# REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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| DATE ISSUED: | September 11, 2025 | | |
| HEARING DATE: | September 24, 2025 | AGENDA ITEM: | 8 |
| PROJECT NUMBER: | R2005-01452-(3) | | |
| PERMIT NUMBER(S): | Variance 200900001 | | |
| SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: | 3 | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga | | |
| OWNER: | CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. | | |
| APPLICANT: | Cory Isaacson | | |
| APPELLANT: | Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation | | |
| CASE PLANNER: | Tyler Montgomery, Principal Regional Planner<br>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:*

**This is an appeal of the Hearing Officer's approval of June 24, 2025**. LA County Planning Staff ("Staff") recommends that the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") **DENY THE APPEAL** and **APPROVE** Project Number R2005-01452-(3), Variance Number 200900001, based on the Findings (Exhibit E) attached to this report and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit F).

**A complete application for this Variance was filed in 2009.** Therefore, it has been evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan ("2000 LUP") and the Los Angles County Code as it existed in 2009 ("2009 County Code"), which includes the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("2009 CSD").

Staff recommends the following motions:

***CEQA:***

**I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.**

***ENTITLEMENT:***

**I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION DENY THE APPEAL AND APPROVE VARIANCE NUMBER 200900001 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### A. Entitlement Requested

- Variance for the construction of a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence and appurtenant structures within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") in the A-1-5 (Light Agricultural—5-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) Zone and within the Santa Monica Mountains North Area, pursuant to Section 22.56.260 of the 2009 County Code.

### B. Project

The applicant, Cory Isaacson ("Applicant"), requests a Variance to construct a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence on the northern portion of 4.9-acre parcel ("Project Site") in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area. The Project also includes an attached 585-square-foot garage, a swimming pool, and a new onsite wastewater treatment system on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. Access is provided by an existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway that traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (State Route 27) and designated scenic route, to the west. The southernmost portion of the existing driveway, which is 665 feet in length, is paved, while the northern portion, which is 650 feet in length, would be paved as part of the Project. The graded pad and driveway were developed legally between 2006 and 2009. The Project does not propose any additional grading.

Per the 2009 County Code, a single-family residence is permitted with a Site Plan Review in the A-1 Zone (2009 County Code 22.24.070). However, per the requirements of the 2009 CSD, a Variance is required for any development within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a mapped significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Per the mapping of the 2000 LUP (as well as the current mapping), a significant ridgeline runs directly through the proposed residence. Therefore, a Variance is required for the activities involved with this request.

The Project Site is 4.9 acres and irregularly shaped with a mapped significant ridgeline running northwest to southeast across its northern portion, through an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. The Project Site is adjacent to Topanga Canyon Boulevard to the southwest, although the road is separated from the graded pad by 600 linear feet of steeply sloping terrain. As a result, the graded pad is accessed from the west by a partially paved, 20-foot-wide driveway that traverses two other parcels before reaching Topanga Canyon Boulevard one-half mile to the west. The northern portion of the Project Site consists of graded areas and disturbed vegetation, while the central and southern portions consist mainly of coastal chapparal scrub.

## PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE HEARING OFFICER

A duly noticed public hearing before the Hearing Officer was advertised for June 17, 2025. This Hearing Officer meeting was subsequently canceled due to security issues and the public hearing was automatically continued to June 24, 2025, which was the next Hearing Officer meeting date. On that date, Staff gave a presentation recommending approval of the Variance, and public testimony was given both for and against it. The Hearing Officer subsequently closed the public hearing and approved the Variance.

## REASONS FOR APPEAL

The written appeal, filed by Mr. Roger Pugliese on behalf of the Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation ("LVHF"), states that the Project is in direct conflict with the Significant Ridgeline Ordinance and would not be consistent with the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan. It also states that the Project would have a significant impact on the Summit Valley Edmund G. Edelman Park to the north. It also objects to the fact that no design alternatives have been proposed or studied.

## FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Hearing Officer approved the Project at the continued public hearing on June 24, 2025. This approval was appealed to the Commission on June 25, 2025, by Roger Pugliese, on behalf of the LVHF, per the provisions of County Code Section 22.240.020.

Pursuant to County Code Sections 22.222.150, 22.222.170, and 22.222.180, the community was properly notified of the appeal hearing by mail, newspaper (*Malibu Times)*, and property posting. Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On August 15, 2025, a total of 38 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners 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 to any additional interested parties.

Staff received a letter from the Topanga Town Council after 12 p.m. on June 23, 2025, so it was not provided to the Hearing Officer but was made part of the public record and is attached as Exhibit E. The letter is dated June 14, 2025, although it was submitted on June 23, 2025, and it expresses concerns regarding the Project. It states that the Applicant may have done unpermitted work that encroached onto the Summit Valley Edmund G. Edelman Park property to the north, so the Applicant should not be granted the Variance until the violation is

corrected. Staff notes that this issue was previously addressed in the Supplemental Staff Report to the Hearing Officer dated June 23, 2025, which is attached as part of Exhibit D. Staff believes, but has not confirmed, that the unpermitted development on park property to the north may be the result of grading and construction activity on one or both of the adjacent properties to the west of the Project Site. Regardless, Staff has determined that the unpermitted grading should be addressed as a separate violation unrelated to the Project because it is not located on the Project Site.

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Report Reviewed By: M. Glaser for Robert Glaser

Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner

Report Approved By: M. Glaser

Mitch Glaser, Assistant Administrator

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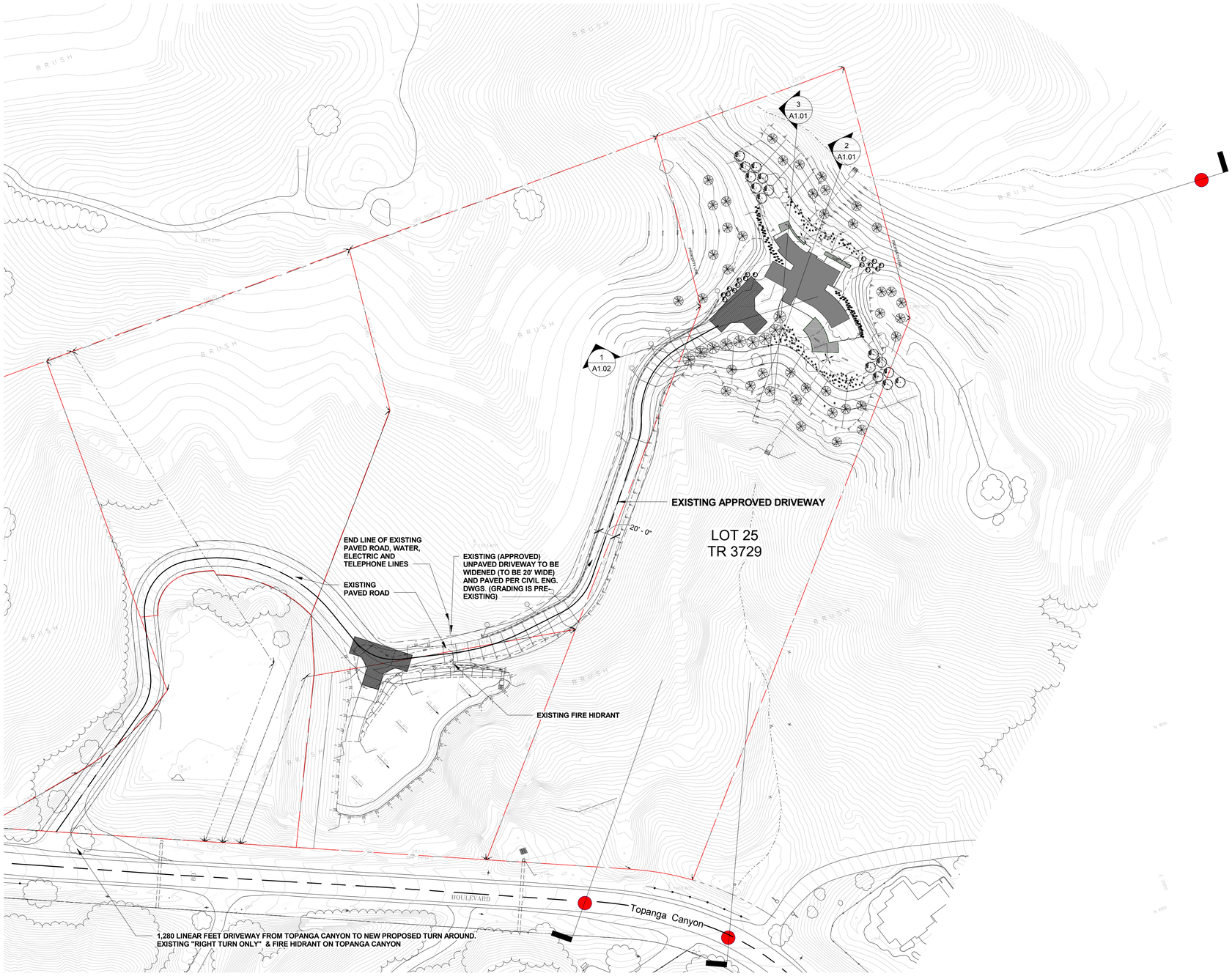
| LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS | |
|---|---|
| EXHIBIT A | Site Plans |
| EXHIBIT B | Appeal Form |
| EXHIBIT C | Hearing Officer Approval Package (6/25/25) |
| EXHIBIT D | Hearing Officer Staff Report and Supplemental Staff Reports (6/5/25, 6/18/25, 6/23/25) |
| EXHIBIT E | Draft Findings |
| EXHIBIT F | Draft Conditions of Approval |
| EXHIBIT G | Public Correspondence from the Topanga Town Council |




NOTES:

PARCEL GROSS AREA: 5 ACRES

PARCEL NET AREA:

PROPOSED NEW HOUSE AREA:
4,000 SF.

DESIGN FEATURES TO MINIMIZE VISIBILITY OF THE NEW HOUSE TO INCLUDE:
-USE OF DOWNLIGHTS
- LANDSCAPE

WATER LINES ARE ALREADY INSTALLED.
ADDITIONAL METER TO BE ADDED. CONNECTION POINT LOCATED ON TOPANGA CANYON, NEAR THE WATER METERS.

THERE ARE NOT KNOWN CONSTRAINED AREAS.

N

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| No. | Description | Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Design Options Planning Submittal | 03.31.16 |
| 2 | Site Plan Planning Submittal | 05.09.16 |
| 3 | Planning Submittal | 09.26.16 |

# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

## Reference Site Plan

Date

Scale 1/64" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A1.00

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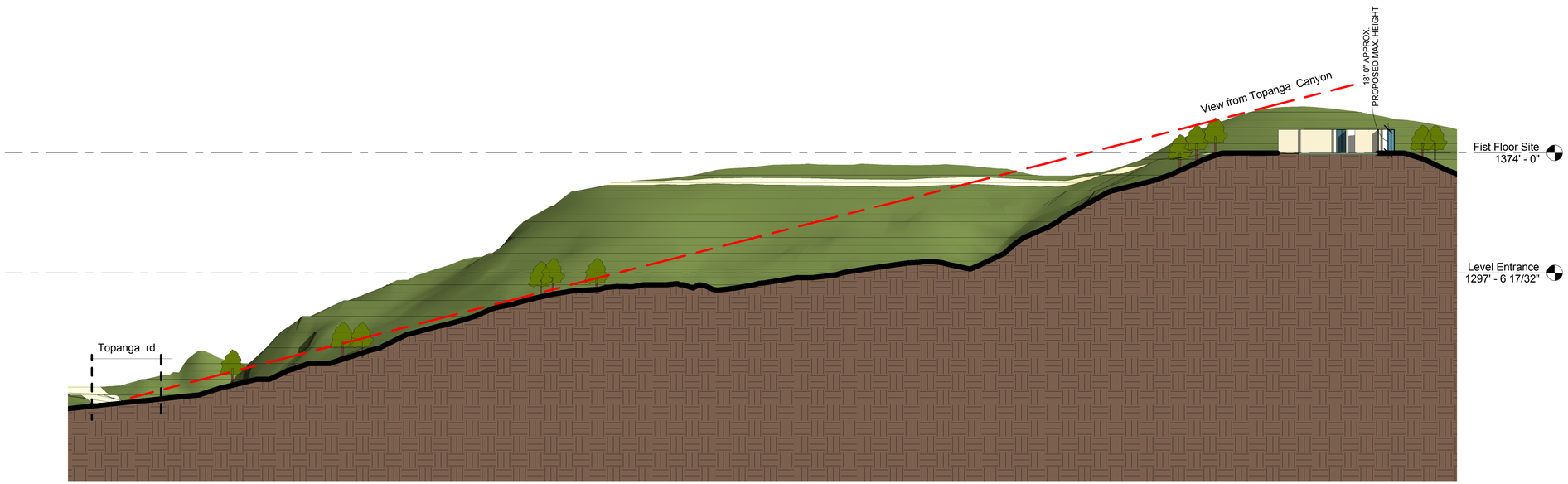


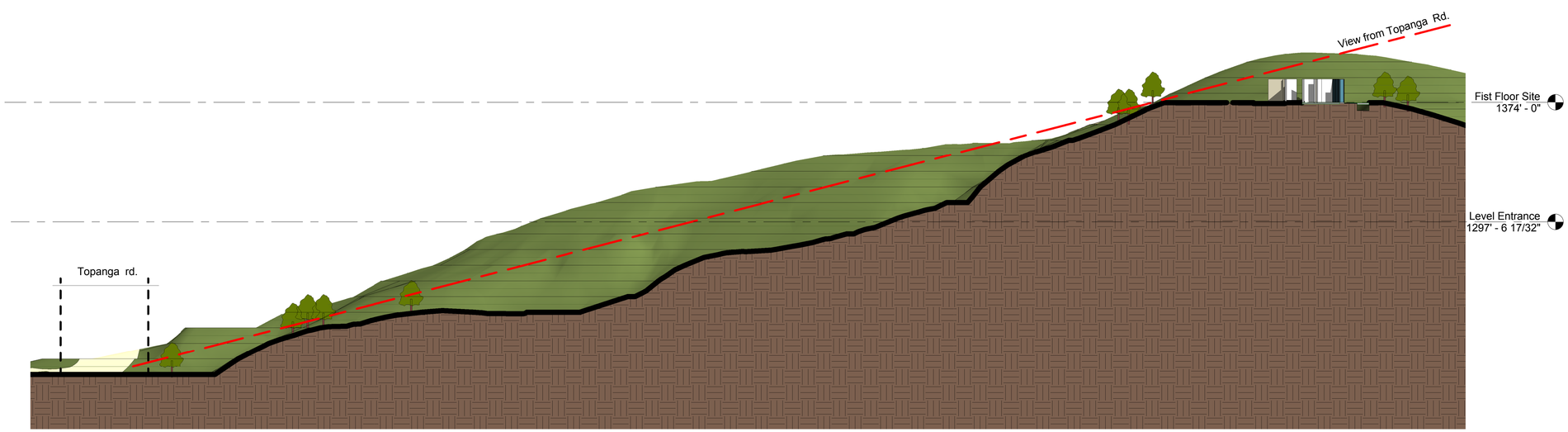


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# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

## Sections /Elevations

Date

Scale 1" = 40'-0"

Sheet Number A1.01

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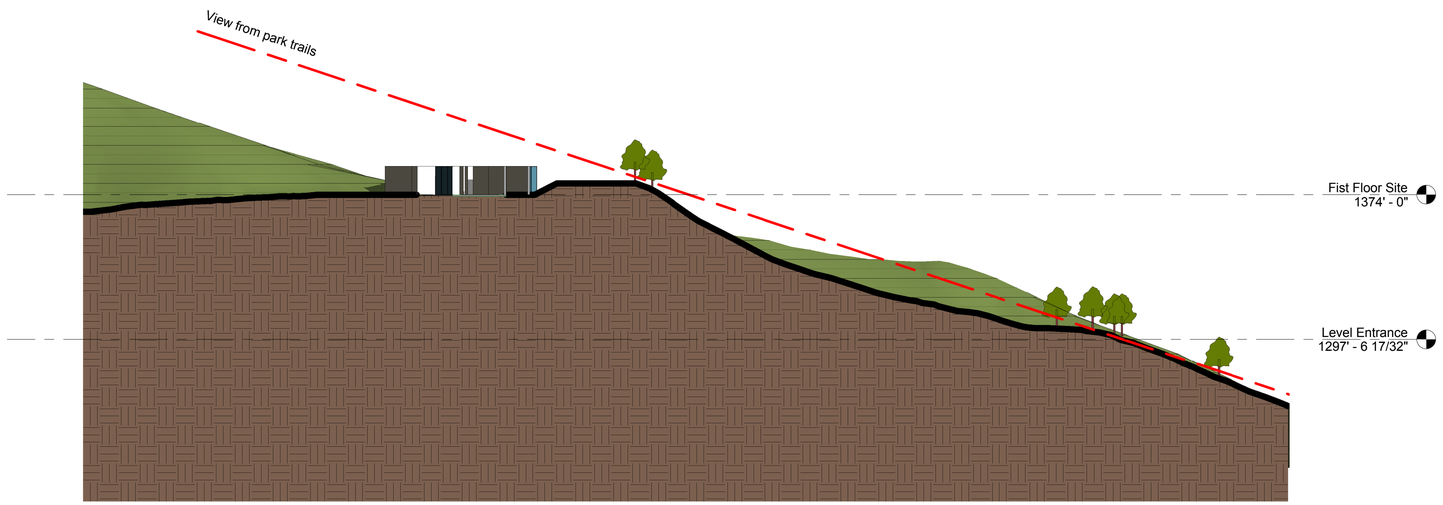


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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

Sections

Date

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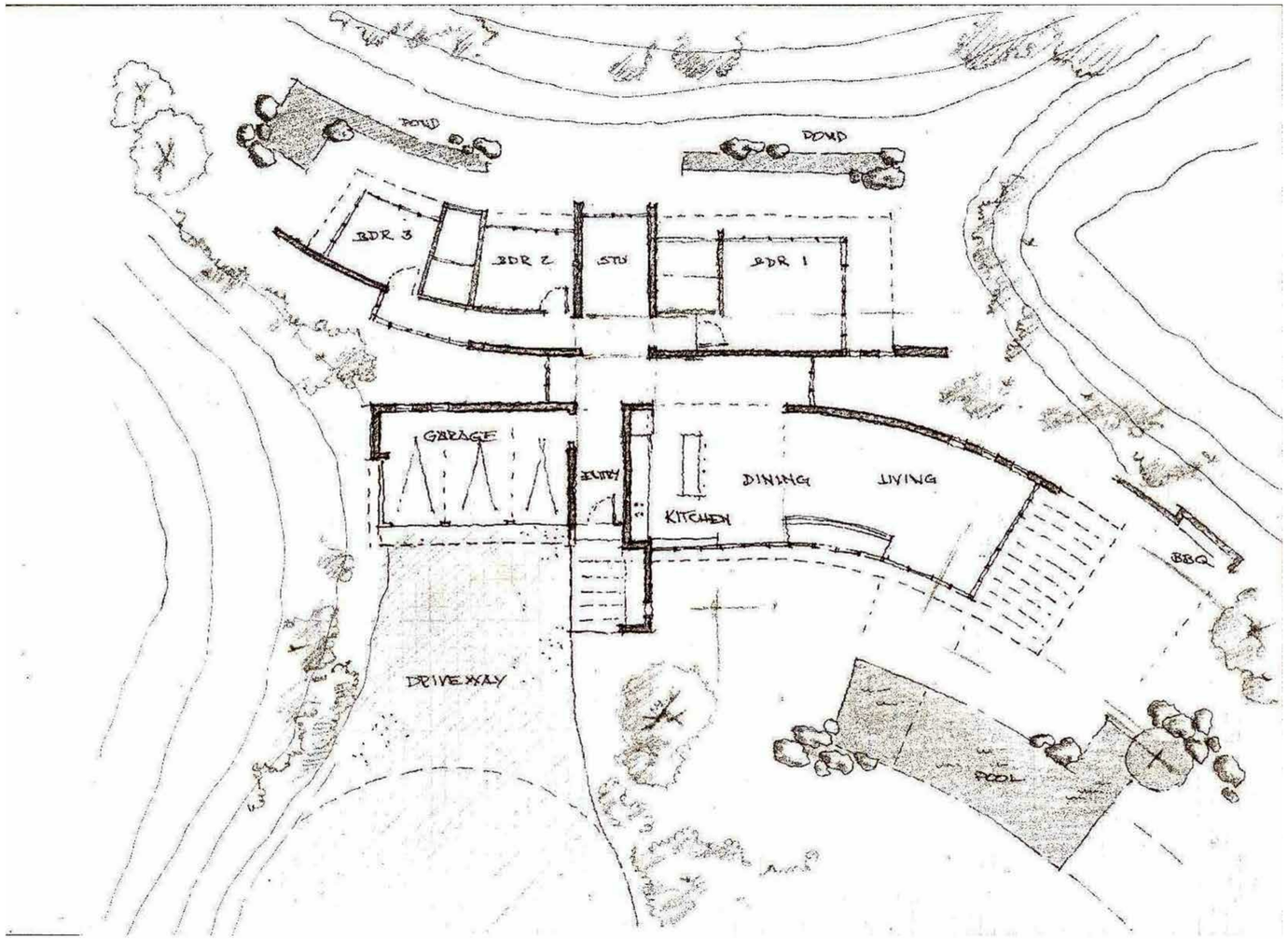


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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

Floor Plan

Date

Scale

Sheet Number A1.03

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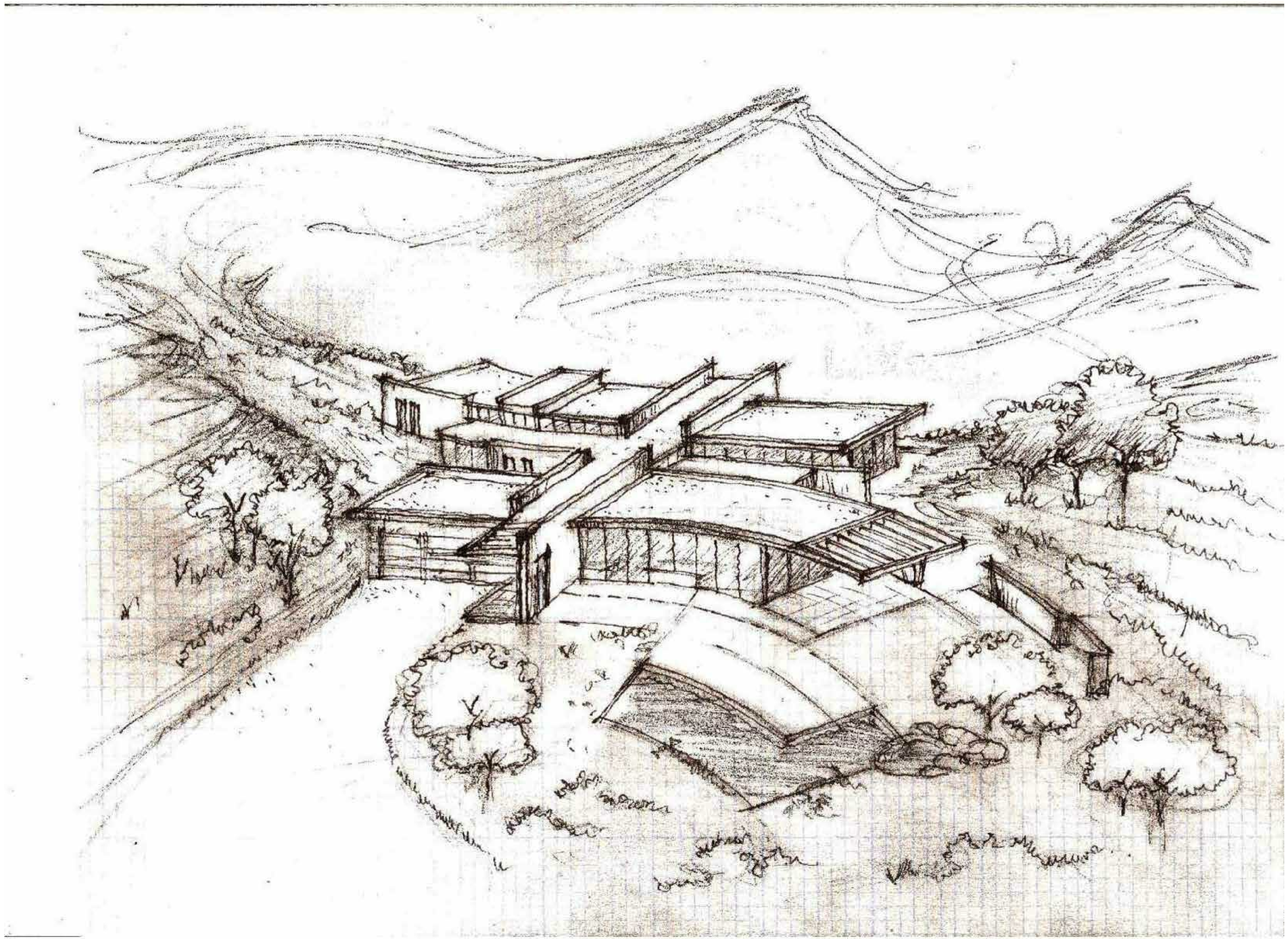

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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

Perspective

Date

Scale

Sheet Number A1.04

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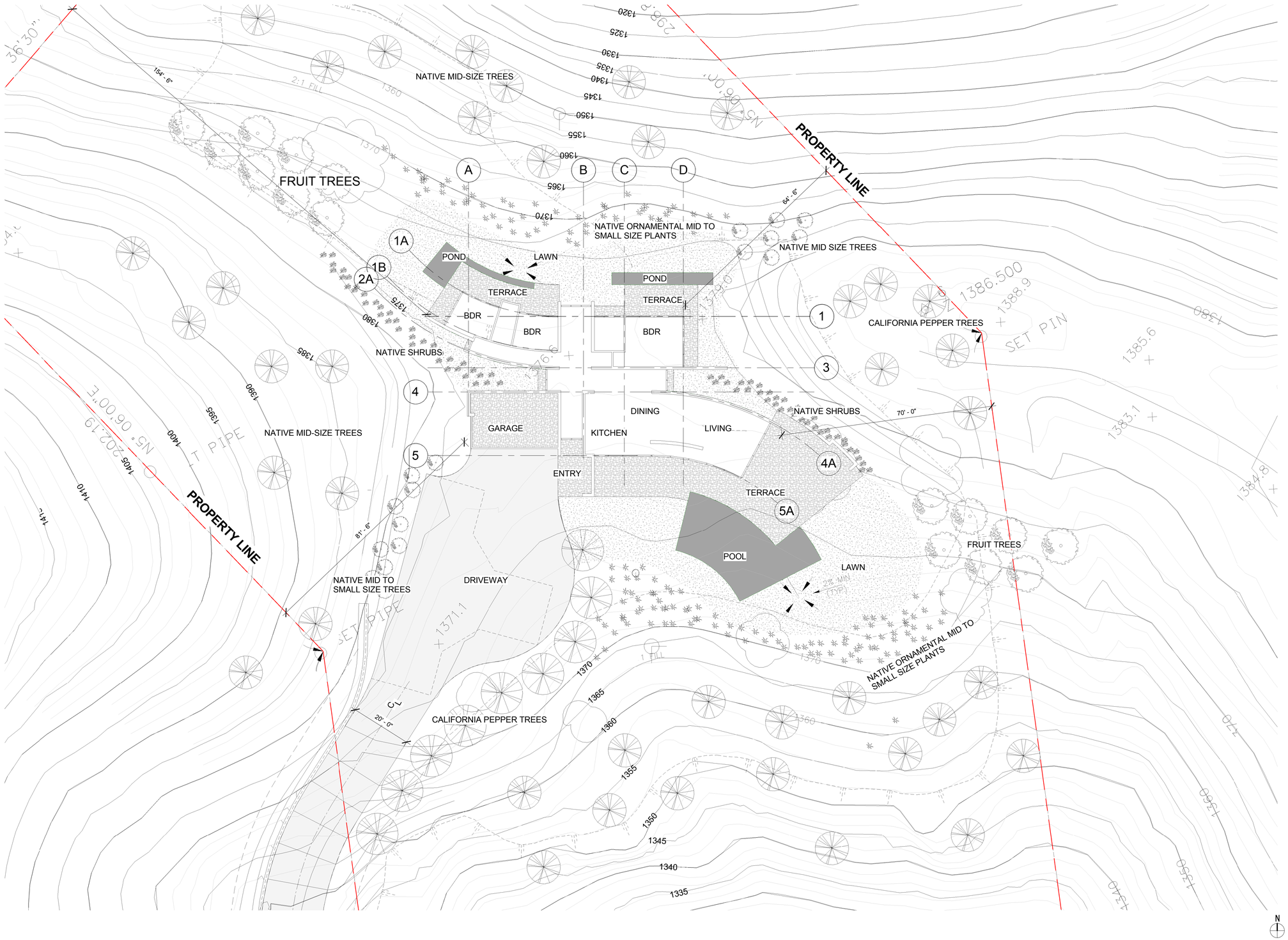



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# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

## Site Plan

Date

Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A2.05

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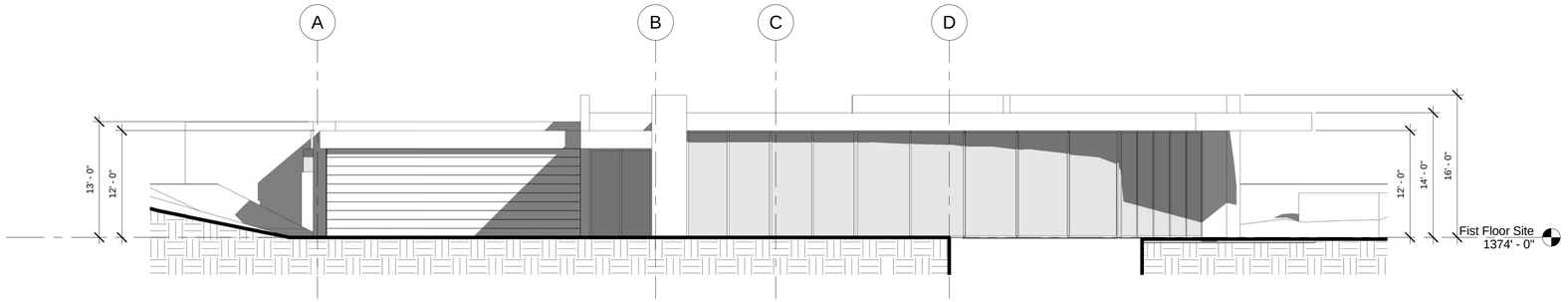
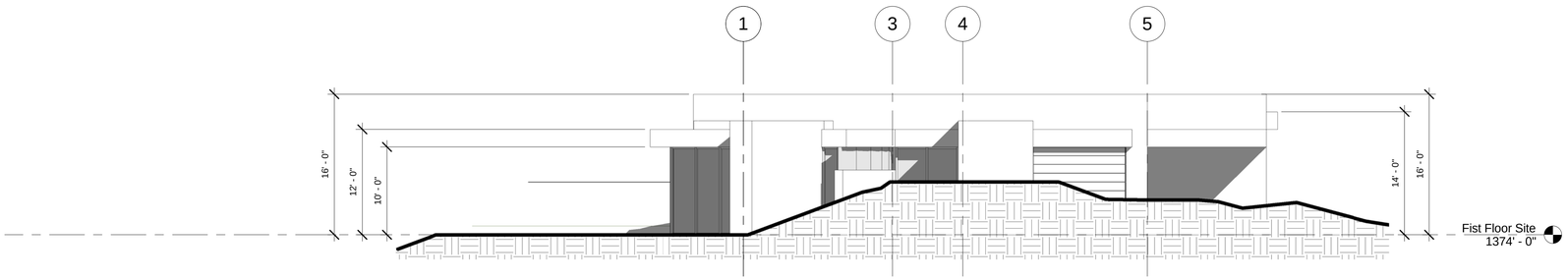
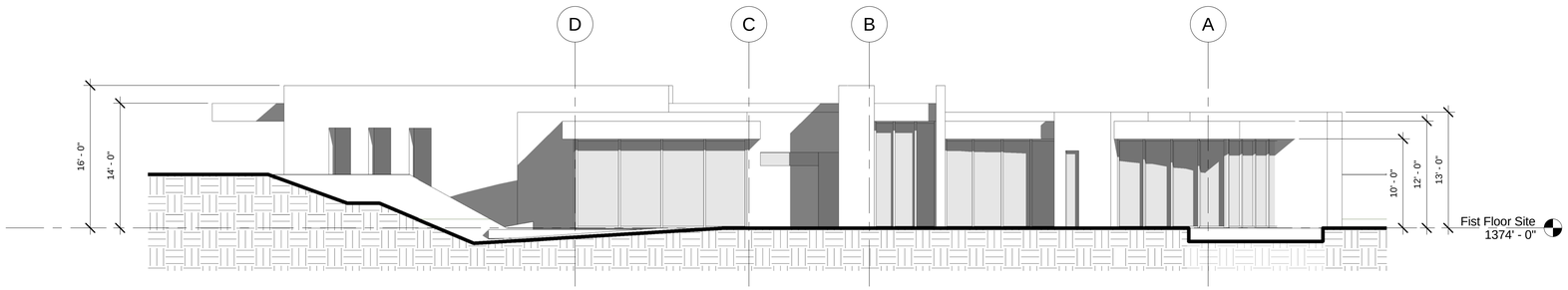


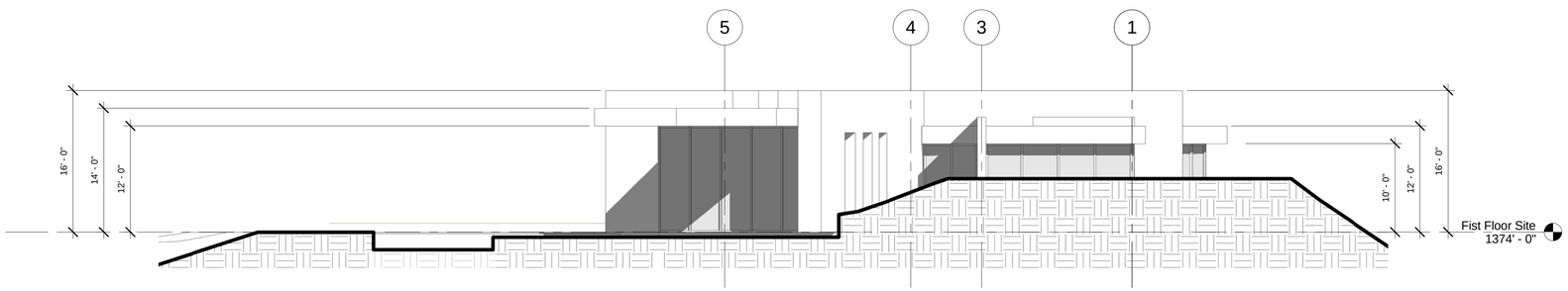

1 South Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




2 West Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




3 North Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




4 East Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

Elevations

Date

Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A2.06

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GENERAL NOTES:

1. All grading and construction shall conform to the 2011 County of the Los Angeles Building Code and the State Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance unless specifically noted on these plans.

2. Any modifications of or changes to approved grading plans must be approved by the Building Official.

3. No grading shall be started without first notifying the Building Official. A pre-grading meeting at the site is required before the start of the grading with the following people present: Owner, grading contractor, design civil engineer, soils engineer, geologist, County grading inspector(s) or their representatives, and when required the archeologist or other jurisdictional agencies. Permittee or his agent are responsible for arranging pre-grading meeting and must notify the Building Official at least two business days prior to the proposed pre-grading meeting.

4. Approval of these plans reflects solely the review of plans in accordance with the Los Angeles County Building Code and does not reflect any position by the County of Los Angeles or the Department of Public Works regarding the status of any title issues relating to the land on which the improvements may be constructed. Any disputes relating to title are solely a private matter not involving the County of Los Angeles or the Department of Public Works.

5. All grading and construction activities shall comply with Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Section 12.12.030 that controls and restricts noise from the use of construction and grading equipment from the hours of 8:00 PM to 6:30 AM, and on Sundays and Holidays. (More restrictive construction activity times may govern, as required by the Department of Regional/Planning and should be shown on the grading plans when applicable.)

6. California Public Resources Code (section 5097.98) and Health and Safety Code (section 7050.5) address the discovery and disposition of human remains. In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the law requires that grading immediately stops and no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area where human remains may be located, occur until: the following measures have been taken:

a. The County Coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and

b. If the remains are of Native American origin, the descendants from the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation for the means of treating or disposing, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods.

7. The location and protection of all utilities is the responsibility of the Permittee.

8. All export of material from the site must go to a permitted site approved by the Building Official or a legal dumpsite. Receipts for acceptance of excess material by a dumpsite are required and must be provided to the Building Official upon request.

9. A copy of the grading permit and approved grading plans must be in the possession of a responsible person and available at the site at all times.

10. Site boundaries, easements, drainage devices, restricted use areas shall be located per construction staking by Field Engineer or licensed surveyor. Prior to grading, as requested by the Building Official, all property lines, easements, and restricted use areas shall be staked.

11. No grading or construction shall occur within the protected zone of any oak tree as required per Title. Chapter 22.56 of the Los Angeles County, Zoning Code. The protected zone shall mean that area within the dripline of an oak tree extending there from a point at least five feet outside the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk(s) of a tree, whichever is greater.

12. The standard retaining wall details shown on the grading plans are for reference only. Standard retaining walls are not checked, permitted or inspected per the Grading Permit. A separate retaining wall permit is required for all standard retaining walls.

Note: This note only applies to standard retaining walls, Geogrid fabric and segmental retaining walls do not require a separate retaining wall permit Details and construction notes for all Geogrid walls must be on the grading plan.

13. A preventive program to protect the slopes from potential damage from burrowing rodents is required per Section J101.8 of the Los Angeles County Building Code. Owner to inspect slopes periodically for evidence of burrowing rodents and a first evidence of their existence shall employ an exterminator for their removal.

14. If grading authorized by this plan is to extend through the rainy season, November 1 Through April 15 of the following year, separate updated plans for erosion control must be submitted prior to October per Section J111.3 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

15. Transfer of Respositbility: If the Civil Engineer, Soil Engineer, or the Engineering Geologist of record is changed during grading, the work shall be stopped until the has agreed in writting to accept their responcibility within the Area of technical competence for approval upon completion of the work. It shall be the Duty of the Permittee to notify the Building Official in writting of such change prior to the Recommencement of such grading.

DRAINAGE NOTES

1. Roof drainage must be diverted from graded slopes.
2. Provisions shall be made for contributory drainage at all times. Owner will maintain drainage devices and keep free of debris.
3. All construction and grading within a storm drain easement are to be done per Private Drain PD No.
or miscellaneous Transfer Drain MTD No._____
4. All storm drain work is to be done under continuous Inspection by the Field Engineer. Status reports required under note 18 and section J105.11 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code shall include inspection information and reports on the storm drain installation.

AGENCY NOTES:

1. An encroachment permit from (Caltrans) is required for all work within or affecting road right of way. All work within Road right of way shall conform to (Caltrans) encroachment permit.
2. An Encroachment Permit/Connection Permit is required from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for all work within the Los Angeles County Flood Control District right of way. All work shall conform with conditions set by the Permit.
3. Permission to operate in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone must be obtained from the Fire Prevention Bureau or the local Fire Station to prior commencing work.
4. All work within the Streambed and areas outlines on grading plan shall conform to:

Army Corp.404 Permit Number: _____
California Fish & Game Permit NO: ___

INSPECTION NOTES

1. The permittee or his agent shall notify the Building Official at least one working day in advance of required Inspections at following stages of the work. (Section J105.7 of the Building Code.)

(a) Pre-grade-before the start of any earth disturbing activity or construction.
(b) Initiall. When the site has been cleared of vegetation and unapproved fill has been scarified, benched or otherwise prepared for fill. Fill shall not have been placed prior to this inspection.
Note: Prior to any construction activities, including grading, all storm water pollution prevention measures including erosion control devices which contain sediments must be installed.
(c) Rough. When approximate final elevations have been established; drainage terraces, swales and berms installed at the top of the slope; and the statements required in this Section have been received.
(d) Final. When grading has been completed; all drainage devices installed; slope planting established, irrigation systems installed and the As-Built plans, required statements, and reports have been submitted and approved.

2. In addition to the inspection required of the Building Official for grading, reports and statements shall be submitted to the Building Official in accordance with Section J105 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code.

3. Unless otherwise directed by the Building Official, the Field Engineer for all engineered grading projects shall prepare route inspection reports as required under Section J105.11 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code. These reports, known as "Report of Grading Activities", shall be submitted to the Building Official as follows:

a. Bi-weekly during all times when grading of 400 cubic yards or more per week is occurring on the site;

b. Monthly, at all other times; and

c. at any time when requested in writing by the Building Official.

Such "Report of Grading Activities" shall certify to the Building Official that the Field Engineer has inspected the grading site and related activities and has found them in compliance with the approved grading plans and specifications, the Building Code, all grading permit conditions, and all other applicable ordinances and requirements. This form is available at the following website http://dpw.lacounty.gov/bsd/dg/default.aspx. "Report of Grading Activities" may be scanned and uploaded at the website or faxed to (310) 530-5482. Failure to provide required inspection reports will result in a "Stop Work Order".

4. All graded sites must have drainage swales, berms, and other drainage devices installed prior to rough grading approval per Section J105.7 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

5. The grading contractor shall submit the statement to the grading inspector as required by Section J105.12 of the Los Angeles County Building Code at the completion of rough grading.

6. Final grading must be approved before occupancy of buildings will be allowed per Section J105 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

GENERAL GEOTECHNICAL NOTES

1. All work must be in compliance with the recommendations included in the consultant's geotechnical report(s) and the approved grading plans and specifications.

2. Grading operations must be conducted under periodic inspections by geotechnical consultons with monthly inspection reports to be submitted to the Geology and Soils Section. ( 900 S. Fremont, Alhambra, Ca 91803, 3 rd floor)

3. The Soils Engineer shall provide sufficient inspections during the preparation of the natural ground and the placement and compaction of the fill to be satisfied that the work is being performed in accordance with the plan and applicable Code requirements.

4. Rough grading must be approved by a Final Engineering Geology and Soils Engineering Report. An As-Built Geologic Map must be included in the Final Geology Report. Provide a Final Report Statement that verifies work was done in accordanse with Report Recommendations and code provisions (Section J105.12 of the Los Angeles County Building Code). The Final Report(s) must be submitted to the Geotechnical and Material Division for review and approval.

5. Foundation, wall and pool excavations must be inspected and approved by the consulting geologist and soil engineer, prior to the placing of steel or concrete.

6. Building pads located in cut/fill transition areas shall be over-excavated a minimum of three (3) feet below the proposed bottom of footing.

PLANTING AND IRRIGATION NOTES:

1. Planting and irrigation on graded slopes must comply with the following minimum guidelines:

a. The surface of all cut slopes more than 5 feet in height and fill slopes more than 3 feet in height shall be protected against damage by erosion by planting with grass or groundcover plants. Slopes exceeding 15 feet in vertical height shall also be planted with shrubs, spaced at not to exceed 10 feet on centers; or trees, spaced at not to exceed 20 feet on centers, or combination of shrubs and trees at equivalent spacing, in addition to the grass or groundcover plants. The plants selected and planting methods used be suitable for the soil and climatic conditions of the site. Plant material shall be selected which will produce a coverage of permanent planting effectively controlling erosion. Consideration shall be given to deep-rooted planting material needing limited watering, maintenance, high root to shoot ratio, wind susceptibility and fire-retardant characteristics. All plant materials must be approved by the building official.(Section J110.3 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

NOTE: Planting may be modified for the site if specific recommendations are provided by both the Soils Engineer and a Landscape Architect. Specific recommendations must consider soils and climatic conditions, irrigation requirements, planting methods, fire returdant characteristics, water efficiency, maintenance needs, and other regulatory requirements. Recommendations must include a finding that the alternative planting will provide a permanent and effective method of erosion control. Modifications to planting must be approved by the Building Official prior to installation.

b. Slopes required to be planted by Section J110.3 of the Building Code shall be provided with an approved system of irrigation that is designed to cover all portions of the slope. Irrigation system plans shall be submitted and approved prior to installation. A functional test of the system may be required. For slopes less than 20 feet in vertical height, hose bibs to permit hand watering will be acceptable if such hose bibs are installed at conveniently accessible locations where a hose no longer than 50 feet is necessary for irrigation. The requirements for permanent irrigation systems may be modified upon specific recommendation of a landscape architect or equivalent authority that, because of the type of plants selected, the planting methods used and the soil and climatic conditions at the site, irrigation will not be necessary for the maintenance of the slope planting. (Section J110.4 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

c. Other governmental agencies may have additional requirements for landscaping irrigation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to coordinate with agencies to meet their requirements while maintaining compliance with the County of Los Angeles Building Code.

2. The planting and irrigation system shall be installed as soon as practical after rough grading. Prior to final grading approval all required slope planting must be well established. (Section J110.4 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

3. Prior to rough grade approval this project requires a landscape permit. Landscape plans in compliance with the "Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance" Title 23, Chapter 2.7 of California Code of Regulations (AB 1881) must be submitted to the Department of Public Works, Land Development Division. (900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra - 3rd floor, CA 91803 (626)458-4921. To obtain Landscape permit, approved plans and Water Purveyor acknowledgment form must be submitted to the local Building and Safety office.

BENCH MARK - CONCRETE SLAB AT SOUTH-WESTERLY BUILDING CORNER @2326 N. TOPANGA CANYON BLVD., ELEVATION - 1233.30

FILL NOTES

1. All fill shall be compacted to the following minimum relative compaction criteria :
a. 90 percent of maximum dry density within 40 feet below finish grade.

b. 93 percent of maximum dry density deeper than 40 feet below finish grade, unless a lower relative compaction (not less than 90 percent of maximum dry density) is justified by the geotechnical engineer.

The relative compaction shall be determined by A.S.T.M. soil compaction test D1557-91, where applicable: Where not applicable, a test acceptable to the Building Official shall be used. (Section J107.5 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code.)

2. Field density shall be determined by a method acceptable to the Building Official. (Section J107.5 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.) However, not less than 10% of the required density tests, uniformly distributed, shall be obtained by the Sand Cone Method,

3. Sufficient tests of the fill soils shall be made to determine the relative compaction of the fill in accordance with the following minimum guidelines:
a. One test for each two-foot vertical lift.

b. One test for each 1,000 cubic yards of material placed.

c. One test at the location of the final fill slope for each building site (lot) in each four-foot vertical lift or portion thereof.

d. One test in the Vicinity of each building pad for each four-foot vertical lift or portion thereof.

4. Sufficient tests of fill soils shall be made to verify that the soil properties comply with the design requirements, as determined by the Soil Engineer including soil types, shear strengths parameters and corresponding unit weights in accordance with the following guidelines:
a. Prior and subsequent to placement of the fill, shear tests shall be taken on each type of soil or soil mixture to be used for all fill slopes steeper than three (3) horizontal to one vertical.
b. Shear test results for the proposed fill material must meet or exceed the design values used in the geotechnical report to determine slope stability requirements. Otherwise, the slope must be re-evaluated using the actual shear test value of the fill material that is in place.
c. Fill soils shall be free of deleterious materials.

5. Fill shall not be placed until stripping of vegetation, removal of unsuitable soils, and installation of subdrain (if any) have been inspected and approved by the Soil Engineer. The Building Official may require a "Standard Test Method for moisture, ash, organic matter, peat or other organic soils" ASTM D-2974-87 on any suspect material. Detrimental amounts of organic material shall not be permitted in fills. Soil containing small amounts of roots may be allowed provided that the roots are in a quantity and distributed in a manner that will not be detrimental to the future use of the site and the Soils Engineer approves the use of such material.

6. Rock or similar material greater than 12 inches in diameter shall not be placed in the fill unless recommendations for such placement have been submitted by the Soil Engineer and approved in advance by the Building Official. Location, extent, and elevation of rock disposal areas must be shown on an "As-Build" grading plan.

7. Continuous inspection by the Geotechnlcal Engineer, or a responsible representative, shall be provided during all fill placement and compaction operations where fills have a depth greater than 30 feet or slope surface steeper than 2:1. (Section J107.8 of the Los Angeles County Building Code).

8. Continuous inspection by the Geotechnical Engineer, or a responsible representative, shall be provided during all subdrain installations. (Section J107.2 of the Los Angeles County Building Code).

9. All subdrain outlets are to be surveyed for line and elevation. Subdrain information must be shown on an "As-Build" grading plan.

10. Fill slopes in excess of 2:1 steepness ratio are to be constructed by the placement of soil at sufficient distance beyond the proposed finish slope to allow compaction equipment to be operated at the outer limits of the final slope surface. The excess fill is to be removed prior to completion of rough grading. Other construction procedures may be used when it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Building Official that the angle of slope, construction method and other factors will have equivalent effect. (Section J107.5 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.)

11. (H) for retaining walls shown on the plan is the estimated difference between finished surface on both sides of the retaining wall. It does not include depth to the footing and the freeboard. Contractor is responsible for determining actual height of walls based on field conditions. Height of retaining walls may change depending on conditions of adjacent lots. Contractor shall verify wall heights and consult engineer in case of any discrepancy.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE NOTES:

1. Every effort should be made to eliminate the discharge of non-stormwater from the project site at all times.

2. Eroded sediments and other pollutants must be retained on-site and may not be transported from the site via sheet flow, swabs, area drains, natural drainage courses or wind.

3. Stockpiles of earth and other construction related materials must be protected from being transported from the site by the forces of wind or water.

4. Fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials must be stored in accordance with their listing and are not to contaminate the soil and surface waters. All approved storage containers are to be protected from the weather. Spills must be cleaned up immediately and disposed of in a proper manner. Spills may not be washed into the drainage system.

5. Excess or waste concrete may not be washed into the public way or any other drainage system. Provisions shall be made to retain concrete wastes on-site until they can be disposed of as solid waste.

6. Trash and construction related solid wastes must be deposited into a covered receptacle to prevent contamination of rainwater and dispersal by wind.

7. Sediments and other materials may not be tracked from the site by vehicle traffic. The construction entrance roadways must be stabilized so as to inhibit sediments from being deposited into the public way. Accidental depositions must be swept up immediately and may not be washed down by rain or other means.

8. Any slopes with disturbed soils or denuded of vegetation must be stabilized so as to inhibit erosion by wind and water.

9. As the Project Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner, I have read and understand the requirements listed above, necessary to control storm water pollution from sediments, erosion, and constraction materials, and I certify that I will comply with these requirements.

Print Name FELIX LEVITAS
(Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner)

Signature _____ Date _____
(Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner)

As Civil Engineer/ Land Surveyor of the project, I have reviewed and verified locations and purposes of easements, and they are accurately depicted on these plans. I have verified the proposed construction does not interfere with and conforms with the intended use of easement.

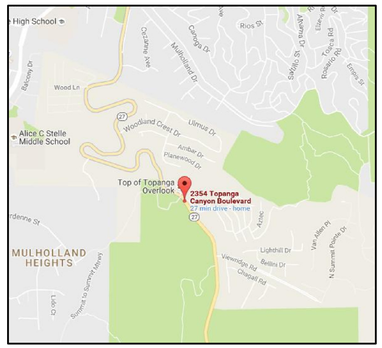
_____
Civil Engineer/ Land Surveyor stamp and signature Date

LEGEND:

GRADED SLOPE — TOP, CUT SLOPE, FILL SLOPE, TOE
EXISTING CONTOUR — 1300
PROPOSED CONTOUR — 1300
CUT/ FILL LINE — C / F
DAYLIGHT LINE
EXISTING ELEVATION — ± 1200.0
SLOPE DIRECTION/ RATE — 4%
RETAINING WALL
SPLASH WALL
DETAIL SHEET NUMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| TG | TOP OF GRATE |
| TD | TOP OF DECK |
| FL HP | FLOW LINE HIGH POINT |
| INV | INVERT ELEVATION |
| FF | FINISH FLOR |
| FS | FINISH SURFACE |

Grading Permit Application No. _____
Earthwork Volumes Cut _____ (cy), Fill _____
Over Excavation/ Alluvial Removal & Compaction _____ (cy),
Shrinkage 15% _____ (cy),
Export _____ (cy), Export Location: _____ (cy),
Total Disturbed Area _____ (Acres)
Total Proposed Landscape Area _____ (Sq Ft)
Total Turf Area _____ % (Percent of Total Proposed Landscaping)
Total Drought Tolerant Landscaping Area _____ % (Percent of Total Proposed Landscaping)
Pre-Development Impervious Area _____ (Acres)
Post-Development Impervious Area _____ (Acres)
Waste Discharge Identefication Number (WDID #) _____
Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Plan(RPP ID) _____
Post-construction BMP feature(s) GPS coordinates x_____ y____
Property Address: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. TOPANGA, CA 90290
Tract/ Parcel Map No.
Property Owners:
Assessors ID Number _____
Property Zoning: _____
Intended Land Use: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
Certificate of Compliance: CC NO. _____
Plot Plan : PP NO. _____
Conditional Use Permit: CUP NO. _____ Expiration Date: _____
Oak Tree Permit Number: OTP NO._____ Expiration Date: _____
Community Standards District: _____
California Coastal Commission Area: _____ Yes, _____No Approved volume: ____ (cy)
Coastal Development Permit CDP _____ Expiration Date: _____
Fish & Wildlife, Army Corp of Engineers, Regional Water Cntrol Board, AQMD & Other Agency Permits should be added as applicable. (Permit Number Expiration Date: _____ )




VICINITY MAP
N.T.S.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

THAT PORTION OF LOT 25 IN TRACT 3729, AS SHOWN ON MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 41 PAGE 17 ET SEQ, OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY, BOUNDED AS FOLLOW:

SOILS ENGINEER & GEOLOGIST

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND CONFORMS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOILS GEOLOGIST REPORTS.
DATE.....
SIGNATURE.....

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND CONFORMS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOILS ENGINEERING REPORTS.
DATE.....
SIGNATURE.....

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER — FELIX LEVITAS — No. 62311 — EXP. 09-30-17 — CIVIL — STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:

FELIX LEVITAS, RCE 62311 DATE


GRUTMAN · MAZLER ENGINEERING, INC.
GM Engineering
civil engineers, land surveyors & general contractors
GM ENGINEERING 6624 VALJEAN AVENUE, CA 91406
tel. (818) 908-1824 fax# (818) 908-3038 fax#2 (818) 905-3884 gm@gmengineering.com


| REVISIONS | ENGR. | DATE | DATE 08-08-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | DRAWN S.Q. |
| | | | DESIGNED F.L. |
| | | | CHECKED F.L. |

NO.

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR: CORY ISAACSON

SHEET TITLE: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. CONCEPTUAL GRADING PLAN NOTES

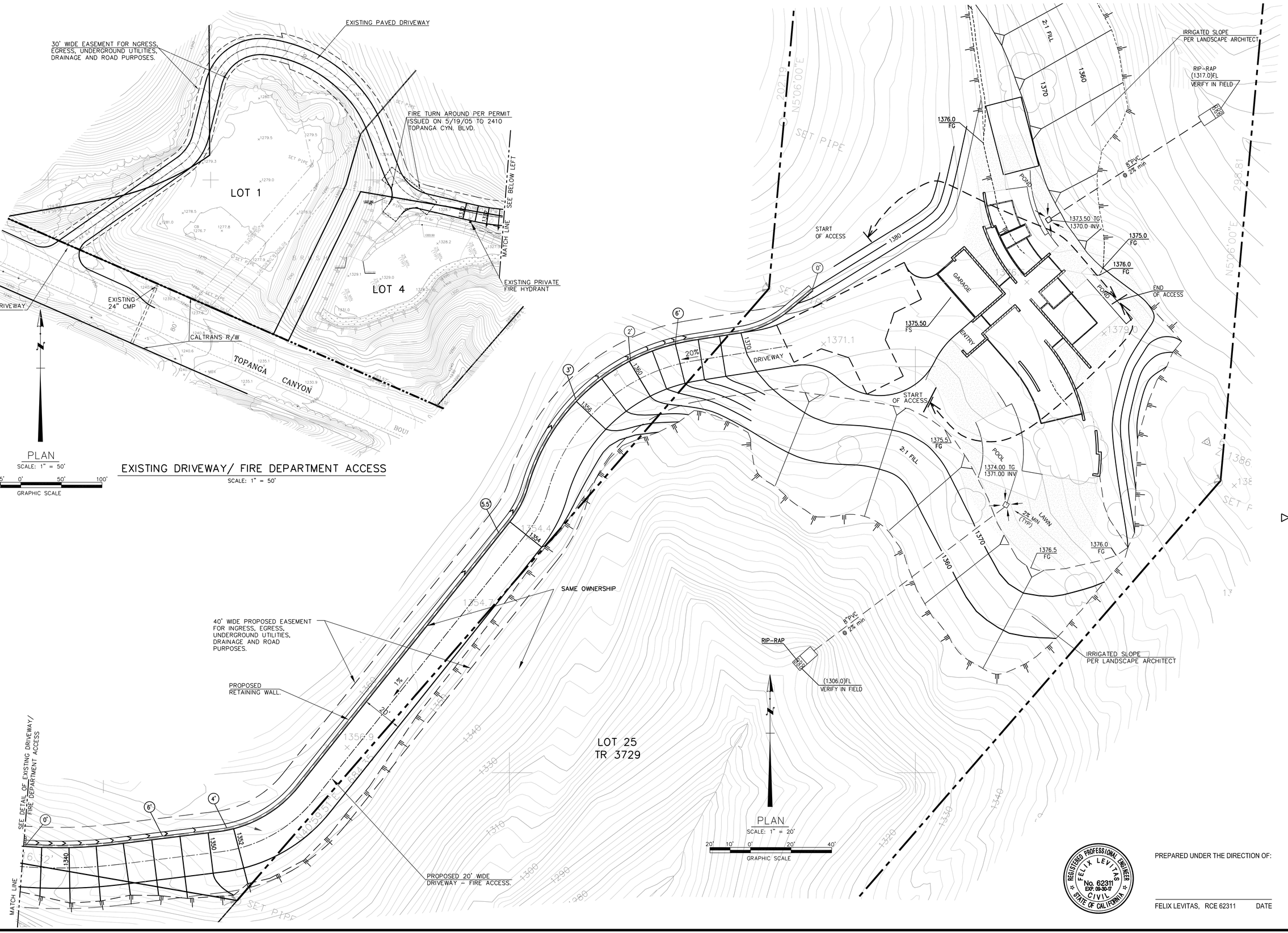
SHEET NO. 1 OF 2 SHEETS

JOB NO. 200601410

PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 50'
50' 25' 0' 50' 100'
GRAPHIC SCALE

## EXISTING DRIVEWAY/ FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS

SCALE: 1" = 50'




PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 20'
20' 10' 0' 20' 40'
GRAPHIC SCALE

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER FELIX LEVITAS No. 62311 EXP. 09-30-17 CIVIL STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:

FELIX LEVITAS, RCE 62311 DATE

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tel. (818) 908-1824 fax# (818) 908-3038 fax# (818) 908-3041 gm@grumanmazler.com

| | |
|---|---|
| DATE | 08-08-2016 |
| DRAWN | S.O. |
| DESIGNED | F.L. |
| CHECKED | F.L. |

| REVISIONS | DATE | ENGR. |
|---|---|---|
| NO. | | |

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR: CORY ISAACSON

SHEET TITLE: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. CONCEPTUAL GRADING PLAN

SHEET NO. 2 OF 2 SHEETS

JOB NO. 200601410

LA COUNTY PLANNING

# REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION APPEAL FORM

DATE: June 26,2025

TO: Ms. Elida Luna
Regional Planning Commission Secretary
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 W. Temple Avenue, Room 1350 Los Angeles, CA 90012
appeal@planning.lacounty.gov

FROM: Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation
Name

SUBJECT:

Project Number(s): R 2005-01452-(3)

Case Number(s):

Case Planner: Tyler Montgomery

Address: 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd Topanga Ca 90290

Assessor Parcel Number:

Planning Area: Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area- North Area

Entitlement Requested:

Related Zoning Matters:

| | |
|---|---|
| Tentative Tract/Parcel Map No. | |
| CUP, VAR, or Oak Tree No. | 200900001 |
| Change of Zone Case No | |
| Other | |

I am appealing the decision of (check one and fill in the underlying information)

☐ **Director** ☑ **Hearing Officer**

Decision Date: June 24,2025

Public Hearing Date: June 24,2025

Hearing Officer's Name: Steven Jareb

Agenda Item No.: 5

The following decision is being appealed (Check all that apply)

☐ The Denial of this request

☑ The Approval of this request

☐ The following conditions of approval:

List conditions here

The reason for appeal is as follows:

The Las Virgenes Homeowner Federation is appealing the decision of the Hearing Officer to build a house on a significate Ridgeline in the Santa Monica Mountains. This is in direct violation of the Significant Ridgeline ordanance. It is inconsistant with the North Area Plan.Significant impacts on MRCA/Park land and Parkland resources.No design Alturnatives.

Are you the applicant for the subject case(s) (check one)? ☑ Yes ☐ No

The appeal filing fee as indicated on the Fee Schedule (https://planning.lacounty.gov/fees) may be paid online via Epic LA (https://epicla.lacounty.gov/SelfService/#/home), or submitted herein (cash, check, credit card or money order). Make checks payable to Los Angeles County.

Appellant Signature

Roger Pugliese
Print Name

Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation PO Box 353 Agoura Hills, Ca 91301
Address

emimoon@gmail.com
Email

310 455-2951 or 310 985-4645
Day Time Telephone No.

LA COUNTY PLANNING

AMY J. BODEK, AICP
Director,
Regional Planning

DENNIS SLAVIN
Chief Deputy Director,
Regional Planning

June 25, 2025

Cory Isaacson
1962 Road 120
Cheyenne, WY 82009

PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)
VARIANCE NO. 200900001
2354 TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD, TOPANGA (APN 4434-013-002)

Dear Applicant:

Hearing Officer Steven Jareb, by his action of **June 24, 2025,** has approved the above-referenced project. Enclosed are the Hearing Officer's Findings and Conditions of Approval. Please carefully review each condition. This approval is not effective until the appeal period has ended and the required documents and applicable fees are submitted to LA County Planning (see enclosed Affidavit of Acceptance Instructions).

**Appeals:** The applicant or any other interested persons may appeal the Hearing Officer's decision. The appeal period for this project will end at 5:00 p.m. on **July 8, 2025.** Appeals must be submitted to appeal@planning.lacounty.gov before the end of the appeal period.

Upon completion of the appeal period, the notarized Affidavit of Acceptance and any applicable fees must be submitted to the planner assigned to your case. Please make an appointment to ensure that processing will be completed in a timely manner. Failure to submit these documents and applicable fees within 60 days will result in a referral to Zoning Enforcement for further action.

In addition, any applicable California Environmental Quality Act fees for the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall be paid, and a Notice of Determination, if applicable must be filed with the County Clerk according to the instructions with the enclosed Affidavit of Acceptance. A Notice of Exemption, if applicable, may also be filed according to the instructions in the enclosed Affidavit of Acceptance.

For questions or for additional information, please contact Tyler Montgomery of the Coastal Development Services Section at (213) 974-0051, or TMontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov.

Sincerely,

AMY J. BODEK, AICP
Director of Regional Planning

Rob Glaser

Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner
Coastal Development Services Section

RG:TM

Enclosures: Findings, Conditions of Approval, Affidavit of Acceptance (Permittee's Completion)

c: PW (Building and Safety)
Zoning Enforcement
Coastal Commission (Ventura Office)

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

# FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER AND ORDER
# PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)
# VARIANCE NO. 200900001

## RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATE(S).** The Los Angeles County ("County") Hearing Officer conducted a duly noticed public hearing on June 24, 2025, in the matter of Project No. R2005-01452-(3), Variance No. 200900001 ("Variance").

2. **HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** A duly noticed public hearing before the Hearing Officer was advertised for June 17, 2025. This hearing date was subsequently canceled due to security issues and automatically rescheduled for the next public hearing date: June 24, 2025. At this hearing date, LA County Planning staff ("Staff") gave a presentation recommending approval of the Variance, and public testimony was given both for and against it. The Hearing Officer subsequently closed the public hearing and approved the Variance.

3. **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.** A complete application for the Variance was filed in 2009; therefore, it was evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan ("2000 LUP") and the Los Angles County Code as it existed in 2009 ("2009 County Code"), which includes the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("2009 CSD").

4. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUESTED.** The applicant, Cory Isaacson ("Permittee"), requests the Variance to authorize the construction of a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence with an attached 585-square-foot garage and appurtenant structures within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") on a property that is 4.9 gross acres in size located at 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Assessor's Parcel Number 4434-013-002) in the unincorporated community of Topanga in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), pursuant to Section 22.56.330 of the 2009 County Code.

5. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUIRED**. The Variance is required in order to approve new development within 50 feet of a significant ridgeline as mapped by the 2000 LUP, pursuant to the requirements of the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133).

6. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENTS.** Certificate of Compliance No. 200500127 confirmed the legality of the underlying parcel and was approved on August 19, 2005.

   Zoning Conformance Review No. 200600712 authorized a solid fill project to create a flat pad with drainage structures for erosion control (1,999 cubic yards grading—500 cubic yards cut, 1,499 cubic yards fill, 999 cubic yards import) and was approved on July 18, 2006.

7. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the Mountain Land 5 (N5 – one dwelling unit per five gross acres maximum density) land use designation of the 2000 LUP.

8. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area and is zoned A-1-5 (Light Agricultural—Five Acre Minimum Required Lot Area). Pursuant to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, a single-family residence is a principal permitted use within the A-1 Zone and is permitted with a site plan review. However, the 2009 CSD requires a variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) from a significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the residence is located on a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP, a variance is required.

9. **SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING**

| LOCATION | 2000 LUP LAND USE POLICY | ZONING | EXISTING USES |
|---|---|---|---|
| NORTH | OS (Open Space) | O-S (Open Space) | Open space |
| EAST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| SOUTH | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| WEST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |

10. **PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.**

A. Existing Site Conditions
The Project Site is 4.9 gross acres and irregularly shaped with a mapped significant ridgeline running northwest to southeast across its northern portion, through an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. The Project Site is adjacent to Topanga Canyon Boulevard to the southwest, although the road is separated from the graded pad by 600 linear feet of steeply sloping terrain. As a result, graded pad is accessed from the west by a partially paved, 20-foot-wide driveway that traverses two other parcels before reaching Topanga Canyon Boulevard one-half mile to the west. The northern portion of the Project Site consists of graded areas and disturbed vegetation, while the central and southern portions consist mainly of coastal chapparal scrub.

B. Site Access
Access is provided by an existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway that traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (SR-27) and designated scenic route, to the west. The

southernmost portion of the existing driveway (665 linear feet) is paved, while the northern portion (650 linear feet) would be paved as part of the Project.

C. Site Plan
The Permittee proposes the construction of a 4,000-square-foot single-family residence and a 585-square-foot attached garage and on the northern portion of the 4.9-acre Project Site. The one-story residence would have a maximum height of 16 feet above grade and would be located on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. No additional grading is proposed. The Project would also include a swimming pool, retaining walls, decks, stairways, hammerhead turnaround, and other appurtenant facilities on the existing graded pad. A new onsite wastewater treatment system ("OWTS") with two seepage pits would be located approximately 100 feet to the northwest of the residence. Also the northern portion (650 linear feet) of an existing 1,315-foot-long, 20-foot-wide driveway would be paved as part of the Project.

11. **CEQA DETERMINATION.** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines.

Pursuant to section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes a single-family residence, accessory structures, and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because the Project includes a proposal to construct a new single-family residence, a garage, a swimming pool, associated infrastructure, an access driveway, decks, and retaining walls.

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 because a biological inventory of the area of Project disturbance did not indicate the presence of 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 Staff Biologist. The biological inventory determined that no portion of the Project Site proposed for development contains any environmental resources of hazardous or

critical concern, nor do they contain any plants or animals listed as federal, state, or locally sensitive designations, and they are not considered particularly sensitive environments. The Project is not expected to impact scenic resources, such as the designated scenic route to the south, from which it will not be visible. 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. Therefore, the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** Staff received one letter of support and nine letters of opposition to the Project. The letters of opposition object to placing structures within a designated significant ridgeline due to aesthetic concerns. They also state that the significant ridgeline regulations in the CSD were carefully considered before their adoption and should be upheld via denial of the Variance. Some letters of opposition also cite the unpermitted grading within the parkland to the north of the Project Site, which they contend was conducted by the Permittee, although the Permittee denies this allegation.

13. **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**

    A. County Fire Department ("Fire Department"): Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated February 21, 2019.

    B. County Department of Parks & Recreation: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

    C. County Department of Public Health: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated May 25, 2017.

    D. County Department of Public Works ("Public Works"): Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

14. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.990, 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 May 8, 2025, a total of 38 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 500-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

15. **LAND USE POLICY.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2000 LUP because the N5 land use designation is intended for single-family residential uses on relatively large lots. A single-family residence is permitted under this designation.

16. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following policies of the 2000 LUP:

*Conservation & Open Space Element*
*Policy IV-3:*
*Require development designs that protect and preserve significant, viable habitat areas and habitat linkages/wildlife corridors in their natural condition.*

*Policy IV-9:*
*New development projects shall be designed to protect significant natural features, and to minimize the amount of grading.*

*Policy IV-13:*
*Ensure that the overall project design/layout of hillside developments adapts to the natural hillside topography and protects ridgelines and natural-appearing views from surrounding vantage points such as highways, parklands and overlooks. Overall, emphasize fitting the project into its hillside setting rather than altering the hillside to fit the project.*

The Project would utilize a previously graded pad on the northern portion of the Project Site that was previously disturbed and mainly consists of nonnative grasses. This location will avoid the need to remove native vegetation and grade large amounts of earth further down the slope. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved.

*Land Use Element*
*Policy VI-20:*
*Limit structure heights in suburban and rural areas to ensure compatibility of new development with the respective characteristics of the surrounding settings and sites.*

*Policy VI-21:*
*Encourage siting of developments to include setbacks that protect public lands, streams, scenic features, views, and other natural features and that maximize open space areas; project density and structure placement shall be consistent with the need to minimize vegetation clearance for fire protection.*

Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape, and the modest 16-foot maximum height, would be in character with the surrounding community.

## ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

17. **PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the A-1-5 zoning classification because a single-family residence is a principal permitted use in such zone with a site plan review pursuant to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110. The 2009 CSD also requires a variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the Project proposed developing a single-family residence on a mapped significant ridgeline, a Variance is required instead of a site plan review.

18. **REQUIRED YARDS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, as the Project would meet all required setback standards.

19. **HEIGHT.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). The maximum height for a single-family residence proposed on a significant ridgeline is 18 feet above grade, while the maximum height of the proposed single-family residence is 16 feet above grade.

20. **SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the Significant Ecological Area ("SEA") requirements of the 2009 County Code (Section 22.56.215). Although the Project Site is mapped as being within an SEA by the 2000 LUP, the 2009 County Code does not require an SEA Conditional Use Permit ("SEA-CUP") for development of one single-family residence. Because the Project consists of one single-family residence, an SEA-CUP is not required.

21. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable grading requirements identified in the 2009 CSD (County Code Section 22.44.133). The 2009 CSD requires a conditional use permit for grading that exceeds 5,000 cubic yards (cut plus fill). The Project is not proposing any additional grading beyond the grading that was approved with a zoning conformance review in 2006 (1,999 cubic yards).

22. **PARKING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified for development in the A-1-5 Zone (County Code Section 22.24.110), as no covered parking spaces are required for properties that exceed one acre in area. Although the Project Site is 4.9 acres, the Project would provide two covered parking spaces in an attached garage.

23. **SIGNIFICANT RIDGELINE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in 2009 County Code Section 22.44.133. The Project Site is located on a designated significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP. Therefore, a variance is required, which is what has been requested by the Permittee.

**VARIANCE FINDINGS**

24. **The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification**. A building site—including a graded pad and driveway—was created legally on the significant ridgeline in 2006, and the remainder of the subject property is steeply sloping. As a result, the building site is the most appropriate location for development of a single-family residence, which is a principal permitted use in the A-1 Zone. The development of a residence at a lower elevation would require a prodigious amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

25. **The Hearing Officer finds that the modification 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.** Other nearby property owners to the south and west already enjoy similar use of their properties, as there are three other single-family residences developed on comparable pads in the immediate vicinity, all of which are also located on the significant ridgeline.

26. **The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.** The development of a residence away from the significant ridgeline at a lower elevation would require a prodigious amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

27. **The Hearing Officer finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.** The Project would be similar in character to other single-family residences in the vicinity and compares favorably to them in terms of height and bulk. Residences within 500 feet range between 1,440 square feet and 4,228 square feet. While the proposed residence would be on the higher end of this range at 4,000 square feet, its relatively modest height of 16 feet above grade is less than that of nearly all other residences in the vicinity, many of which are two stories. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

28. 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). The Class 3 Categorical Exemption specifically pertains to a single-family residence and its appurtenant structures.

## ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

29. **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**:

A. The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

B. The Hearing Officer finds that the modification 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.

C. The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.

D. The Hearing Officer finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.

**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) Categorical Exemption; and

2. Approves **VARIANCE NO. 200900001**, subject to the attached conditions.

**ACTION DATE: June 24, 2025**

RG:TM
06/25/25
c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**
**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)**
**VARIANCE NO. 200900001**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a Variance to construct a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence located on a mapped significant ridgeline on a 4.9-acre property in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), subject to the following conditions of approval:

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant, owner of the property, and any other person, corporation, or other entity making use of this grant.

2. This grant shall not be effective for any purpose until the permittee, and the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, have filed at the office of the Los Angeles County ("County") Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all of the conditions of this grant, and that the conditions of the grant have been recorded as required by Condition No. 7, and until all required monies have been paid pursuant to Condition No. 9. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Condition No. 2 and Conditions No. 4, 5, and 8 shall be effective immediately upon the date of final approval of this grant by the County.

3. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "date of final approval" shall mean the date the County's action becomes effective pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1090.

4. The permittee shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the County or its agents, officers, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul this permit approval, which action is brought within the applicable time period of Government Code section 65009 or any other applicable limitations period. The County shall promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding and the County shall reasonably cooperate in the defense. If the County fails to promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding, or if the County fails to cooperate reasonably in the defense, the permittee shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless the County.

5. In the event that any claim, action, or proceeding as described above is filed against the County, the permittee shall within 10 days of the filing make an initial deposit with LA County Planning in the amount of up to $5,000.00, from which actual costs and expenses shall be billed and deducted for the purpose of defraying the costs or expenses involved in LA County Planning's cooperation in the defense, including but not limited to, depositions, testimony, and other assistance provided to permittee or permittee's counsel.

If during the litigation process, actual costs or expenses incurred reach 80 percent of the amount on deposit, the permittee shall deposit additional funds sufficient to bring the balance up to the amount of $5,000.00. There is no limit to the number of supplemental deposits that may be required prior to completion of the litigation.

At the sole discretion of the permittee, the amount of an initial or any supplemental deposit may exceed the minimum amounts defined herein. Additionally, the cost for collection and duplication of records and other related documents shall be paid by the permittee according to County Code Section 2.170.010.

6. If any material provision of this grant is held or declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the permit shall be void and the privileges granted hereunder shall lapse.

7. Prior to the use of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall **record the terms and conditions** of the grant in the office of the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk ("Recorder"). In addition, upon any transfer or lease of the property during the term of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall promptly provide a copy of the grant and its conditions to the transferee or lessee of the subject property.

8. This grant shall expire unless used within two (2) years from the date of final approval of the grant. A single one-year time extension may be requested in writing and with the payment of the applicable fee prior to such expiration date.

9. The subject property shall be maintained and operated in full compliance with the conditions of this grant and any law, statute, ordinance, or other regulation applicable to any development or activity on the subject property. Failure of the permittee to cease any development or activity not in full compliance shall be a violation of these conditions. No provision of any easement or any other encumbrance on the property shall exempt the permittee and/or property owner from compliance with these conditions and applicable regulations. Inspections shall be made to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant as well as to ensure that any development undertaken on the subject property is in accordance with the approved site plan on file. The permittee shall deposit with the County the sum of **$456.00**. The deposit shall be placed in a performance fund, which shall be used exclusively to compensate LA County Planning for all expenses incurred while inspecting the premises to determine the permittee's compliance with the conditions of approval. The fund provides for **one inspection three years after the date of final approval of the grant.** Inspections shall be unannounced.

   If additional inspections are required to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant, or if any inspection discloses that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be financially responsible and shall reimburse LA County Planning for all additional enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance. The amount charged for additional inspections shall be $456.00 per inspection, or the current recovery cost at the time any additional inspections are required, whichever is greater.

10. Notice is hereby given that any person violating a provision of this grant is guilty of a misdemeanor. Notice is further given that the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") or a Hearing Officer may, after conducting a public hearing, revoke or modify this grant, if the Commission or Hearing Officer finds that these conditions have been violated or that this grant has been exercised so as to be detrimental to the public's health or safety or so as to be a nuisance, or as otherwise authorized pursuant to County Code Sections 22.44.1130 and/or 22.44.1140.

11. All development pursuant to this grant must be kept in full compliance with the County Fire Code to the satisfaction of the County Fire Department ("Fire Department").

12. All development pursuant to this grant shall conform with the requirements of the County Department of Public Works ("Public Works") to the satisfaction of said department.

13. All development pursuant to this grant shall comply with the requirements of Title 22 of the County Code and of the specific zoning of the subject property, unless specifically modified by this grant, as set forth in these conditions, including the approved Exhibit "A," or a revised Exhibit "A" approved by the Director of Regional Planning ("Director").

14. The subject property shall be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the plans marked Exhibit "A." If changes to any of the plans marked Exhibit "A" are required as a result of instruction given at the public hearing, **one (1) digital copy** of a modified Exhibit "A" shall be submitted to LA County Planning by **August 18, 2025**.

15. In the event that subsequent revisions to the approved Exhibit "A" are submitted, the permittee shall submit **one (1) digital copy** of the proposed plans to the Director for review and approval. All revised plans must substantially conform to the originally approved Exhibit "A." All revised plans must be accompanied by the written authorization of the property owner(s) and applicable fee for such revision.

## PROJECT SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

16. The exterior colors of all structures shall be earth-toned and shall not include bright or white tones. No glossy or reflective materials shall be permitted for exterior construction, other than glass, which shall be the least reflective variety available.

17. Prior to construction, the permittee shall submit a grading/drainage plan to the Public Works' Building and Safety Division for review and approval. The grading plans shall show and call out the construction of all drainage devices and details, paved driveways, elevation and drainage of all pads, retaining walls, water-quality devices, Low-Impact Development ("LID") features, and all existing easements. All structures shall meet the County Building, Residential, and Green Building Standards codes, and the Project shall comply with all LID standards (County Code Section 12.84.440) in accordance with the LID standards manual. This condition shall be met to the satisfaction of Public Works.

18. Per County Code Section 22.336.070.I, grading shall be prohibited during the rainy season, defined as October 15 of any year through April 15 of the subsequent year.

19. All development, with the exception of landscaping, fuel modification, and driveway widening, shall be limited to the existing graded pad on the northern portion of the project site.

20. Any storage of construction equipment, materials, or vehicles shall be prohibited unless a valid building or grading permit is in effect for the Project Site. Any construction equipment, materials, or vehicles currently on the Project Site shall be removed on or before **July 24, 2025**. Access to the Project Site shall also be secured by this date in order to prevent future reoccurrence of such storage.

# REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DATE ISSUED: | June 5, 2025 | | |
| HEARING DATE: | June 17, 2025 | AGENDA ITEM: | 5 |
| PROJECT NUMBER: | R2005-01452-(3) | | |
| PERMIT NUMBER(S): | Variance No. 200900001 | | |
| SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: | 3 | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga | | |
| OWNER: | CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. | | |
| APPLICANT: | Cory Isaacson | | |
| CASE PLANNER: | Tyler Montgomery, Principal Regional Planner<br>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 R2005-01452-(3), Variance Number 200900001, based on the Findings (Exhibit C – Findings) contained within this report and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval).

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 VARIANCE NUMBER 200900001 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A complete application for this variance was filed in 2009; therefore, it has been evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan ("2000

LUP") and the Los Angles County Code as it existed in 2009 ("2009 County Code"), which includes the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("2009 CSD").

**A. Entitlement(s) Requested**

- Variance for the construction of a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence and appurtenant structures within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline in the A-1-5 (Light Agricultural—5-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) Zone and within the Santa Monica Mountains North Area, pursuant to Section 22.56.260 of the 2009 County Code.

**B. Project**

The applicant requests a Variance to construct a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence on the northern portion of 4.9-acre parcel ("Project Site") in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project"). The Project also includes an attached 585-square-foot garage, a swimming pool, and a new OWTS (septic system) on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. Access is provided by an existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway that traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (SR-27) and designated scenic route, to the west. The southernmost portion of the existing driveway (665 linear feet) is paved, while the northern portion (650 linear feet) would be paved as part of the Project. The graded pad and driveway were developed legally between 2006 and 2009 (see "Previous Cases" below). The Project does not propose any additional grading.

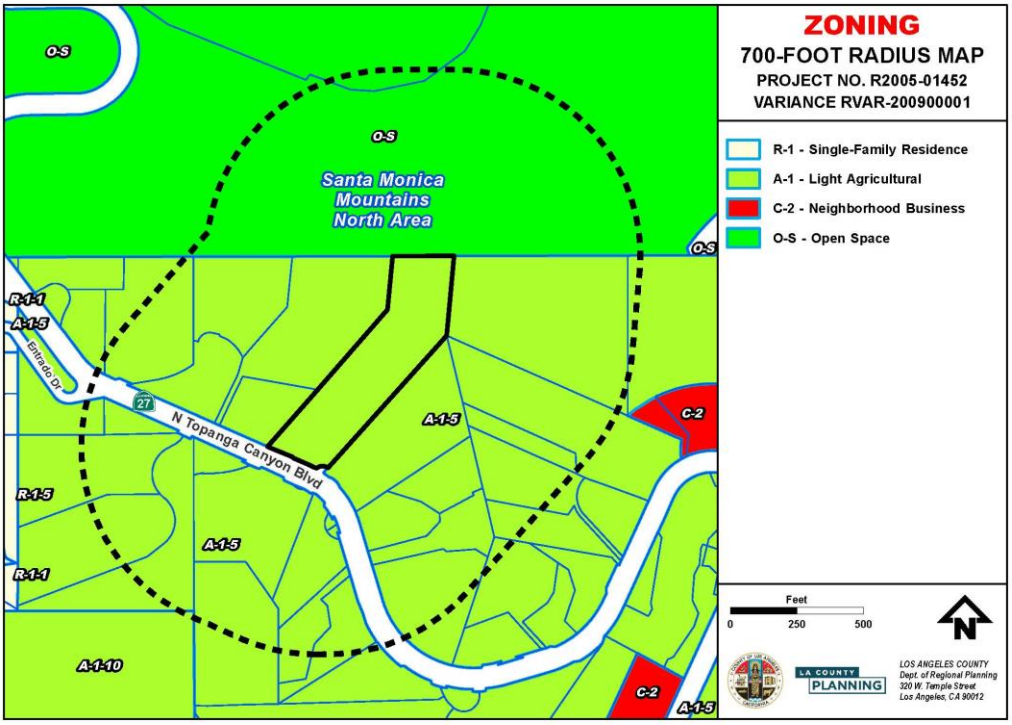
Per the 2009 County Code, a single-family residence is permitted with a site plan review in the A-1 Zone (2009 County Code 22.24.070). However, per the requirements of the 2009 CSD, a variance is required for any development within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a mapped significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Per the mapping of the 2000 LUP (as well as current mapping), a significant ridgeline runs directly through the proposed residence. Thus, a Variance is required for the activities involved with this request.

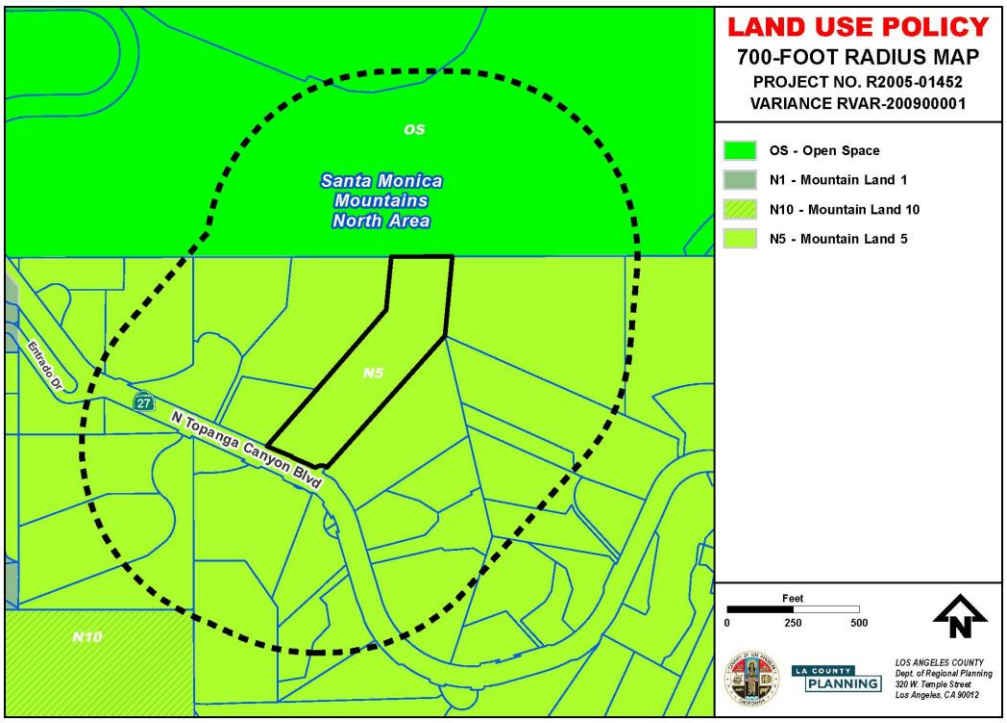
The Project Site is 4.9 acres and irregularly shaped with a mapped significant ridgeline running northwest to southeast across its northern portion, through an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. The Project Site is adjacent to Topanga Canyon Boulevard to the southwest, although the road is separated from the graded pad by 600 linear feet of steeply sloping terrain. As a result, the graded pad is accessed from the west by a partially paved, 20-foot-wide driveway that traverses two other parcels before reaching Topanga Canyon Boulevard one-half mile to the west. The northern portion of the Project Site consists of graded areas and disturbed vegetation, while the central and southern portions consist mainly of coastal chapparal scrub.

**SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDINGS**

The following chart provides property data within a 700-foot radius:

| LOCATION | LAND USE POLICY | ZONING | EXISTING USES |
|---|---|---|---|
| SUBJECT PROPERTY | N5 (Mountain Land 5—One dwelling unit per five gross acres maximum density) | A-1-5 | Vacant land |
| NORTH | OS (Open Space), | O-S (Open Space), | Open space |
| EAST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| SOUTH | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| WEST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |






## PROPERTY HISTORY

### A. Zoning History

| ORDINANCE NO. | ZONING | DATE OF ADOPTION |
|---|---|---|
| 10754 | A-1 (Light Agricultural) | 2/25/1975 |
| 20020062z | A-1-5 | 8/20/2002 |

### B. Previous Cases

| CASE NO. | REQUEST | DATE OF ACTION |
|---|---|---|
| Certificate of Compliance No. 200500127 | Confirmed legality of underlying parcel | Approved 8/19/2005 |
| Zoning Conformance Review No. 200600712 | Solid fill project to create access driveway and flat pad with drainage structures (1,999 cubic yards grading—500 cubic yards cut, 1,499 cubic yards fill, 999 cubic yards import) | Approved 7/18/2006 |

## ANALYSIS

### A. Land Use Compatibility

The Project is a request to construct a new single-family residence in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area. As proposed, the Project – with the exception of development on a significant ridgeline – would comply with all applicable development standards for residences in the 2009 County Code, including those related to setbacks, height restrictions, and native tree preservation. For further details on this compliance, see the "Zoning Ordinance Consistency" section below or the attached Exhibit C – Findings. The intent of the Mountains Land 5 land use category in the 2000 LUP is to allow for single-family residences and resource-dependent uses on large lots. The proposed single-family residence on a 4.9-acre lot would be consistent with this designation. Therefore, the Project would be in conformity with the 2000 LUP and is not expected to negatively affect the surrounding community.

In order for an applicant to be granted a Variance, he or she must demonstrate that there are special physical circumstances or characteristics of the subject property which are not generally applicable to other properties in the vicinity that are similarly classified. It must also be demonstrated that the Variance is necessary in order to preserve a property right enjoyed by owners of other properties in the same vicinity and zone (2009 County Code Section 22.56.290). In this case, a building site—including a graded pad and driveway—was created legally on the significant ridgeline in 2006, and the remainder of the subject property is steeply sloping. As a result, the building site is the most appropriate location for development of a single-family residence, which is a principal permitted use in the A-1 Zone. The development of a residence at a lower elevation would require a prodigious amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect. Further, other nearby property owners to the south and west already enjoy similar use of their properties, as there are three other single-family residences developed on comparable pads in the immediate vicinity, all of which are also located on the significant ridgeline.

### B. Neighborhood Impact

The neighborhood impact of the Project is likely to be minimal, as it would consist of one single-family residence in an area with existing residential development to the south, east, and west. The Project is proposed on an existing graded pad and is immediately adjacent to existing infrastructure for electricity, water, and driveway access.

The Project would be similar in character to other single-family residences in the vicinity and compares favorably to them in terms of height and bulk. Residences within 500 feet range between 1,440 square feet and 4,228 square feet. While the proposed residence would be on the higher end of this range at 4,000 square feet, its relatively modest height

of 16 feet above grade is less than that of nearly all other residences in the vicinity, many of which are two stories.

**C. Design Compatibility**

Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (see Exhibit A – Site Plans), the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. The 2009 CSD also requires a maximum height of 18 feet above grade for any structure proposed on a significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). The Project would have a maximum height of 16 feet above grade, which is two feet below the maximum.

The design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape, and the modest 16-foot maximum height, would be compatible with all requirements of the 2009 CSD and would be in character with the surrounding community. This compatibility is indicated by the applicant's submitted architectural elevations and sections.

## GENERAL PLAN/COMMUNITY PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Project is consistent with applicable goals and policies of the General Plan and the Santa Monica Mountains LUP. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

## ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

The proposed Project complies with all applicable zoning requirements, with the exception of the maximum driveway length of 300 feet, which requires a variance. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

## BURDEN OF PROOF

The applicant is required to substantiate all facts identified by 2009 County Code Section 22.56.330. The Burden of Proof with applicant's responses is attached (Exhibit E – Applicant's Burden of Proof). Staff is of the opinion that the applicant has met the burden of proof.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Staff recommends that this Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) 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 a single-family residence, accessory structures and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because the Project includes a proposal to construct a new single-family residence, a garage, associated infrastructure, a swimming pool, and retaining walls.

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 because a biological inventory of the area of Project disturbance did not indicate the presence of 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 Staff Biologist. The biological inventory determined that no portion of the Project Site proposed for development contains any environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern, nor do they contain any plants or animals listed as federal, state, or locally sensitive designations, and they are not considered particularly sensitive environments. The Project is not expected to impact scenic resources, such as the designated scenic route to the south, from which it will not be visible. 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. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Hearing Officer determine that the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

## COMMENTS RECEIVED

### A. County Department Comments and Recommendations

1. The Department of Parks and Recreation, in a letter dated April 27, 2017, recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing without conditions.
2. The Department of Public Works, in a letter dated April 27, 2017, recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing with specific conditions regarding submittal of drainage and grading plans, as well as compliance with Low Impact Development standards. These have been included as draft conditions of Project approval (Exhibit D – Conditions).
3. The Department of Public Health, in a letter dated May 25, 2017, recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing without conditions.
4. The Fire Department, in a letter dated February 21, 2019, recommended that the Project proceed to a public hearing without conditions.

All of the letters cited above are attached to this report (Exhibit H – Agency Correspondence).

**B. Other Agency Comments and Recommendations**

Staff has received no other agency comments or recommendations at this time.

**C. Public Comments**

Staff has not received any public comments regarding the Project at this time.

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Report Reviewed By: Rob Glaser
Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner

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

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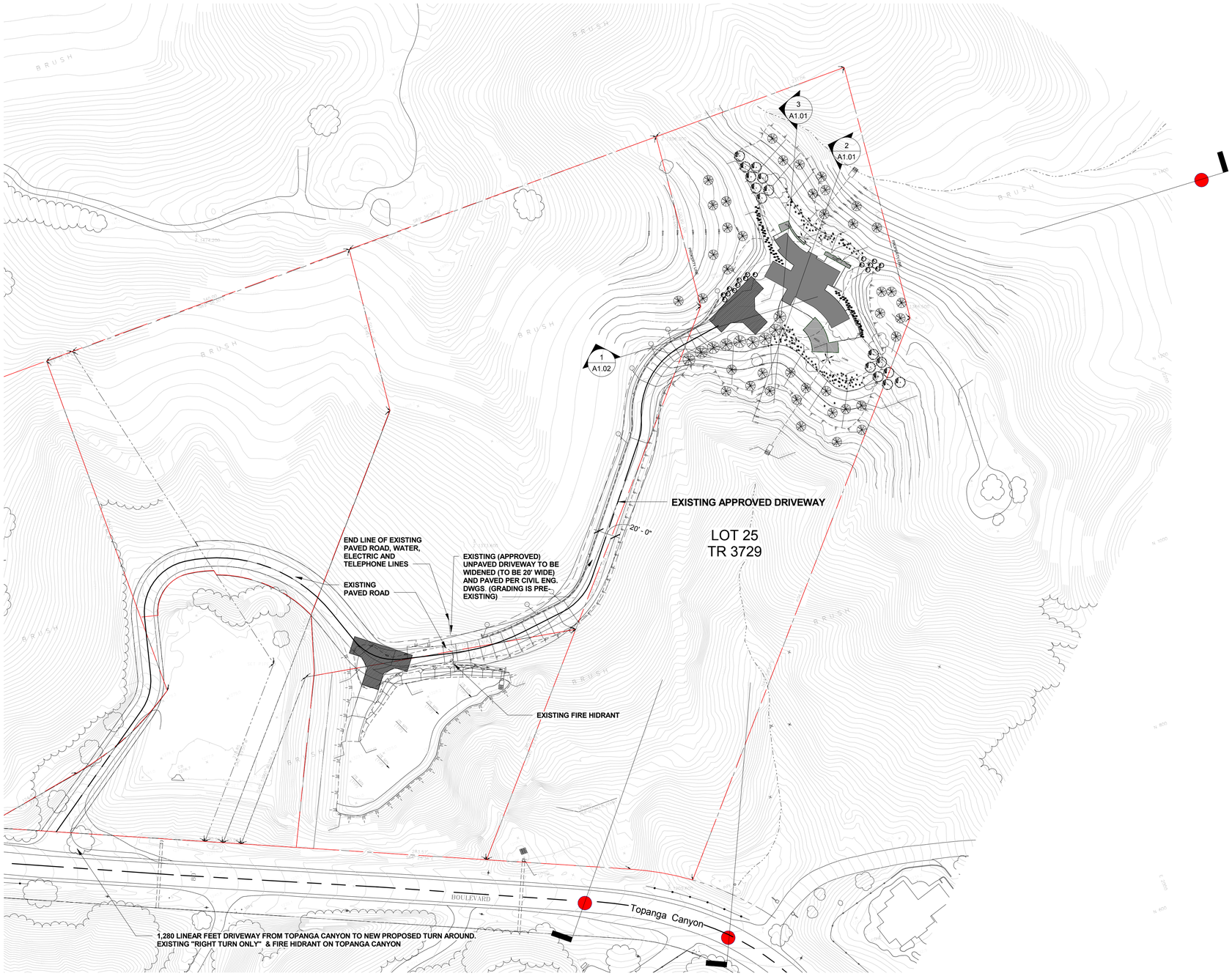
| LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS | |
|---|---|
| EXHIBIT A | Plans |
| EXHIBIT B | Project Summary Sheet |
| EXHIBIT C | Findings |
| EXHIBIT D | Conditions of Approval |
| EXHIBIT E | Applicant's Burden of Proof |
| EXHIBIT F | Informational Maps |
| EXHIBIT G | Photos |
| EXHIBIT H | Agency Correspondence |
| EXHIBIT I | Environmental Determination |




NOTES:

PARCEL GROSS AREA: 5 ACRES

PARCEL NET AREA:

PROPOSED NEW HOUSE AREA:
4,000 SF.

DESIGN FEATURES TO MINIMIZE VISIBILITY OF THE NEW HOUSE TO INCLUDE:
-USE OF DOWNLIGHTS
- LANDSCAPE

WATER LINES ARE ALREADY INSTALLED.
ADDITIONAL METER TO BE ADDED. CONNECTION POINT LOCATED ON TOPANGA CANYON, NEAR THE WATER METERS.

THERE ARE NOT KNOWN CONSTRAINED AREAS.

N

de Mier-Pepin Design

**Felipe de Mier**
**Carolina Pepin**
1209 Via Gabriel
Palos Verdes Estates
CA 90274
Tel. (310) 570-7258
(310) 750-6454

Consultant
Address
Address
Phone
Fax
e-mail

| No. | Description | Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Design Options Planning Submittal | 03.31.16 |
| 2 | Site Plan Planning Submittal | 05.09.16 |
| 3 | Planning Submittal | 09.26.16 |

# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

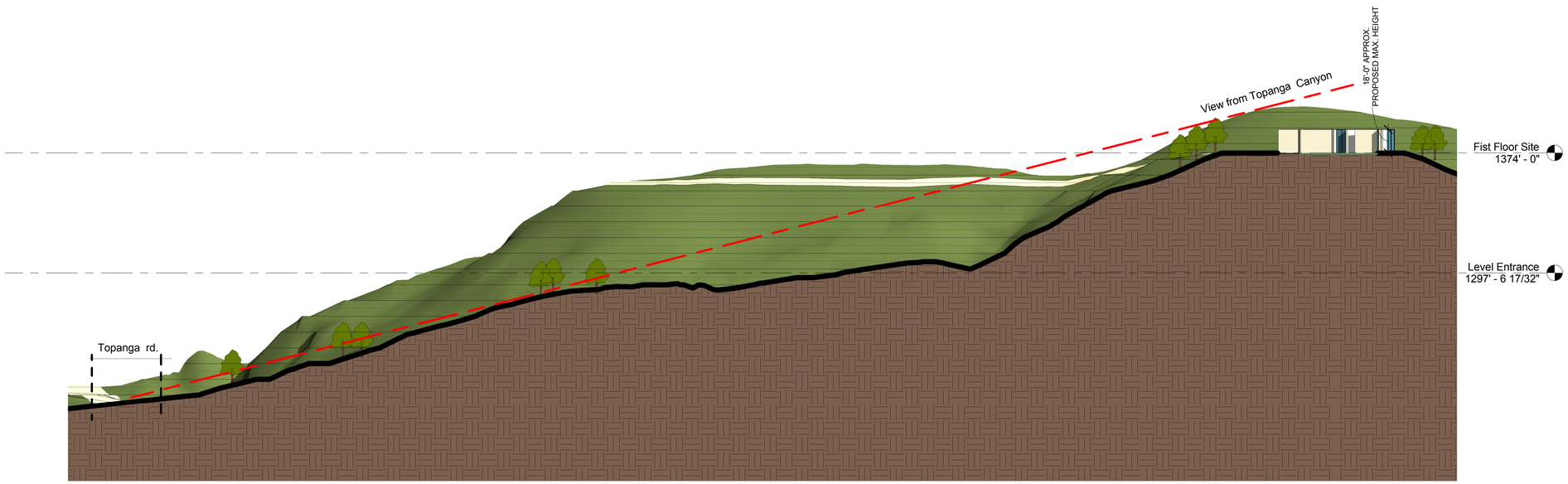
## Reference Site Plan

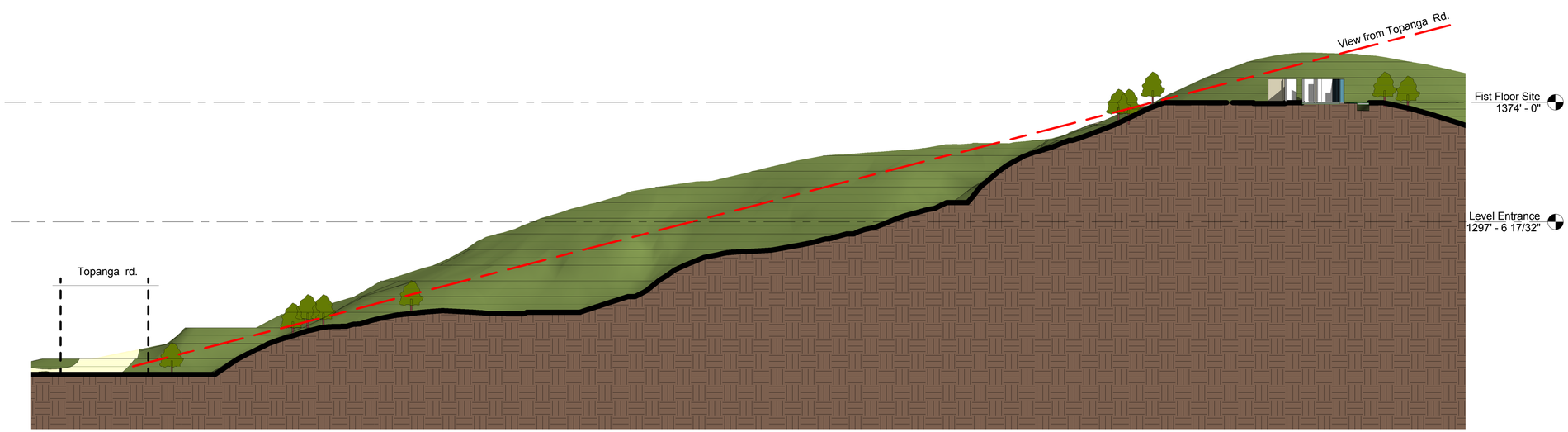
Date

Scale 1/64" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A1.00

9/25/2016 8:43:52 PM




de Mier-Pepin Design

**Felipe de Mier**
**Carolina Pepin**
1209 Via Gabriel
Palos Verdes Estates
CA 90274
Tel. (310) 570-7258
(310) 750-6454

Consultant
Address
Address
Phone
Fax
e-mail

| No. | Description | Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Design Options Planning Submittal | 03.31.16 |
| 2 | Site Plan Planning Submittal | 05.09.16 |
| 3 | Planning Submittal | 09.26.16 |

# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

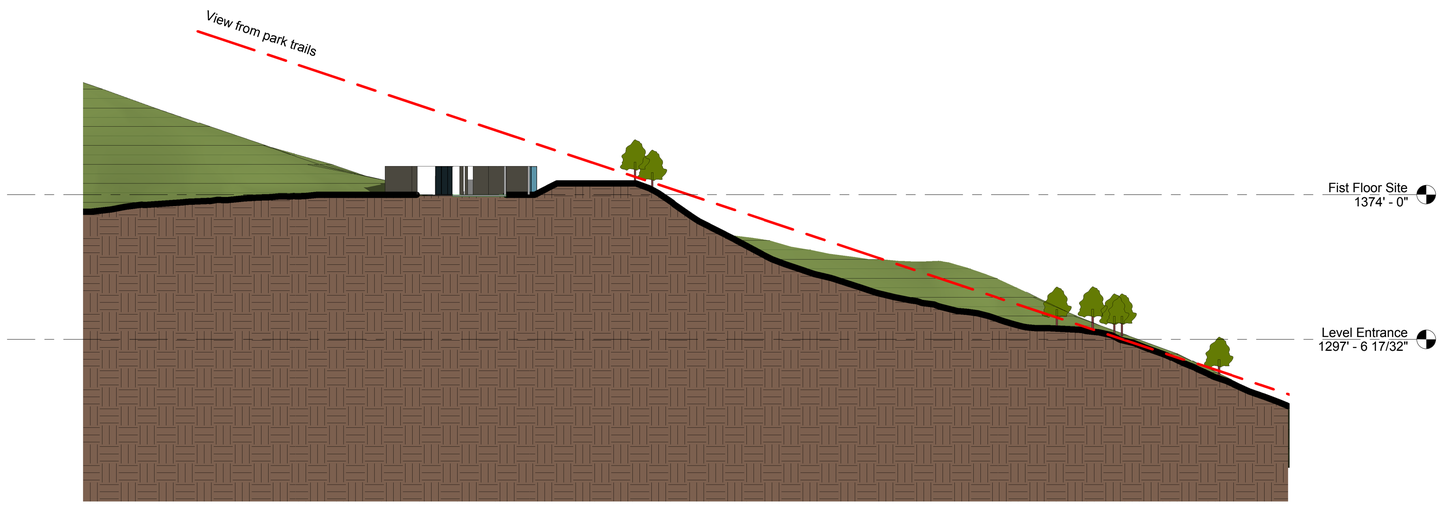
## Sections /Elevations

Date

Scale 1" = 40'-0"

Sheet Number A1.01

9/25/2016 8:43:56 PM

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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

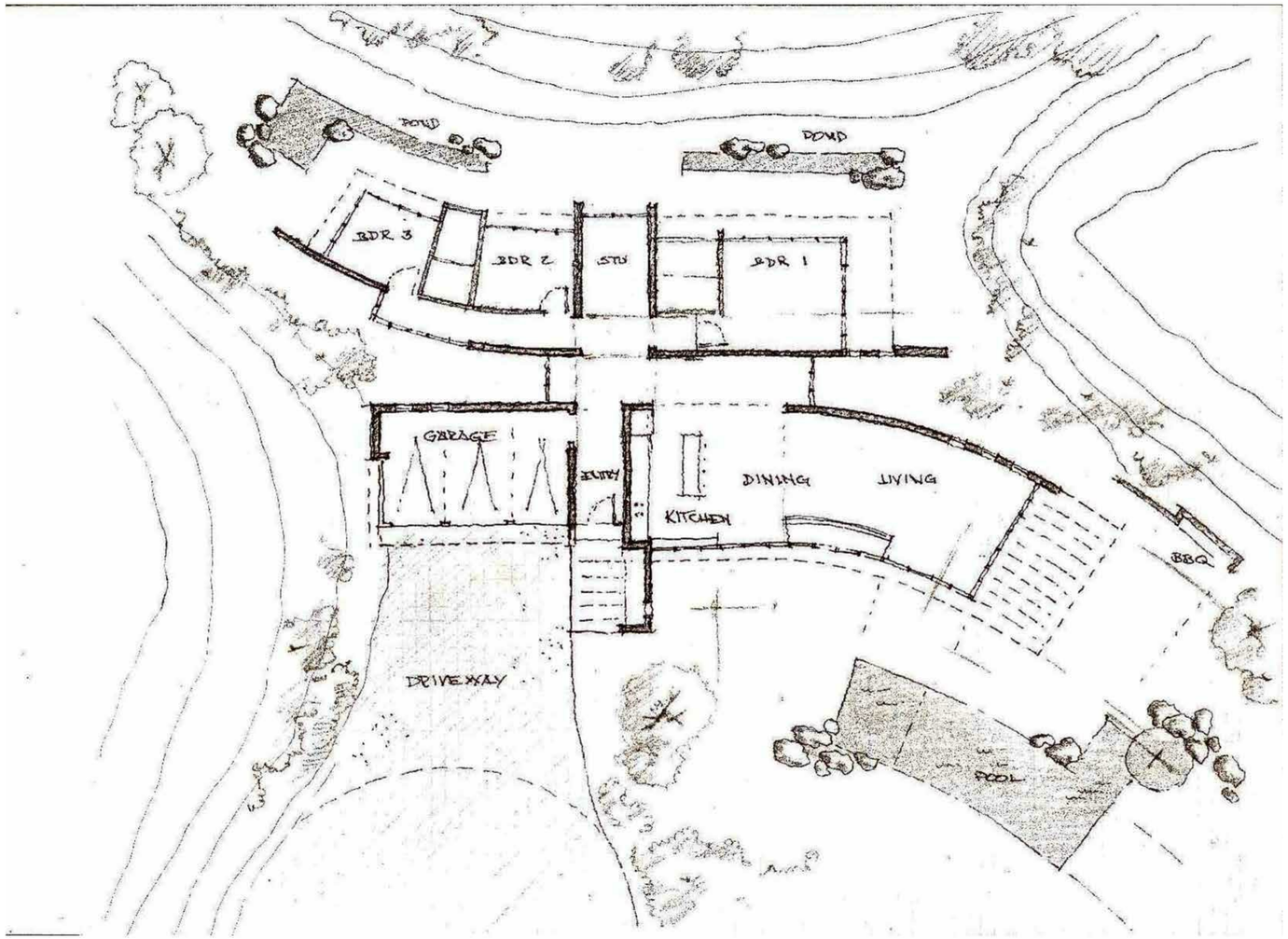
Sections

Date

Scale 1" = 40'-0"

Sheet Number A1.02

9/25/2016 8:43:58 PM




N

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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

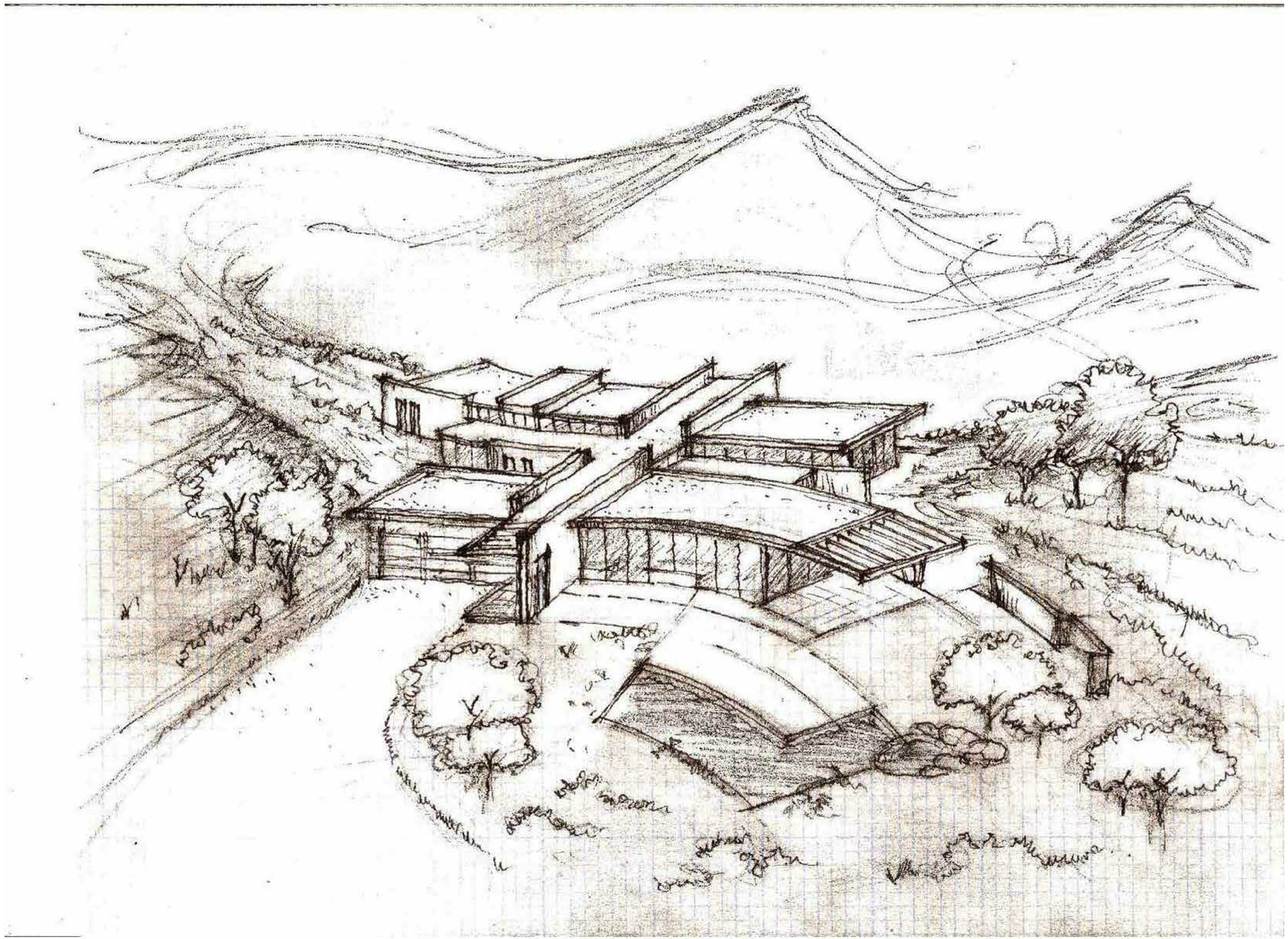
Floor Plan

Date

Scale

Sheet Number A1.03

9/25/2016 8:43:58 PM



N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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

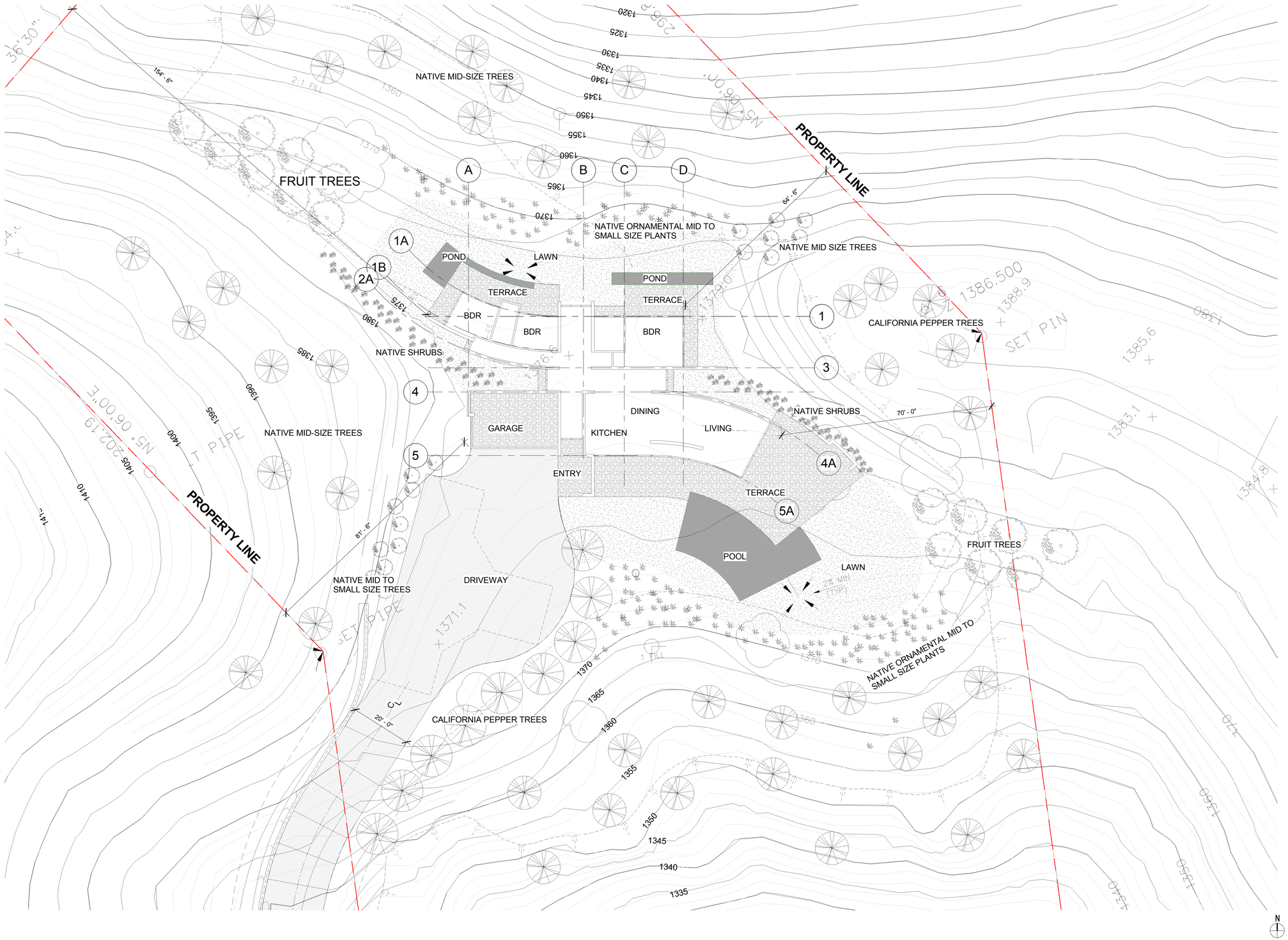
Perspective

Date

Scale

Sheet Number A1.04

9/25/2016 8:43:58 PM





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# 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California

## Single Family House

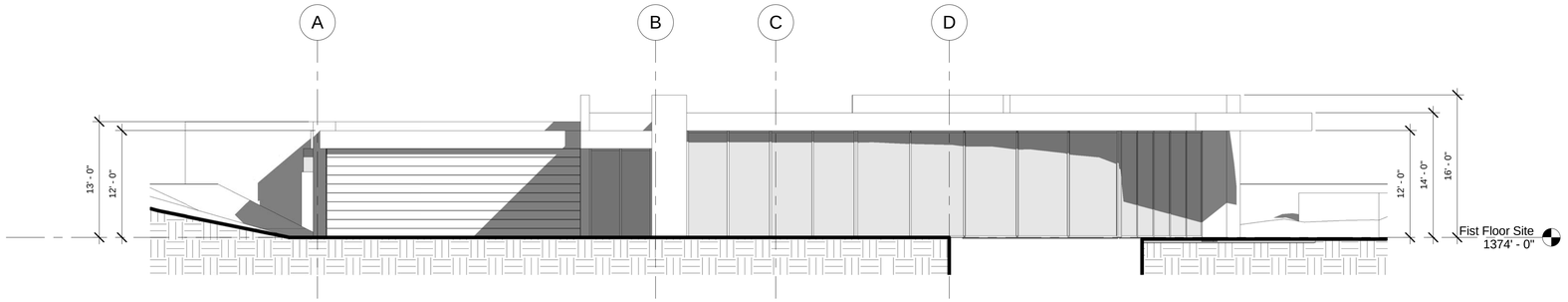
## Site Plan

Date

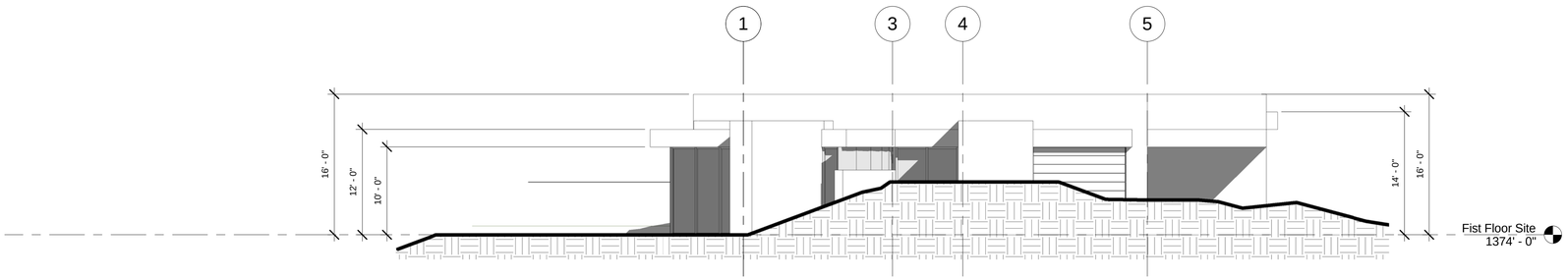
Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A2.05

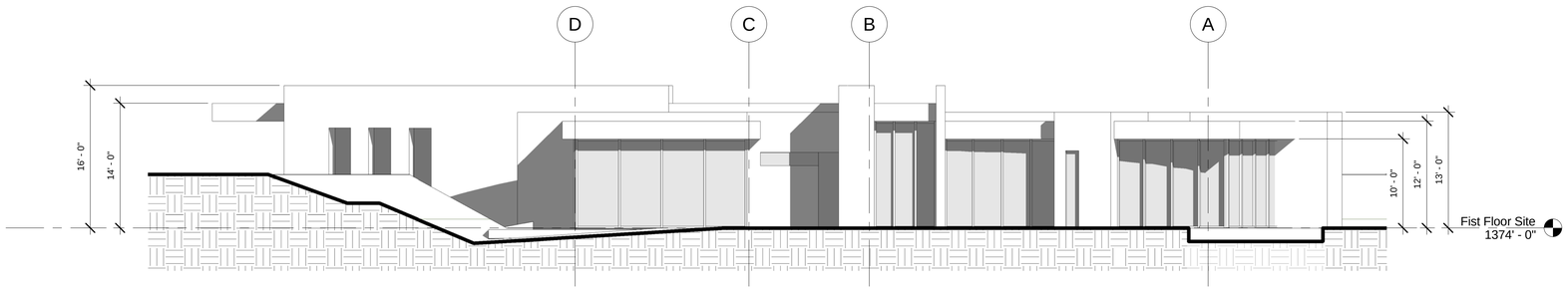
9/25/2016 8:44:04 PM



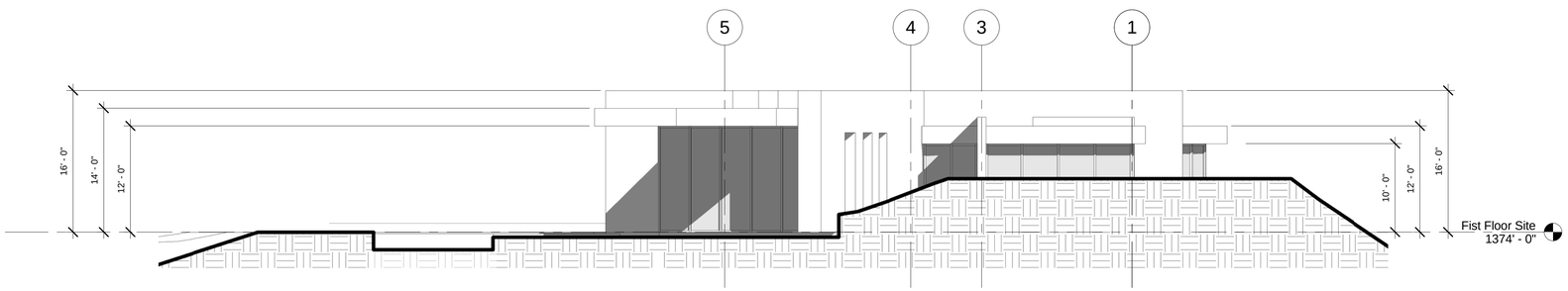

1 South Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




2 West Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




3 North Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"




4 East Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,
Topanga, California

Single Family House

Elevations

Date

Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

Sheet Number A2.06

10/14/2016 4:10:45 PM

GENERAL NOTES:

1. All grading and construction shall conform to the 2011 County of the Los Angeles Building Code and the State Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance unless specifically noted on these plans.

2. Any modifications of or changes to approved grading plans must be approved by the Building Official.

3. No grading shall be started without first notifying the Building Official. A pre-grading meeting at the site is required before the start of the grading with the following people present: Owner, grading contractor, design civil engineer, soils engineer, geologist, County grading inspector(s) or their representatives, and when required the archeologist or other jurisdictional agencies. Permittee or his agent are responsible for arranging pre-grading meeting and must notify the Building Official at least two business days prior to the proposed pre-grading meeting.

4. Approval of these plans reflects solely the review of plans in accordance with the Los Angeles County Building Code and does not reflect any position by the County of Los Angeles or the Department of Public Works regarding the status of any title issues relating to the land on which the improvements may be constructed. Any disputes relating to title are solely a private matter not involving the County of Los Angeles or the Department of Public Works.

5. All grading and construction activities shall comply with Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Section 12.12.030 that controls and restricts noise from the use of construction and grading equipment from the hours of 8:00 PM to 6:30 AM, and on Sundays and Holidays. (More restrictive construction activity times may govern, as required by the Department of Regional/Planning and should be shown on the grading plans when applicable.)

6. California Public Resources Code (section 5097.98) and Health and Safety Code (section 7050.5) address the discovery and disposition of human remains. In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the law requires that grading immediately stops and no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area where human remains may be located, occur until: the following measures have been taken:

a. The County Coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and

b. If the remains are of Native American origin, the descendants from the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation for the means of treating or disposing, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods.

7. The location and protection of all utilities is the responsibility of the Permittee.

8. All export of material from the site must go to a permitted site approved by the Building Official or a legal dumpsite. Receipts for acceptance of excess material by a dumpsite are required and must be provided to the Building Official upon request.

9. A copy of the grading permit and approved grading plans must be in the possession of a responsible person and available at the site at all times.

10. Site boundaries, easements, drainage devices, restricted use areas shall be located per construction staking by Field Engineer or licensed surveyor. Prior to grading, as requested by the Building Official, all property lines, easements, and restricted use areas shall be staked.

11. No grading or construction shall occur within the protected zone of any oak tree as required per Title. Chapter 22.56 of the Los Angeles County, Zoning Code. The protected zone shall mean that area within the dripline of an oak tree extending there from a point at least five feet outside the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk(s) of a tree, whichever is greater.

12. The standard retaining wall details shown on the grading plans are for reference only. Standard retaining walls are not checked, permitted or inspected per the Grading Permit. A separate retaining wall permit is required for all standard retaining walls.

Note: This note only applies to standard retaining walls, Geogrid fabric and segmental retaining walls do not require a separate retaining wall permit Details and construction notes for all Geogrid walls must be on the grading plan.

13. A preventive program to protect the slopes from potential damage from burrowing rodents is required per Section J101.8 of the Los Angeles County Building Code. Owner to inspect slopes periodically for evidence of burrowing rodents and a first evidence of their existence shall employ an exterminator for their removal.

14. If grading authorized by this plan is to extend through the rainy season, November 1 Through April 15 of the following year, separate updated plans for erosion control must be submitted prior to October per Section J111.3 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

15. Transfer of Respositbility: If the Civil Engineer, Soil Engineer, or the Engineering Geologist of record is changed during grading, the work shall be stopped until the has agreed in writting to accept their responcibility within the Area of technical competence for approval upon completion of the work. It shall be the Duty of the Permittee to notify the Building Official in writting of such change prior to the Recommencement of such grading.

DRAINAGE NOTES

1. Roof drainage must be diverted from graded slopes.
2. Provisions shall be made for contributory drainage at all times. Owner will maintain drainage devices and keep free of debris.
3. All construction and grading within a storm drain easement are to be done per Private Drain PD No.
or miscellaneous Transfer Drain MTD No._____
4. All storm drain work is to be done under continuous Inspection by the Field Engineer. Status reports required under note 18 and section J105.11 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code shall include inspection information and reports on the storm drain installation.

AGENCY NOTES:

1. An encroachment permit from (Caltrans) is required for all work within or affecting road right of way. All work within Road right of way shall conform to (Caltrans) encroachment permit.
2. An Encroachment Permit/Connection Permit is required from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for all work within the Los Angeles County Flood Control District right of way. All work shall conform with conditions set by the Permit.
3. Permission to operate in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone must be obtained from the Fire Prevention Bureau or the local Fire Station to prior commencing work.
4. All work within the Streambed and areas outlines on grading plan shall conform to:

Army Corp.404 Permit Number: _____
California Fish & Game Permit NO: ___

INSPECTION NOTES

1. The permittee or his agent shall notify the Building Official at least one working day in advance of required Inspections at following stages of the work. (Section J105.7 of the Building Code.)

(a) Pre-grade-before the start of any earth disturbing activity or construction.
(b) Initiall. When the site has been cleared of vegetation and unapproved fill has been scarified, benched or otherwise prepared for fill. Fill shall not have been placed prior to this inspection.
Note: Prior to any construction activities, including grading, all storm water pollution prevention measures including erosion control devices which contain sediments must be installed.
(c) Rough. When approximate final elevations have been established; drainage terraces, swales and berms installed at the top of the slope; and the statements required in this Section have been received.
(d) Final. When grading has been completed; all drainage devices installed; slope planting established, irrigation systems installed and the As-Built plans, required statements, and reports have been submitted and approved.

2. In addition to the inspection required of the Building Official for grading, reports and statements shall be submitted to the Building Official in accordance with Section J105 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code.

3. Unless otherwise directed by the Building Official, the Field Engineer for all engineered grading projects shall prepare route inspection reports as required under Section J105.11 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code. These reports, known as "Report of Grading Activities", shall be submitted to the Building Official as follows:

a. Bi-weekly during all times when grading of 400 cubic yards or more per week is occurring on the site;

b. Monthly, at all other times; and

c. at any time when requested in writing by the Building Official.

Such "Report of Grading Activities" shall certify to the Building Official that the Field Engineer has inspected the grading site and related activities and has found them in compliance with the approved grading plans and specifications, the Building Code, all grading permit conditions, and all other applicable ordinances and requirements. This form is available at the following website http://dpw.lacounty.gov/bsd/dg/default.aspx. "Report of Grading Activities" may be scanned and uploaded at the website or faxed to (310) 530-5482. Failure to provide required inspection reports will result in a "Stop Work Order".

4. All graded sites must have drainage swales, berms, and other drainage devices installed prior to rough grading approval per Section J105.7 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

5. The grading contractor shall submit the statement to the grading inspector as required by Section J105.12 of the Los Angeles County Building Code at the completion of rough grading.

6. Final grading must be approved before occupancy of buildings will be allowed per Section J105 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.

GENERAL GEOTECHNICAL NOTES

1. All work must be in compliance with the recommendations included in the consultant's geotechnical report(s) and the approved grading plans and specifications.

2. Grading operations must be conducted under periodic inspections by geotechnical consultons with monthly inspection reports to be submitted to the Geology and Soils Section. ( 900 S. Fremont, Alhambra, Ca 91803, 3 rd floor)

3. The Soils Engineer shall provide sufficient inspections during the preparation of the natural ground and the placement and compaction of the fill to be satisfied that the work is being performed in accordance with the plan and applicable Code requirements.

4. Rough grading must be approved by a Final Engineering Geology and Soils Engineering Report. An As-Built Geologic Map must be included in the Final Geology Report. Provide a Final Report Statement that verifies work was done in accordanse with Report Recommendations and code provisions (Section J105.12 of the Los Angeles County Building Code). The Final Report(s) must be submitted to the Geotechnical and Material Division for review and approval.

5. Foundation, wall and pool excavations must be inspected and approved by the consulting geologist and soil engineer, prior to the placing of steel or concrete.

6. Building pads located in cut/fill transition areas shall be over-excavated a minimum of three (3) feet below the proposed bottom of footing.

PLANTING AND IRRIGATION NOTES:

1. Planting and irrigation on graded slopes must comply with the following minimum guidelines:

a. The surface of all cut slopes more than 5 feet in height and fill slopes more than 3 feet in height shall be protected against damage by erosion by planting with grass or groundcover plants. Slopes exceeding 15 feet in vertical height shall also be planted with shrubs, spaced at not to exceed 10 feet on centers; or trees, spaced at not to exceed 20 feet on centers, or combination of shrubs and trees at equivalent spacing, in addition to the grass or groundcover plants. The plants selected and planting methods used be suitable for the soil and climatic conditions of the site. Plant material shall be selected which will produce a coverage of permanent planting effectively controlling erosion. Consideration shall be given to deep-rooted planting material needing limited watering, maintenance, high root to shoot ratio, wind susceptibility and fire-retardant characteristics. All plant materials must be approved by the building official.(Section J110.3 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

NOTE: Planting may be modified for the site if specific recommendations are provided by both the Soils Engineer and a Landscape Architect. Specific recommendations must consider soils and climatic conditions, irrigation requirements, planting methods, fire returdant characteristics, water efficiency, maintenance needs, and other regulatory requirements. Recommendations must include a finding that the alternative planting will provide a permanent and effective method of erosion control. Modifications to planting must be approved by the Building Official prior to installation.

b. Slopes required to be planted by Section J110.3 of the Building Code shall be provided with an approved system of irrigation that is designed to cover all portions of the slope. Irrigation system plans shall be submitted and approved prior to installation. A functional test of the system may be required. For slopes less than 20 feet in vertical height, hose bibs to permit hand watering will be acceptable if such hose bibs are installed at conveniently accessible locations where a hose no longer than 50 feet is necessary for irrigation. The requirements for permanent irrigation systems may be modified upon specific recommendation of a landscape architect or equivalent authority that, because of the type of plants selected, the planting methods used and the soil and climatic conditions at the site, irrigation will not be necessary for the maintenance of the slope planting. (Section J110.4 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

c. Other governmental agencies may have additional requirements for landscaping irrigation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to coordinate with agencies to meet their requirements while maintaining compliance with the County of Los Angeles Building Code.

2. The planting and irrigation system shall be installed as soon as practical after rough grading. Prior to final grading approval all required slope planting must be well established. (Section J110.4 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code)

3. Prior to rough grade approval this project requires a landscape permit. Landscape plans in compliance with the "Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance" Title 23, Chapter 2.7 of California Code of Regulations (AB 1881) must be submitted to the Department of Public Works, Land Development Division. (900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra - 3rd floor, CA 91803 (626)458-4921. To obtain Landscape permit, approved plans and Water Purveyor acknowledgment form must be submitted to the local Building and Safety office.

BENCH MARK - CONCRETE SLAB AT SOUTH-WESTERLY BUILDING CORNER @2326 N. TOPANGA CANYON BLVD., ELEVATION - 1233.30

FILL NOTES

1. All fill shall be compacted to the following minimum relative compaction criteria :
a. 90 percent of maximum dry density within 40 feet below finish grade.

b. 93 percent of maximum dry density deeper than 40 feet below finish grade, unless a lower relative compaction (not less than 90 percent of maximum dry density) is justified by the geotechnical engineer.

The relative compaction shall be determined by A.S.T.M. soil compaction test D1557-91, where applicable: Where not applicable, a test acceptable to the Building Official shall be used. (Section J107.5 of the County of Los Angeles Building Code.)

2. Field density shall be determined by a method acceptable to the Building Official. (Section J107.5 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.) However, not less than 10% of the required density tests, uniformly distributed, shall be obtained by the Sand Cone Method,

3. Sufficient tests of the fill soils shall be made to determine the relative compaction of the fill in accordance with the following minimum guidelines:
a. One test for each two-foot vertical lift.

b. One test for each 1,000 cubic yards of material placed.

c. One test at the location of the final fill slope for each building site (lot) in each four-foot vertical lift or portion thereof.

d. One test in the Vicinity of each building pad for each four-foot vertical lift or portion thereof.

4. Sufficient tests of fill soils shall be made to verify that the soil properties comply with the design requirements, as determined by the Soil Engineer including soil types, shear strengths parameters and corresponding unit weights in accordance with the following guidelines:
a. Prior and subsequent to placement of the fill, shear tests shall be taken on each type of soil or soil mixture to be used for all fill slopes steeper than three (3) horizontal to one vertical.
b. Shear test results for the proposed fill material must meet or exceed the design values used in the geotechnical report to determine slope stability requirements. Otherwise, the slope must be re-evaluated using the actual shear test value of the fill material that is in place.
c. Fill soils shall be free of deleterious materials.

5. Fill shall not be placed until stripping of vegetation, removal of unsuitable soils, and installation of subdrain (if any) have been inspected and approved by the Soil Engineer. The Building Official may require a "Standard Test Method for moisture, ash, organic matter, peat or other organic soils" ASTM D-2974-87 on any suspect material. Detrimental amounts of organic material shall not be permitted in fills. Soil containing small amounts of roots may be allowed provided that the roots are in a quantity and distributed in a manner that will not be detrimental to the future use of the site and the Soils Engineer approves the use of such material.

6. Rock or similar material greater than 12 inches in diameter shall not be placed in the fill unless recommendations for such placement have been submitted by the Soil Engineer and approved in advance by the Building Official. Location, extent, and elevation of rock disposal areas must be shown on an "As-Build" grading plan.

7. Continuous inspection by the Geotechnlcal Engineer, or a responsible representative, shall be provided during all fill placement and compaction operations where fills have a depth greater than 30 feet or slope surface steeper than 2:1. (Section J107.8 of the Los Angeles County Building Code).

8. Continuous inspection by the Geotechnical Engineer, or a responsible representative, shall be provided during all subdrain installations. (Section J107.2 of the Los Angeles County Building Code).

9. All subdrain outlets are to be surveyed for line and elevation. Subdrain information must be shown on an "As-Build" grading plan.

10. Fill slopes in excess of 2:1 steepness ratio are to be constructed by the placement of soil at sufficient distance beyond the proposed finish slope to allow compaction equipment to be operated at the outer limits of the final slope surface. The excess fill is to be removed prior to completion of rough grading. Other construction procedures may be used when it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Building Official that the angle of slope, construction method and other factors will have equivalent effect. (Section J107.5 of the Los Angeles County Building Code.)

11. (H) for retaining walls shown on the plan is the estimated difference between finished surface on both sides of the retaining wall. It does not include depth to the footing and the freeboard. Contractor is responsible for determining actual height of walls based on field conditions. Height of retaining walls may change depending on conditions of adjacent lots. Contractor shall verify wall heights and consult engineer in case of any discrepancy.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE NOTES:

1. Every effort should be made to eliminate the discharge of non-stormwater from the project site at all times.

2. Eroded sediments and other pollutants must be retained on-site and may not be transported from the site via sheet flow, swabs, area drains, natural drainage courses or wind.

3. Stockpiles of earth and other construction related materials must be protected from being transported from the site by the forces of wind or water.

4. Fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials must be stored in accordance with their listing and are not to contaminate the soil and surface waters. All approved storage containers are to be protected from the weather. Spills must be cleaned up immediately and disposed of in a proper manner. Spills may not be washed into the drainage system.

5. Excess or waste concrete may not be washed into the public way or any other drainage system. Provisions shall be made to retain concrete wastes on-site until they can be disposed of as solid waste.

6. Trash and construction related solid wastes must be deposited into a covered receptacle to prevent contamination of rainwater and dispersal by wind.

7. Sediments and other materials may not be tracked from the site by vehicle traffic. The construction entrance roadways must be stabilized so as to inhibit sediments from being deposited into the public way. Accidental depositions must be swept up immediately and may not be washed down by rain or other means.

8. Any slopes with disturbed soils or denuded of vegetation must be stabilized so as to inhibit erosion by wind and water.

9. As the Project Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner, I have read and understand the requirements listed above, necessary to control storm water pollution from sediments, erosion, and constraction materials, and I certify that I will comply with these requirements.

Print Name FELIX LEVITAS
(Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner)

Signature _____ Date _____
(Owner or Autorized Agent of the Owner)

As Civil Engineer/ Land Surveyor of the project, I have reviewed and verified locations and purposes of easements, and they are accurately depicted on these plans. I have verified the proposed construction does not interfere with and conforms with the intended use of easement.

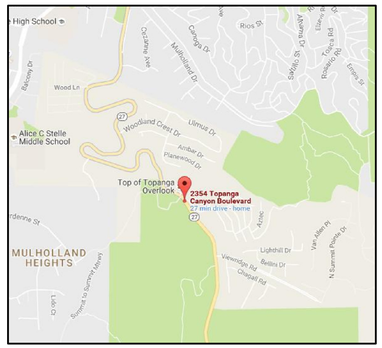
_____
Civil Engineer/ Land Surveyor stamp and signature Date

LEGEND:

GRADED SLOPE — TOP, CUT SLOPE, FILL SLOPE, TOE
EXISTING CONTOUR — 1300
PROPOSED CONTOUR — 1300
CUT/ FILL LINE — C / F
DAYLIGHT LINE
EXISTING ELEVATION — ± 1200.0
SLOPE DIRECTION/ RATE — 4%
RETAINING WALL
SPLASH WALL
DETAIL SHEET NUMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| TG | TOP OF GRATE |
| TD | TOP OF DECK |
| FL HP | FLOW LINE HIGH POINT |
| INV | INVERT ELEVATION |
| FF | FINISH FLOR |
| FS | FINISH SURFACE |

Grading Permit Application No. _____
Earthwork Volumes Cut _____ (cy), Fill _____
Over Excavation/ Alluvial Removal & Compaction _____ (cy),
Shrinkage 15% _____ (cy),
Export _____ (cy), Export Location: _____ (cy),
Total Disturbed Area _____ (Acres)
Total Proposed Landscape Area _____ (Sq Ft)
Total Turf Area _____ % (Percent of Total Proposed Landscaping)
Total Drought Tolerant Landscaping Area _____ % (Percent of Total Proposed Landscaping)
Pre-Development Impervious Area _____ (Acres)
Post-Development Impervious Area _____ (Acres)
Waste Discharge Identefication Number (WDID #) _____
Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Plan(RPP ID) _____
Post-construction BMP feature(s) GPS coordinates x_____ y____
Property Address: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. TOPANGA, CA 90290
Tract/ Parcel Map No.
Property Owners:
Assessors ID Number _____
Property Zoning: _____
Intended Land Use: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
Certificate of Compliance: CC NO. _____
Plot Plan : PP NO. _____
Conditional Use Permit: CUP NO. _____ Expiration Date: _____
Oak Tree Permit Number: OTP NO._____ Expiration Date: _____
Community Standards District: _____
California Coastal Commission Area: _____ Yes, _____No Approved volume: ____ (cy)
Coastal Development Permit CDP _____ Expiration Date: _____
Fish & Wildlife, Army Corp of Engineers, Regional Water Cntrol Board, AQMD & Other Agency Permits should be added as applicable. (Permit Number Expiration Date: _____ )




VICINITY MAP
N.T.S.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

THAT PORTION OF LOT 25 IN TRACT 3729, AS SHOWN ON MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 41 PAGE 17 ET SEQ, OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY, BOUNDED AS FOLLOW:

SOILS ENGINEER & GEOLOGIST

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND CONFORMS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOILS GEOLOGIST REPORTS.
DATE.....
SIGNATURE.....

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND CONFORMS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOILS ENGINEERING REPORTS.
DATE.....
SIGNATURE.....

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER — FELIX LEVITAS — No. 62311 — EXP. 09-30-17 — CIVIL — STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:

FELIX LEVITAS, RCE 62311 DATE


GRUTMAN · MAZLER ENGINEERING, INC.
GM Engineering
civil engineers, land surveyors & general contractors
GM ENGINEERING 6624 VALJEAN AVENUE, CA 91406
tel. (818) 908-1824 fax# (818) 908-3038 fax#2 (818) 905-3884 gm@gmengineering.com


| REVISIONS | ENGR. | DATE | DATE 08-08-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | DRAWN S.Q. |
| | | | DESIGNED F.L. |
| | | | CHECKED F.L. |

NO.

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR: CORY ISAACSON

SHEET TITLE: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. CONCEPTUAL GRADING PLAN NOTES

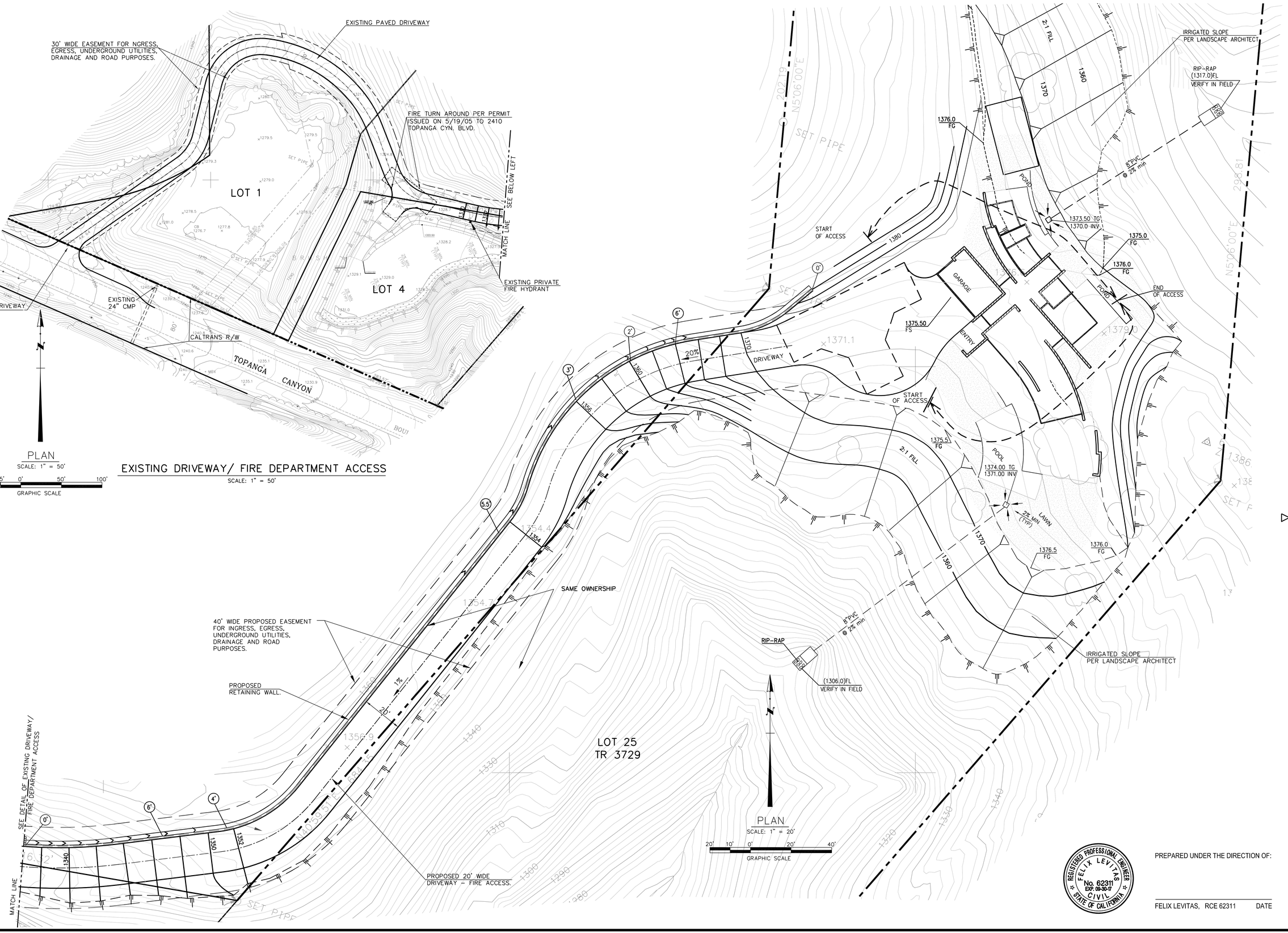
SHEET NO. 1 OF 2 SHEETS

JOB NO. 200601410

PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 50'
50' 25' 0' 50' 100'
GRAPHIC SCALE

## EXISTING DRIVEWAY/ FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS

SCALE: 1" = 50'




PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 20'
20' 10' 0' 20' 40'
GRAPHIC SCALE

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER FELIX LEVITAS No. 62311 EXP. 09-30-17 CIVIL STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:

FELIX LEVITAS, RCE 62311 DATE

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tel. (818) 908-1824 fax# (818) 908-3038 fax# (818) 908-3041 gm@grumanmazler.com

| | |
|---|---|
| DATE | 08-08-2016 |
| DRAWN | S.O. |
| DESIGNED | F.L. |
| CHECKED | F.L. |

| REVISIONS | DATE | ENGR. |
|---|---|---|
| NO. | | |

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR: CORY ISAACSON

SHEET TITLE: 2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. CONCEPTUAL GRADING PLAN

SHEET NO. 2 OF 2 SHEETS

JOB NO. 200601410

LA COUNTY PLANNING

**PROJECT NUMBER**
R2005-01452-(3)

**HEARING DATE**
June 17, 2025

**REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS**
Variance No. RVAR-200900001

# PROJECT SUMMARY

**OWNER / APPLICANT**
CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. / Cory Isaacson

**MAP/EXHIBIT DATE**
9/26/2016

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Variance to authorize the construction of a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence, an attached 585-square-foot three-car garage, an onsite wastewater treatment system, a swimming pool, hardscaping, and landscaping ("Project") within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline on a 4.9-acre lot in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area. The Project is proposed on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet, which was legally developed between 2004 and 2009. No additional grading is proposed. An existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (SR-27) and designated scenic route, to the south. The southernmost portion of the existing driveway (665 linear feet) is paved, while the northern portion (650 linear feet) would be paved as part of the Project. A complete application for the Project was filed in 2009; therefore, the Project will be evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan and the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("CSD").

**LOCATION**
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga

**ACCESS**
Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway one-half mile to the south, via a private driveway traversing two other parcels

**ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBER(S)**
4434-013-002

**SITE AREA**
4.9 acres

**GENERAL PLAN / LOCAL PLAN**
2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan

**PLANNING AREA**
Santa Monica Mountains

**LAND USE DESIGNATION**
N5 (Mountain Land 5 – One dwelling unit per five gross acres maximum density)

**ZONE**
A-1-5 (Light Agricultural – 5-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area)

**PROPOSED UNITS**
1 dwelling unit

**MAX DENSITY/UNITS**
1 dwelling unit

**COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT**
Santa Monica Mountains North Area (2009)

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION (CEQA)**

Class 3 Categorical Exemption—New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

**KEY ISSUES**

- Consistency with the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan
- Satisfaction of the following Section(s) of Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code from 2009:
  - 22.24.110 (A-1 Zone Development Standards)
  - 22.44.133 (Santa Monica Mountains North Area CSD Standards)
  - 22.56.330 (Variance Burden of Proof)


**CASE PLANNER:**
Tyler Montgomery

**PHONE NUMBER:**
(213) 974-0051

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**
tmontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

# DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER AND ORDER
# PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)
# VARIANCE NO. 200900001

## RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATE(S).** The Los Angeles County ("County") Hearing Officer conducted a duly noticed public hearing on **[DATE]**, in the matter of Project No. R2005-01452-(3), Variance No. 200900001 ("Variance").

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

3. **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.** A complete application for the Variance was filed in 2009; therefore, it was evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan ("2000 LUP") and the Los Angles County Code as it existed in 2009 ("2009 County Code"), which includes the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("2009 CSD").

4. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUESTED.** The applicant, Cory Isaacson ("Permittee"), requests the Variance to authorize the construction of a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence with an attached 585-square-foot garage and appurtenant structures within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") on a property that is 4.9 gross acres in size located at 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Assessor's Parcel Number 4434-013-002) in the unincorporated community of Topanga in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), pursuant to Section 22.56.330 of the 2009 County Code.

5. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUIRED**. The Variance is required in order to approve new development within 50 feet of a significant ridgeline as mapped by the 2000 LUP, pursuant to the requirements of the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133).

6. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENTS.** Certificate of Compliance No. 200500127 confirmed the legality of the underlying parcel and was approved on August 19, 2005.

   Zoning Conformance Review No. 200600712 authorized a solid fill project to create a flat pad with drainage structures for erosion control (1,999 cubic yards grading—500 cubic yards cut, 1,499 cubic yards fill, 999 cubic yards import) and was approved on July 18, 2006.

7. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the Mountain Land 5 (N5 – one dwelling unit per five gross acres maximum density) land use designation of the 2000 LUP.

8. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area and is zoned A-1-5 (Light Agricultural—Five Acre Minimum Required Lot Area). Pursuant

to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, a single-family residence is a principal permitted use within the A-1 Zone and is permitted with a site plan review. However, the 2009 CSD requires a variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) from a significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the residence is located on a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP, a variance is required.

9. **SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING**

| LOCATION | 2000 LUP LAND USE POLICY | ZONING | EXISTING USES |
|---|---|---|---|
| NORTH | OS (Open Space) | O-S (Open Space) | Open space |
| EAST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| SOUTH | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| WEST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |

10. **PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.**

A. Existing Site Conditions
The Project Site is 4.9 gross acres and irregularly shaped with a mapped significant ridgeline running northwest to southeast across its northern portion, through an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. The Project Site is adjacent to Topanga Canyon Boulevard to the southwest, although the road is separated from the graded pad by 600 linear feet of steeply sloping terrain. As a result, graded pad is accessed from the west by a partially paved, 20-foot-wide driveway that traverses two other parcels before reaching Topanga Canyon Boulevard one-half mile to the west. The northern portion of the Project Site consists of graded areas and disturbed vegetation, while the central and southern portions consist mainly of coastal chapparal scrub.

B. Site Access
Access is provided by an existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway that traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (SR-27) and designated scenic route, to the west. The southernmost portion of the existing driveway (665 linear feet) is paved, while the northern portion (650 linear feet) would be paved as part of the Project.

C. Site Plan
The Permittee proposes the construction of a 4,000-square-foot single-family residence and a 585-square-foot attached garage and on the northern portion of the 4.9-acre Project Site. The one-story residence would have a maximum height

of 16 feet above grade and would be located on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. No additional grading is proposed. The Project would also include a swimming pool, retaining walls, decks, stairways, hammerhead turnaround, and other appurtenant facilities on the existing graded pad. A new onsite wastewater treatment system ("OWTS") with two seepage pits would be located approximately 100 feet to the northwest of the residence. Also the northern portion (650 linear feet) of an existing 1,315-foot-long, 20-foot-wide driveway would be paved as part of the Project.

11. **CEQA DETERMINATION.** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines.

    Pursuant to section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes a single-family residence, accessory structures, and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because the Project includes a proposal to construct a new single-family residence, a garage, a swimming pool, associated infrastructure, an access driveway, decks, and retaining walls.

    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 because a biological inventory of the area of Project disturbance did not indicate the presence of 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 Staff Biologist. The biological inventory determined that no portion of the Project Site proposed for development contains any environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern, nor do they contain any plants or animals listed as federal, state, or locally sensitive designations, and they are not considered particularly sensitive environments. The Project is not expected to impact scenic resources, such as the designated scenic route to the south, from which it will not be visible. 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. Therefore, the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") Staff ("Staff") did not receive any public comments regarding the Project as of the date that the Report to the Hearing Officer was issued.

13. **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**

    A. County Fire Department ("Fire Department"): Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated February 21, 2019.

    B. County Department of Parks & Recreation: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

    C. County Department of Public Health: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated May 25, 2017.

    D. County Department of Public Works ("Public Works"): Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

14. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.990, 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 May 8, 2025, a total of 38 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 500-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

15. **LAND USE POLICY.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2000 LUP because the N5 land use designation is intended for single-family residential uses on relatively large lots. A single-family residence is permitted under this designation.

16. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following policies of the 2000 LUP:

    *Conservation & Open Space Element*
    *Policy IV-3:*
    *Require development designs that protect and preserve significant, viable habitat areas and habitat linkages/wildlife corridors in their natural condition.*

    *Policy IV-9:*
    *New development projects shall be designed to protect significant natural features, and to minimize the amount of grading.*

*Policy IV-13:*
*Ensure that the overall project design/layout of hillside developments adapts to the natural hillside topography and protects ridgelines and natural-appearing views from surrounding vantage points such as highways, parklands and overlooks. Overall, emphasize fitting the project into its hillside setting rather than altering the hillside to fit the project.*

The Project would utilize a previously graded pad on the northern portion of the Project Site that was previously disturbed and mainly consists of nonnative grasses. This location will avoid the need to remove native vegetation and grade large amounts of earth further down the slope. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved.

*Land Use Element*
*Policy VI-20:*
*Limit structure heights in suburban and rural areas to ensure compatibility of new development with the respective characteristics of the surrounding settings and sites.*

*Policy VI-21:*
*Encourage siting of developments to include setbacks that protect public lands, streams, scenic features, views, and other natural features and that maximize open space areas; project density and structure placement shall be consistent with the need to minimize vegetation clearance for fire protection.*

Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape, and the modest 16-foot maximum height, would be in character with the surrounding community.

## ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

17. **PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the A-1-5 zoning classification because a single-family residence is a principal permitted use in such zone with a site plan review pursuant to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110. The 2009 CSD also requires a variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the Project proposed developing a single-family residence on a mapped significant ridgeline, a Variance is required instead of a site plan review.

18. **REQUIRED YARDS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, as the Project would meet all required setback standards.

19. **HEIGHT.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). The maximum height for a single-family residence proposed on a significant ridgeline is 18 feet above grade, while the maximum height of the proposed single-family residence is 16 feet above grade.

20. **SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the Significant Ecological Area ("SEA") requirements of the 2009 County Code (Section 22.56.215). Although the Project Site is mapped as being within an SEA by the 2000 LUP, the 2009 County Code does not require an SEA Conditional Use Permit ("SEA-CUP") for development of one single-family residence. Because the Project consists of one single-family residence, an SEA-CUP is not required.

21. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable grading requirements identified in the 2009 CSD (County Code Section 22.44.133). The 2009 CSD requires a conditional use permit for grading that exceeds 5,000 cubic yards (cut plus fill). The Project is not proposing any additional grading beyond the grading that was approved with a zoning conformance review in 2006 (1,999 cubic yards).

22. **PARKING.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified for development in the A-1-5 Zone (County Code Section 22.24.110), as no covered parking spaces are required for properties that exceed one acre in area. Although the Project Site is 4.9 acres, the Project would provide two covered parking spaces in an attached garage.

23. **SIGNIFICANT RIDGELINE.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in 2009 County Code Section 22.44.133. The Project Site is located on a designated significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP. Therefore, a variance is required, which is what has been requested by the Permittee.

## VARIANCE FINDINGS

24. **The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification**. A building site—including a graded pad and driveway—was created legally on the significant ridgeline in 2006, and the remainder of the subject property is steeply sloping. As a result, the building site is the most appropriate location for development of a single-family residence, which is a principal permitted use in the A-1 Zone. The development of a residence at a lower elevation would require a prodigious amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a

significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

25. **The Hearing Officer finds that the modification 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.** Other nearby property owners to the south and west already enjoy similar use of their properties, as there are three other single-family residences developed on comparable pads in the immediate vicinity, all of which are also located on the significant ridgeline.

26. **The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.** The development of a residence away from the significant ridgeline at a lower elevation would require a prodigious amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

27. **The Hearing Officer finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.** The Project would be similar in character to other single-family residences in the vicinity and compares favorably to them in terms of height and bulk. Residences within 500 feet range between 1,440 square feet and 4,228 square feet. While the proposed residence would be on the higher end of this range at 4,000 square feet, its relatively modest height of 16 feet above grade is less than that of nearly all other residences in the vicinity, many of which are two stories. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

28. 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). The Class 3 Categorical Exemption specifically pertains to a single-family residence and its appurtenant structures.

## ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

29. **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**:

A. The Hearing Officer finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

B. The Hearing Officer finds that the modification 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.

C. The Hearing Officer finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.

D. The Hearing Officer finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.

**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) Categorical Exemption; and

2. Approves **VARIANCE NO. 200900001**, subject to the attached conditions.

**ACTION DATE: June 17, 2025**

RG:TM
5/19/25

c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety

**EXHIBIT D**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

**DRAFT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**
**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)**
**VARIANCE NO. 200900001**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a Variance to construct a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence located on a mapped significant ridgeline on a 4.9-acre property in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), subject to the following conditions of approval:

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant, owner of the property, and any other person, corporation, or other entity making use of this grant.

2. This grant shall not be effective for any purpose until the permittee, and the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, have filed at the office of the Los Angeles County ("County") Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all of the conditions of this grant, and that the conditions of the grant have been recorded as required by Condition No. 7, and until all required monies have been paid pursuant to Condition No. 9. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Condition No. 2 and Conditions No. 4, 5, and 8 shall be effective immediately upon the date of final approval of this grant by the County.

3. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "date of final approval" shall mean the date the County's action becomes effective pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1090.

4. The permittee shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the County or its agents, officers, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul this permit approval, which action is brought within the applicable time period of Government Code section 65009 or any other applicable limitations period. The County shall promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding and the County shall reasonably cooperate in the defense. If the County fails to promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding, or if the County fails to cooperate reasonably in the defense, the permittee shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless the County.

5. In the event that any claim, action, or proceeding as described above is filed against the County, the permittee shall within 10 days of the filing make an initial deposit with LA County Planning in the amount of up to $5,000.00, from which actual costs and expenses shall be billed and deducted for the purpose of defraying the costs or expenses involved in LA County Planning's cooperation in the defense, including but not limited to, depositions, testimony, and other assistance provided to permittee or permittee's counsel.

If during the litigation process, actual costs or expenses incurred reach 80 percent of the amount on deposit, the permittee shall deposit additional funds sufficient to bring the balance up to the amount of $5,000.00. There is no limit to the number of supplemental deposits that may be required prior to completion of the litigation.

At the sole discretion of the permittee, the amount of an initial or any supplemental deposit may exceed the minimum amounts defined herein. Additionally, the cost for collection and duplication of records and other related documents shall be paid by the permittee according to County Code Section 2.170.010.

6. If any material provision of this grant is held or declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the permit shall be void and the privileges granted hereunder shall lapse.

7. Prior to the use of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall **record the terms and conditions** of the grant in the office of the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk ("Recorder"). In addition, upon any transfer or lease of the property during the term of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall promptly provide a copy of the grant and its conditions to the transferee or lessee of the subject property.

8. This grant shall expire unless used within two (2) years from the date of final approval of the grant. A single one-year time extension may be requested in writing and with the payment of the applicable fee prior to such expiration date.

9. The subject property shall be maintained and operated in full compliance with the conditions of this grant and any law, statute, ordinance, or other regulation applicable to any development or activity on the subject property. Failure of the permittee to cease any development or activity not in full compliance shall be a violation of these conditions. No provision of any easement or any other encumbrance on the property shall exempt the permittee and/or property owner from compliance with these conditions and applicable regulations. Inspections shall be made to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant as well as to ensure that any development undertaken on the subject property is in accordance with the approved site plan on file. The permittee shall deposit with the County the sum of **$456.00**. The deposit shall be placed in a performance fund, which shall be used exclusively to compensate LA County Planning for all expenses incurred while inspecting the premises to determine the permittee's compliance with the conditions of approval. The fund provides for **one inspection three years after the date of final approval of the grant.** Inspections shall be unannounced.

   If additional inspections are required to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant, or if any inspection discloses that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be financially responsible and shall reimburse LA County Planning for all additional enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance. The amount charged for additional inspections shall be $456.00 per inspection, or the current recovery cost at the time any additional inspections are required, whichever is greater.

10. Notice is hereby given that any person violating a provision of this grant is guilty of a misdemeanor. Notice is further given that the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") or a Hearing Officer may, after conducting a public hearing, revoke or modify this grant, if the Commission or Hearing Officer finds that these conditions have been violated or that this grant has been exercised so as to be detrimental to the public's health or safety or so as to be a nuisance, or as otherwise authorized pursuant to County Code Sections 22.44.1130 and/or 22.44.1140.

11. All development pursuant to this grant must be kept in full compliance with the County Fire Code to the satisfaction of the County Fire Department ("Fire Department").

12. All development pursuant to this grant shall conform with the requirements of the County Department of Public Works ("Public Works") to the satisfaction of said department.

13. All development pursuant to this grant shall comply with the requirements of Title 22 of the County Code and of the specific zoning of the subject property, unless specifically modified by this grant, as set forth in these conditions, including the approved Exhibit "A," or a revised Exhibit "A" approved by the Director of Regional Planning ("Director").

14. The subject property shall be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the plans marked Exhibit "A." If changes to any of the plans marked Exhibit "A" are required as a result of instruction given at the public hearing, **one (1) digital copy** of a modified Exhibit "A" shall be submitted to LA County Planning by **August 18, 2025**.

15. In the event that subsequent revisions to the approved Exhibit "A" are submitted, the permittee shall submit **one (1) digital copy** of the proposed plans to the Director for review and approval. All revised plans must substantially conform to the originally approved Exhibit "A." All revised plans must be accompanied by the written authorization of the property owner(s) and applicable fee for such revision.

## PROJECT SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

16. The exterior colors of all structures shall be earth-toned and shall not include bright or white tones. No glossy or reflective materials shall be permitted for exterior construction, other than glass, which shall be the least reflective variety available.

17. Prior to construction, the permittee shall submit a grading/drainage plan to the Public Works' Building and Safety Division for review and approval. The grading plans shall show and call out the construction of all drainage devices and details, paved driveways, elevation and drainage of all pads, retaining walls, water-quality devices, Low-Impact Development ("LID") features, and all existing easements. All structures shall meet the County Building, Residential, and Green Building Standards codes, and the Project shall comply with all LID standards (County Code Section 12.84.440) in accordance with the LID standards manual. This condition shall be met to the satisfaction of Public Works.

18. Per County Code Section 22.336.070.I, grading shall be prohibited during the rainy season, defined as October 15 of any year through April 15 of the subsequent year.

19. All development, with the exception of landscaping, fuel modification, and driveway widening, shall be limited to the existing graded pad on the northern portion of the project site.

Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*

# VARIANCE BURDEN OF PROOF

**In addition to the information required on the application by Chapter 22.56, Part 2, the applicant for a variance shall substantiate to the satisfaction of the Director the following facts:**

***(Do not repeat the statement or provide Yes/No responses. If necessary, attach additional pages.)***

| A. That 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; and |
|---|
| See Attached Sheets |

| B. That such 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; and |
|---|
| See Attached Sheets |

| C. That the 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. |
|---|
| See Attached Sheets |

## Burden of Proof

A. The subject property consists of steeply sloping terrain to the north and south of a naturally occurring saddle which is the only building site located within the property boundaries and through which the designated ridgeline runs.

This "saddle" site was approved under R2006-01452 and ZCR 2006-00712 as a solid fill project to receive material from an offsite project. The access road and site grading was approved and conducted under L.A. County Grading Permit GP 0910 0605220001. The fill that was placed did not impact the existing ridgeline contours.

The design presented herewith is consistent with similar residential projects in this area. The structures are located toward the northerly portion of the pad (saddle), not visible from the Topanga Canyon Blvd. view corridor. And the buildings are situated to minimize any further landform alterations.

In order to substantiate that the proposed site as the only feasible building pad upon the subject property, we evaluated other potential sites and prepared an alternative plan. This plan is depicted on Sheet S-3. This scheme depicts the proposed site outside of the horizontal and vertical ridgeline protected zones. It would consist of an additional 20 foot wide access driveway branching off the current driveway. This driveway would cut into the existing slope and require approximately 260 lineal feet of retaining wall, roughly 1' to 22' in height. The pad would also require that an existing descending drainage course be filled. Civil engineering standards would require that this fill slope be keyed and benched into firm bedrock formations below the drainage flow. The height of this fill slope would be on the order of 70 feet. The estimates of grading quantities are:

- Pad Cut: 1,620 cubic yards
- Pad Fill: 10,920 cubic yards
- Removal and re-compaction (within drainage course) estimated to be: 10,000 cubic yards

This grading would be discouraged by the State of California Department of Fish and Game which has jurisdiction over waterways, and by the State of California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) which has imposed a condition upon this site that no additional flow from buildings, paving or similar improvement can be added to this particular waterway which feeds into a CALTRANS drain at the toe of this property.

Further, this alternate site would be highly visible from the Topanga Canyon corridor, dramatically altering the natural landscape. Not only would the structure be prominent in this location, the changes to the natural hillside would be severely blemished due to the extensive grading, reshaping, and fill required.

Therefore the project, as proposed, is located in the only portion of the subject property that is feasible and realistic. It would have the least environmental impact upon on-site resources and the off-site neighborhood and natural habitat.

B. As there are no feasible alternative sites on this property, and an access road and building pad already exist and were approved under an L.A. County Grading permit, the granting of this variance will preserve the property rights of the applicant.

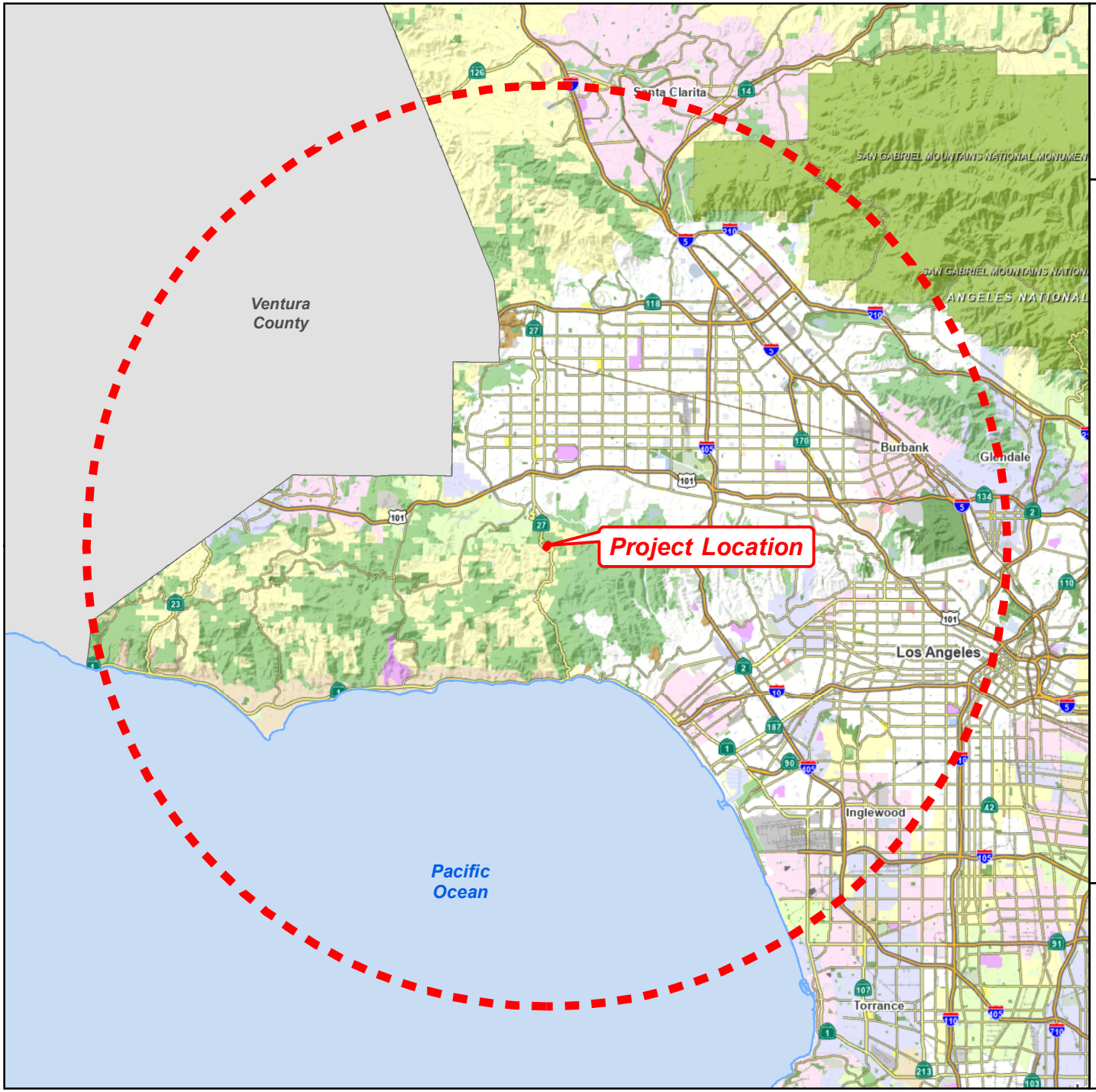
C. The project, as proposed, will have no impact upon off-site drainage courses, will not require any measurable grading or landform alteration, will have little impact upon public views and will not impact any off-site properties. Therefore, it will not be materially detrimental to public welfare or be injurious to any properties in the same vicinity.

# 20-MILE RADIUS

## LOCATOR MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**



Miles

0 5 10

N

LA COUNTY PLANNING

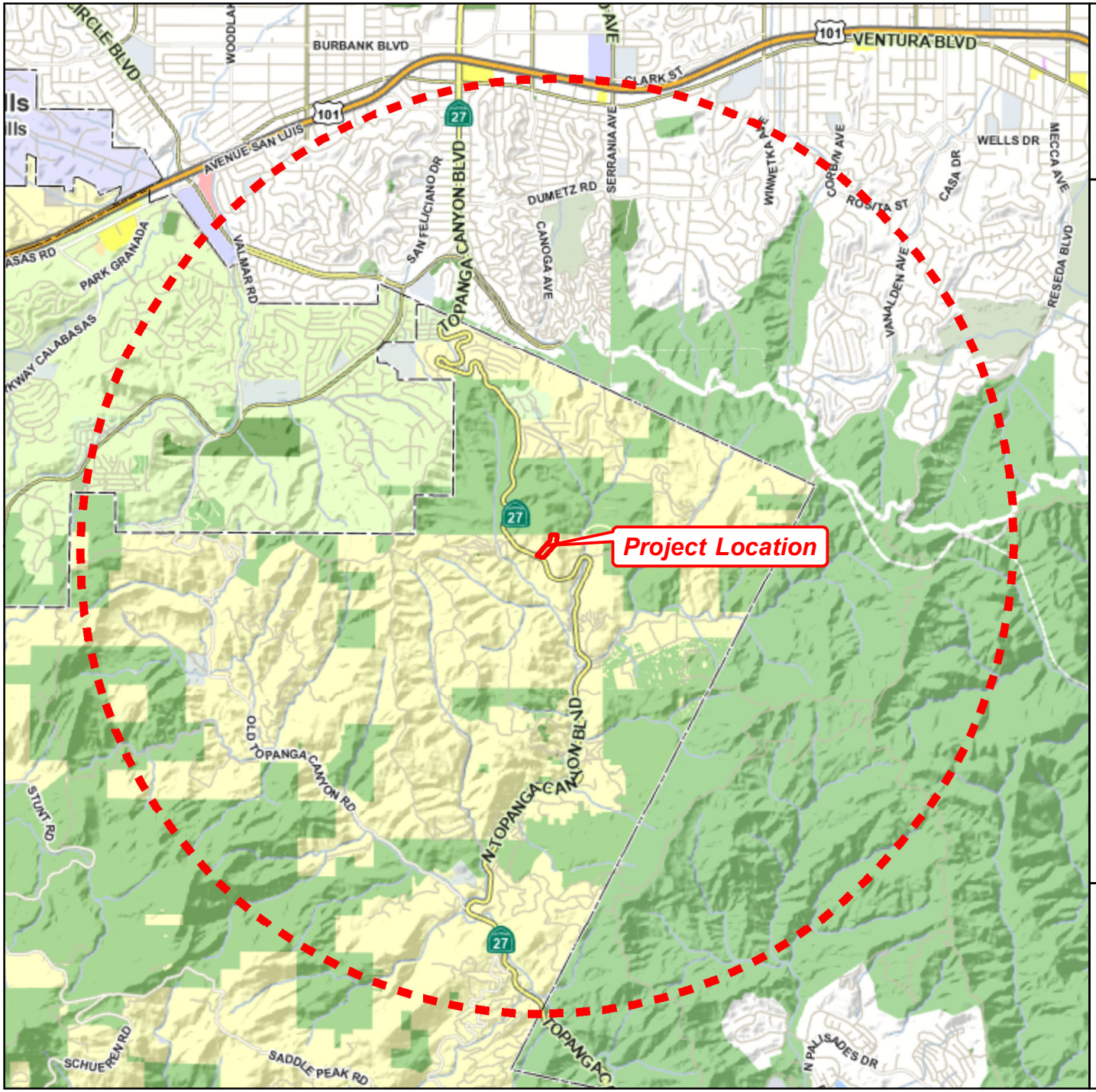

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

# 3-MILE RADIUS

## LOCATOR MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**



Feet

0 4,000 8,000

N

LA COUNTY PLANNING

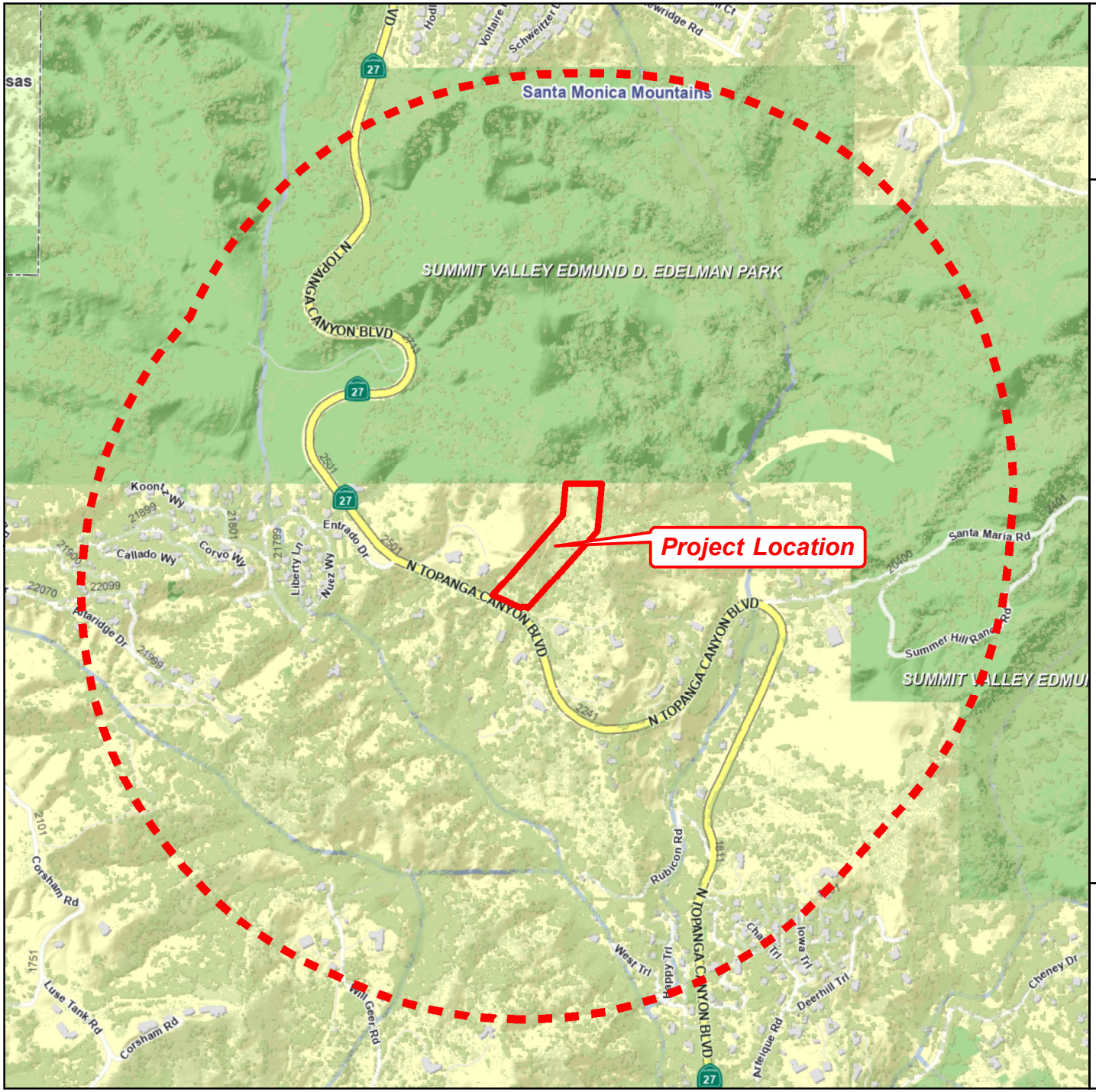

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

# HALF-MILE RADIUS

## LOCATOR MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**



Feet

0 600 1,200

N

LA COUNTY PLANNING

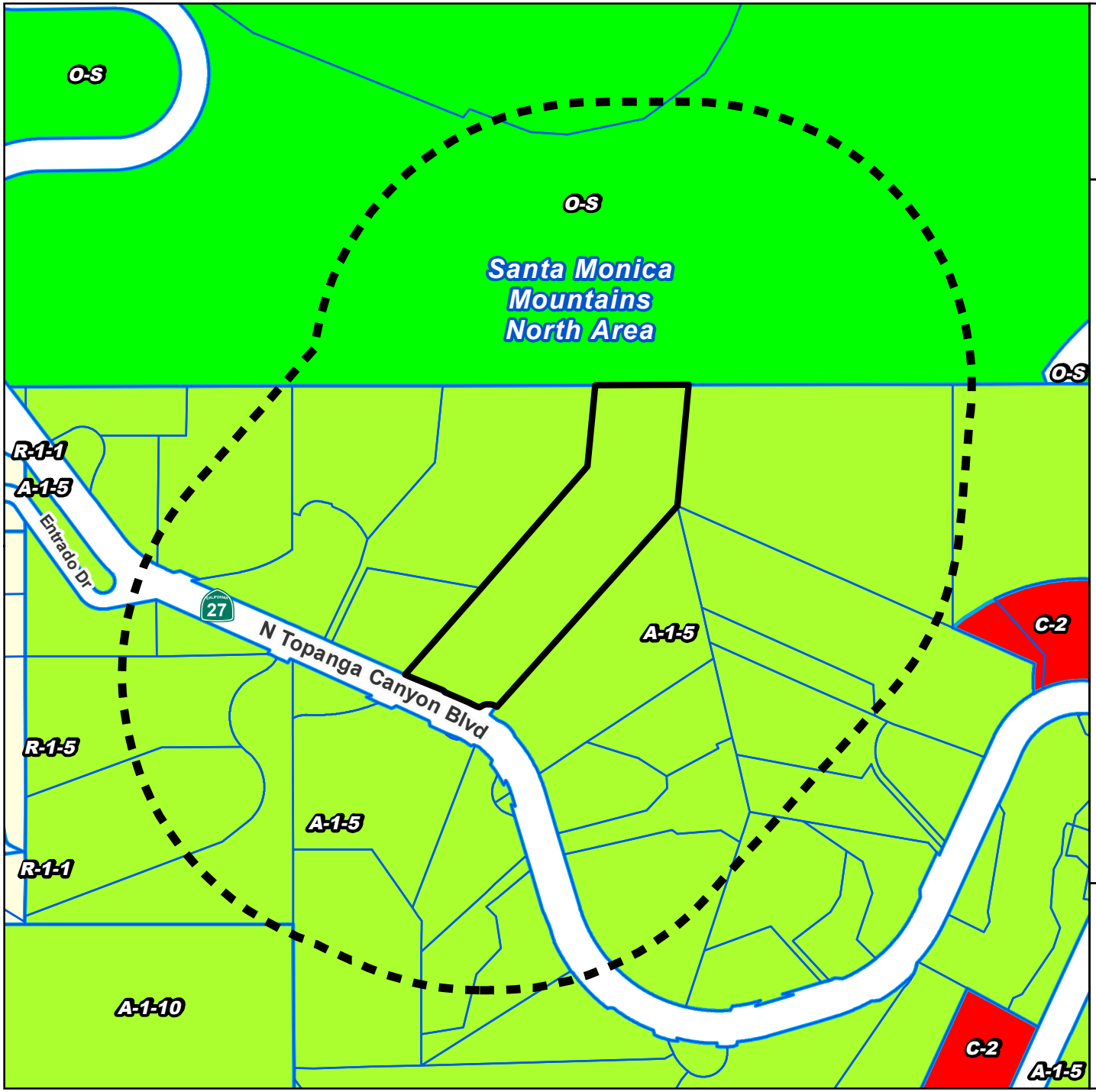

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

# ZONING

## 700-FOOT RADIUS MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**




- R-1 - Single-Family Residence
- A-1 - Light Agricultural
- C-2 - Neighborhood Business
- O-S - Open Space

Feet

0 250 500

N

LA COUNTY PLANNING

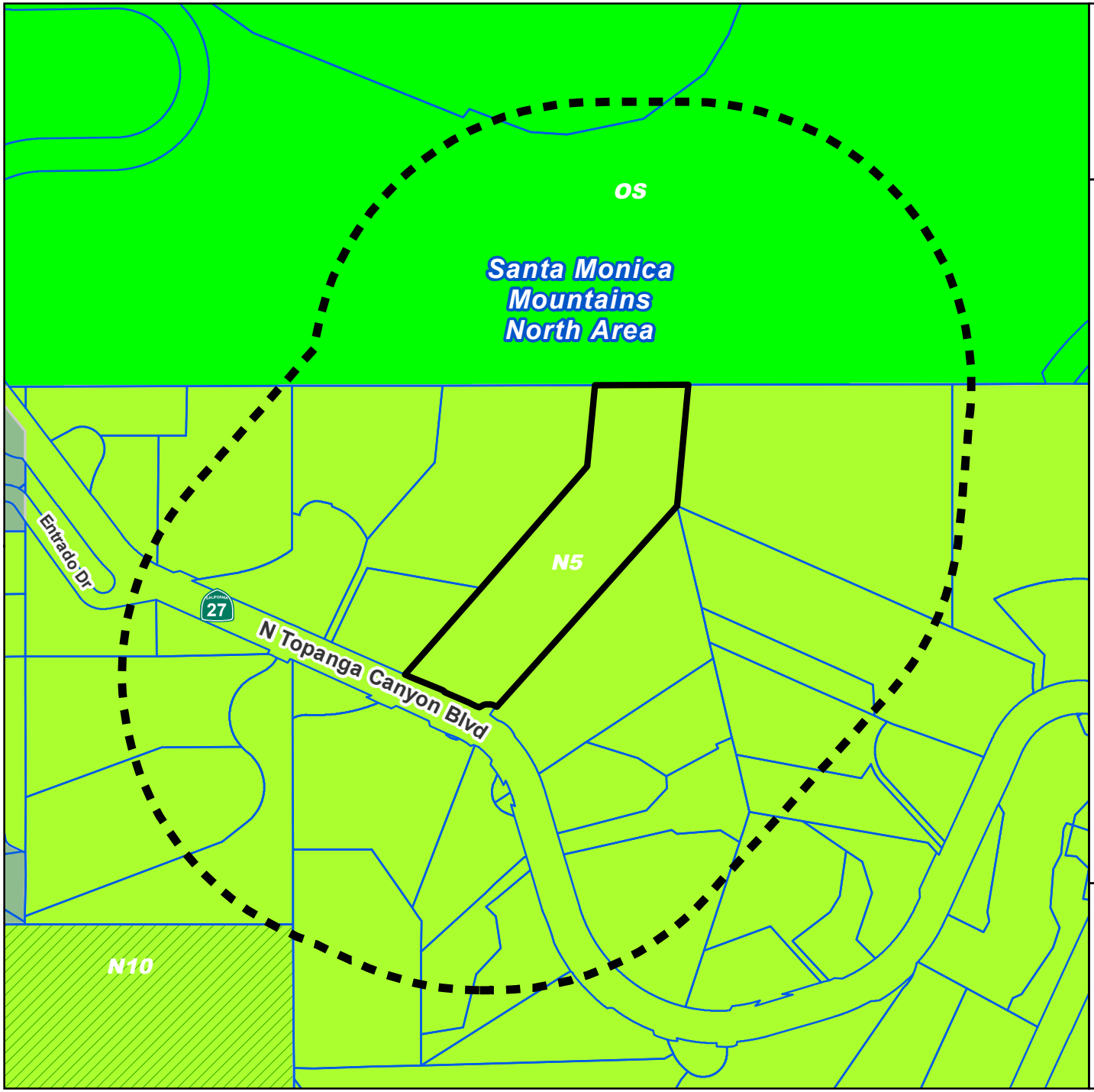

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

# LAND USE POLICY

## 700-FOOT RADIUS MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**




- OS - Open Space
- N1 - Mountain Land 1
- N10 - Mountain Land 10
- N5 - Mountain Land 5

Feet

0 250 500

N


LA COUNTY PLANNING

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

# AERIAL IMAGERY

## SITE-SPECIFIC MAP

**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**

**VARIANCE RVAR-200900001**

**Digital Ortho Aerial Imagery:**
**Los Angeles Region Imagery Acquisition Consortium (LARIAC)**
**2024**

Feet

0 100 200

N

LA COUNTY PLANNING

*LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
*Dept. of Regional Planning*
*320 W. Temple Street*
*Los Angeles, CA 90012*

ZGLU 8072247
45G1
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CAI

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
*"Parks Make Life Better!"*
John Wicker, Director
Norma E. Garcia, Chief Deputy Director

April 27, 2017

Sent via email: jhuntington@planning.lacounty.gov

TO: Josh Huntington
Department of Regional Planning

FROM: Julie Yom, AICP
Planning and CEQA Section

SUBJECT: **CASE NO. RVAR-200900001**
**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452**
**2354 TOPANGA CANYON BLVD., TOPANGA**
**APN: 4434-013-002**

The above-mentioned variance consultation has been reviewed for potential impacts on the facilities of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). The project will not impact DPR facilities and we have no comments.

Thank you for including this Department in the review of this document. If you have any questions, please contact me at jyom@parks.lacounty.gov or (213) 351-5127.

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

MARK PESTRELLA, Director

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
Telephone: (626) 458-5100
http://dpw.lacounty.gov

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P.O. BOX 1460
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460


April 27, 2017

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE: LD-2

TO: Rob Glaser
Coastal Permits Section
Department of Regional Planning

Attention Josh Huntington

FROM: Art Vander Vis
for Land Development Division
Department of Public Works

**PLAN NO. VAR200900001**
**PLAN TYPE: PERMITS AND REVIEWS**
**WORK CLASS: VARIANCE**
**PROJECT NO. R200501452**
**2354 NORTH TOPANGA CANYON ROAD**
**ASSESSOR'S MAP BOOK NO. 4434, PAGE NO. 13, PARCEL NO. 2**
**UNINCORPORATED COUNTY AREA OF TOPANGA CANYON**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the site plan and zoning permit application for the construction of a new 4,000-square-foot, single-family residence in the north area of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The application and project description referred to the graded pad as legally existing. Our grading permit record for 2354 Topanga Road, issued in 2006, was for a solid fill project and not for a future single-family structure. Additionally, the grading permit for the site was never signed off for rough grade and is currently an uncertified fill pad. The application and the project description should be updated to reflect this information.

☒ Public Works recommends that the conditions shown below be applied to the project if ultimately approved by the advisory agency.

☐ Public Works has comments on the submitted documents; therefore, a Public Hearing shall **NOT** be scheduled until the following comments have been addressed:

1. Building and Safety

   1.1. Submit a grading/drainage plan, as appropriate, for approval and to the satisfaction of Public Works. The grading plans must show and call out the construction of at least all drainage devices and details; paved driveways; and elevation and drainage of all pads, retaining walls, and water quality devices and Low-Impact Development (LID) features if applicable. The applicant is required to show and call out all existing easements on the grading plan and obtain the easement holder approvals.

   1.2. Per County Code, Section 12.84.440, comply with LID standards in accordance with the LID Standards Manual, which can be found at http://dpw.lacounty.gov/ldd/lib/fp/Hydrology/Low%20Impact%20Development%20Standards%20Manual.pdf.

   1.3. Provide a maintenance agreement/covenant for privately maintained drainage devices.

   1.4. Obtain soil/geology approval of the grading plan from Public Works' Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Division.

   1.5. Obtain Fire Department approval of the grading plan.

   1.6. Provide permits and/or letters of non-jurisdiction from all applicable State and Federal agencies. These agencies may include, but may not be limited to, the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board; State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife; State of California Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources; and the Army Corps of Engineers.

   For questions regarding the building and safety conditions, please contact RaChelle Burke of Public Works' Building and Safety Division at (818) 880-4150 or rburke@dpw.lacounty.gov.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Toan Duong of Public Works' Land Development Division at (626) 458-4945 or tduong@dpw.lacounty.gov.

AM:tb
P:\ldpub\SUBPCHECK\Plan\Single\2354 NTOPANGA CANYON\TVAR 200900001\2016-10-18 TVAR 200900001 SUBMIT\20170418-TVAR 200900001-DPW CLEARED.docx

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
**Public Health**

**BARBARA FERRER, Ph.D., M.P.H., M. Ed.**
Director

**JEFFREY D. GUNZENHAUSER, M.D., M.P.H.**
Interim Health Officer

**CYNTHIA A. HARDING, M.P.H.**
Chief Deputy Director

**ANGELO J. BELLOMO, REHS, QEP**
Deputy Director for Health Protection

**TERRI S. WILLIAMS, REHS**
Director of Environmental Health

**BRENDA J. LOPEZ, REHS**
Assistant Director of Environmental Health

5050 Commerce Drive
Baldwin Park, California 91706
TEL (626) 430-5100 • FAX (626) 813-3000

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov

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Fourth District

**Kathryn Barger**
Fifth District

May 25, 2017

TO: Joshua Huntington
Principal Regional Planning Assistant
Department of Regional Planning

FROM: Michelle Tsiebos, REHS, DPA, MPA M.T
Environmental Health Division
Department of Public Health

**SUBJECT: VARIANCE Consultation**
**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452/ RVAR200900001**
**Proposed Single Family Residence**
**2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga**

☒ Public Health recommends approval of this VARIANCE.
☐ Public Health does **NOT** recommend approval of this VARIANCE.

The Department of Public Health - Environmental Health Division has reviewed the information provided for the project identified above. The Variance request is for a proposed single family residence.

The Department recommends approval of the Variance. The conditions stated in this report shall be observed.

**Potable Water Supply**

The Drinking Water Program has reviewed the project information. The County Waterworks District memo indicates that the project is within the water district's service boundary and that no commitment for water service is granted. The project may proceed at the preliminary stages with the following condition:

Submittal of a written contract, proof of entitlement, or will serve letter from the LACWD stating the project's final buildout phase water demand in acre-feet and the corresponding amount of water in acre-feet that the LACWD will guarantee for the project before the Building Permit approval phase.

For questions regarding the above comments, please contact the Drinking Water Program at (626) 430-5420

**Wastewater Disposal Method**

The Land Use program has reviewed the feasibility report for the proposed Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS). The feasibility report submitted was completed in 2004 and updated in 2017.
A determination was made that it is feasible to install a pre-treatment or Enhanced Non–Conventional Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (NOWTS) at the property. Percolation testing results showed a rate greater than 5.12 gallons/sq.ft./day. The proposed system will be a MicroSeptic ES-12 3634-gallon tank and a 6' diameter, 38' deep, 7' cap seepage pit which meet the requirements for the proposed 3-bedroom/bathroom house. The proposed setbacks for the septic system were met and the 100% future expansion area was tested and designated.

Based on this review the Land Use program issues a conceptual approval for the proposed OWTS which shall expire a year from the date of this report. Prior to the installation of the septic system, at Building Permit stage, a complete application shall be submitted to this program for a final approval according to current regulations.

For any questions regarding this section, please contact the inspector assigned to the review Ms. Veronica Aranda at (818) 880-3411 or at varanda@ph.lacounty.gov or contact the Land Use program at (626) 430-5380.

**Noise and Air Quality**

Requirements and recommendations stated in report dated May 10, 2017 still apply for this section.

For any other questions regarding this report, please contact me at (626) 430-5380 or at mtsiebos@ph.lacounty.gov.

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT
## FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

Land Development Unit
5823 Rickenbacker Road
Commerce, CA 90040
Telephone (323) 890-4243, Fax (323) 890-9783

CASE NUMBER: RVAR-20090001 MAP DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2019
PROJECT NUMBER: R2005-01452 PLANNER: ALYSSA NETTO

---

**THE PROPOSED VARIANCE REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE CONSTRUCTION OF A SFD LOCATED TO WITHIN 50 FT OF A SIGNIFICANT RIDGELINE HAS BEEN CLEARED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. SUBMIT PLANS TO THE FIRE PREVENTION ENGINEERING SECTION FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ARHITECHTURAL DRAWINGS.**

Additional comments pending the information returned by the applicant for Fire Department plan check; presently all outstanding comments have been addressed via plan check.

**For any questions regarding the report, please contact Joseph Youman at (323) 890-4243 or Joseph.Youman@fire.lacounty.gov.**

Reviewed by: Joseph Youman Date: February 21, 2019

# PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

| | |
|---|---|
| DETERMINATION DATE: | June 17, 2025 |
| PROJECT NUMBER: | R2005-01452-(3) |
| PERMIT NUMBER(S): | Variance No. 200900001 |
| SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: | 3 |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga |
| OWNER: | CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. |
| APPLICANT: | Cory Isaacson |
| CASE PLANNER: | Tyler Montgomery, Principal Planner<br>tmontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov |

Los Angeles County ("County") completed an initial review for the above-mentioned Project. Based on examination of the Project proposal and the supporting information included in the application, the County proposes that a Categorical Exemption is the appropriate environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Project qualifies for Categorical Exemptions (Class 3 Exemption, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) pursuant to CEQA and the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines.

Pursuant to Section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes a single-family residence, accessory structures and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because the Project includes a proposal to construct a new single-family residence, a garage, associated infrastructure, a swimming pool, and retaining walls.

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 because a biological inventory of the area of Project

disturbance did not indicate the presence of 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 Staff Biologist. The biological inventory determined that no portion of the Project Site proposed for development contains any environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern, nor do they contain any plants or animals listed as federal, state, or locally sensitive designations, and they are not considered particularly sensitive environments. The Project is not expected to impact scenic resources, such as the designated scenic route to the south, from which it will not be visible. 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. Therefore, the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

# SUPPLEMENTAL
# REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DATE ISSUED: | June 18, 2025 | | |
| HEARING DATE: | June 24, 2025 | AGENDA ITEM: | 5 |
| PROJECT NUMBER: | R2005-01452-(3) | | |
| PERMIT NUMBER(S): | Variance No. 200900001 | | |
| SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: | 3 | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga | | |
| OWNER: | CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. | | |
| APPLICANT: | Cory Isaacson | | |
| CASE PLANNER: | Tyler Montgomery, Principal Regional Planner<br>TMontgomery@planning.lacounty.gov | | |

This agenda item is a request to construct a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") in the A-1-5 (Light Agricultural – Five-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) and within the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("CSD"), pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.260, as it existed in 2009.[1]

After the Report to the Hearing Officer was issued on June 5, 2025, LA County Planning staff ("Staff") received five letters of opposition to the Project.

The first letter is from Paul Edelman of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy ("SMMC") and is attached as Exhibit A-1. The letter expresses concerns with the Project and states that the Project applicant has illegally graded approximately 0.26 acres of land within the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's ("MRCA") Summit Valley – Ed Edelman Park to the north. While aerial photos do show that grading was conducted within the parkland area to the north, no grading or zoning violations were ever issued for this work. Staff is currently conducting research to determine the legality of, and responsibility for, this grading. The letter also states that, by moving the residence further to the south, the Project would be moved outside of the 50-foot significant ridgeline buffer and that location would result in less

[1] Note: Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the Project applicant chose to have the complete Variance application be subject to the zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted in 2009.

off-site brush clearance within parkland to the north. However, Staff would like to note that, at that location, the residence would still require a variance because it would be within 50 vertical feet of the significant ridgeline, and it would likely require more grading because it would be near the edge of the existing graded pad. Also, the County cannot require off-site brush clearance within state-owned parkland. Staff's understanding is that brush clearance cannot be required in the parkland to the north because it is owned and managed by the MRCA, which is a joint-power authority that includes SMMC as a state agency. However, Staff will conduct further research on this issue.

The other four letters are from area residents and the Topanga Chamber of Commerce. These letters object to placing structures within a designated significant ridgeline due to aesthetic concerns. They also state that the significant ridgeline regulations in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area CSD were carefully considered before their adoption and should be upheld via denial of this Variance. These letters are attached as Exhibit B-1.

Staff will issue an additional Supplemental Report to the Hearing Officer with a recommendation on June 23, 2025. 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: Rob Glaser
Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner

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

---

| LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS | |
|---|---|
| EXHIBIT A-1 | Letter from Paul Edelman with SMMC (6/12/25) |
| EXHIBIT B-1 | Four (4) additional letters of opposition to the Project |

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
KING GILLETTE RANCH
26800 MULHOLLAND HIGHWAY
CALABASAS, CA 91302
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3200
WWW.SMMC.CA.GOV

June 12, 2025

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

**Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001**
**2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline**

Dear Hearing Officer:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) offers the following comments on the proposed Variance to develop on a significant ridgeline in Topanga Canyon adjacent the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (MRCA) Summit Valley – Ed Edelman Park. Both the attached aerial photographs and those in the staff report clearly show that the applicant has done substantial grading and land filling on MRCA parkland including the filling of 200 feet of a USGS mapped drainage on public land. The attached low elevation drone photographs further confirm this illegal grading that destroyed 0.26 acres of vegetation and natural soils on MRCA land.

Because the project has already significantly adversely impacted public land beyond the subject parcel boundary, it cannot qualify for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption. The destroyed public land is in the County-designated Santa Monica Mountains Significant Ecological Area (SEA) which qualifies as a sensitive environment.

It also appears that the grading conducted to reach the MRCA land also graded beyond the grading limits approved in 2006. Furthermore, this northernmost grading on the subject parcel and the MRCA parcel form a unified block of fill within a drainage (see attached drone photographs.) As a result, the stability of fill on the subject property is dependent on fill on the MRCA property.

The subject project is also integral with the adjacent residential project under construction to the immediate west. At least 90 percent of the impacts of the project's 655 feet of road grading/widening occur on that subject adjacent property. The project description is further flawed because it does not address where the hundreds of cubic yard of cut for the road widening construction would be placed. This project has been piecemealed through the CEQA process, and its impacts must be analyzed in a more

cumulative manner with four other projects under construction between the subject lot and Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

The staff report and supporting environmental analysis (Environmental Determination) are significantly flawed for omitting both the existence of the existing offsite grading impacts and of any analysis of potential impacts from said illegal grading. The applicant's submitted Burden of Proof on why a variance to develop on the significant ridge line **is invalid -** first because it stated that any development site other than exactly that house location on pad site would result in filling a drainage, cause extensive extra grading, and unnecessarily damage additional habitat. Well, the applicant demonstrated that the proposed project already illegally caused all three of those types of harm. The current project description is thus inadequate.

Further, both the Burden of Proof and the staff report analysis are both flawed because their only alternative considered to not developing within 50 feet of the ridgeline is to move the development to where **no** variance would be required. In contrast, by moving the house location on the existing pad, significant public benefits can be obtained via a significant reduction of permanent required brush clearance on the MRCA parkland and on the subject parcel. The subject analyses fail because they both frame the ridgeline development as a black and white matter when there are many shades of grey on where the existing pad will allow a substantially equivalent sized house.

A single story, 3,500-square-foot-house could fit on the southwest most portion of the existing pad almost eliminating required annual brush clearance on MRCA parkland. Per the attached figure, with a 50 foot shift in the house footprint, the required clearance on MRCA parkland would drop from 0.18 acres to 0.04 acres. In all cases, a home on the subject pad would force over four acres of permanent brush clearance in Santa Monica Mountains Significant Ecological Area. Moving the house **on** the pad moves that permanent clearance zone off of the sensitive resource of public parkland on to private property.

Moving the house to the southwest on the existing pad also makes it easier to take advantage of the large fill slope to the southwest to create better defensible space particularly in concert with the brush clearance required for the house under construction to the immediate west. If the subject house is moved southwestward on pad, less fuel modification would have to occur in the mature onsite chaparral to the east and the house would be better protected from future fire and embers coming from the east. If the County is going to continue allow the construction of ridge top houses surrounded by hundreds of acres of chaparral at the end of steep 1500-foot-long narrow driveways, and grant variances to do so, the County should require that the siting of said houses to maximize fire safety and to minimize damage to sensitive resources and public

parkland acquired with public funds. Not to mention eliminate allowing this project to plant scores of non-native pepper trees in its fuel modification zones.

The hearing must be delayed; and the County must first require a new environmental analysis that reflects this illegal grading on adjacent public parkland. That analysis must include definitive, time certain measures to eliminate the fill from MRCA land and to reestablish perennial native vegetation on all affected areas to the satisfaction of the County biologist. That restoration must occur at the applicant's expense. A new spring biological survey on MRCA land must be conducted because heavy machinery will have to work on public land. The attached figures show the extent of the damage footprint on MRCA property.

The whole Burden of Proof idea that the only way to preserve the applicant's property rights is to grant the Variance is totally flawed. This letter demonstrates that substantial economic gain is available to the property owner with a house on the existing pad that significantly better avoids permanent brushing impacts to public parkland in a Significant Ecological Area. The pad and its grading were approved with the full knowledge of all those involved that it was bisected by a Significant Ridgeline. There was obvious inherent risk. The applicant acquired the property knowing that a Variance was and is required to build on the pad. The applicant now has no rights to build on the pad. There are no absolute property rights to be preserved to build on the ridgeline. The County has complete authority to dictate what rights this applicant has to develop on the ridgeline. The County should do what is in the best public interest.

The County can achieve a balance of adequate applicant economic reward with resource protection by requiring a plan to shift the house to the southwest on the existing pad -- all the while requiring full restoration of the buried MRCA parkland. Any less of a public benefit outcome totally defeats the value of protecting ridgelines, rewards multiple actions detrimental to commons, and would set a poor precedent. Granting this Variance would be a granting a special privilege to an applicant that graded and filled on adjacent public parkland. Moving the house on the existing pad is not the strict application of zoning regulations. Rather, it constitutes the full granting of a Variance for a better public serving project. As demonstrated in this letter, granting of such a slightly different Variance will not result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships.

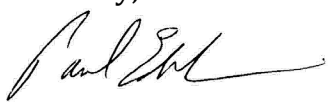
Contrary to the staff report, the project as proposed is far from consistent with the below 2000 LUP policy:

Policy VI-21: Encourage siting of developments to include setbacks that protect public lands, streams, scenic features, views, and other natural features and that maximize open

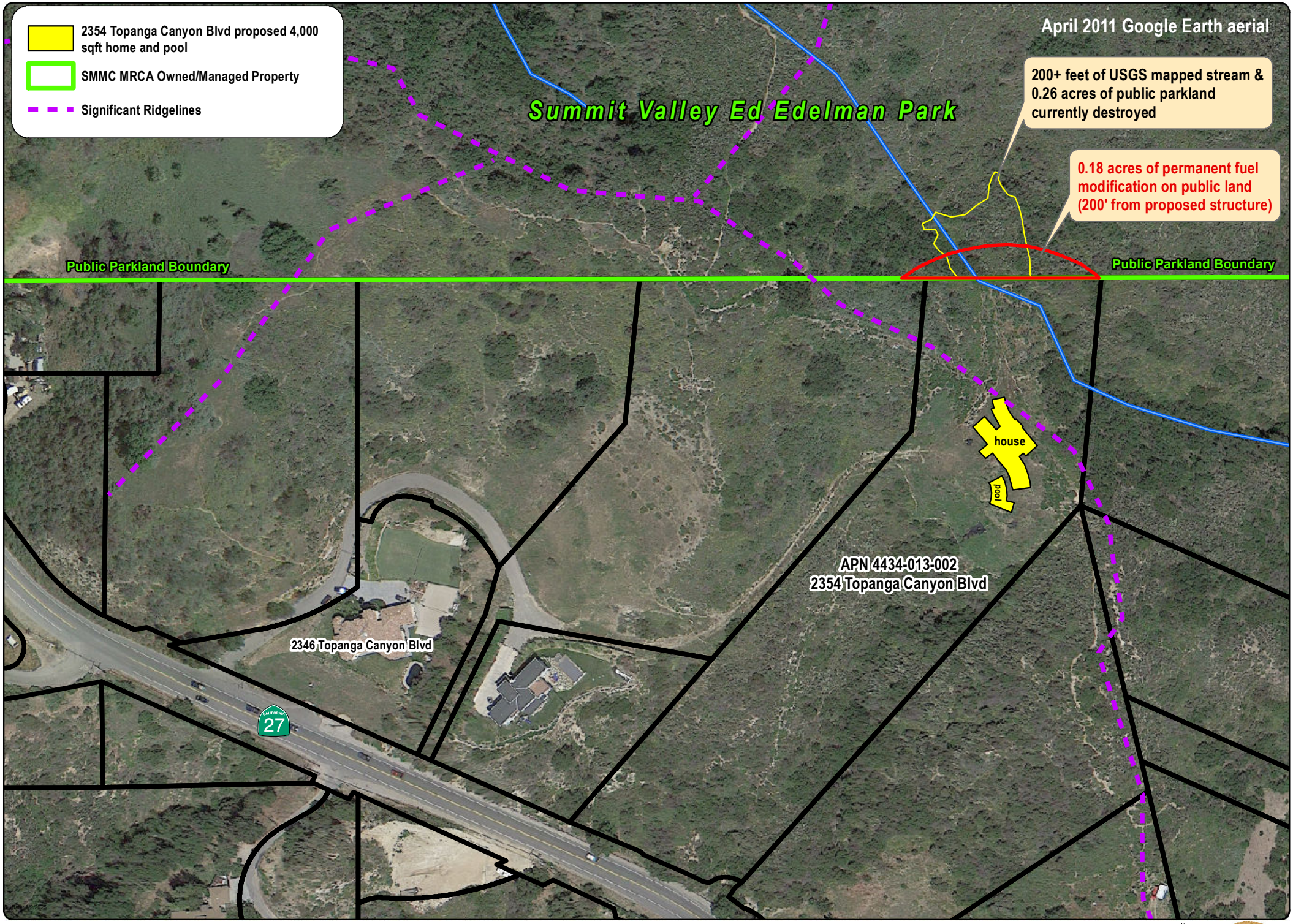
space areas; project density and structure placement shall be consistent with the need to minimize vegetation clearance for fire protection.

Please direct any future correspondence to my attention email at edelman@smmc.ca.gov, by phone at 310-589-3200 ext. 128, or at the above letterhead address.

Sincerely,

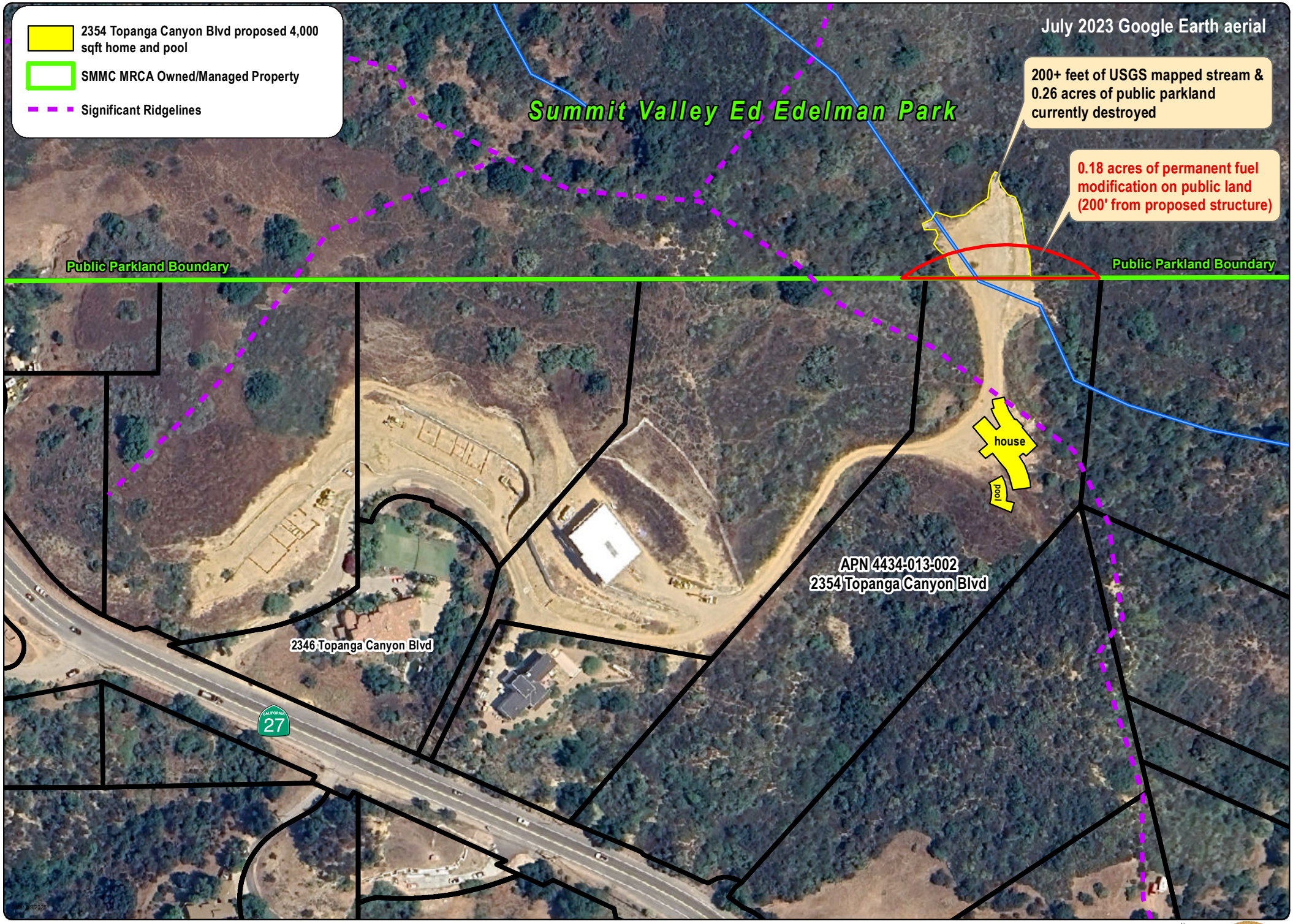


PAUL EDELMAN
Deputy Director
Natural Resources and Planning



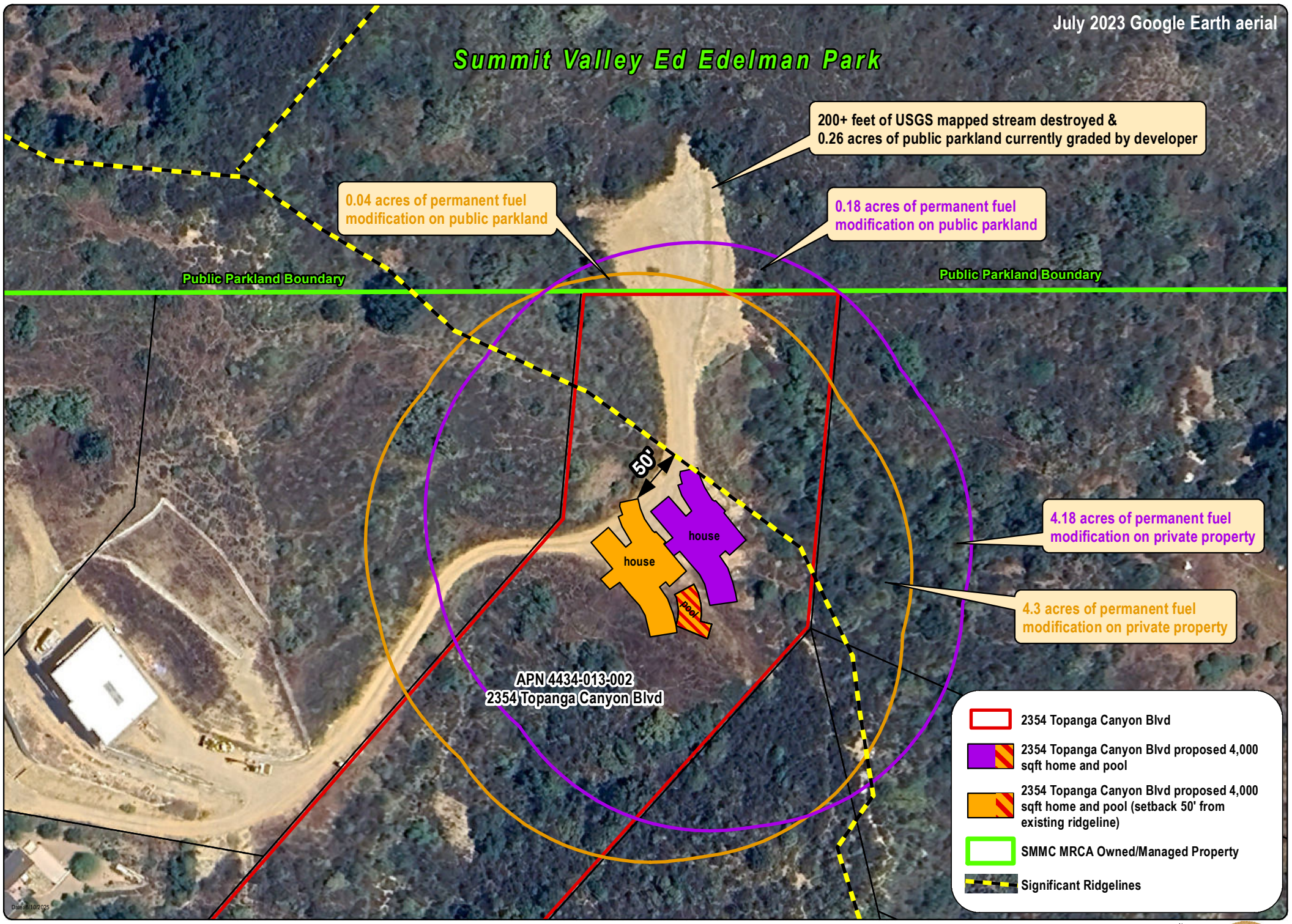

PROJECT NO. R2005-01452 VARIANCE RVAR-200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga

0 50 100 Feet




PROJECT NO. R2005-01452 VARIANCE RVAR-200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga

0 50 100 Feet




PROJECT NO. R2005-01452 VARIANCE RVAR-200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga

N W E S

0 50 100 Feet

USGS Mapped Stream
MRCA Property
2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd

MRCA Property
2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd

Hearing Officer

Los Angeles County Regional Planning

320 West Temple Street Los Angeles, CA 90012

I am writing regarding project # R2005-01452-(3) Variance # 200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline Development

This proposed variance for the building of a home on the ridgeline at 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd should be denied.

As a resident of Topanga for almost 2 decades, I have come to respect the beauty of this place… the rolling hills, sprawling meadows and volcanic mountain faces. The nature that lives in this place, both plant and animal, is testimony to Topanga Canyon being a precious sanctuary in the middle of a county inhabited by 10,000 residents.

We need to protect this special place and not allow it to be carved up and sold out to the highest bidder. Once it's gone- it's gone forever.

This project will forever scar Topanga's ridgeline. It's proposal to cut down and pave over a rolling hillside for access and building of a massive compound is not a resident building a dream home, it's an exhibition of gluttony- a developer that is doing it just because they can.

The applicant has already shown no regard for existing habitat or rules as one can plainly see the property has already been graded. Homes can be built with respect for the community and the environment.

Please deny this variance,

William Alford

Topanga Resident 18 years, Trash Warriors, Arson Watch, Topanga Volunteer Fire & Forestry Department

**From:** DRP Public Comment
**To:** Tyler Montgomery; Robert Glaser
**Cc:** DRP Public Comment
**Subject:** RE: Variance No. 200900001
**Date:** Monday, June 16, 2025 6:54:37 AM

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Please see email regarding tomorrow's project located on 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Thank you.

**ELIDA LUNA** (she/her/hers)
**COMMISSION SECRETARY, Operations & Major Projects (OMP)**
Direct: (213) 974-6409
Email: eluna@planning.lacounty.gov

---

**From:** ken mazur <kenmazur@earthlink.net>
**Sent:** Sunday, June 15, 2025 8:44 PM
**To:** DRP Public Comment <comment@planning.lacounty.gov>
**Subject:** Variance No. 200900001

**CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.**

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning 320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

June 13, 2025

Dear Hearing Officer:

Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

The above proposed variance for the building of a home on the ridgeline at 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd. should be denied. The ridgeline ordinance was created after much debate with public input. The property in question has already been illegally graded multiple times with significant encroachment and damage to *protected public lands* in Edelman Park. The applicant has shown little regard for existing North Area Plan regulations, nor the existing protected lands, having extensively graded this area as far back as 2003 without the relevant permits.

There are alternative sites on the property where a home could be built without impacting the natural existing scenic nature of this ridge or requiring a variance. A commitment to keeping the beauty of the Santa Monica Mountains intact, while allowing for the use of private land is one of the functions of the North Area Plan. Homes can be built and dreams realized without disregard for the community, the environment and unique scenic nature of the Canyon.

Please deny this variance.

Thank you,

Ken Mazu (not the applicant)

818 434 0828

kenmazur@earthlink.net

Topanga Resident for thirty-five years.

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

June 15th, 2025

Dear Hearing Officer,

As a Veterinarian, I took an important vow to always provide my very best of energy, effort and concentrated focus for the benefit and well-being of the animals.

Regarding the above ridgeline variance request, as a 13-year resident of Topanga Canyon, I would like to speak for the unspoken, natural wildlife within our special community.

The ridgeline for the above project is located on the natural watershed that many wildlife creatures and native plants depend on. Further interference rather than restoration of the watershed stream can have an impact on the ecosystem including decreased animal populations, increased competition for resources, habitat loss and an increased susceptibility of diseases within wildlife.

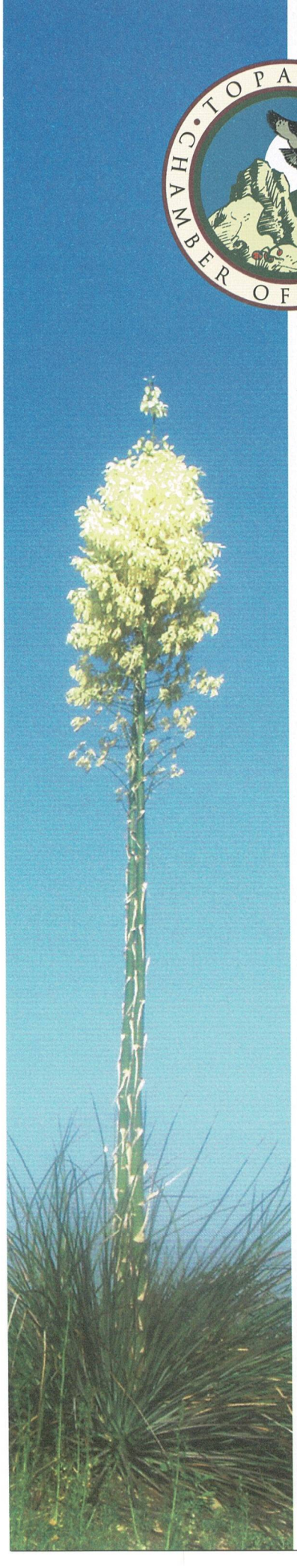
As we share our homes within a natural habitat adjacent to State Parks and protected public open space lands, building a home in Topanga that has a negative impact to nature is counterintuitive and should not even be a consideration. It's important to seek a solution to live within nature for sustainability and admiration, not on top of nature with development.

On behalf of the wildlife within Topanga Canyon, we would greatly appreciate it if you will please deny this variance request.

Thank you for your time.

Phusita Nakphairat, DVM (Dr. Pooh)

**Topanga Chamber of Commerce**
*Where Business Thrives, Naturally*
P.O. Box 185, Topanga, CA 90290
TopangaChamber.org
310.455.0790



Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

Dear Hearing Officer

The Topanga Chamber of Commerce has been serving Topanga for over 75years. We have supported local businesses and work hard to help Topanga thrive. It is because of our rustic, natural beauty that many of our member businesses and their customers come to Topanga to shop, dine, and experience nature.

Topanga has stayed Topanga thanks to the hard-fought battles our Community has taken part in. The LA County ordinance preventing developers from building on a significant ridgeline helps in this way. When folks come to Topanga, they know they are in a special place by not seeing homes built on Ridgelines or the bright lights these houses often use to light up our night sky, possibly in violation of the County's dark sky ordinance.

All Topangans and our visitors enjoy land that was saved from development, like the epic battle fought to support the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's acquisition of Summit Vally Park in the 90's. Now a developer is proposing to build out and

encroach on part of that protected land. The Ridgeline Ordinance was created to stop this type of development from happening. It should be followed.

We recommend denial of the request in question and that the recommendations stated in the Conservancy's testimony be respected and followed. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this project.

Ronald Fomalont
President, Topanga Chamber of Commerce

# SUPPLEMENTAL
# REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DATE ISSUED: | June 23, 2025 | | |
| HEARING DATE: | June 24, 2025 | AGENDA ITEM: | 5 |
| PROJECT NUMBER: | R2005-01452-(3) | | |
| PERMIT NUMBER(S): | Variance No. 200900001 | | |
| SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: | 3 | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION: | 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Topanga | | |
| OWNER: | CMI Corporate Marketing, Inc. | | |
| APPLICANT: | Cory Isaacson | | |
| CASE PLANNER: | Tyler Montgomery, Principal Regional Planner<br>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 R2005-01452-(3), Variance Number 200900001, based on the Findings (Exhibit C – Findings) attached to the Report to the Hearing Officer dated June 5, 2025, and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval) attached to the Report to the Hearing Officer dated June 5, 2025.

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 VARIANCE NUMBER 200900001 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.**

## BACKGROUND

This agenda item is a request to construct a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") in the A-1-5 (Light Agricultural – Five-Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) and within the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("CSD"), pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.260 as it existed in 2009.[1]

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

After the previous Supplemental Report to the Hearing Officer was issued on June 18, 2025, Staff received one letter of support for the Project (Exhibit A-2) and five additional letters of opposition to the Project (Exhibit B-2). The one letter of support is from an immediate neighbor. One of the four additional letters of opposition is from the Topanga Association for a Scenic Community, and the other four additional letters of opposition are from area residents. These letters of opposition object to placing structures within a designated significant ridgeline due to aesthetic concerns. They also state that the significant ridgeline regulations in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area CSD were carefully considered before their adoption and should be upheld via denial of this Variance. Some letters of opposition also cite the unpermitted grading within the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's ("MRCA") Summit Valley – Ed Edelman Park to the north of the Project Site, which they contend was conducted by the applicant.

Staff has researched the grading that conducted on the MRCA property to the north of the Project Site. No permits were issued for this grading, which occurred sometime between 2022 and 2023, according to aerial photos (see Exhibit C-2). The applicant states that he is not responsible for this grading and has no knowledge of who is responsible.

Based on Staff's research using aerial photos, the Project Site was relatively undisturbed in 2006, when Zoning Conformance Review No. 200600712 ("ZCR") and grading permits were issued for a solid fill project to create an access driveway and a flat pad with drainage structures. Specifically, the ZCR and grading permits authorized 1,999 cubic yards of grading, consisting of 500 cubic yards of cut, 1,499 cubic yards of fill, and 999 cubic yards of import. The result of this permitted grading can be seen in the aerial photos from 2008. After 2008, the Project Site was relatively untouched until 2021, when grading permits were first issued for development on the two adjacent properties to the west, which share a driveway with the Project Site. At that time, it appears the pad for the Project Site was again scraped and used for the storage of construction materials and equipment, and additional fill was gradually added to the MRCA property to the north of the Project Site, which is located at the end of the shared driveway.

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[1] Note: Pursuant to County Code Section 22.246.020 (Applicability of Zone Changes and Ordinance Amendments), the Project applicant chose to have the complete Variance application be subject to the zoning and regulations in effect at the time it was submitted in 2009.

Staff visited the Project Site on June 23, 2025, and took photos (Exhibit D-2). Staff observed ongoing grading and home construction on the two adjacent properties to the west of the Project Site and also observed that the area of unpermitted grading is being used for the unsecured storage of earthmoving equipment and construction materials. Therefore, Staff believes, but has not confirmed, that this unpermitted fill may be the result of grading and construction activity on one or both of the adjacent properties to the west of the Project Site. Regardless, Staff has determined that the unpermitted grading should be addressed as a separate violation unrelated to the Project because is not located on the Project Site.

During the site visit, Staff also observed that none of the story poles can be seen from Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which is the only public road in the vicinity. This observation demonstrates that the single-family residence will not be visible from the public right-of-way. Staff took photos of the story poles placed on the Project Site and a yellow bulldozer that appeared to have been recently parked just to the south of the story poles. The applicant states that the bulldozer is not his and does not have his permission to be parked on the Project Site. However, the bulldozer can be viewed from Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which illustrates that moving the single-family residence further south, as suggested by the MRCA in its previous letter, would almost certainly result in it being visible from Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which is a designated scenic route. The single-family residence in its currently proposed location would most likely be visible from existing trails that traverse the MRCA parkland to the north of the Project Site. However, these trails are 200 feet higher in elevation than the Project Site. As a result of these observations, Staff believes the proposed 18-foot-tall single-family residence's location on the Project Site is appropriate because placing it more than 50 feet from the mapped significant ridgeline would result in significantly more grading of steep slopes as well as a greater visual impact from Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

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

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Report Reviewed By: Rob Glaser
Robert Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner

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

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| LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS | |
|---|---|
| EXHIBIT A-2 | Letter of support for the Project |
| EXHIBIT B-2 | Five (5) additional letters of opposition to the Project |
| EXHIBIT C-2 | Timeline of aerial photos (2006 to 2024) |
| EXHIBIT D-2 | Site photos (June 23, 2025) |

**From:** brian.spitznagel@gmail.com
**To:** Tyler Montgomery
**Subject:** 2354 N Topanga Cyn Blvd Project
**Date:** Monday, June 16, 2025 3:05:05 PM

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**CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.**

Hi Mr. Montgomery,

My name is Brian Spitznagel, I live at 2410 N Topanga Blvd, a direct neighbor of Mr. Issacson's proposed project.
I just wanted to reach out to you and voice my support for his project to move forward.

All the best,

**Brian Spitznagel**
M. 310.210.2455

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

**From:** Eileen Delehanty Pearkes
**To:** Tyler Montgomery
**Subject:** Regarding project #R2005-01452-(3) Variance #200900001 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard
**Date:** Thursday, June 19, 2025 2:48:47 PM

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**CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.**

to the LA county planning department:

As a resident of Topanga Canyon living in a modest 1910 home in the oldest part of Topanga Canyon, I strongly oppose any request for a ridgeline variance, **in particular for this address, 2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd.**

The lot's location - **adjacent to the Edelman Park open space lands** - once again calls into question important conservation values that have long protected the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy against human-centricity. Edelman Park was once destined to be a golf course and condos, before it was stopped by local opposition. The recent wildfires place even more value on unburned, safe areas for wildlife to inhabit and traverse.

During Covid, Topanga Canyon endured a fresh onslaught of commercializing forces from outside the area, ones that naturally led to a desire for more expensive, ridgetop homes. In the aftermath of the fires, Topanga real estate listings have ballooned to almost 70 homes for sale, some of them on ridgelines, with few purchasers in sight.

Meanwhile, Topanga must stand firm as it always has - to protect visual beauty, preserve open space for wildlife habitats and keep the night dark for several species of owls.

Thank you,
---
Eileen Delehanty Pearkes
1237 Old Topanga Canyon Road
Topanaga CA 90290

TOPANGA ASSOCIATION FOR A SCENIC COMMUNITY
PO BOX 352, TOPANGA CA. 90290

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

Dear Hearing Officer

Our organization formed in 1963 and represents many Topanga Residents takes this opportunity to comment on the above project number and their request to ask for a variance in order to encroach on to the Ridgeline in Topanga.

Looking at all the material available and being very familiar with this area, we must agree completely with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in their assessment.
The scenic quality of the Ridgeline has been compromised. The size of the home and garage that is proposed has taken it to the maximum footage allowed. This has caused extreme damage to the enviroment.

We believe this project as the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy does, must be analyzed in its entirety with the significate and cumulative effects from it and the other structures already built between it and Topanga Canyon Blvd. The project and its height can be viewed from Topanga Canyon Blvd (State Highway 27) demonstrated by the Story Poles that were put in place.

The degradation of the public land (Summit Valley Park) is fully evident by the pictures presented to you. It is for this reason and many other statements given to you by each of the organizations and residents submitted a more detail review by the County must be had. Simply put we are dealing with a president setting decision. By allowing this varience you will continue to degrade our lovely community.
.

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

Dear Hearing Officer:

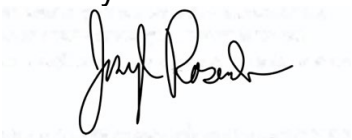
My name is Joseph Rosendo and I am a resident of Topanga since 2007.
After looking at the material available on the proposal asking for a variance,
I must stand with all of the Topanga organizations and residents opposing the variance request.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, The Topanga Association for a Scenic Community and the residents who offered their thoughts on this development are correct in their analysis.

This project has impeded onto Conservancy property and must be either redesigned and made smaller or made to go through a more stringent review. The intent of the LA County Ridgeline ordinance was created to protect all of the Significate Ridgelines in the Santa Monica Mountains.

This should be a slam dunk decision. The construction and infringement on the ridgeline go against the ordinance and a variance MUST be denied. Protect and Preserve our Santa Monica Mountain Ridgelines.

Thank you.



Joseph Rosendo
Topanga Chamber of Commerce
Community Liaison
Topanga Canyon Boulevard Trash Warriors
Co-Founder
Box 1541
Topanga, CA 90290
310-699-8668
liaison@TopangaChamber.org
TopangaChamber.org

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

16 June 2025

Re: Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

Dear Hearing Officer –

I am writing as a 21-year resident of Topanga Canyon and like many, an admirer of the scenic resources which brings protected wildlife and other appreciators of nature to this unique and special canyon community.

New development comes at a cost to the natural landscape, the wildlife and the visual beauty which are our scenic resources. It therefore must be done in a methodical and considered manner to minimize its intrusion and exist *within* the land, not *on top* of the land. This variance is a request for the structure to sit *on top* of the land.

The property at 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard has been scared with unpermitted grading, has encroached on protected public lands in Edelman Park and has disrupted a natural watershed and sensitive wildlife habitat. Efforts should be focused on restoring what scenic resources were adversely impacted, not proposed actions to further develop it.

The 4,000 square foot monument will deface the natural ridgeline with its structural surface walls, while blinding sunlight reflections off the glass will become intrusive to the scenic beauty. Light illumination trespass will replace a natural, darkened, silhouetted mountain landscape which also invades our protected night skies.

To approve a variance of an existing ridgeline ordinance set forth after great efforts to protect the scenic resources for future generations would be irresponsible.

It's important to protect the visual beauty which identifies the culture of the Topanga Canyon community, nurtures businesses and recreational activities, allows wildlife to thrive and provides residents a quality of life that promotes a mental and physical well-being.

We have all traveled through various towns and those that are the most unique, most memorable and most appreciated, tend to be the ones that are most preserved, most protected and most respected. Other forgotten towns or landscapes are not lost to the natural

circumstances of time, but to decisions by local leaders over the years allowing adverse development to erase what should have been protected.

Stewardship is a great privilege and when we have a scenic resource such as Topanga Canyon, it is our collective responsibility to protect it for the enjoyment of many and not allow it to be exploited for the benefit of a few.

If we lose interest in protecting the integrity of our natural landscape, we're losing interest in protecting the integrity of our wildlife, our community and our culture.

Please deny this variance.

Thank you.

D. Todd Davidovich
Topanga Canyon, California

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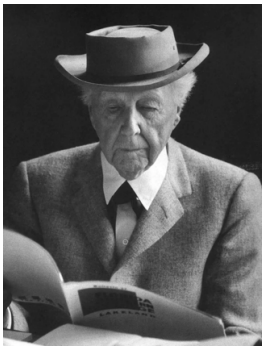


No house should ever be on a hill or on anything. It should be of the hill. Belonging to it. Hill and house should live together each the happier for the other. If you build a house on a hill, you lose the hill. – Frank Lloyd Wright

**Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.**

*The voice and conscience of the Santa Monica Mountains since 1968*

Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
LosAngeles, California 90012

Project No. R2005-01452-(3) Variance No. 200900001
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Significant Ridgeline

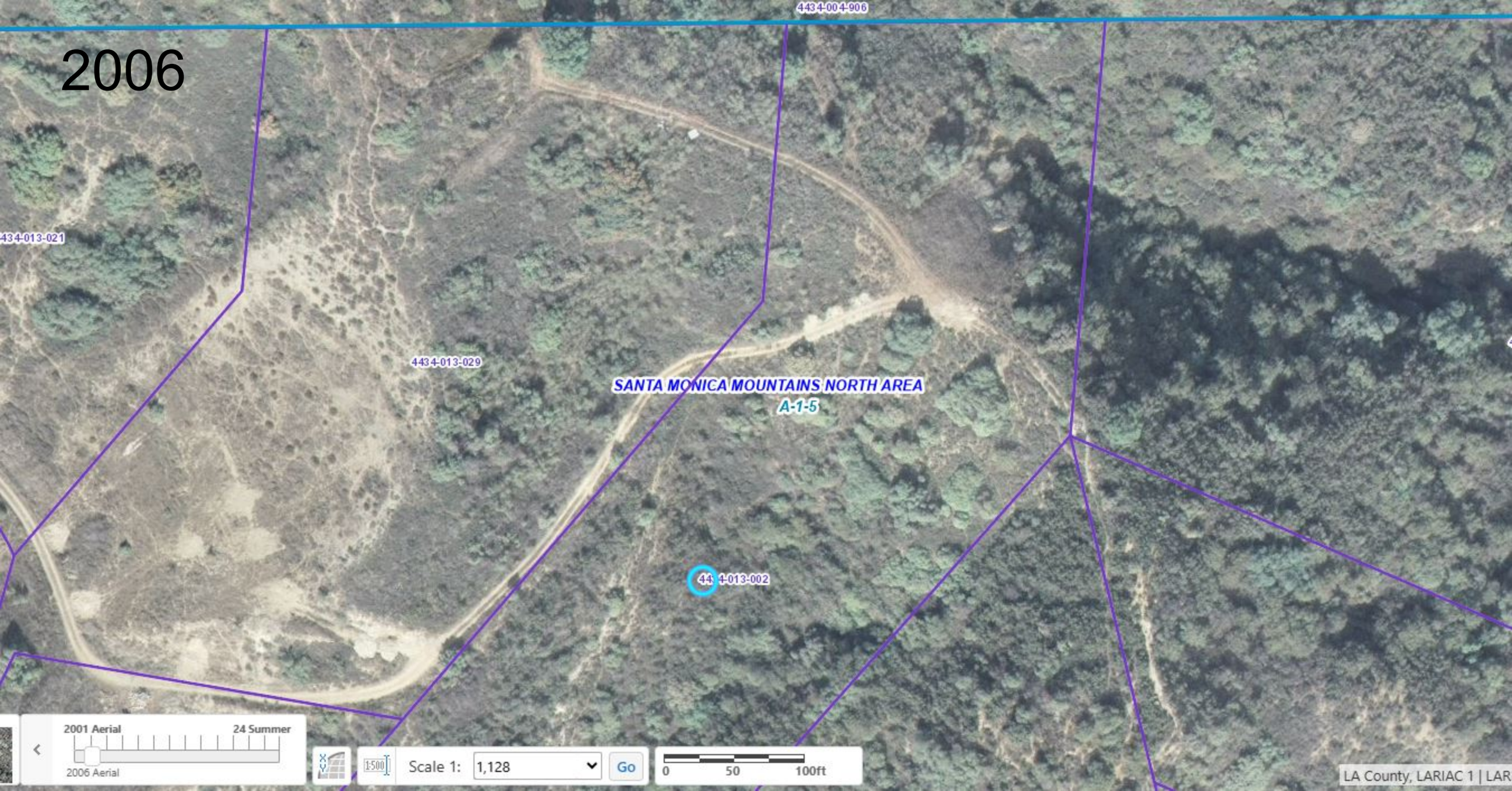
Dear Hearing Officer

The Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation offers the following comments on the proposed Variance to develop on a significant ridgeline in Topanga Canyon adjacent the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (MRCA) Summit Valley – Ed Edelman Park.

We are in full agreement with all of the comments made asking that the request for a Variance on the above project be denied. After reading the report done by Regional Planning staff and then reviewing the comments made by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and all of the residents in Topanga, it is clear that this project needs further review.

The Ridgeline Ordinance is clear in its intent. There should be no building on any significant Ridgeline in the Santa Monica Mountains either in the Coastal Zone or the North Area. This ordinance was implemented after abuses to our Ridgelines happened over and over. A very dangerous precedence will be set if this project is approved

Thank you
Joan Slimocosky
Roger Pugliese
Co-Presidents
Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation


2006
4434-004-906
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SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA
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SPRING 2021
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4434-013-021
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100ft

# FALL 2021

4434-004-906
4434-013-021
4434-013-021
4434-013-029
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA
A-1-5
4434-013-002
4434-013-028
4434-013-028
2001 Aerial
24 Summer
21 Fall
Scale 1: 1,128
Go
0
50
100ft

I want to...
2022
O-S
4434-004-906
4434-013-021
4434-013-021
4434-013-029
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA
A-1-5
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4434-013-028
2001 Aerial
24 Summer
22 Summer
Scale 1: 1,128
Go
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I want to...
2023
O-S
4434-004-906
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4434-013-021
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA
4434-013-029
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4434-013-002
4434-013-028
2001 Aerial
24 Summer
2023
Scale 1: 1,128
Go
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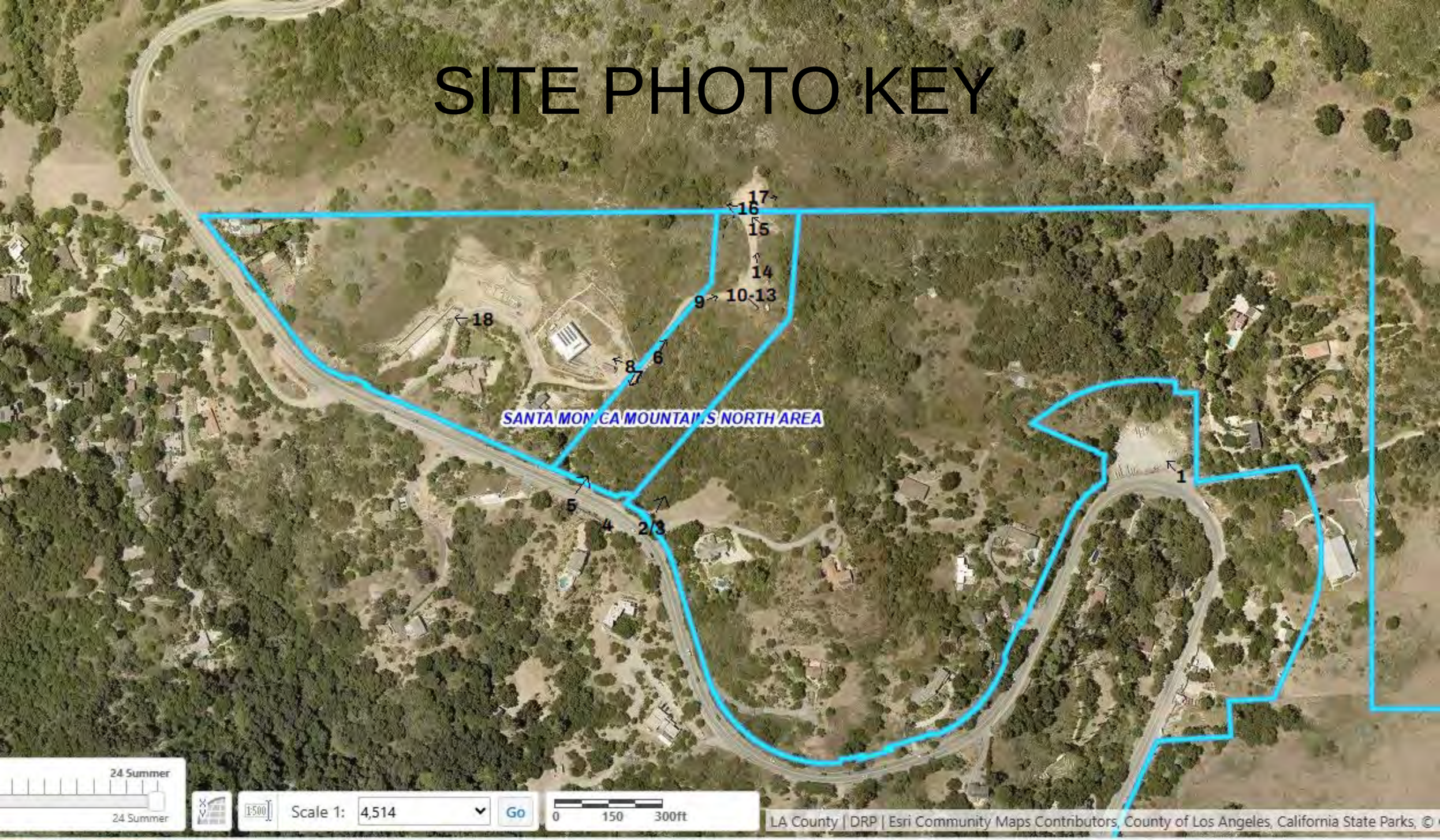
I want to...
SUMMER 2024
O-S
4434-004-906
4434-013-021
4434-013-021
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA
4434-013-029
A-1-5
4434-013-002
4434-013-028
2001 Aerial
24 Summer
24 Summer
Scale 1: 1,128
Go
0
50
100ft

# SITE PHOTO KEY



1
MAVERICK
SAFETY IS MY GOAL
662-283-8613
2432
8YJS989

2
CAUTION
AUTOMATIC GATE
KEEP CLEAR

4

5

Link-Belt

miller
KNAACK
8185098238

ANDY GUMP
NP311P
SORENTO

9
973C
CAT

CAT

12

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CAT

16

17

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

# DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AND ORDER
# PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)
# VARIANCE NO. 200900001

## RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATES.** The Los Angeles County ("County") Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing on September 24, 2025, in the matter of Project No. R2005-01452-(3), Variance No. 200900001 ("Variance"). This was an appeal of the Hearing Officer's approval of the Variance on June 24, 2025.

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

3. **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.** A complete application for the Variance was filed in 2009. Therefore, it was evaluated under the standards of the 2000 Santa Monica Mountains North Area Land Use Plan ("2000 LUP") and the Los Angeles County Code as it existed in 2009 ("2009 County Code"), which includes the 2009 version of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District ("2009 CSD").

4. **ENTITLEMENTS REQUESTED.** The applicant, Cory Isaacson ("Permittee"), requests the Variance to authorize the construction of a 4,000-square-foot, 16-foot-tall single-family residence with an attached 585-square-foot garage and appurtenant structures within 50 feet of a mapped significant ridgeline ("Project") on a property that is 4.9 gross acres in size located at 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Assessor's Parcel Number 4434-013-002) in the unincorporated community of Topanga in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), pursuant to Section 22.56.330 of the 2009 County Code.

5. **LOCATION.** The Project is located on a vacant 4.9-acre lot located at 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard in the unincorporated Santa Monica Mountains North Area, also known as Assessor's Parcel Number 4434-013-002.

6. **ENTITLEMENTS REQUIRED.** The Variance is required in order to approve new development within 50 feet of a significant ridgeline as mapped by the 2000 LUP, pursuant to the requirements of the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133).

7. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENTS.** Certificate of Compliance No. 200500127, approved on August 19, 2005, confirmed the legality of the underlying parcel.

   Zoning Conformance Review No. 200600712, approved on July 18, 2006, authorized a solid fill project to create a flat pad with drainage structures for erosion control (1,999

cubic yards of grading, consisting of 500 cubic yards cut, 1,499 cubic yards fill, and 999 cubic yards import) and was approved on July 18, 2006.

8. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the Mountain Land 5 (N5 – one dwelling unit per five gross acres maximum density) land use designation of the 2000 LUP.

9. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area and is zoned A-1-5 (Light Agricultural—Five Acre Minimum Required Lot Area). Pursuant to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, a single-family residence is a principal permitted use within the A-1 Zone and is permitted with a Site Plan Review. However, the 2009 CSD requires a Variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) from a significant ridgeline (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the residence is located on a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP, a Variance is required.

10. **SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING.**

| LOCATION | LAND USE POLICY | ZONING | EXISTING USES |
|---|---|---|---|
| NORTH | OS (Open Space) | O-S (Open Space) | Open space |
| EAST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| SOUTH | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |
| WEST | N5 | A-1-5 | Single-family residences, vacant land |

11. **PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.**

A. Existing Site Conditions
The Project Site is 4.9 gross acres and irregularly shaped with a mapped significant ridgeline running northwest to southeast across its northern portion, through an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. The Project Site is adjacent to Topanga Canyon Boulevard to the southwest, although the road is separated from the graded pad by 600 linear feet of steeply sloping terrain. As a result, the graded pad is accessed from the west by a partially paved, 20-foot-wide driveway that traverses two other parcels before reaching Topanga Canyon Boulevard one-half mile to the west. The northern portion of the Project Site consists of graded areas and disturbed vegetation, while the central and southern portions consist mainly of coastal chapparal scrub.

B. Site Access
Access is provided by an existing 20-foot-wide, 1,315-foot-long private driveway that traverses two other parcels and connects to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a 70-foot-wide state highway (State Route 27) and designated scenic route, to the west. The southernmost portion of the existing driveway, which is 665 feet in length, is paved, while the northern portion, which is 650 feet in length, would be paved as part of the Project.

C. Site Plan
The Permittee proposes the construction of a 4,000-square-foot single-family residence and a 585-square-foot attached garage and on the northern portion of the 4.9-acre Project Site. The one-story residence would have a maximum height of 16 feet above grade and would be located on an existing graded pad of approximately 20,000 square feet. No additional grading is proposed. The Project would also include a swimming pool, retaining walls, decks, stairways, hammerhead turnaround, and other appurtenant facilities on the existing graded pad. A new onsite wastewater treatment system ("OWTS") with two seepage pits would be located approximately 100 feet to the northwest of the residence. The northern portion of an existing 1,315-foot-long, 20-foot-wide driveway, which is 650 feet in length, would be paved as part of the Project.

12. **CEQA DETERMINATION.** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines.

Pursuant to section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes a single-family residence, accessory structures, and associated infrastructure. The Project qualifies for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption because the Project includes a proposal to construct a new single-family residence, a garage, a swimming pool, associated infrastructure, an access driveway, decks, and retaining walls.

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 because a biological inventory of the area of Project disturbance did not indicate the presence of 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. The biological inventory determined that no portion of the Project Site proposed for development contains any environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern, nor do they contain any plants or animals listed as federal, state, or locally sensitive designations, and they are not considered particularly sensitive environments. The Project is not expected to impact scenic resources, such as the designated scenic route to the south, from which it will not be visible. 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. Therefore, the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

13. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** LA County Planning Staff received one letter of support and 10 letters of opposition to the Project. The letters of opposition object to placing structures within a designated significant ridgeline due to aesthetic concerns. They also state that the significant ridgeline regulations in the CSD were carefully considered before their adoption and should be upheld via denial of the Variance. Some letters of opposition also cite the unpermitted grading within the parkland to the north of the Project Site, which they contend was conducted by the Permittee, although the Permittee denies this allegation.

14. **COUNTY DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS.**

    A. Department of Parks and Recreation: Recommended clearance to public hearing with conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

    B. Department of Public Works: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated April 27, 2017.

    C. County Department of Public Health: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated May 25, 2017.

    D. County Fire Department: Recommended clearance to public hearing with no conditions in a letter dated February 21, 2019.

15. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** The Commission finds that Pursuant to County Code Sections 22.222.150, 22.222.170, and 22.222.180, the community was properly notified of the appeal hearing by mail, newspaper (*Malibu Times)*, and property posting. Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On August 15, 2025, a total of 38 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners 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 to any additional interested parties.

16. **PREVIOUS HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** A duly noticed public hearing before the Hearing Officer was advertised for June 17, 2025. The Hearing Officer meeting was subsequently canceled due to security issues and the public hearing was automatically

continued to June 24, 2025, which was the next Hearing Officer meeting date. On that date, Staff gave a presentation recommending approval of the Variance, and public testimony was given both for and against it. The Hearing Officer subsequently closed the public hearing and approved the Variance. This approval was appealed to the Commission on June 25, 2025 by Roger Pugliese on behalf of the Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, per the provisions of County Code Section 22.240.020.

## GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

17. **LAND USE POLICY.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2000 LUP because the N5 land use designation is intended for single-family residential uses on relatively large lots. A single-family residence is permitted under this designation.

18. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the following policies of the 2000 LUP:

    *Conservation & Open Space Element*
    *Policy IV-3:*
    *Require development designs that protect and preserve significant, viable habitat areas and habitat linkages/wildlife corridors in their natural condition.*

    *Policy IV-9:*
    *New development projects shall be designed to protect significant natural features, and to minimize the amount of grading.*

    *Policy IV-13:*
    *Ensure that the overall project design/layout of hillside developments adapts to the natural hillside topography and protects ridgelines and natural-appearing views from surrounding vantage points such as highways, parklands and overlooks. Overall, emphasize fitting the project into its hillside setting rather than altering the hillside to fit the project.*

    The Project would utilize a previously graded pad on the northern portion of the Project Site that was previously disturbed and mainly consists of nonnative grasses. This location will avoid the need to remove native vegetation and grade large amounts of earth further down the slope. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved.

    *Land Use Element*
    *Policy VI-20:*
    *Limit structure heights in suburban and rural areas to ensure compatibility of new development with the respective characteristics of the surrounding settings and sites.*

*Policy VI-21:*
*Encourage siting of developments to include setbacks that protect public lands, streams, scenic features, views, and other natural features and that maximize open space areas; project density and structure placement shall be consistent with the need to minimize vegetation clearance for fire protection.*

Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east or from the Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north. Therefore, views from scenic resources would be preserved. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape, and the modest 16-foot maximum height, would be in character with the surrounding community.

## ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

19. **PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the A-1-5 zoning classification because a single-family residence is a principal permitted use in such zone with a Site Plan Review pursuant to 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110. The 2009 CSD also requires a Variance for any development proposed within 50 feet (vertical or horizontal) of a significant ridgeline, as mapped by the 2000 LUP (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). Because the Project proposed developing a single-family residence on a mapped significant ridgeline, a Variance is required instead of a Site Plan Review.

20. **REQUIRED YARDS.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standards identified in 2009 County Code Section 22.24.110, as the Project would meet all required setback standards.

21. **HEIGHT.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in the 2009 CSD (2009 County Code Section 22.44.133). The maximum height for a single-family residence proposed on a significant ridgeline is 18 feet above grade, while the maximum height of the proposed single-family residence is 16 feet above grade.

22. **SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the Significant Ecological Area ("SEA") requirements of the 2009 County Code (Section 22.56.215). Although the Project Site is mapped as being within an SEA by the 2000 LUP, the 2009 County Code does not require an SEA Conditional Use Permit ("SEA CUP") for development of one single-family residence. Because the Project consists of one single-family residence, an SEA CUP is not required.

23. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable grading requirements identified in the 2009 CSD (County Code Section 22.44.133). The 2009 CSD requires a Conditional Use Permit for grading that exceeds 5,000 cubic yards (cut plus fill). The Project is not proposing any additional

grading beyond the grading that was approved with a Zoning Conformance Review in 2006 (1,999 cubic yards).

24. **PARKING.** The Commission finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.44.1410. Because the Project Site is greater than one acre in size, no covered parking spaces are required, although an attached two-car garage would be constructed as part of the Project.

**VARIANCE FINDINGS**

25. **The Commission finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.** A building site—including a graded pad and driveway—was created legally on the significant ridgeline in 2006, and the remainder of the subject property is steeply sloping. As a result, the building site is the most appropriate location for development of a single-family residence, which is a principal permitted use in the A-1 Zone. The development of a residence at a lower elevation would require a large amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

26. **The Commission finds that the modification 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.** The Project is not located between the nearest public road near the shoreline or the shoreline of any body of water in the coastal zone, nor is the site used for public access or public trails in the vicinity. Therefore, the Project does not need to meet the requirements of Chapter 3 of Division 20 of the Public Resources Code.

27. **The Commission finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.** The development of a residence away from the significant ridgeline at a lower elevation would require a large amount of grading and the disturbance of undisturbed chaparral habitat further down the slope. This would likely have a significantly more detrimental effect on the scenic and biological resources of the area, which the significant ridgeline restrictions are meant to protect.

28. **The Commission finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.** The Project would be similar in character to other single-family residences in the vicinity and compares favorably to them in terms of height and bulk. Residences within 500 feet range between 1,440 square feet and 4,228 square feet. While the proposed residence would be on the higher end of this range at 4,000 square feet, its relatively modest height of 16 feet above grade is less than that of nearly all other residences in the vicinity, many

of which are two stories. Due to a topographic rise between the Project and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the Project will not be visible from the road, a designated scenic route to the south, nor is it visible from the Santa Maria Canyon Trail to the east. Further, the design of the Project would utilize materials and colors compatible with the surrounding landscape.

## ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

29. **LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS.** The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Commission'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 COMMISSION CONCLUDES**:

A. The Commission finds that because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of the County Code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

B. The Commission finds that the modification 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.

C. The Commission finds that strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards.

D. The Commission finds that such 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 located in the vicinity.

**THEREFORE, THE COMMISSION:**

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

2. Approves **VARIANCE NO. 200900001**, subject to the attached conditions.

**ACTION DATE: September 24, 2025**

MG:TM
09/11/25

c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

**DRAFT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**
**PROJECT NO. R2005-01452-(3)**
**VARIANCE NO. 200900001**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a new 4,000-square-foot single-family residence located on a mapped significant ridgeline on a 4.9-acre property in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area ("Project Site"), subject to the following conditions of approval:

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant, owner of the property, and any other person, corporation, or other entity making use of this grant.

2. This grant shall not be effective for any purpose until the permittee, and the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, have filed at the office of the Los Angeles County ("County") Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all of the conditions of this grant, and that the conditions of the grant have been recorded as required by Condition No. 7, and until all required monies have been paid pursuant to Condition No. 9. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Condition No. 2 and Conditions No. 4, 5, and 8 shall be effective immediately upon the date of final approval of this grant by the County.

3. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "date of final approval" shall mean the date the County's action becomes effective pursuant to County Code Section 22.44.1090.

4. The permittee shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the County or its agents, officers, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul this permit approval, which action is brought within the applicable time period of Government Code section 65009 or any other applicable limitations period. The County shall promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding and the County shall reasonably cooperate in the defense. If the County fails to promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding, or if the County fails to cooperate reasonably in the defense, the permittee shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless the County.

5. In the event that any claim, action, or proceeding as described above is filed against the County, the permittee shall within 10 days of the filing make an initial deposit with LA County Planning in the amount of up to $5,000.00, from which actual costs and expenses shall be billed and deducted for the purpose of defraying the costs or expenses involved in LA County Planning's cooperation in the defense, including but not limited to, depositions, testimony, and other assistance provided to permittee or permittee's counsel.

If during the litigation process, actual costs or expenses incurred reach 80 percent of the amount on deposit, the permittee shall deposit additional funds sufficient to bring the balance up to the amount of $5,000.00. There is no limit to the number of supplemental deposits that may be required prior to completion of the litigation.

At the sole discretion of the permittee, the amount of an initial or any supplemental deposit may exceed the minimum amounts defined herein. Additionally, the cost for collection and duplication of records and other related documents shall be paid by the permittee according to County Code Section 2.170.010.

6. If any material provision of this grant is held or declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the permit shall be void and the privileges granted hereunder shall lapse.

7. Prior to the use of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall **record the terms and conditions** of the grant in the office of the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk ("Recorder"). In addition, upon any transfer or lease of the property during the term of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall promptly provide a copy of the grant and its conditions to the transferee or lessee of the subject property.

8. This grant shall expire unless used within two (2) years from the date of final approval of the grant. A single one-year time extension may be requested in writing and with the payment of the applicable fee prior to such expiration date.

9. The subject property shall be maintained and operated in full compliance with the conditions of this grant and any law, statute, ordinance, or other regulation applicable to any development or activity on the subject property. Failure of the permittee to cease any development or activity not in full compliance shall be a violation of these conditions. No provision of any easement or any other encumbrance on the property shall exempt the permittee and/or property owner from compliance with these conditions and applicable regulations. Inspections shall be made to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant as well as to ensure that any development undertaken on the subject property is in accordance with the approved site plan on file. The permittee shall deposit with the County the sum of **$456.00**. The deposit shall be placed in a performance fund, which shall be used exclusively to compensate LA County Planning for all expenses incurred while inspecting the premises to determine the permittee's compliance with the conditions of approval. The fund provides for **one inspection three years after the date of final approval of the grant.** Inspections shall be unannounced.

   If additional inspections are required to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant, or if any inspection discloses that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be financially responsible and shall reimburse LA County Planning for all additional enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance. The amount charged for additional inspections shall be $456.00 per inspection, or the current recovery cost at the time any additional inspections are required, whichever is greater.

10. Notice is hereby given that any person violating a provision of this grant is guilty of a misdemeanor. Notice is further given that the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") or a Hearing Officer may, after conducting a public hearing, revoke or modify this grant, if the Commission or Hearing Officer finds that these conditions have been violated or that this grant has been exercised so as to be detrimental to the public's health or safety or so as to be a nuisance, or as otherwise authorized pursuant to County Code Sections 22.44.1130 and/or 22.44.1140.

11. All development pursuant to this grant must be kept in full compliance with the County Fire Code to the satisfaction of the County Fire Department.

12. All development pursuant to this grant shall conform with the requirements of the County Department of Public Works ("Public Works") to the satisfaction of said department.

13. All development pursuant to this grant shall comply with the requirements of Title 22 of the County Code and of the specific zoning of the subject property, unless specifically modified by this grant, as set forth in these conditions, including the approved Exhibit "A," or a revised Exhibit "A" approved by the Director of Regional Planning ("Director").

14. The subject property shall be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the plans marked Exhibit "A." If changes to any of the plans marked Exhibit "A" are required as a result of instruction given at the public hearing, **one (1) digital copy** of a modified Exhibit "A" shall be submitted to LA County Planning by **November 24, 2025**.

15. In the event that subsequent revisions to the approved Exhibit "A" are submitted, the permittee shall submit **one (1) digital copy** of the proposed plans to the Director for review and approval. All revised plans must substantially conform to the originally approved Exhibit "A." All revised plans must be accompanied by the written authorization of the property owner(s) and applicable fee for such revision.

## PROJECT SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

16. The exterior colors of all structures shall be earth-toned and shall not include bright or white tones. No glossy or reflective materials shall be permitted for exterior construction, other than glass, which shall be the least reflective variety available.

17. Prior to construction, the permittee shall submit a grading/drainage plan to the Public Works' Building and Safety Division for review and approval. The grading plans shall show and call out the construction of all drainage devices and details, paved driveways, elevation and drainage of all pads, retaining walls, water-quality devices, Low-Impact Development ("LID") features, and all existing easements. All structures shall meet the County Building, Residential, and Green Building Standards codes, and the Project shall comply with all LID standards (County Code Section 12.84.440) in accordance with the LID standards manual. This condition shall be met to the satisfaction of Public Works.

18. Per County Code Section 22.336.070.I, grading shall be prohibited during the rainy season, defined as October 15 of any year through April 15 of the subsequent year.

19. All development, with the exception of landscaping, fuel modification, and driveway widening, shall be limited to the existing graded pad on the northern portion of the project site.

20. Any storage of construction equipment, materials, or vehicles shall be prohibited unless a valid building or grading permit is in effect for the Project Site.

TOPANGA TOWN COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 1085 ♦ TOPANGA, CA 90290 ♦ 310.455.3001 ♦ www.TopangaTownCouncil.org

June 14, 2025

CARRIE CARRIER
PRESIDENT

ALISA LAND HILL
VICE PRESIDENT

STACY SLEDGE
SECRETARY
TREASURER

ROGER PUGLIESE
MEMBER

TAM TAYLOR
ADVISOR

JASPREET KATRIB
MEMBER

Regional Planning Board and Hearing Officer
Los Angeles County Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Regional Planning Board and Hearing Officer,
The Topanga Town Council ("TTC") board would like to submit a public comment regarding Project No. R2005-01452-(3) | Variance No. 200900001 | Address: 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard-Significant Ridgeline.

It is rare for the TTC Board to take a position on any individual, private property parcel, but we do so here because of the enormous implications of this particular case for Topanga and the wider Santa Monica Mountains. Most people in this community believe strongly in the sanctity of protecting both private property rights and environmental integrity. If a parcel of land is zoned as residential (and has been for an extended period of time), we generally believe that the owner has the right to build a home on his/her land within the given legal parameters. That said, if regulations exist that constrain said person's ability to develop his/her land, then the parcel owner has a responsibility to try to work within those constraints to the extent feasible and/or to seek a variance or exemption from said regulations before embarking on any work that makes said exemptions a foregone conclusion.

Importantly, we also believe that, when and if a precedent is to be set regarding the granting of a variance for any given project, the conduct of said applicant must be considered before granting any potential variance. People will take undue risks and flagrantly violate the law if they believe that their actions will not result in any meaningful personal consequences. If we do not discourage unlawful behavior, then we inadvertently create a system in which "moral hazard" will prevail. If we had a dime for every developer or polluter who uttered the phrase: "It is better to ask for forgiveness than permission," we'd be retired in Fiji now. We cannot let this cancerous and destructive mindset take hold; otherwise our regulations are pointless and the Santa Monica Mountains will cease to be the pristine habitat that they currently are.

Based on a formal statement from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy ("SMMC" or "the Conservancy"), we have significant reason to believe that the applicant currently seeking a variance for this parcel egregiously encroached on the land of the Conservancy without any regard for that entity's own private property rights. Such a violation should be investigated and factored into any decisions made about this parcel.

If any variance is ever to be granted here, we believe that it should only be granted to those who make a good faith effort to follow our laws and regulations and respect the review and approval process before executing on any project plans that violate our rules and norms. In short, we do not believe that it is prudent to reward those who willfully violate our land use and zoning laws and/or illegally encroach on other entities' private property to satisfy their own objectives.

Lastly, it goes without saying that we live in a highly sensitive environment where conscientiousness about one's actions on the wider community are critical. Everything that we do here has outsized downstream effects, from increasing fire risk to polluting our precious watershed. The people who may deserve a variance are those who show a recognition of those impacts and who make an honest and concerted effort to understand this community and help sustain it.

Respectfully,

*Carrie L. Carrier*
Topanga Town Council, President

Dr. Alisa Land, Vice President
Stacy L. Sledge, Secretary/Treasurer
Roger Pugliese, Government Liaison
Jaspreet Katrib, IT Director
Tam Taylor, Member Emeritus