



City of Redwood City
Community Development & Transportation Department

CEQA COMPLIANCE AND EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

Memo

To: Planning Commission
From: Emilie Wolfson, Associate Planner
Date: May 4, 2021
Re: CEQA Exemption Class 32 for the Proposed Residential Project on 150 Charter Street

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 PROJECT TITLE

150 Charter Street Residential Project

1.2 LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS

City of Redwood City
Community Development Department
1017 Middlefield Road
Redwood City, CA 94063

1.3 CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER

Emilie Wolfson, Associate Planner
City of Redwood City
650.780.5939

1.4 PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS

LMT Home Corporation
1667 San Carlos Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070

1.5 APPLICATION NUMBERS

AP2018-085, TM2018-010, CP2019-006, PD2019-007

1.6 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

110 Charter and 150 Charter Street
Redwood City, CA 94063

Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 054-112-180 & 054-112-170 & 054-112-160

General Plan Designation: [Mixed Use – Corridor \(MUC\)](#)

Zoning District: Mixed-Use Corridor – [El Camino Real \(MUC-ECR\)](#)

The project site is a flat lot which consists of three parcels located on Charter Street and is approximately 600 feet from El Camino Real. The site is currently developed with a grocery store and surface parking that would be demolished as part of this project. The project would combine the parcels to create a 78,341 sq. ft. site located in the Mixed-Use Corridor – El Camino Real (MUC-ECR) Zoning District. The project site is also adjacent to the Woodside Central Shopping Center located to the east and abuts a large retail structure (Target) which is part of the Shopping Center to the southeast of the project site. . To the immediate north are Caltrans railroad tracks, residences are interspersed with auto service garages, a gas station, other markets, and a church are located to the west, and to the south are several surface parking lots for the Woodside Central Shopping Center.

1.7 PROPOSED PROJECT

The applicant proposes to construct a 109,436 square foot, four-story 72 unit residential building. More specifically, the proposed project would consist of the demolition of the existing grocery store and surface parking lot. The project consists of seven 2-bedroom units and sixty-five 3-bedroom units which would be for-sale including 11 below market rate units including (1) two-bedroom unit and ten (10) three bedroom units at the moderate income level. The proposed building would have a total height of 50'-0". The project includes a total of 144 parking spaces for the residential units, 18 guest parking spaces, and 38 bicycle spaces all of which are located on the ground floor within a shared podium parking structure underneath the residential units. The project also includes residential courtyards intended to provide areas of open space and recreation for the residents. The project would front Charter Street with pedestrian access on Charter Street and vehicular access through a private driveway on the west side of Charter street and a shared ingress/egress easement on the east side of Charter Street.

2.0 CEQA DETERMINATION

15332. In-Fill Development Projects.

Yes No

 15332(a) Establishes that the project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Mixed Use Corridor (MUC), which "... allows for the reinvention of key corridors to support major transit and complementary commercial and residential uses, encouraging transit use, bicycle use, and pedestrian activity." With the proposed project less than ¼ mile from El Camino Real, the residents would be in close proximity to utilize the existing SamTrans bus line. The project provides

bicycle parking in excess of what is required and would be encouraged by the use of existing multi-modal connections to access the project.

The project is consistent with the Mixed Use Corridor General Plan designation. The project is within 750 ft. of El Camino Real and provides for multi-family dwellings at approximately 40 du/acre. The project is consistent with zoning regulations including setbacks, height, open space, and density.

Yes No

15332(b) Establishes that the proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.

The project site is a rectangular-shaped lot of approximately 78,341 square feet (1.8 Acres), is located within city limits (two blocks north of El Camino Real). Nearby uses include the Woodside Central Shopping Center located to the east, railroad tracks to the north, a storage facility and church to the west and several surface parking lots for the Woodside Central Shopping Center to the south.

Yes No

15332(c) Establishes that the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.

The project site consists of 78,341 square feet with an existing grocery store and a paved asphalt parking lot that would be demolished for the development of a new four-story 72 unit residential project. Due to its location in a highly urbanized area, as well as due to the fact that the site is completely paved, the site has no value as habitat. Additionally, the project site is not located near or adjacent to any vegetation community that would support any wildlife movement, travel, or habitat corridor identified in the General Plan EIR (Figure 4-4.2).

Yes No

15332(d) Establishes that approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

Would the project:	Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would the project:	Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to air quality .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to water quality .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Traffic

SB 743, signed into law in 2013, updated guidelines on evaluating transportation impacts under CEQA. Starting on July 1, 2020, a city must review a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of LOS (Level of Service). VMT measures how much actual auto travel (additional miles driven) a proposed project would create on roads.

On July 27, 2020 the City Council adopted a [Transportation Analysis Manual](#) implementing new environmental criteria (VMT) in accordance with State law. The Manual provides direction on transportation analysis including project types that are exempted from additional CEQA transportation analysis.

Projects located in Transit Priority Areas (TPA) are among the project types identified as exempt from additional CEQA transportation analysis. TPAs, defined as sites within ½ mile walkshed around major transit stops (e.g. Redwood City Transit Center Station) or within ¼ mile walkshed around high quality transit corridors (e.g. El Camino Real), would not be subject to additional CEQA transportation analysis if it also meets the following criteria:

CRITERIA	PROPOSED PROJECT
FAR Greater than 0.75	1.40 FAR
Total 500,000 sq. ft. or less	109,436 sq. ft.
Parking does not exceed minimum required in Zoning Ordinance	Zoning requires 144 spaces, and 18 guest spaces, projects provides 144 spaces, and 18 guest spaces
Project consistent with General Plan or applicable Specific Plan	Project consistent with General Plan and Zoning
Existing on-site affordable residential units or maintained or increased	The proposed project will include 11 affordable residential units. Currently there are no existing on-site affordable units as the site is occupied by a grocery store and parking lot.
Less than significant levels of VMT are expected due to project specific or location specific information	Site located within ¼ mile walkshed around high quality transit corridor (e.g. El Camino Real)

The proposed residential project is located within ¼ mile walkshed around El Camino Real, where the SamTrans Route ECR runs every 15 minutes, meets the additional required criteria, and is considered exempt from additional CEQA transportation analysis. Therefore, the impact associated with the project would be **less than significant**.

While LOS is not considered a CEQA impact, development plans are reviewed by staff to ensure consistency with City design standards and that they do not conflict with any adopted plans, such as the General Plan, or policies. Any identified deficiencies shall be addressed as conditions of project approval. Based on trip generation rates published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition (2017), the proposed project is estimated to generate approximately 53 trips (0.74/unit) during the AM peak hour and 71 trips (0.99/unit) during the PM peak hour. Based on the trip credits from the existing supermarket which is approximately 10,000 square feet, the project would result in a net increase of 15 trips during the AM peak hour and a net decrease of 21 trips during the PM peak hour¹, and as a result, the proposed project would still result in less than the 100 PM peak hour trip threshold the City has established as a benchmark for needing a traffic study.

The projects trips were calculated using the formula for single-family homes as a conservative approach since single-family homes generate more trips than townhomes under the ITE standards.

Noise

Multifamily townhomes are a permitted land use and would not cause a permanent substantial increase in the existing noise environment or exceed the ambient noise level standards established in the General Plan (Figure 4) and Chapter 24 (Noise Regulation) of the Redwood City Municipal Code. Operation of the proposed 72 townhomes would potentially result in minor increases in the ambient noise level due to project traffic and operational noise from the proposed outdoor courtyards proposed by the project. Residential use from the proposed outdoor space shall not exceed 55 dBA in noise level at any point along the property line per the General Plan noise element. The project including a new 18-foot-tall cement plaster wall above the podium slab to provide a sound barrier along the perimeter of the courtyards and will help address both exterior noise coming from outside the project, as well as help with sound escaping outside of the project to adjacent properties.

There are uniformly applicable development standards that would be applied to temporary noise associated with construction, such as hours of construction (COA#67) and noise regulations governing the temporary impact

¹ AM Peak Grocery Trips= (10,000/1000)*3.84=38 AM Trips; PM Peak Grocery Trips= (10,000/1000)*92.4= 92 PM Trips

of construction activities. Staff will conduct a preconstruction meeting (COA#69) with the applicant to implement on-site noise mitigation. Staff finds that the noise impacts associated with long-term operation and temporary construction would be **less than significant**.

Air Quality

The applicant submitted an Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Study, prepared by EMC Planning Group dated December 2020. The Air Quality Study identified that temporary air quality impacts would result from construction activities but would not exceed BAAQMD project-level thresholds. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project are the homes across Charter Street, approximately 70 feet west of the project site. The distance to the nearest residences and the project site is within the 500-foot screening distance recommend by CARB. Receptors are within both distances. Therefore, exposure of sensitive receptors to Toxic Area Contaminants (TACs) from heavy equipment diesel exhaust during construction is a potentially significant impact, however the consultant suggested two conditions of approval prior to and during construction that would address the potential impact. The first recommended COA is already required by the City (COA #40) and the second recommendation has been included as COA # 77. Operational emissions would be due to vehicle trips, energy use, and area sources; however, the proposed project would not exceed BAAQMD project-level thresholds for operational emissions. Thus, temporary construction and long-term regional impacts to air quality would be **less than significant**. Furthermore, the proposed project would generate a substantially lower volume of greenhouse gas emissions than does the existing baseline use, and would have a positive GHG emissions impact. Staff has reviewed the technical report and concurs with its conclusions.

Water Quality

The applicant submitted a Water Quality Study and Utility Report prepared by EMC Planning Group dated October 2020. The Water Quality Study identified that with implementation of applicable laws and regulations, the proposed project would not violate water quality standards or contribute additional sources of polluted runoff during construction or operation. Water quality impacts would be **less than significant**. The proposed project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site and would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater systems. Runoff adjacent to the project site would continue to enter the local stormwater drainage system through curb inlets on Charter Street. Moreover, the Utility Report concluded that project would treat all stormwater on site to meet C.3 requirements. Existing regulations, including the municipal code and the Municipal Regional Stormwater National Pollutant discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, would be implemented through the structural stormwater improvements, including the installation of a detention and bio-filtration treatment area to detain runoff. As such impacts associated with substantial erosion or siltation on-or-off-site and would not

create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater systems. Impacts associated with erosion, siltation, or exceedance of existing stormwater drainage capacity **would be less than significant**. The project site is not located in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area and is not subject to flooding, therefore the proposed project would result in no impact with exposing people or structures to a risk of loss, injury, or death associated with flooding. As of October 2020, the state Department of Water Resources has not approved a sustainable groundwater management plan for the San Mateo Plain sub basin and a groundwater sustainability agency has not been formed for the sub basin. Because there is no sustainable groundwater management plan in effect, the project would not conflict with or obstruct such a plan and there would be no impact. Staff has reviewed the technical reports and concurs with its conclusions.

Yes No

 15332(e) Establishes the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The applicant submitted conceptual civil drawings including a utility plan which details the existing and proposed public and private infrastructure to serve the proposed development. The project would be conditioned to underground utilities (COA #27), and provide sewer improvements (COA #28) at building permit submittal. The Project would be required to demonstrate that the water main meets the domestic and fire flow requirements (COA #38). The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

CEQA DETERMINATION

Based on an examination of the project, supporting information, and analysis contained herein, the project is found to be exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to Section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines.



Signature: Emilie Wolfson, Associate Planner

5/4/2021
Date:

Source Document: [General Plan Environmental Impact Report, dated December 2010 Project Plans](#)
[EMC Planning Group Revised Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report, dated March 31, 2021](#)
[EMC Planning Group Water Quality Study, dated October 15, 2020](#)

[Wilson IHRIG Noise Study, dated October 16, 2020](#)
[Wilson IHRIG Vibration Report, dated October 16, 2020](#)