

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
200 NORTH SPRING STREET, ROOM 395
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

(PRC Section 21152; CEQA Guidelines Section 15062)

Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21152(b) and CEQA Guidelines § 15062, the notice should be posted with the County Clerk by mailing the form and posting fee payment to the following address: Los Angeles County Clerk/Recorder, Environmental Notices, P.O. Box 1208, Norwalk, CA 90650. Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21167 (d), the posting of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to reliance on an exemption for the project. Failure to file this notice as provided above, results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

PARENT CASE NUMBER(S) / REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS
DIR-2023-3149-TOC-HCA / Transit Oriented Communities

LEAD CITY AGENCY: City of Los Angeles (Department of City Planning)
CASE NUMBER: ENV-2023-3150-CE

PROJECT TITLE: 4516 West Finley Apartments
COUNCIL DISTRICT: 4 - Raman

PROJECT LOCATION (Street Address and Cross Streets and/or Attached Map): 4516 West Finley Avenue
Map attached: [ ]

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: [x] Additional page(s) attached.
The proposed project is for the demolition of an existing single-family dwelling, accessory building, and detached garage and the construction, use and maintenance of a four-story, 23,780 square-foot, 21-unit multi-family residential building, measuring 41 feet in height. The proposed project includes the removal of 1 existing Street Tree and 1 existing Protected Tree. For purposes of this CEQA, this analysis assumes a worst-case-scenario of three (3) Street Tree removals. The Protected Tree is proposed for replacement at a 4:1 ratio. The proposed project will include the grading and export of approximately 5,897 cubic yards of earth.

NAME OF APPLICANT / OWNER: Daiana Yerevanian Kamberian (Owner)

CONTACT PERSON (If different from Applicant/Owner above): Armen Kazanchyan (Representative)
(AREA CODE) TELEPHONE NUMBER | EXT.: (818) 395-2686

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check all boxes, and include all exemptions, that apply and provide relevant citations.)
STATE CEQA STATUTE & GUIDELINES
[ ] STATUTORY EXEMPTION(S)
Public Resources Code Section(s) \_\_\_\_\_
[x] CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION(S) (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15301-15333 / Class 1-Class 33)
CEQA Guideline Section(s) / Class(es) Section 15332 / Class 32
[ ] OTHER BASIS FOR EXEMPTION (E.g., CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) or (b)(4) or Section 15378(b))

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: [x] Additional page(s) attached
In-fill development meeting the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines 15332: (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. (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services
[x] None of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption(s) apply to the Project.
[ ] The project is identified in one or more of the list of activities in the City of Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines as cited in the justification.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATING THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOUND THE PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT.
If different from the applicant, the identity of the person undertaking the project.

CITY STAFF USE ONLY:
CITY STAFF NAME AND SIGNATURE: Dylan Lawrence
STAFF TITLE: City Planning Associate

ENTITLEMENTS APPROVED: See Case No. DIR-2023-3149-TOC-HCA



## JUSTIFICATION FOR CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION CASE NO. ENV-2023-3150-CE

The Department of City Planning 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 Section 15332 (Class 32), Case No. ENV-2023-3150-CE, and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies.

### **Project Description**

The proposed project is for the demolition of an existing single-family dwelling, accessory building, and detached garage and the construction, use and maintenance of a four-story, 23,780 square-foot, 21-unit multi-family residential building, measuring 41 feet in height. The applicant is setting aside 10 percent of the total 21 units and a minimum of seven (7) percent of the base 14 units, respectively, for Extremely Low-Income Households. The building will contain 23,780 square feet of floor area with a 2.95:1 FAR. The unit mix will comprise 6 one-bedroom units and 15 two-bedroom units. There will be 26 automobile parking spaces located in subterranean and first-floor garages. The project also includes 25 bicycle parking spaces, and 2,608 square feet of usable open space.

Per the Tree Report dated March 29, 2024 (and reviewed by the Urban Forestry Division on July 8, 2024), prepared by Arsen Margossian (ISA Certified Arborist #WE-7233A), there are three (3) existing Street Trees in the public right-of-way, one (1) Protected Tree on-site, and 13 non-protected trees on-site. The project proposes the removal of one (1) Mexican Fan Palm Street Tree, one (1) Protected Coast Live Oak tree, and 13 non-protected trees on-site. The project proposes to plant three (3) 24-inch box trees on-site, along with four (4) new Coast Live Oak trees.

As there are no approved right-of-way improvement plans, the project considered will assume the worst-case scenario of removal of all street trees. However, this analysis gives no rights to the applicant to remove any street tree. No street trees may be removed without prior approval of Urban Forestry based on compliance with LAMC Section 62.169 and 62.170 and applicable findings.

### **CEQA Section 15300.2: Exceptions to the Use of Categorical Exemptions**

The City has considered whether the Proposed Project is subject any of the five (5) exceptions that would prohibit the use of a categorical exemption as set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. There are five (5) Exceptions which must be considered in order to find a project

exempt under CEQA: (a) Cumulative Impacts; (b) Significant Effect; (c) Scenic Highways; (d) Hazardous Waste Sites; and (e) Historical Resources.

**(a) Cumulative Impacts.** *All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

The project is located at 4516 West Finley Avenue within the Hollywood Community Plan. There are currently 3 projects, dating back to October 1, 2019, which are either currently filed with the Department of City Planning or have received a Letter of Determination from the Department of City Planning but have yet to receive a Certificate of Occupancy from the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS). As such, there are projects within 1,320 feet of the same type and in the same place as the subject project.

PROJECTS WITHIN A QUARTER-MILE FROM THE SUBJECT SITE			
Address	Case Number	Date Filed	Scope of Work
1822 N Hillhurst Ave 1-4	DIR-2023-7014-SPP	10/22/2023	Change of use from apartment to acupuncture office (approved)
4544 W Los Feliz Blvd	DIR-2021-10084-TOC-HCA	12/9/2021	Demolition of a single-family dwelling and the construction of a 27-unit residential building (approved)
4521 W Melbourne Ave	DIR-2021-10788-SPP-HCA	12/22/2021	New duplex (approved)

According to SCAQMD, individual construction projects that do not exceed the SCAQMD’s recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Air Basin is in non-attainment. Interim thresholds were developed by DCP staff based on CalEEMod model runs relying on reasonable assumptions, consulting with AQMD staff, and surveying published air quality studies for which criteria air pollutants did not exceed the established SCAQMD construction and operational thresholds. Construction-related daily emissions at the project site would not exceed SCAQMD’s regional or localized significance thresholds. Therefore, the project’s contribution to cumulative construction-related regional emissions would not be cumulatively considerable and therefore would be less than significant. Construction of the project also would have a less-than-significant impact with regard to localized emissions.

As noise is a localized phenomenon and decreases in magnitude as distance from the source increases, only projects and ambient growth in the nearby area could combine with the proposed project to result in cumulatively considerable noise impacts. These above noted projects will begin construction and end construction at different timelines, with minor overlap between projects. Furthermore, a Noise Study prepared by Yorke Engineering on August 3, 2023, concluded that any cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Moreover, the proposed project includes a haul route approval for the export of up to 5,897 cubic yards of earth. According to Navigate LA, within 500 feet of the subject site, there are three (3) other haul routes approved and one (1) other haul route application being processed. The haul routes are for the following properties and during the following timeframes:

Approved Haul Route:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>
1. 4503-4561 W. Hollywood Blvd, 1513-1559 W. Hillhurst Ave, 4510-4514 W. Clayton Ave, 1562-1566 N. Lyman Place	June 11, 2019	December 11, 2021
2. 1922-1930 N. Hillhurst Ave	September 17, 2019	March 17, 2022
3. 1922-1930 N. Hillhurst Ave (Alt)	September 17, 2019	March 17, 2022

Pending Haul Route:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>
1. 2016 Rodney Dr	TBD	TBD

The haul route approval for the proposed project will include RCMs and recommended conditions prepared by LADOT to be considered by the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners to reduce the impacts of construction related hauling activity, monitor the traffic effects of hauling, and reduce haul trips in response to congestion. The applicant team submitted a Soils Report prepared by Applied Earth Sciences on January 3, 2023 (with addendums on April 10, 2023 and May 31, 2023), which was approved by LADBS Grading Division on July 11, 2023, Log No. 124864-02. Therefore, no foreseeable cumulative impacts are expected and are unlikely to cumulatively contribute to air quality, construction traffic, and noise levels.

**(b) Significant Effect.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

As mentioned, the applicant proposes a 21-unit multi-family residential building in an area zoned and designated for such development, with a 50% density increase through the TOC Affordable Housing Incentive Program in exchange for affordable housing. All surrounding lots are developed with commercial and multi-family dwelling units. The project proposes a FAR of 2.95:1 which is within the maximum 3:1 FAR otherwise permitted. The proposed building will be four stories, with at-grade parking and one subterranean parking level in an area that is currently developed with buildings that range in height from two- to four-stories. In conjunction with the TOC Affordable Housing Incentive Program, the proposed building will not be unusual for the vicinity of the subject site and will be similar in scope to future residential buildings in the area that use the TOC Affordable Housing Incentive Program in exchange for affordable housing. Thus, there are no unusual circumstances which may lead to a significant effect on the environment.

**(c) Scenic Highways.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.*

As it relates to development along a Scenic Highway, 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. State Route 27 is located approximately 18 miles to the west of the subject property. Therefore, the subject site will not create any impacts within a designated state scenic highway.

- (d) Hazardous Waste.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

In regard to Hazardous Waste sites, 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. As such, the project would not be developed on a site identified as a hazardous site pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- (e) Historic Resources.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

The project site is improved with a single-family dwelling, a detached garage, and an accessory building, constructed in 1919 and 1920. Office of Historic Resources (OHR) staff confirmed via email on August 23, 2023 that the 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. However, OHR staff indicated that additional study was needed to ensure that the proposed project would not impact the abutting property to the east at 4510 West Finley Avenue, which is improved with St. Mary of the Angels Church (Historic-Cultural Monument No. 136). The applicant submitted a Historical Resources Assessment Report, dated December 27, 2023, and prepared by Sapphos Environmental, Inc., which confirmed that the proposed project would not create a substantial adverse effect resulting from loss of integrity to St. Mary of the Angels Church. The existing single-family dwelling, accessory building, and detached garage are proposed for demolition as part of the subject project. 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.

### **CEQA Determination – Class 32 Categorical Exemption Applies**

A project qualifies for a Class 32 Categorical Exemption if it is developed on an infill site and meets the conditions as follows: (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

- (a) The project is consistent with applicable general plan designation, applicable policies, and applicable zoning designations.**

The subject site is located within the Hollywood Community Plan area, is zoned R3-1XL and has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Medium Residential. As shown in the case file, the project is consistent with the applicable Hollywood Community Plan designation and policies and all applicable zoning designations and regulations in conjunction with the TOC Affordable Housing Incentive Program.

**(b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.**

The subject site is wholly within the City of Los Angeles, on a site that is approximately 0.26 acres. The surrounding area is characterized by lightly sloped topography, improved streets and residential and commercial development. The surrounding properties are within the R3-1XL and C4-1D Zones and are designated for Medium Residential and Neighborhood Office Commercial land uses, respectively. The abutting property to the east is improved with the St. Mary of the Angels Church (HCM No. 136). The abutting properties to the south are improved with a 2-story, fourplex residential building and a surface parking lot. The abutting properties to the west are improved with a 3-story, 14-unit apartment building and a 4-story, 15-unit apartment building. The adjacent properties to the north, across Finley Avenue, are improved with a 3-story, 10-unit multi-family residential building, a 2-story duplex residence, and a 2-story triplex residence.

**(c) The project has no value as a habitat for endangered species, rare, or threatened species.**

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. The applicant submitted a Tree Report prepared by Arsen Margossian, Certified Arborist # WE7233A, which concluded that there is one (1) Protected Tree on-site, three (3) existing Street Trees in the adjacent parkway, and 13 non-protected trees on-site. The Applicant proposes to remove one (1) Protected Coast Live Oak tree and replace it with four (4) Coast Live Oak trees. The project also proposes removal of one (1) Street Tree, subject to the approval of the Urban Forestry Division. The applicant will be required to improve the right-of-way. Prior to any work on the right-of-way, the applicant will be required to obtain approved plans from the Department of Public Works. As there currently is no approved right-of-way improvement plan and for purposes of conservative analysis and the requirements of CEQA, Planning has analyzed the worst-case potential for removal of all street trees. Note, no street tree or protected tree may be removed without prior approval of the Board of Public Works/Urban Forestry (BPW) under LAMC Sections 62.161 - 62.171. At the time of preparation of this CE, no approvals have been given for any tree removals on-site or in the right-of-way by BPW. Based on the above, Planning has required a Tree Report to identify all trees on the project site and in the right-of-way that could be impacted by the Project and to consider the potential removal of one (1) Protected Tree and three (3) Street Trees.

**(d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.**

The project will be subject to Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs), which require compliance with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinance, pollutant discharge, dewatering, stormwater mitigations, and Best Management Practices for stormwater runoff. These RCMs will ensure the project will not have significant impacts on noise and water.

Furthermore, the City of Los Angeles Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Calculator resulted in the proposed project having a net increase of 91 daily vehicle trips and a net increase of 623 daily VMT. Based on the VMT Calculator, the project is not required to perform VMT analysis under the VMT standards. The applicant team submitted a Noise Study prepared by Yorke Engineering on August 3, 2023, which details methods that would be used to ensure compliance with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinance. Therefore, no foreseeable cumulative impacts are expected. Interim thresholds were developed by DCP staff based on CalEEMod model runs relying on reasonable assumptions, consulting with AQMD staff, and

surveying published air quality studies for which criteria air pollutants did not exceed the established SCAQMD construction and operational thresholds. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant effects related to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

**(e) The proposed project has been reviewed by City staff and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.**

The project site will be adequately served by all public utilities and services given that the construction of a residential 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. As the project has been found to be categorically exempt from CEQA, the project is not anticipated to have a negative effect on the environment and no mitigation measures are required.