

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

DETERMINATION DATE: April 5, 2023
PROJECT NUMBER: PRJ2021-03654-(1-5)
PERMIT NUMBER(S): Advance Planning Project No. RPPL2021010116
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 1-5
PROJECT LOCATION: Countywide
CASE PLANNER: Cameron Robertson, Regional Planner
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Los Angeles County (“County”) completed an initial review for the above-mentioned project. Based on examination of the project proposal, the County proposes that an Exemption is the appropriate environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). The project qualifies as exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) and is consistent with the finding by the State Secretary for Resources or by local guidelines that this activity is covered by the common-sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

The proposed Residential Design Standards Ordinance (“Ordinance”) does not trigger or prompt the construction or alteration of facilities nor does it alter the intended land uses and development intensities planned for at any location by the General Plan, its component Area, Community, and Specific Plans, or by Los Angeles County Code Title 22. These regulations do not create a change in land use or density for any of the properties located within the unincorporated County. Future development subject to the Ordinance has either already been evaluated under CEQA at the Plan level or will undergo CEQA review as part of a discretionary review process at the project-specific level consistent with CEQA requirements. Therefore, the proposed Ordinance will not have a significant effect on the environment; and staff recommends that the project is exempt from CEQA.

SHAPING
TOMORROW

**ATTACHMENT TO NOTICE OF EXEMPTION
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS ORDINANCE**

1. Project Description

The Los Angeles County Residential Design Standards Ordinance (“Ordinance”) establishes development standards to guide residential development throughout the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (“County”). The proposed design standards are intended to result in well designed, sustainable projects that raise the overall design quality of development occurring in the County. The Ordinance amends Los Angeles County Code Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) and proposes new design standards that would apply to residential projects of all scales and typologies, ranging from a single-family residence to multi-family and mixed use residential projects. Existing countywide and community-specific development standards such as density, maximum lot coverage provisions, height, and parking requirements are not modified by the proposed design standards. The proposed design standards build upon the characteristics of both the natural and manmade environment that are unique to each community such as architectural style and scale of existing buildings. The proposed design standards address different elements of site and building design, building orientation, façade articulation, pedestrian connectivity to the public right-of-way, and building materials. No construction activities or specific developments are proposed as part of or prompted by this Ordinance.

2. Description of Project Site

The proposed Ordinance would only apply to the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, approximately 65 percent of the total land area in Los Angeles. The County stretches along 75 miles of the Pacific Coast of Southern California and is bordered by Orange County to the southeast, San Bernardino County to the east, Kern County to the north, and Ventura County to the west. It also includes two offshore islands, Santa Catalina Island and San Clemente Island. The unincorporated areas in the northern portion of Los Angeles County are covered by large amounts of sparsely populated and undeveloped land and include the Angeles National Forest, part of the Los Padres National Forest, and the Mojave Desert. The unincorporated areas in the southern portion of Los Angeles County consist of more urban and suburban communities in noncontiguous land areas.

3. Reasons Why This Project is Exempt

The Ordinance is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) per Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the “common sense” exemption, because it does not involve the construction or alteration of facilities that will have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed Ordinance does not trigger or prompt the construction or alteration of facilities nor does it alter the intended uses and intensities (including residential densities or building envelopes) planned for at any location by the General Plan, its component Area, Community, and Specific Plans, or by County Code Title 22. The Ordinance does not create a change in land use or density for any of the properties located within the unincorporated County. Future development subject to the ordinance either has already been evaluated under CEQA at the Plan level or will undergo CEQA review as part of a discretionary review process at the project-specific level consistent with CEQA requirements. Therefore, the proposed Ordinance will not have a significant effect on the environment.

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Section 15601.B.3 (Common Sense)

The activity is covered by the common-sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

Pursuant to this section, the proposed Ordinance fits within the general rule that CEQA only applies to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. No construction activities or specific developments are proposed as part of the proposed design standards, and future development impacted by the proposed design standards may require discretionary review and be analyzed separately on a project-specific level consistent with CEQA requirements. Therefore, the proposed design standards will not have a significant effect on the environment; and the activity is not subject to CEQA.