

CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

April 28, 2015 meeting

Applicant

Troedsson Design and Planning
969 Colorado Blvd., #2
LA, CA / 90041

Case Type / Number:

Second Floor Review 15-05

Property Owner:

Young E. Yi
5228 Haskell Street
La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011

Site Address:

5180 Alta Canyada Road

Case Planner:

Chris Gjolme ~ Planner

1. Request:

The request is for Second Floor Review to construct a new 5,862 sq. ft. two-story house on a 23,520 sq. ft. lot. The project complies with all floor area, setback and height requirements. The project was originally approved by the Planning Commission at the July 14, 2009 meeting. However, after several time extensions, said approval has expired and re-approval is now required. This report is largely the same as the one prepared in 2009, with revisions to reflect minor project changes/design nuances.

2. Location:

The site is located along a curving portion of Alta Canyada Road between its intersection with El Vago Street to the south and Hacienda Drive to the north, in the R-1-20,000 zone.

3. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the request **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

4. Project Size:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Lot Size: | 23,520 sq. ft. |
| Proposed 1 st floor (inc. garage): | 3,527 sq. ft. |
| Proposed 2 nd floor: | 2,335 sq. ft. |
| Total: | 5,862 sq. ft. |
| FAR: | 0.25 |

5. General Plan / Zoning / Existing Land Use:

The Land Use Map identifies the site as Very low Density Residential (up to 2 dwelling units per acre). The property is zoned R-1-20,000 (Single Family Residential, 20,000 Square Foot Minimum Lot Size). The site is currently vacant. (Demolition of the previous split-level residence occurred in 2011.)

6. Environmental Impact Review:

Staff has determined that the proposed Second-floor Review and Tree Removal Permit are Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, under Class 2.5(c)(1)(new construction) of the City of La Cañada Flintridge Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA.

7. Previous Action:

Tree Removal 08-45 / Allowed removal of three deodar cedars centrally located on the site to accommodate the new residence / Approved in conjunction with SFR 08-26 on July 14, 2009. Said trees are no longer considered protected given their distance from the street (> 20 feet). As such, a Tree Removal Permit is no longer required.

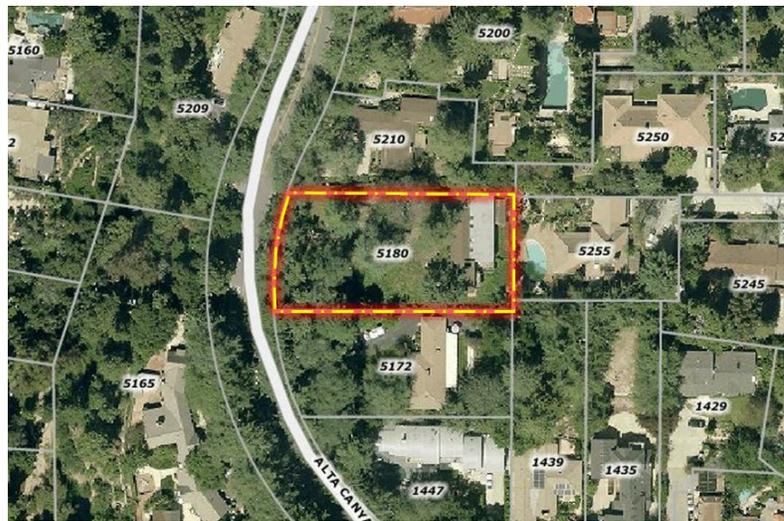
8. Pending and Potential Actions:

Plan check and issuance of a building permit.

9. Staff Analysis:

A. Context:

This site is mid-block along the east side of Alta Canyon Road, two properties north of the street's curving intersection with El Vago Street. Alta Canyon Road rises in elevation as it extends to the north, resulting in subtle elevation differences between adjacent lots. Accordingly, the lot to the south is below the subject pad level while the residence to the north is positioned several feet above the site. The immediate



neighborhood is characterized by one and two-story homes that vary in size and architectural style, and a streetscape laced with mature Deodar Cedar trees.

With a depth of 210 feet and width of 110 feet, the site comprises 23,520 sq. ft., above the 20,000 sq. ft. requisite for the underlying zone and larger than adjacent lots to the north, south and rear. Several large deodars lace the site, including a half dozen along the front of the property that insulate the site while contributing to the wooded streetscape.

Single-story homes are adjacent to the north and south. Two lots meet directly across the street to the west. Homes on these two properties (5165 and 5209) are positioned well to the north and south on their respective pads, thus creating a development gap opposite the subject lot's frontage which lends to a sense of openness along the immediate street setting. A survey of 12 properties proximate to the site reveals the following:

| Address | Lot Size | House Size | FAR | Stories |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| 5149 Alta Canyonada Road | 31,040 sf | 3,433 sf | 0.11 | 1 |
| 5165 Alta Canyonada Road | 48,790 sf | 3,929 sf | .08 | 2 |
| 5172 Alta Canyonada Road | 20,470 sf | 2,181 sf | 0.11 | 1 |
| 5200 Alta Canyonada Road | 53,580 sf | 7,724 sf | 0.14 | 2 |
| 5209 Alta Canyonada Road | 21,760 sf | 1,806 sf | .08 | 1 |
| 5210 Alta Canyonada Road | 15,230 sf | 2,221 sf | 0.15 | 1 |
| 5227 Alta Canyonada Road | 21,310 sf | 2,068 sf | 0.10 | 1 |
| 1435 El Vago Street | 21,340 sf | 5,225 sf | 0.24 | 2 |
| 1439 El Vago Street | 20,910 sf | 2,863 sf | 0.14 | 1 |
| 1447 El Vago Street | 20,860 sf | 4,679 sf | 0.22 | 2 |
| 5250 Indian Drive | 14,960 sf | 4,486 sf | 0.30 | 2 |
| 5255 Indian Drive | 15,326 sf | 5,466 sf | 0.36 | 2 |
| AVERAGE: | 25,465 sf | 3,840 sf | 0.17 | n/a |
| <i>*5180 Alta Canyonada Road</i> | <i>23,520 sf</i> | <i>5,112 sf</i> | <i>0.22</i> | <i>2</i> |

**Project site. Note - Above figures do not include garages, volume spaces, patios, and other non-habitable areas and are intended for general comparison only.*

B. Project Description:

The project involves construction of a two-story residence, basement and rear yard swimming pool. The project would comply with all floor area, setback and height requirements. Two non-protected deodar cedar trees would be removed to accommodate the new residence.

The 1st-floor would comprise 3,527 sq. ft. and would include dining and living area to the rear, an office, entry and stairwell at the mid-section and 3-car garage “wing” to the front. A 2,000 sq. ft. basement, exempt from floor area calculations, is also proposed. A single light well is proposed to the north and south, the retaining walls for which would be well beyond the required 11-foot setback. Basement export would be necessary; approximately 800 cubic yards of material would be removed and accordingly a haul route condition of approval is included as part of the resolution.

The second floor would be well recessed from the garage and would comprise 2,335 sq. ft., inclusive of three bedrooms to the south and a master suite to the north, and largely absent inefficient volume space. Second-floor depth would be modest to the south, increasing along the north side to accommodate the roomier master suite. Total floor area for the residence would be 5,862 sq. ft., within the 6,454 sq. ft. maximum allowance for the subject property.

A minimum front setback of 47 feet would be provided as measured to the northwest corner of the garage. The front setback would increase to 79 feet as measured to the recessed 2nd floor. The street’s outward curvature would further increase the front setback to 92 feet at the front entry and main section of the house. With an average width of 110 feet, 11-foot and 20-foot 1st and 2nd-floor side setbacks are required. Said setbacks would be exceeded to the south where a 21-foot 1st-floor setback and 26-foot 2nd-floor setback are proposed. Compliant side setbacks of 17’-9” and 20 feet (minimum) would also be provided to the north. Lastly, a rear setback of 59 feet, almost 4x the 15-foot standard, would be provided to a majority of the structure.

A maximum height of 32 feet would be achieved near the center of the new residence. However, sloping hips would comprise a majority of the roof structure, ensuring that building height lowers as the structure extends to the north and south, eventually reaching 25 and 28 feet as measured to the respective 2nd-floor ridge. Side setbacks would combine with the sloped roof design to achieve ample angle-plane compliance as demonstrated on Sheet A3.0

Lastly, an auto-court would front the 3-car garage, but associated paving would be well below the 50% front hardscape limit. In all, the project compares with applicable code standards as follows:

| | Standard: | Project: |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Floor Area: | 6,454 sq. ft. | 5,862 sq. ft. |
| Front SB: | 47 feet | 47 feet |
| North Side SB | | |
| 1st floor: | 11 feet | 17’-9” |
| 2nd floor: | 20 feet | 20 feet |
| South Side SB | | |
| 1st floor: | 11 feet | 21 feet |
| 2nd floor: | 20 feet | 26 feet |
| Rear SB: | 15 feet | 59 feet |
| Height: | 32 feet | 32 feet (max.) |

C. Second Floor Review:

Discussion

The context and project description sections already addressed several spatial and site characteristics that indicate the proposal is appropriate for the subject lot, including:

- Compliant floor area.
- A reasonable 0.25 floor area ratio
- Ample setbacks to the front and sides.
- Retention of the forward deodars and preservation of the streetscape.

Given this and the number of mid-to-large homes found in the above table, the proposal is also viewed as reasonable for the area, despite being above the neighborhood average and the most distinct 2-story home on the subject block.

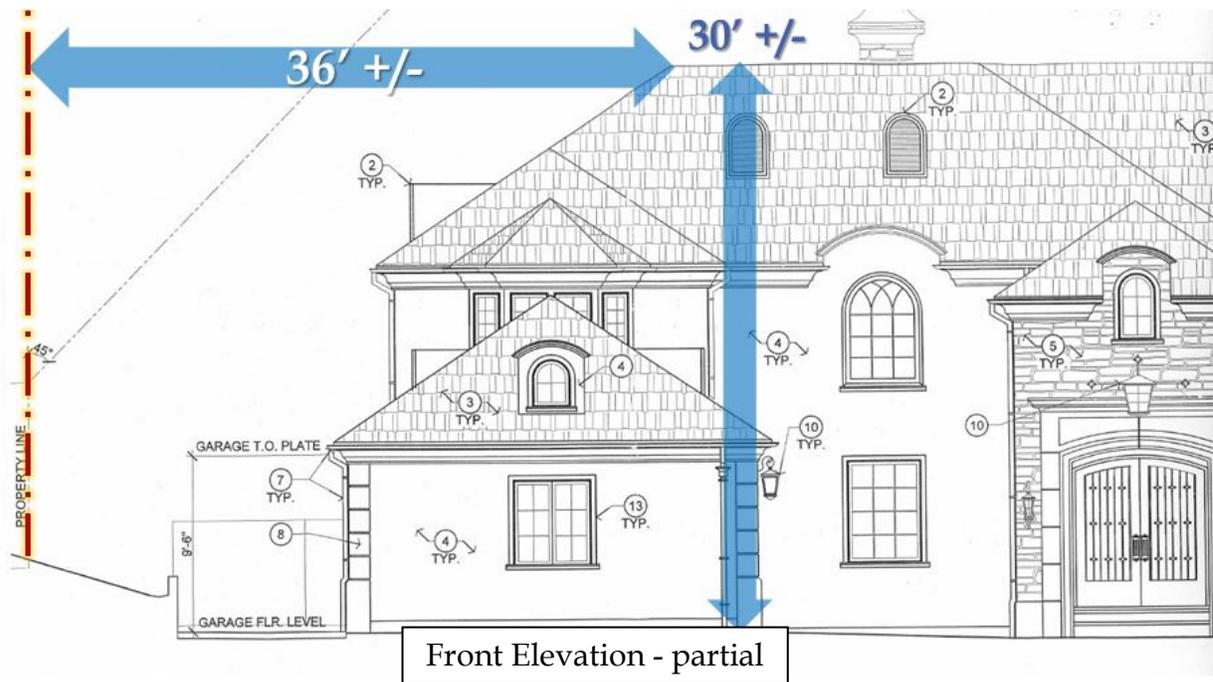
The style of the home is English-country vernacular as evidenced by the blending of plaster and stone facades, steep-pitched roofs/shallow eaves and detailed cornices. These elements would be consistent throughout all elevations, rather than just the front as is often the case with development of lesser quality.

Setbacks would amply compensate for the size and scale of the home, in particular to the front where a 47-foot front setback measured to the single-story garage would increase significantly to 90 feet+ at the main section of the house. Similarly, a 60-foot setback is proposed to the rear, offering ample separation from the property adjacent to the east.

Lesser side setbacks would be provided to the north and south. Although adjacent homes are single-story, both homes employ floor wide floor plans of narrow depth, as compared to deep homes with prominent side elevations. This suggests limited views of the site from these homes and that the project's north/south exposure would be somewhat negligible. The adjacency of one-story homes is further taken into account by the project's northerly bias, which maximizes setbacks to the south for the benefit of the downslope neighbor. The depth of the 2nd-floor would increase along the north side, where the adjacent home is elevated several feet above the site. Five windows are proposed here, three of which are smaller windows serving closet and bathroom space. Lastly, to the east, the subject home's surplus rear setback would provide ample separation from pool/patio area at 5255 Indian Drive.

Another consideration is the height of the project. While a maximum height of 32-feet would be achieved by small flat roof component, average structure height as viewed from the north and south sides would be less considering the home's stepped profile. Moreover, the home's use of a vertically staggered roof form ensures that maximum building height is achieved near the center of the lot. This aspect is important since the point at which the structure's maximum height is achieved is compensated by side setbacks in excess of the building's height - yielding the critical diminishing effect

afforded by a horizontal setback greater than vertical building height - as illustrated below:



The City's Residential Design Guidelines address four primary considerations, which are italicized in bold font. Staff's favorable summary analysis of each consideration follows in parenthesis:

- ***Neighborhood Compatibility*** (the English-country architectural style combines with the deep front and rear setbacks so that the mass of the structure is distant and minimized. The setback from the street is also laced by several large deodars which would partially buffer the new home. The size of the home is proportionate to the site while the overall visual scale of the home would not be excessive given the substantial articulation demonstrated and the strong distinction between the one and two-story sections of the structure.)
- ***Site Development*** (the home would utilize existing pad area and would provide setbacks that exceed code standards to the front and rear. The home is shifted somewhat to the north side of the pad in order maximize separation to the south, where the lot exhibits gentle downs-slope. This is particularly beneficial given the adjacency of a single-story home to the south.)
- ***Physical Design Components*** (the project includes strong visual distinction between the 1st and 2nd floors through notable recession of mass and a stepped roof design, important given the home's large size, while the architecture provides facade and roof articulation, wall texture, and ornamental details that add visual interest and minimize scale.)

- **Landscaping** (is served by preserving the notable deodar cedars already in place along the street's frontage. A landscape plan will be required in conjunction with plan check but is not regarded as integral to positive findings and project approval.)

Findings

1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation.

The proposed residence would be well articulated and tastefully detailed in a manner representative of the English-country style while compliant and ample setbacks are provided at both floor levels, including greater than required front and rear setbacks. The front setback would be visually augmented by several large deodar cedars ensuring buffering of the new home as viewed from the street. Staff supports the finding.

2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed home is large, but sensitively massed, and would not convey an excessive visual scale considering the central location of the second floor atop a deep and proportionate footprint as seen primarily from the north and south. Other mid-to-large homes of comparable scale are found in the immediate area while the subject home would utilize rustic materials that would integrate well within the neighborhood. Staff supports the finding.

3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors.

View of the new home would be adequately buffered from the front through a combination of existing tree screening and distance, while other public views in the area would not be impacted by the project. Balconies or decks at the 2nd-floor level are not proposed thereby negating the potential for intrusive views into neighboring properties. Neighboring homes are adequately separated and/or elevated while significant long-range views are not available given the wooded topography of the area. Staff supports the finding.

4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council.

The scale, massing and materials utilized by the project relate well with the site and are sensitive to the character of the immediate area and would be consistent with the primary directives of the City's Residential Design Guidelines, the foremost consideration of which is neighborhood and streetscape compatibility. Staff supports the finding.

D. Recommendation:

Based on the above discussion, staff believes that the project is appropriate for the site and

area and would recommend that the Second Floor Review request **BE APPROVED**, subject to conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

*C : Troedsson Design and Planning / 969 Colorado Blvd., #2 / LA, CA / 90041
Young E. Yi / 5228 Haskell Street / La Canada Flintridge, CA / 91011*

CITY OF **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**

RESOLUTION NO. 15-xx

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
APPROVING SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 15-05
FOR A NEW TWO-STORY RESIDENCE
AND RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS
AT 5180 ALTA CANYADA ROAD
AS REQUESTED BY
TROEDSSON DESIGN AND PLANNING
ON BEHALF OF
YOUNG E. YI**

WHEREAS, a request by Troedsson Design and Planning, on behalf of Young E. Yi, has been received for Second-floor Review to allow the construction of a new two-story house and related site improvements, said request attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on April 28, 2015, after posting and publication in the prescribed manner, held a public hearing and conducted a review of the request; and

WHEREAS, the Commission reviewed the project and determined that no significant environmental impacts would result from the project, which is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, under Section 2.5(c)(1)(new construction) of the City of La Cañada Flintridge Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the facts contained in the staff report dated April 28, 2015, regarding the application for Second-floor Review at 5180 Alta Canyon Road, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; and voted to continue the project for redesign; and

WHEREAS, based on the evidence presented by the application materials, staff report, and public testimony, the Planning Commission finds the following:

Section 1:

Second-floor Review:

1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation because the proposed residence would be well articulated and tastefully

detailed in a manner representative of the English-country style while compliant and ample setbacks are provided at both floor levels, including greater than required front and rear setbacks. The front setback would be visually augmented by several large deodar cedars ensuring buffering of the new home as viewed from the street.

2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood because the proposed home is large, but sensitively massed, and would not convey an excessive visual scale considering the central location of the second floor atop a deep and proportionate footprint as seen primarily from the north and south. Other mid-to-large homes of comparable scale are found in the immediate area while the subject home would utilize rustic materials that would integrate well within the neighborhood.
3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors because view of the new home would be adequately buffered from the front through a combination of existing and proposed landscaping and distance, while other public views in the area would not be impacted by the project. Balconies or decks at the 2nd-floor level are not proposed thereby negating the potential for overly intrusive views into neighboring properties. Neighboring homes are adequately separated and/or elevated while significant long-range views are not available given the topography of the area.
4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council because the scale, massing and materials utilized by the project relate well with the site and are sensitive to the character of the immediate area and would be consistent with the primary directives of the City's Residential Design Guidelines, the foremost consideration of which is neighborhood compatibility, which the project would achieve.

Section 2:

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Planning Commission approves Second-floor Review 15-05 at 5180 Alta Canyada Road, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 28th day of April, 2015.

Chair of the Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary to the Planning Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 15-05
5180 ALTA CANYADA ROAD

Standard Conditions:

1. Compliance with and execution of all conditions listed herein shall be necessary prior to obtaining final building inspection clearance and/or prior to obtaining any occupancy clearance. Deviation from this requirement shall be only by written consent of the Director of Community Development.
2. This approval is granted for the land or land use as described in the application and any attachments thereto, and as shown on the site plan submitted, labeled Second-floor Review 15-05.
3. Prior to obtaining a building permit or when applicable initiation of use, the applicant and property owner shall file with the Secretary of the Planning Commission written acknowledgment of the conditions stated herein on forms provided by the Planning Department.
4. All structures, site work and other features including but not limited to, buildings, roadways, parking areas, landscaping and other facilities shall be located and maintained as shown on the project plans labeled Second-floor Review 15-05, Sheets A-1.0 thru A-3.1, except as otherwise stated in these conditions.
5. This approval will expire unless "start of construction" is commenced within 24 months after approval is granted and diligently pursued thereafter. The Director of Community Development may extend the original expiration date by as much as 12 months upon receipt of a written request from the applicant prior to expiration of the original approval if the approved project and applicable zoning standards are unchanged. Start of construction is defined as:
 - a. All zoning and related approvals are effective; and
 - b. All required building and grading permits for the project have been issued; and
 - c. The "foundation inspection" and "concrete slab or underfloor inspection" have been made and received approval from the Division of Building and Safety; i.e., all trenches must be excavated, forms erected, and all materials for the foundation delivered on the job and all in-slab or underfloor building service

equipment, conduit, piping accessories and other ancillary equipment items must be in place. Nothing in this definition shall be construed to alter the applicable legal standards for determining when vested property rights to complete the project have arisen.

6. All applicable requirements of any law, ordinance, or regulation of the City of La Cañada Flintridge shall be complied with.
7. This approval is subject to the applicant paying all fees, deposits and assessments to the City of La Cañada Flintridge, as established by policy, ordinance or resolution of the City Council prior to occupancy or initiation of use. This includes payment for contracted staff services as invoiced to the city.
8. In the event the City determines that it is necessary to take legal action to enforce any of the provisions of these conditions, and such legal action is taken, the applicant agrees to pay any and all costs of such legal action, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the City, even if the matter is not prosecuted to a final judgment or is amicably resolved, unless the City should otherwise agree with the applicant to waive said fees or any part thereof. The foregoing shall not apply if the permittee prevails in the enforcement proceeding.
9. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents, and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its officers, agents, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul approval of this Second-Floor Review. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense.
10. An approval granted by the Planning Commission does not constitute a building permit or authorization to begin any construction. An appropriate permit issued by the Division of Building and Safety must be obtained prior to construction, enlargement, relocation, conversion, or demolition of any building or structure within the City.
11. All construction/contractor parking shall be on-site only. At the time of approval, if it is deemed by the Planning Commission that sufficient on-site parking may not be available, then on-street parking in front of the site will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that such parking will not interfere with the immediate neighbors, and will not interfere with the public's use of the surrounding streets. If this cannot be found, then any additional construction vehicle or equipment parking must occur off-site at a location approved by the Director of Community Development. Approval of the off-site location shall be based on the submittal of a Parking Management Plan by the applicant that

demonstrates that the site shall not interfere with the neighbors in the area or hinder the public's use of the surrounding streets. Contractors and construction workers will be required to carpool to the construction site. No construction, no deliveries and no movement of construction materials shall occur on Sundays or City recognized holidays.

12. Any subsequent substantive change to these approved plans by the Fire Department or any other agency having subsequent approval authority shall cause these plans to be returned to the Planning Commission for additional review and approval prior to permit issuance.
13. Unless this approval is appealed to the City Council, story poles shall be removed promptly (within one week) after expiration of the 15-day appeal period. Verification of this shall be required prior to submittal of the project for plan check OR prior to issuance of building permits for those projects where "at-risk" plan check is in process or has already been completed.

Planning Conditions:

14. The applicant shall prepare a Haul Route Management Plan. The plan will describe the route, queuing and destination of the trucks for removal of dirt from the site, as well as the frequency of operation. Frequency of operation shall include days of operation, time of operation and the time spacing of vehicles between pickups. The Haul Route Management Plan shall be reviewed by the Director of Public Works and the Director of Community Development. In particular, the plan shall prohibit hauling operations on Saturdays and Sundays, and on days when other large trucks are scheduled to be in the area (trash on Mondays). Times of operation shall also address local school operations and any other similar activities that would be affected by the movement of large trucks. As part of the plan, the applicant shall fund a temporary city employee to act as the Haul Route Manager for the city. This person shall be responsible for managing the plan and shall report directly to the City Engineer or the Director of Public Works. No permits of any kind shall be issued until the Haul Route Management Plan is approved by both Directors and the Plan Manager hired.
15. The maximum size of the proposed light wells shall be the minimum required by the building code
16. Applicable tree protection guidelines shall be strictly adhered to during all phases of construction.
17. Chain-link protection barriers of the requisite size shall be installed around all protected trees to be retained as part of the project. Said fencing shall be

inspected by the City prior to issuance of any grading or building permits, and shall remain in place during all phases of construction.

18. Primary roof and wall colors shall be reviewed and approved by staff prior to issuance of building permits.

Public Works Conditions:

19. The applicant shall submit a preliminary grading plan, indicating elevation contours, on-site drainage flow and BMPs in conjunction with plan check.
20. The project shall comply with Los Angeles County's Low Impact Development Standard.
21. This project **disturbs less than one acre of land**, the project is subject to the following minimum construction requirements:
 - Sediments from areas disturbed by construction shall be retained on site, using structural drainage controls to the maximum extent practicable, and stockpiles of soil shall be properly contained to minimize sediment transport from the site to streets, drainage facilities, or adjacent properties via runoff, vehicle tracking, or wind.
 - Construction-related materials, wastes, spills or residues shall be retained on site to minimize transport from the site to streets, drainage facilities, or adjoining properties by wind or runoff.
 - Runoff from equipment and vehicle washing shall be contained at construction sites unless treated to remove sediments and pollutants.
22. The site plan shall indicate existing/proposed sewer mainline on Alta Canyada Road, and existing/proposed point of connection (lateral) serving the project.
23. Prior to any construction (including, but not limited to, drive approaches, sidewalks, curb and gutter, etc.), trenching or grading within public or private street right-of-way, the applicant shall submit a street improvement plan consistent with the approved Site Plan and conditions of approval and obtain encroachment permits from the Engineering Division.
24. Any proposed mailbox structure shall be approved and permitted by Public Works.

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