditions of approval.

20. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable grading requirements identified in County Code Section 22.44.1260 (Grading). The Project is proposing 4,900 cubic yards of total grading (2,500 cubic yards of cut; 500 cubic yards of fill; 1,900 cubic yards of overexcavation and recompaction and 2,000 cubic yards of export) within a disturbed area of ~~10,000~~ 8,960 SF. The Project is consistent with the applicable grading requirements because grading would occur mainly within previously disturbed areas and the Project is appropriately conditioned to prohibit grading during the rainy season, defined as October 15 of any year through April 15 of the subsequent year. The exact amount of overexcavation and recompaction is unknown at this time, although the civil engineer for the Project is certain that it will not exceed 1,900 cubic yards and will likely be less. This will keep the total amount of grading less than 5,000 cubic yards, at which point a Major CDP would be required.
21. **EXTERIOR LIGHTING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable exterior lighting requirements identified in County Code Section 22.44.1270 (Exterior Lighting). The Project is proposing outdoor lighting that would be appropriately shielded per LIP standards. The Project is appropriately conditioned so that all exterior lighting remains consistent with County Code Section 22.44.1270 (Exterior Lighting).
22. **PARKING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified for development in the R-C-~~40-20~~ Zone (County Code Section 22.44.1750 [R-C Rural Coastal Zone]), as two covered parking spaces are required. The Project would provide three covered parking spaces in an attached garage.
23. **FENCES AND WALLS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.44.1310 (Fences, Gates, and Walls). Fences in the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone must be wildlife-permeable unless they are within Fuel Modification Zone "A," which typically extends 20 feet from habitable structures. No fencing is proposed on the Project Site.

24. **BUILDING SITE AREA.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.44.1910.I (Land Planning and Development Standards). The Project's building site area is 9,8908,960 square feet, which is less than the maximum of 10,000 square feet.

25. **HABITAT CATEGORIES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.44.1920 (Development Standards). The project site is irregularly shaped and mapped within the Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan ("LUP") as 1.04 acres of H3 Habitat, 4.09 acres of H2 Habitat, and 0.10 acres of H1 Habitat. After site-specific surveys by the applicant's biologist and the Staff Biologist, the ERB recommended that the on-site habitat be remapped, which would result in approximately 2.17 acres of H3 Habitat, 2.65 acres of H2 Habitat, and 0.41 acres of H1 Habitat. H1 Habitat consists of small areas of California walnut woodland on the central portion of the Project Site.

The residence and all other appurtenant structures are proposed almost entirely within H3 Habitat, although 0.01 acres of direct development, 0.42 acres of irrigated fuel modification and 0.44 acres of non-irrigated fuel modification would occur within H2 Habitat on site, and 0.68 acres of off-site brush clearance would occur within H2 Habitat. In addition, 0.17 acres of direct development would occur within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone (0-100 feet away). These impacts must be mitigated through on-site habitat mitigation, off-site habitat mitigation, or payment the habitat in-lieu fee pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1950 (Mitigation). A condition has been included to require that the applicant obtain an approved on-site or off-site mitigation plan or pay all required in-lieu fees prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit. These fees are calculated at a rate of \$83,478 per acre for direct impacts, irrigated fuel modification, and off-site brush clearance and at a rate of \$23,583.10 per acre for non-irrigated on-site fuel modification. Based on these rates, the in-lieu fee would be \$117,228.40. While the entirety of the residence is located less than 200 feet from H1 Habitat to the west, these areas would not require fuel modification, as indicated in the preliminary Fuel Modification Plan approved by the Fire Department.

In addition, the location of the Project on the southwest portion of the Project Site places all habitable structures, as well as most of the building site area, within the existing brush clearance radius of a single-family residence immediately to the west (H3 Habitat). While Project development would be entirely within H3 Habitat and H2 Habitat, approximately 0.17 acres of direct development would be within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone. In addition, the remainder of direct development (approximately 0.20 acres) would be within the H1 Quiet Zone. Per the requirements of the LIP, residential development may only be permitted within an H1 Quiet Zone or H1 Habitat Buffer Zone when it is the minimum amount of development necessary to make use of the property, when there is no other feasible building site location, and when the maximum feasible

buffer width between development and H1 Habitat is provided so that no H1 Habitat would be significantly degraded (County Code Section 22.44.1890.E [Permitted Uses]).

The proposed he BSA of 8,960 SF is less the maximum allowed (10,000 SF) (County Code Section 22.44.1910.C [Land Planning and Development Standards]), and almost all of it is located within H3 Habitat. The small portion within H2 Habitat (0.01 acres) includes a portion of the proposed swimming pool. The applicant prepared a shadow study showing that placing the pool within H3 Habitat to the north would subject it to shadows during most of the day, which would severely limit its use. It would also require a significant amount of additional grading, as the slopes in that location are significantly steeper. Swimming pools currently exist at most other single-family residences in the vicinity, and the resulting reduction in value of a residence developed without a pool may affect the Project's economic feasibility. The proposed pool is of a relatively modest size (520 SF). Due to the small amount of required development within H2 Habitat, the existence of swimming pools at most other residences in the vicinity, and the lack of level ground to the north, placing the pool in the proposed location is appropriate. Therefore, the development of 0.01 acres of H2 Habitat would be the minimum amount necessary to make economic use of the property. This development of H2 Habitat will be mitigated through commensurate habitat restoration or payment of an in-lieu fee.

The entirety of the proposed residence and ancillary development would be located within the H1 Habitat Buffer Zone or H1 Quiet Zone. However, the proposed location is the most appropriate site for development. The location of the residence on the southwestern portion of the Project Site places it in the farthest feasible location from H1 Habitat to the east, as well as within the existing fuel modification zone of a single-family residence immediately to the west (H3 Habitat). Movement of the residence further to the northwest, which would be slightly farther away from H1 Habitat, would result in dramatically more grading on slopes exceeding 50 percent grade, as well as the removal of three Southern California black walnut trees, resulting in greater habitat impacts.

Direct development within the H1 Habitat Buffer and the H1 Quiet Zone is also kept to the minimum amount necessary to make economic use of the property. Except for its northwestern corner—which is discussed above—the entirety of the Project Site is located within the H1 Quiet Zone. The residence is relatively small compared to those in the surrounding area (3,827 square feet), is immediately adjacent to the access road, and is located almost entirely within H3 Habitat. ~~While the BSA is close to the maximum allowed~~Much of the proposed BSA (9,998,960 square feet), much of it is due to the required grading to place the residence on sloping terrain. The inclusion of a 527-square-foot pool house, patios, and a portion of the swimming pool within the H1 Quiet Zone does significantly increase the BSA, as they would be mostly within areas

of required grading for the proposed residence. The impact to H1 Habitat would also not be increased in any meaningful way, as these areas are farther from H1 Habitat than the proposed residence.

26. **OWTS STANDARDS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.44.1340 (Water Resources), which prohibits OWTS leach fields or seepage pits within 50 feet of the dripline of any oak or other native tree or within 150 feet of a stream. The Project's proposed seepage pits would meet these standards, and the design concept was approved by the County Department of Public Health.

27. **SIGNIFICANT RIDGELINE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project requires a Variance for development within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a designated significant ridgeline pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.2040.B (Development Standards). Alternative sites within the property or project have been considered and eliminated from consideration based on the potential for substantial habitat damage and destruction. The Variance is requested to allow development to occur closer to the ridgeline and protect sensitive biological resources, including riparian H1 and H2 Habitat areas and coast live oak and black walnut trees downslope from the proposed residence. Any alternative location outside of the significant ridgeline area would be placed entirely within H2 Habitat and within or very close to H1 Habitat. This approach balances the protection of biological resources and scenic resource protection measures. Grading quantities would also be reduced by allowing the residence and related driveway access closer to the ridgeline and public road. In addition, the proposed residence would be ~~less than~~ 18 feet in height and conform to the natural contours of the slope to further reduce grading impacts.

28. **GRANT TERM.** The Hearing Officer finds that it is not necessary to require a grant term given the nature of the residential use and the surrounding area.

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FINDINGS

29. **The Hearing Officer finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the certified local coastal program.** As proposed, the Project would comply with all applicable development standards for residences in the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program, which includes the LUP and LIP, including those standards related to permitted uses, building site area, habitat categories, and height restrictions, except for those standards regarding development within 50 feet of a designated significant ridgeline, which is why the Project requires a Variance.

30. **The Hearing Officer finds that any development located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone, is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of Division 20 of the Public Resources Code.** The Project Site is not located between the ocean and the nearest public road, so coastal access requirements are not applicable.

VARIANCE FINDINGS

31. The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification. there are special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property involved, such as size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, which are not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classification. The Project would require a Variance because it is proposed to be located within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline. This Variance is needed to protect biological resources, including riparian H1 Habitat and coast live oak and black walnut trees downslope, by allowing development closer to the ridgeline, as permitted by County Code Section 22.44.1350.B.15 (Hillside Management). This approach prioritizes biological resource protection over scenic resource protection, while ensuring the proposed development does not obstruct views of the Significant Ridgeline from a scenic route. Grading quantities would also be reduced by allowing the residence and related driveway access closer to the ridgeline and public road. The combination of H1 Habitat and steep slopes to the east constitute special circumstances and exceptional characteristics not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classification. The property owners to the north, south, and west of the Project Site along Henry Ridge Motorway already enjoy similar use of their properties, as several single-family residences of similar size are already located on the mapped significant ridgeline. Therefore, the strict application of the Code would deprive such property of the privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.
32. The Hearing Officer finds that the adjustment authorized will not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the property is situated. such a variance is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right of the applicant such as that possessed by owners of other property in the same vicinity and zone The property owners to the north, south, and west of the Project Site along Henry Ridge Motorway already enjoy similar use of their properties, as several single-family residences of similar size are already located on the mapped significant ridgeline. Therefore, the variance will not grant a special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the zone in which the property is situated.
- 32-33. The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of the zoning regulations will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards. Locating the residence more than 50 feet (vertical and horizontal) from the significant ridgeline would likely require development in H1 Habitat, which is prohibited in the LIP. This may inhibit the development the Project Site entirely. This relocation would also require significant grading of steep slopes and result in a driveway of more than 300 feet in length, which

also requires a Variance under Section 22.44.1920.C (Development Standards) of the County Code. The LIP prioritizes the preservation of biological resources, such as H1 Habitat, over scenic resources, such as significant ridgelines. Thus, strict application of the zoning regulations will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.

33-34. The Hearing Officer finds that the adjustment will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare, or to the use, enjoyment, or valuation of property of other persons in the vicinity~~granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or be injurious to other property or improvements in the same vicinity and zone.~~ The requested variance is the minimum needed for relief and reasonable property use. Placement of the residence any further away from the significant ridgeline would result in a large volume of additional grading due to the steep slopes and lengthened driveway, as well as development closer to H1 Habitat. As proposed, the Project will not harm public health, safety, or welfare, nor negatively affect nearby properties.

34-35. The Hearing Officer finds that the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to coastal resources. The Project has been designed to avoid any impact to sensitive coastal biological resources, such as H1 Habitat in the central portion of the Project Site, east of the proposed single-family residence. This H1 Habitat will not be affected by fuel modification, as the Fire Department exempted it from this requirement in its approved fuel modification plan. The Project has also been found to be in conformity with the certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

35-36. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines sections 15303 (Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures Categorical Exemption) and 15304 (Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land Categorical Exemption). The Class 3 Categorical Exemption specifically pertains to a single-family residence and its appurtenant structures, while the Class 4 Categorical Exemption specifically refers to the grading and required fuel modification proposed as part of the Project.

ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

36-37. **LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS.** The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Hearing Officer's decision is based in this matter is at LA County Planning, 13th Floor, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. The custodian of such documents and materials shall be the Section Head of the Coastal Development Services Section, LA County Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE HEARING OFFICER CONCLUDES THAT:

Regarding the Minor CDP:

- A. The Hearing Officer finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program.
- B. The Hearing Officer finds that the proposed development is not located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone and therefore is not subject to public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of Division 20 of the Public Resources Code.

Regarding the Variance:

- A. The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification. ~~there are special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property involved, such as size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, which are not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classification.~~
- B. The Hearing Officer finds that the adjustment authorized will not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the property is situated. ~~such a variance is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right of the applicant such as that possessed by owners of other property in the same vicinity and zone.~~
- B.C. The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of the zoning regulations will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.
- C.D. The Hearing Officer finds that the adjustment will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare, or to the use, enjoyment, or valuation of property of other persons in the vicinity~~granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or be injurious to other property or improvements in the same vicinity and zone.~~
- D.E. The Hearing Officer finds that the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to coastal resources.

THEREFORE, THE HEARING OFFICER:

1. Finds that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines sections 15303 (Class 3, Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) and 15304 (Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land) Categorical Exemptions; and

PROJECT NO. 2020-000267-(3)
MINOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. RPPL2020000457
VARIANCE NO. RPPL2020000459

EXHIBIT C
DRAFT FINDINGS

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2. Approves MINOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. RPPL2020000457 and VARIANCE NO. ~~RPPL2022000459~~RPPL2020000459, subject to the attached conditions.

ACTION DATE: August 25, 2026

MG:RG:TM:JH
~~08/13/26~~08/20/26

c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety