

**DEPARTMENT OF
CITY PLANNING**

COMMISSION OFFICE
(213) 978-1300

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

SAMANTHA MILLMAN
PRESIDENT

CAROLINE CHOE
VICE-PRESIDENT

MARIA CABILDO
MONIQUE LAWSHE
HELEN LEUNG
KAREN MACK
DANA M. PERLMAN
ELIZABETH ZAMORA

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801
(213) 978-1271

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
DIRECTOR

SHANA M.M. BONSTIN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

ARTHI L. VARMA, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

LISA M. WEBBER, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION

CASE NO. ENV-2020-10346-CE

On June 14, 2023 the Planning Department determined that the City of Los Angeles Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 and the State CEQA Guidelines designate the subject project as Categorically Exempt under Article 19, Section 15332, Class 32.

A project qualifies for a Class 32 Categorical Exemption if it is developed on an infill site and meets the following criteria:

- (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with the applicable zoning designation and regulations;
- (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses;
- (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species;
- (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and
- (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The project is for the demolition of existing uses and the construction, use and maintenance of a new multifamily residential building with 129 dwelling units, including 17 set aside for Very Low Income Households. The proposed building will have approximately 117,000 square feet of floor area and will reach a maximum height of 76 feet with stepbacks at the upper floors at the rear of the building. The proposed project will provide 132 parking spaces, 43 of which will be compact spaces. Parking is provided within a partially subterranean garage. The proposed project will provide a publicly accessible path between Arch Drive and the Los Angeles River, providing public pedestrian access to the Los Angeles River path. The project includes any additional actions as deemed necessary or desirable, including but not limited to demolition, grading, excavation, haul route, street tree removal, on-site tree removal, and building permits. The amount of materials exported will be up to approximately 17,000 cubic yards. As 129 unit multifamily project, and a project which is characterized as in-fill development, the project qualifies for the Class 32 Categorical Exemption.

The site is zoned C2-1VL-RIO and has a General Plan Land Use Designation of General Commercial. As shown in the case file, the project is consistent with the applicable Sherman Oaks – Studio City Community Plan designation and policies and all applicable zoning designations and regulations. The subject site is wholly within the City of Los Angeles, on a site that is approximately 1.03 acres. Lots adjacent to the subject site are developed with the following urban

uses: commercial shopping center to the west, multifamily residential to the east, commercial to the south, public facilities to the southeast, and the Los Angeles River path to the north. The site is previously disturbed and surrounded by development and therefore is not, and has no value as, a habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species. There are no protected trees on or near the site, as identified in the Tree Report prepared by Carlberg Associates dated June 2023. There are also no street trees.

The project will be subject to Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs), which require compliance with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinance as well as other local and state regulations regarding pollutant discharge, dewatering, and stormwater mitigations. These RCMs will ensure the project will not have significant impacts on noise and water. The Department of Transportation (LADOT) has reviewed the transportation assessment prepared by Overland Traffic Consultants, Inc., dated April 2022, and concluded the project will not result in a significant transportation impact on VMT. Therefore, the project will not have any significant impacts to traffic or transportation. The Noise and Air Quality Studies prepared by MD Acoustics, LLC, dated October 11, 2022 concluded the project will not result in impacts to air quality or noise. The project site will be adequately served by all public utilities and services given that the construction of a 129 unit apartment building will be on a site which has been previously developed and is consistent with the General Plan. Therefore, the project meets all of the Criteria for the Class 32.

Exceptions Narrative for Class 32 Categorical Exemption

There are five (5) Exceptions which must be considered in order to find a project exempt under Class 32: (a) Cumulative Impacts; (b) Significant Effect; (c) Scenic Highways; (d) Hazardous Waste Sites; and (e) Historical Resources.

There is not a succession of known projects of the same type and in the same place as the subject project. As mentioned, the project proposes 129 apartment units in an area zoned and designated for such development. All adjacent lots are developed with commercial, multifamily residential, public facilities, or open space uses, and the subject site is of a similar size and slope to nearby properties. The project proposes a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3:1 on a site that is permitted to have a maximum FAR of 1:1 by-right and a height of 76 feet on a site that is permitted to have a maximum of 45 feet by-right. The proposed FAR and height are requested properly in conjunction with a Density Bonus request and in exchange for the provision of on-site deed-restricted affordable dwelling units are subject to the City Planning Commissions approval. Multistory buildings are not unusual for the vicinity of the subject site, and is similar in scope to other existing multifamily developments in the area. Thus, there are no unusual circumstances which may lead to a significant effect on the environment. Additionally, the only State Scenic Highway within the City of Los Angeles is the Topanga Canyon State Scenic Highway, State Route 27, which travels through a portion of Topanga State Park which is not near the subject site. Therefore the subject site will not create any impacts within a designated as a state scenic highway. Furthermore, according to Envirostor, the State of California's database of Hazardous Waste Sites, neither the subject site, nor any site in the vicinity, is identified as a hazardous waste site. The project site has not been identified as a historic resource by local or state agencies, and the project site has not been determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, the Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments Register, and/or any local register; and was not found to be a potential historic resource based on the City's HistoricPlacesLA website or SurveyLA, the citywide survey of Los Angeles. Finally, the City does not choose to treat the site as a historic resource. Based on this, the project will not result in a substantial adverse change to the significance of a historic resource and this exception does not apply.