

**SUPPLEMENTAL
REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

DATE ISSUED:	September 18, 2025	
HEARING DATE:	September 24, 2025	AGENDA ITEM: 8
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 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) Zone, and within the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District, pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.260 as it existed in 2009.¹ This is an appeal of the Hearing Officer’s approval of June 24, 2025.

After the Report to the Regional Planning Commission was issued on September 11, 2025, Staff received one additional letter of opposition to the Project (Exhibit A-1). The letter, dated September 17, 2025, is written by Paul Edelman representing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (“MRCA”). It alleges that the unpermitted grading within the MRCA Summit Valley – Ed Edelman Park to the north of the Project Site was conducted by the Project applicant. It also suggests moving the location of the residence further to the west, within the existing graded pad, which would reduce the areas of required off-site brush clearance to the north and east. The letter argues that the appeal should be granted, and the Variance should be denied, unless the applicant addresses these issues.

Staff will conduct further research into the issues raised in the MRCA letter and provide an additional Supplemental Report next week, prior to the hearing date.

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.

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	
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EXHIBIT A-1	MRCA Letter of Opposition (9/17/25)
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MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
King Gillette Ranch
26800 Mulholland Highway
Calabasas, California 91302
PHONE (818) 878-0886

September 17, 2025

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

Via Electronic Mail

**Full Support of Appeal – Project No. R2005-0145-(3) – Significant Ridgeline
2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard – Variance 200900001**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

To protect both public parkland habitat and viewshed interests, a Significant Ridgeline variance must only be granted if both adequate hardship and maximum avoidance of impacts is demonstrated. In this case, neither are adequately demonstrated as shown in the accompanying figures (see attached). Such a lack of design sensitivity must not be rewarded. The staff presentation presents a black and white case that only a 4,000 square foot house in the proposed location can be adequately hidden from motorists on Topanga Canyon Boulevard. That is false. The applicant's own viewshed models show that there is significant headroom between the roadway sightlines and the proposed one story house to move the house westward without it being remotely visible from Topanga Canyon Boulevard. To further insure this invisibility, with the continued use of berms at the pad's outer edge, the house can be moved many yards south away from Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) open space and west away from privately owned H2 habitat to the east.

Why Move the House South and West and Stay on the Existing Pad?

As proposed the house location requires perpetual annual brush clearance on almost a quarter-acre of MRCA parkland (see attached) and over an acre (see attached) of offsite H2 private property. In total, as proposed, the project would require the permanent annual brush clearance of at least 4.18 acres of habitat. Over an acre of that permanently scalped 4.18 acres of natural vegetation would be either on, or within 50 feet of, the mapped Significant Ridgeline (a visual impact never analyzed). These significant permanent impacts to habitat on both public land and visually sticking out like a sore thumb on a significant ridgeline, must and can be, substantially mitigated without significant economic diminution. The applicant cannot build on the ridgeline by-right. So the County should get the design right for the public.

Staff has failed to compel the applicant to provide such mitigation in the project design (house footprint location) as visually presented to the Hearing Officer by the Santa Monica

Mountains Conservancy. The house can be moved to the southwest corner of the pad (staying on the pad) **and** be screened by an enhanced berm that is already included in the plans. The specious argument that the only relocation location is on the adjoining fill slope avoids the truth. Yes, a better mitigated house on the pad would still need a variance, **but** it would substantially protect additional public lands and reduce the overall permanent brush clearance footprint much of which would be a visible scar on the same significant ridgeline that the North Area Plan is designed to protect. The MRCA urges the Commission to grant the appeal and direct the applicant to adjust the house location to eliminate required permanent brush clearance impacts to MRCA parkland and reduce those to offsite private land. Moving the house west shifts the required 200-foot-wide brushing radius into the shared radius of the house under construction on the adjacent lot for a net reduction in total area cleared.

Appeal Must Be Granted Because Applicant is Inextricably Tied to a Quarter-Acre of Illegal Fill on MRCA Land

The MRCA will pursue its own encroachment and damage to public resource actions against the perpetrators of a quarter-acre of fill placed on MRCA land adjacent to, and seamless with, the subject development pad (see attached). But nonetheless that fill was transported through the subject property and was seamlessly integrated with the fill on the north portion of the subject pad. The illegal fill and the project grading are therefore inextricably linked. Both the onsite fill and what is on MRCA land fill the same USGS mapped drainage. The long-ago-approved grading plans did not approve filling that onsite portion of the drainage as it sits today. To date Regional Planning staff has dismissed the fill on MRCA land as not a County problem. However, the onsite unapproved fill slope and pad that cross over into MRCA land, must be a County problem. To not require the remediation (complete removal) of unapproved fill in a drainage (H2 habitat) sets quite a poor precedent – particularly considering the nefarious overlap of another quarter-acre of fill on MRCA parkland. The lone removal of the onsite fill would leave a wall of unsupported fill on MRCA land that requires further remediation for erosion and safety.

To add injury to insult, the MRCA this week received a notice of violation from the County for having shipping containers and heavy equipment on the subject quarter-acre flat fill scar adjacent to the subject property. Aerial photographs show the violation materials were moved through the subject property between April and June of this year. The June aerial photographs show that the erosion-preventing-regrowth on the MRCA's quarter-acre scarred area was denuded to accommodate the shipping containers and heavy equipment. Something is greatly amiss here that must be rectified by the County before any approvals are granted for the subject project. The seamless fill slope on the subject lot and MRCA land alone confirms both the physical and awareness complicity between the subject applicant and the original violator of MRCA land. This is enough evidence to grant the appeal before you. The applicant created his own hardship by not addressing the illegal fill hoping the County would keep turning a blind eye. The applicant stated at the last hearing that he communicates with the heavy equipment operator and had

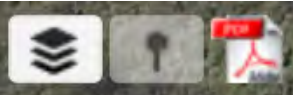
granted the right to store equipment on the subject 2354 Topanga Canyon Boulevard pad.

The MRCA urges the Commission to grant the appeal to protect multiple public interests and avoid deleterious precedents. There is no hardship to reward with the proposed project approval. No project should be approved on the subject lot that requires any permanent annual fuel modification in the mandated 200-foot radius on MRCA parkland. This letter provides a simple prescription to achieve that result while still keeping the project on the existing pad. For an applicant seeking a ridgeline variance it must be incumbent on him to configure the house footprint accordingly. No approvals in the future should be granted without an approved final fire department clearance plan that shows zero need to ever brush on MRCA parkland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Edelman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Edelman
Chief Natural Resources and Planning



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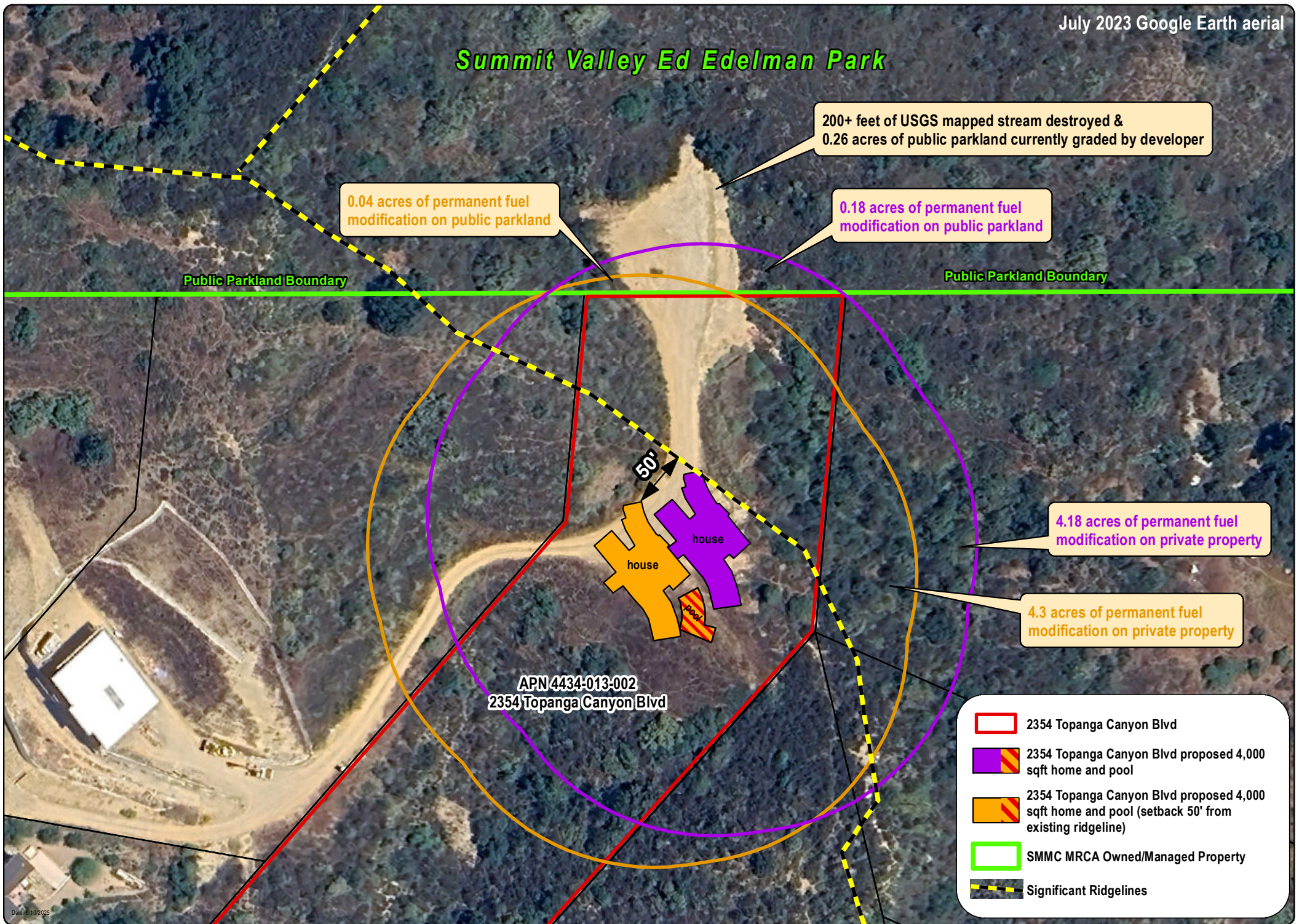


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Summit Valley Ed Edelman Park



2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd proposed 4,000 sqft home and pool

SMMC MRCA Owned/Managed Property

Significant Ridgelines

200+ feet of USGS mapped stream & 0.26 acres of public parkland currently destroyed

0.18 acres of permanent fuel modification on public land (200' from proposed structure)

Summit Valley Ed Edelman Park

Public Parkland Boundary

Public Parkland Boundary

house

pool

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2354 Topanga Canyon Blvd

2346 Topanga Canyon Blvd



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