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SHELLY SCOTT

MARIN COUNTY CLERK

By A.Oxlaj Arevalo Deputy

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THIS SPACE FOR COUNTY CLERK'S USE ONLY

WHEN FILED MAIL TO:

**Marin County Community Development
Agency, Environmental Review Division
3501 Civic Center Drive, #308
San Rafael, Ca 94903**

Attn: Don Allee

NOTICE OF CEQA EXEMPTION

December 11, 2025

- 1. **Project Name:** Catholic Charities CYO Archdiocese of San Francisco Tree Removal Permit
- 2. **Project Location:** 530 Blackstone Drive, San Rafael
APN: 164-290-80
- 3. **Project Summary:** Tree Removal Permit approval to remove 17 trees on the grounds of the Catholic Charities property located at 530 Blackstone Drive, San Rafael. All trees proposed for removal are considered protected trees under Marin County Code § 22.120.030.
- 4. **Public Agency Approving Project:** Marin County Community Development Agency
- 5. **Project Sponsor:** Dennis Garcia
- 6. **CEQA Exemption Status:** CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3); 15301(h), Class 1; and 15304, Class 4.
- 7. **Reasons for Exemption:**

The County of Marin has concluded, upon thorough review of the administrative record, that the proposed project qualifies for exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Guidelines § 15061(b)(3). This determination is based on the assessment that the project is unlikely to result in any significant environmental impact. Although the project entails the removal of twenty-one (21) protected trees, four of which are either dead trees or in poor health and pose a hazard. This 3.2-acre parcel features steep terrain and dense woodlands. Even with the removal of trees, the site will continue to retain a substantial number of mature trees, native shrubs and vegetation, ensuring impacts to biological resources are minimized and that the natural ecosystem continues to thrive. In fact, a significant portion of the site will be preserved in its natural state post-improvement.

The project qualifies for exemption under the CEQA Guidelines, specifically Article 19, § 15301(h), which pertains to Existing Facilities. Class 1 exemption addresses activities that involve the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alterations of established public or private structures, facilities, mechanical systems, or topographical features, provided that there is negligible or no expansion of existing or previous uses. This exemption also

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encompasses the maintenance of existing landscaping, native vegetation, and water supply reservoirs. The determination of exemption for this project is based on the following findings:

The proposed project meets the key consideration for Class 1 exemptions, as it proposes no expansion of the existing residential structure. Specifically, the project proposes minor grading and site clearance to create parking spaces without expanding the footprints of the existing structure. There will be no new building or substantial expansion of the existing use proposed. The primary purpose of this project is to create on-site parking spaces. This will help traffic flow better by reducing the number of drivers searching for parking on the street and will further improve public safety by clearing potential road hazards, such as cars parked on the narrow public roads.

The project qualifies for exemption under the CEQA Guidelines, specifically Article 19, § 15304, Class 4, which consists of “minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes”, such as “new gardening or landscaping, including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire resistant landscaping.” The determination of exemption for this project is based on the following findings:

The proposed project does not change any existing land use regulations. Transitional housing is already permitted throughout the County wherever residential uses are permitted, pursuant to Government Code § 65583. CEQA Guidelines § 15304 (Class 4 Categorical Exemption) includes minor alteration of land and grading as part of this exemption. The project would expand the existing parking spaces, and the removal of the trees is necessary to accomplish the project goals. Therefore, the minor alteration of the land and grading are consistent with the exemption under 15304.

The County has considered the potential for significant impacts on the environment resulting from the specified activities and determined that there are no unusual circumstances that would result in significant effects on the environment constituting an exception to Classes 1 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in Section 15300.2 (c) of the CEQA Guidelines. The determination of exemption for this project is based on the following findings:

Further, the project, as proposed, does not trigger any of the exceptions in State CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2. Neither the project site nor any of the adjacent properties are listed in the California Register of Historical Resources or in the National Register of Historic Places. There are no designated scenic highways adjacent to the project site and the project site is not located on a hazardous waste site list compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5. Based on available data, there are no sensitive habitats, streams, or wetlands present on the site or within 100 feet of the proposed site improvement. No significant impacts due to unusual circumstances, nor any cumulatively significant impacts (such as traffic), were identified during the review process. Additionally, staff notes there are no mapped environmentally sensitive habitats or sensitive plants or animal species on the subject parcel. Therefore, none of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2 apply to the project site.

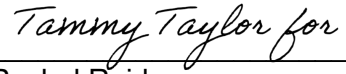
As discussed above, none of the exceptions contained in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the project, and the project is consistent with the criteria in CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3); 15301(h), Class 1; and 15304, Class 4. The project involves minor alteration of land form and the removal of trees on a property that contains substantial amounts of large trees to create off-street parking spaces. The project, therefore, qualifies as exempt from the provisions of CEQA under § 15061(b)(3); 15301(h), Class 1; and 15304, Class 4.

Project Planner:



Immanuel Bereket
Principal Planner

Reviewed by:



Rachel Reid
Environmental Planning Manager

VICINITY MAP

