

CITY OF **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

September 13, 2016 Meeting

Applicant:

Craig Stoddard
4452 Ocean View Blvd. #200
Montrose, CA 91012

Case Type / Number:

Second Floor Review 16-11
Floor Area Review 16-04

Property Owner:

Brian and Lisa Palmer
5037 Hill Street
La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011

Site Address:

5037 Hill Street

Case Planner:

Chris Gjolme ~ Planner

1. Request:

The request is for Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review to construct a new 2-story residence and detached garage comprising 5,793 sq. ft. on a 20,992 sq. ft. lot with a width of 70 feet. The existing single-story residence would be demolished in conjunction with project approval.

2. Location:

The site is located on the west side of Hill Street, one property south of its intersection with Green Lane, in the R-1-15,000 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 area:	20,992 sq. ft.
Proposed 1 st floor:	2,895 sq. ft.
Proposed 2 nd floor:	2,035 sq. ft.
Proposed detached garage:	863 sq. ft.
Total:	5,793 sq. ft.
FAR	0.28

5. General Plan / Zoning / Existing Land Use:

The Land Use Map identifies the site as Low Density Residential – up to 4 Dwelling Units per Acre. The property is designated R-1-15,000 (Single Family Residential – 15,000 Square Foot Minimum Lot Size). The site is developed with a single-story residence, detached garage and rear yard swimming pool, which would be demolished in conjunction with project approval.

6. Environmental Impact Review:

Staff has determined that the proposed Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review 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:

None

8. Pending and Potential Actions:

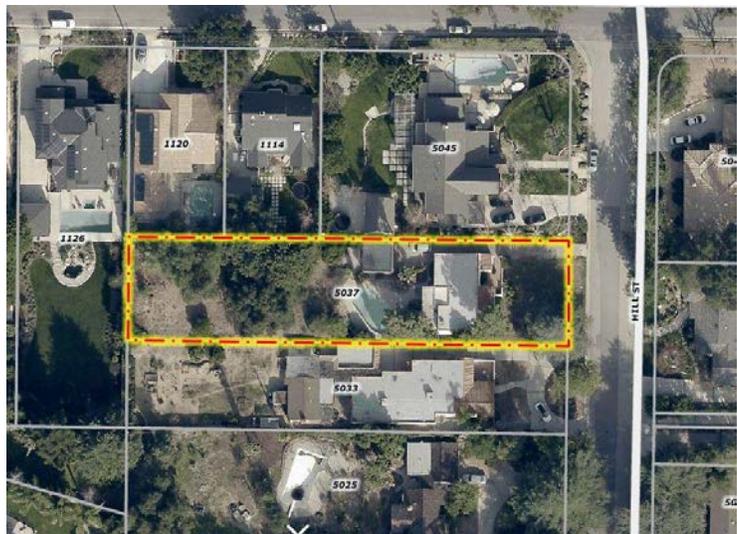
Plan check, Fire Department review and approval and issuance of building permit.

9. Staff Analysis:

A. Context:

Hill Street ascends gently to the north and retains an intimate and quaint character. The short subject block contains 12 properties and is bounded by Olive Lane to the south and Green Lane to the north. Five lots, including the site, front the street along the west side. To the east, four homes on flag lots are obscured from direct street view.

Residential development is varied in terms of house size and style, with Traditional, Tudor, Spanish and Mediterranean homes evident along the block. In general, older homes tend to be one-story homes while newer construction typically renders two-story structures, inclusive of the adjacent home to the north, expanded in 2002, and a large 2-story estate under construction two lots to the south at 5025 Hill



Street.

With regard to basic proportion, the subject lot is a deep rectangle with a 70-foot width and 300-foot depth, and comprises just under 21,000 sq. ft. In addition to the corner property at 5045 Hill Street, two lots fronting on Green Lane (1114 & 1120) share rear property lines with the site's north side property line. The site is developed with a 2,000 sq. ft. single-story home of Spanish design. A driveway extends along the north side property line to a detached garage positioned behind the residence. A lone large deodar cedar distinguishes the front yard. Forward of this tree, within the street right-of-way, is a stand of mail boxes serving several lots on the street.

B. Project Description:

The existing home would be demolished and replaced with a new 2-story residence, basement and 3-car garage. The proposed residence is compliant with regard to all code standards, including floor area, setbacks, and height.

The 1st floor would be distinguished by large interior spaces; a living room and library to the front and single space comprised by the kitchen, nook and family room to the rear. The entry foyer would lead into a central hall that would bisect the floor plan. The front and rear elevations would be graced by a spacious covered front porch and patio trellis. A detached 3-car garage would be to the rear, along the south side of the lot. Accordingly, driveway access would be flipped from north to south. The garage would be proximate to a large oak tree, but with 11'-6" of separation, a protection buffer in excess of the 9-foot requirement would be provided. Total 1st-floor area inclusive of the garage would be 3,758 sq. ft. Minimum setbacks to the north and south would be 8 feet and 10 feet, respectively, as measured to the basement light well retaining wall and chimney, with the residence demonstrating a slightly increased and varied setback on both sides.

The basic configuration and efficiency of the 2nd floor would match the 1st floor below, with an elongated volume space dividing bedroom space to the north and south. The master suite would be to the rear and would comprise a 1/3 of the 2nd floor. The design does not employ modulated second-floor walls to the sides; thus, consistent 16-foot side setbacks are proposed to the north and south. Total 2nd-floor area would be approximately 2,035 sq. ft., increasing the size of the house to 4,930 sq. ft. Inclusion of the detached garage would increase total project floor area to 5,793 sq. ft., within the 5,948 sq. ft. limit for the lot. *(staff would note that 2nd-floor area called out as 'attic' was not included in the floor area tabulation on Sheet A1.1. This area does qualify for inclusion and staff's floor area calculations have been adjusted.)*

A compliant 47'-6" front setback would be provided as measured to the support columns for the front porch. The front setback would increase to 52 feet at the living room's rounded bay and 58 feet as measured to the 2nd-floor volume space at the foyer. Consistent with Traditional/Cape Cod design, mid-pitched roofs would be used, achieving a height of 29 feet, 3 feet below the 32-foot limit for the lot. Hips would terminate prior to achieving a single union/ridge, thereby necessitating use of a flat roof component. Said flat roof would comprise

approximately 16-17% of the overall roof profile, well below the 25% threshold for flat roof review.

A final aspect of the project, beyond the scope of Second-floor or Floor Area Review, involves a sizeable basement, which is exempt from floor area calculations. Lengthy light wells with compliant 8 and 10-foot side setbacks would flank the basement to the north and south. In all, the request compares, and complies, with code standards as follows:

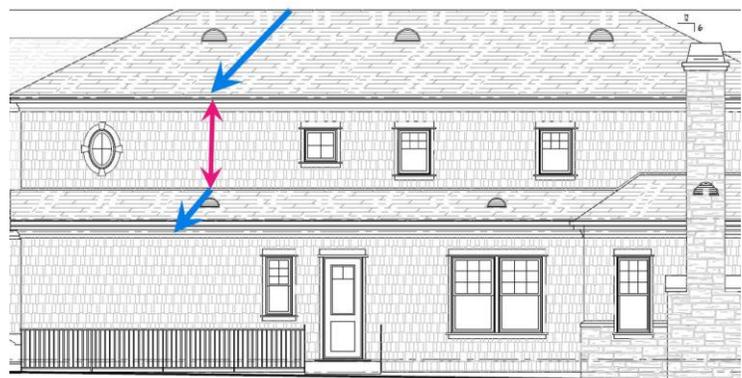
	Standard:	Project:
Floor Area:	5,948 sf	5,793 sq. ft.
Front SB:	47'-6"	47'-6" min.
North Side SB		
1 st floor:	8 feet	8 feet
2 nd floor:	16 feet	16 feet
South Side SB		
1 st floor:	8 feet	10 feet
2 nd floor:	16 feet	16 feet
Rear SB:	15 feet	75' +/- (gar.)
Height:	32 feet	29 feet

C. Second Floor Review:

Discussion

The home’s appropriateness for the site and compatibility within the area is validated by a closer analysis of the floor area and design employed. Although a total of almost 5,800 sq. ft. is proposed, over 1,000 sq. ft. would be comprised by the detached rear garage and interior volume space – area that is not especially prominent or contributory to the home’s overall visual scale. Absent this area, the proposed residence would comprise less than 4,900 sq. ft.

The home’s design is Traditional with Cape Cod influences. Beyond the recession of the 2nd-floor to the front and sides, the front elevation would be articulated by the curved living room bay, stately front porch and subtle projection of the upper volume space bay. Texture and detail are also evident in the use of shingle-siding throughout and a stone wainscot to the front.



At 29 feet, the structure’s height would be well within code limits. The lack of varied 2nd-floor setbacks to the sides is compensated by the pitch and height of the hips; the primary impression would be that of the roof’s sloped form, as opposed to a more rigid vertical form that could result from taller facades (highlighted above). Window size

would be decreased noticeably at the 2nd-floor level. The proposed array is sensible and proportionate to the respective interior space and not viewed as excessive or insensitive to neighboring properties.

Staff's only comment pertains to a consequence of driveway relocation to the south – this would preclude the opportunity of major landscape enhancements along the south side of the new home for the benefit of the adjacent one-story residence at 5033 Hill Street. It would, however, align the subject and neighboring driveways and create adequate separation between the two homes. Staff would note the provision of a new fence topped with flowering vines along the south side property line where proximate to the residence.

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

- ***Neighborhood Compatibility*** (the size of the home is proportionate to the subject lot and comparable to other 2-story homes in the immediate area while the simplicity and harmony of the design would contribute to the quality of the overall street setting.)
- ***Site Development*** (the home would utilize existing pad area and provide setbacks that meet or exceed code standards, while the total floor area proposed is achieved by two separate structures and eased by a primary structure height three feet below the limit for the site.)
- ***Physical Design Components*** (The home's design is Traditional with Cape Cod influences and includes facade and roof articulation, wall texture, and ornamental details that add visual interest. A substantial building program would be eased by tasteful modulation at both floor levels and setbacks commensurate to the project's scale.)
- ***Landscaping*** (A number of landscape enhancements are proposed as part of the project. Relocating the driveway to the south and its provision of paved access to a detached garage well to the rear would preclude major planting to the south for the benefit of a smaller one-story neighbor. However, a new fence with flowering vines is proposed in this area.)

Findings

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

The proposed 2-story residence complies with required front, rear and side yard setbacks, including both first and second floor side yard setbacks and angle plane requirements. The design includes distinction and relief between floor levels and highly articulated facades and roofs. Existing trees would be retained to the front and rear, while a number of other landscaping enhancements are proposed, including a screen fence to the south. Staff supports the finding.

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

A diverse mix of house sizes and styles are found in the neighborhood, including several two-story homes. While the proposal would alter the character of the subject property by introducing a large 2-story structure, it would blend in with the neighborhood since the design is tasteful and built in proportion to the parcel, and visually adequate setbacks would be provided at both floor levels. Staff supports the finding.

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

The proposed project meets required setbacks with regard to the second-floor, as well as angle plane requirements. The area's topography is not conducive to long-range or significant views over and beyond the subject property. The 2nd-floor window array is not excessive and would not compromise the privacy of neighboring properties to the north and south. 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 project would be consistent with the City's Residential Design Guidelines since the massing, materials and detailing utilized by the project are consistent with Traditional architectural styles with Cape Cod influences. The proposed residence is reasonably designed in relation to the subject lot and character of the immediate area, and would not yield an adverse design, massing, view or privacy effect. Staff supports the finding.

D. Floor Area Review:

Discussion

The project presents an attractive design, tasteful massing and provides setbacks commensurate to the home's overall scale. Ample setback opportunity is precluded to the sides by the lot's modest width, but the 8 and 16-foot setbacks proposed meet the requisite for projects in excess of 4,500 sq. ft. Available lot width and the potential for a crowded front elevation is taken into account by the rear siting of the garage. In addition, total project area would be realized by two separate structures, as opposed to a single larger mass, while the residence offers building height at less than allowable limits to compensate for its size. In short, the floor area as proposed is appropriate considering the lot's configuration and size and precedent of other mid-large two-story homes in the immediate area.

Address	Lot Size	*House Size	FAR	Stories
5010 Hill Street	15,268 sf	3,088 sf	0.20	1
5014 Hill Street	28,029 sf	2,075 sf	0.07	2
5024 Hill Street	17,912 sf	4,823 sf	0.27	2
5025 Hill Street	38,987 sf	6,520 sf	0.17	2

5026 Hill Street	14,940 sf	4,241 sf	0.28	2
5033 Hill Street	17,857 sf	2,193 sf	0.12	1
5034 Hill Street	19,928 sf	1,881 sf	0.09	1
5038 Hill Street	14,049 sf	2,787 sf	0.20	1
5044 Hill Street	14,404 sf	4,387 sf	0.30	2
5045 Hill Street	21,537 sf	4,675 sf	0.22	2
1053 Olive Lane	13,132 sf	2,339 sf	0.18	1
1101 Olive Lane	28,497 sf	3,815 sf	0.13	2
AVERAGE:	20,378 sf	3,569 sf	0.18	n/a
PROJECT:	20,928 sf	4,930 sf	0.24	2

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

A review of the above Floor Area Matrix indicates variation in parcel and house size within the immediate area, with parcels ranging from 13,000 sq. ft. to 39,000 sq. ft. and homes between 1,880 sq. ft. and 6,500 sq. ft. Though the proposal would be above the 'average' house size, the project's 0.24 FAR is not excessive or significantly beyond the 0.18 average, and is comparable to the individual FARs of 0.20, 0.22, 0.27, 0.28 and 0.30 demonstrated by 6 other proximate homes.

Finding

- 1. Through its siting, screening, and/or massing effects, the project is compatible with its neighborhood setting.**

The design of the new home is tasteful and well-conceived, while the overall scale is consistent with others in the area, and would be visually minimized by an ample front setback and overall height at less than allowable limits. Moreover, the total floor area proposed would be comprised by two separate structures, as opposed to a single larger mass. No significant disruption to the character of the neighborhood is anticipated. Staff supports the finding.

E. Summary/Recommendation:

Based on the above discussions and related Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review findings, staff has concluded that the proposal is reasonably designed in relation to its site and area, and would not adversely impact the quality of the immediate neighborhood. For that reason, staff recommends that the project **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

C: Craig Stoddard/4452 Ocean View Blvd. #200/Montrose, CA/91012
 Brian and Lisa Palmer/5037 Hill Street/La Canada Flintridge, CA/91011

CITY OF **LACAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**

RESOLUTION NO. 16-xx

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
APPROVING SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 16-11
AND FLOOR AREA REVIEW 16-04
FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY RESIDENCE,
DETACHED GARAGE AND RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS
AT 5037 HILL STREET
AS REQUESTED BY
BRIAN AND LISA PALMER**

WHEREAS, a request by Brian and Lisa Palmer has been received for Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review to allow the construction of a new two-story residence and detached garage in excess of 4,500 sq. ft. on a lot less than 80 feet in width, said request attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on September 13, 2016, 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 Categorical 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 September 13, 2016, regarding the application for Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review at 5037 Hill Street, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; 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.**

The proposed 2-story residence complies with required front, rear and side yard setbacks, including both first and second floor side yard setbacks and angle plane requirements. The design includes distinction and relief between floor levels and highly articulated facades and roofs. Existing trees would be retained to the front and rear,

while a number of other landscaping enhancements are proposed, including a screen fence to the south. Staff supports the finding.

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

A diverse mix of house sizes and styles are found in the neighborhood, including several two-story homes. While the proposal would alter the character of the subject property by introducing a large 2-story structure, it would blend in with the neighborhood since the design is tasteful and built in proportion to the parcel, and visually adequate setbacks would be provided at both floor levels. Staff supports the finding.

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

The proposed project meets required setbacks with regard to the second-floor, as well as angle plane requirements. The area's topography is not conducive to long-range or significant views over and beyond the subject property. The 2nd-floor window array is not excessive and would not compromise the privacy of neighboring properties to the north and south. 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 project would be consistent with the City's Residential Design Guidelines since the massing, materials and detailing utilized by the project are consistent with Traditional architectural styles with Cape Cod influences. The proposed residence is reasonably designed in relation to the subject lot and character of the immediate area, and would not yield an adverse design, massing, view or privacy effect. Staff supports the finding.

Floor Area Review:

1. Through its siting, screening, and/or massing effects, the project is compatible with its neighborhood setting.

The design of the new home is tasteful and well-conceived, while the overall scale is consistent with others in the area, and would be visually minimized by an ample front setback and overall height at less than allowable limits. Moreover, the total floor area proposed would be comprised by two separate structures, as opposed to a single larger mass. No significant disruption to the character of the neighborhood is anticipated. Staff supports the finding.

Section 2:

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Planning Commission approves the Second-floor Review and Floor Area Review requests at 5037 Hill Street, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 13th day of September, 2016.

Chair of the Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary to the Planning Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 16-11
FLOOR AREA REVIEW 16-04
5037 Hill Street

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 16-11 and Floor Area Review 16-04.
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 16-11 and Floor Area Review 16-04, Sheets A1.1-A3.2, 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 and Floor Area 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.

Planning Conditions:

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.
14. Applicable tree protection guidelines shall be strictly adhered to during all phases of construction.
15. Prior to issuance of building permits, chain link protection barriers of the requisite size shall be installed around all protected trees within the construction zone.
16. Prior to issuance of building permits, color and material samples shall be submitted for review and approval by staff.

Public Works Conditions:

17. Project indicates export of soil. Prior to issuance of Grading permit, Applicant shall acquire self-haul approval from the Public Works Department, submitting a haul route plan, debris management plan and a security deposit. The Haul Route Management 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 Haul Route Manager hired.
18. Project shall comply with Los Angeles County’s Low Impact Development Standard.

19. 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.
20. Prior to finalizing Building permit, replace driveway approach and curb/gutter fronting the property.
21. 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.
22. Any proposed mailbox structure shall be approved and permitted by Public Works.

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