



CITY of CALABASAS

Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
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## Environmental Exemption Assessment

**Project Title:** Wild Walnut Park Updates

**Project Location:** 23050 Mulholland Hwy., City of Calabasas, County of Los Angeles.

**Project Description:** Updates to existing facilities within the developed 1.5-acre portion of the 26-acre Wild Walnut Park, including: relocation of the park entrance to a position approximately 40 feet south of the current entrance/exit location (to improve safety at the park entrance and at the Old Topanga Canyon Road / Mulholland Highway intersection), construction of a reconfigured permeable-paver parking lot (23 spaces, including accessible spaces to replace 18 existing spaces that lack accessibility); construction of a 121 s.f. accessible portable restroom enclosure, construction of a 2,900 s.f. (approx.) children's playground area; placement of approx. 620 linear feet of new 4-rail wood fencing around an approximate 17,650 sq.-ft. area for purposes of creating an enclosed dog play area; replacement of approx. 350 feet of existing 2-rail wood fencing; construction of an informational kiosk; and, construction and reconstruction of approximately 500 feet of decomposed granite and mulched pathway extensions to improve park accessibility.

**Project Sponsor:** City of Calabasas Community Services Department, 100 Civic Center Way, Calabasas, CA 91302

**Staff Determination:** The City of Calabasas Planning Division staff, having undertaken and completed a preliminary review of this project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, has concluded that this project does not require further environmental assessment because:

- ☐ The proposed action does not constitute a project under CEQA.
- ☐ The project is a Ministerial Project (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ The project is an Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
- ☐ The project constitutes a feasibility or planning study.
- ☒ The project is categorically exempt – CEQA Guidelines Sections 15303 (Class 3, New Construction of Small Structures); 15304 (Class 4, Minor Alterations to land); and, 15311 (Class 11, Accessory Structures)
- ☐ The project is statutorily exempt. Section \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ The project is otherwise exempt on the following basis: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ The project involves another public agency, which constitutes the Lead Agency.

**Date:** March 11, 2020

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Thomas Bartlett, AICP

**Title:** City Planner

**Phone:** 818-224-1703

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS:

The City's staff has determined that the project is exempt from environmental review in accordance with Section 21084 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Sections 15303, 15304, and 15311 of the CEQA Guidelines. Furthermore, to ensure that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, and to verify that the exceptions to exemptions, as listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 do not apply, the following environmental factors were analyzed. Staff has determined that the project would not result in potentially significant impact to any of the below listed environmental factors, as substantiated by the detailed checklist on the following pages.

<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>1. AESTHETICS.</b> Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, tress, rock outcroppings and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES.</b> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
(c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
(e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use?				X
<b>3. AIR QUALITY.</b> Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
(b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				X
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				X
<b>4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
(c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
(f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
<b>5. CULTURAL RESOURCES.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				X
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				X
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
<b>6. ENERGY.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, either during project construction or during operation?				X
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X
<b>7. GEOLOGY &amp; SOILS.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
(iv) Landslides?				X
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
(d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?				X
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X
(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
<b>8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:</b>				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				X
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X
<b>9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:</b>				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
(d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				X
<b>10. HYDROLOGY &amp; WATER QUALITY. Would the project:</b>				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?				X

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				X
(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;				X
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site; or,				X
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				X
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				X
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				X
<b>11. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:</b>				
(a) Physically divide an established community?				X
(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
<b>12. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:</b>				
(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
<b>13. NOISE. Would the project result in:</b>				
(a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
(c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or within an area governed by an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>14. POPULATION AND HOUSING.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of road or other infrastructure)?				X
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
<b>15. PUBLIC SERVICES.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
(i) Fire protection?				X
(ii) Police protection?				X
(iii) Schools?				X
(iv) Parks?				X
(v) Other public facilities?				X
<b>16. RECREATION.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
<b>17. TRANSPORTATION.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				X
(b) Conflict with, or be inconsistent with, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				X
(c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X



Environmental Factors	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.</b> Would the project:				
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource (defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe), and that is:				
(e) Listed, or eligible for listing, in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k); or,				X
(f) A resource determined by the lead agency in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. (In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)				X
<b>19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.</b> Would the project:				
(a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
(c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project, that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
(d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?				X
(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
<b>20. WILDFIRE.</b> If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?				X



<i>Environmental Factors</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
(c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				X
(d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes ?				X

#### 21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

(a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current project, and the effects of probable future projects.)				X
(c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

## Explanations

- 1. *Aesthetics.* (c) *Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?***

Wild Walnut Park is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of two locally designated scenic roadways: Old Topanga Canyon Road and Mulholland Highway. The 26-acre park (plus nearly one-half acre of adjoining public right-of-way) contributes substantially to the scenic value of both roadways in this particular location because of the heavily vegetated hillsides and many oak trees and walnut trees that make up so much of the park area. The proposed project will affect less than 1.5 acres of the total park area (roughly 5.7% of the total park area). Moreover, this area of the park is already substantially developed with a dirt & gravel parking lot, mulched trails, wooden fences, picnic tables, benches, trash cans, and informational signs. Additionally, this area of the park also contains an existing wireless telecommunications facility, an underground telecommunications equipment vault, and electrical power transmission lines and poles.

The proposed improvements are necessary to improve public safety, afford disabled access to park facilities, and to maintain adequate protections for the walnut and oak trees. Grading aspects of the work will be minimal (830 c.y. of cut, 30 c.y. of fill, and a net export of 800 c.y.), with most of the grading necessary for relocation of the entry driveway, re-shaping and leveling of the parking lot (for accessibility purposes), and minor corrections to the perimeter (roadside) drainage swales. The proposed new structures (portable restroom enclosure and an informational kiosk) are quite small – no larger than a car or truck, and no lighting will be introduced to the park as part of this project. Colors and materials will be muted and earth-toned, consistent with the City's adopted Scenic Corridor Guidelines.

Accordingly, the staff determination is that the project will have no impact on the scenic corridors.

- 4. *Biological Resources.* (a) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? And (e) Would the project Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?***

The Calabasas 2030 General Plan indicates within the Conservation Element (Figure IV-2) that the area inclusive of Wild Walnut Park contains (not surprisingly) California Walnut Woodlands. The project will be accomplished entirely within the existing developed area of the park (approximately 1.5 acres, and comprising less than 5.7% of the total park area). Almost 95% of the park will remain untouched, thereby preserving all existing habitats, flora and fauna, inclusive of the many existing walnut and oak trees scattered throughout the hillside portions of the park. Furthermore, the project will maintain three existing specimen walnut trees in their current location and conditions, while replacing a short 2-rail wooden perimeter fence surround, and introducing a narrow crushed granite style pathway in order to afford access to disabled persons. Meanwhile, existing oak trees in the project area will likewise be maintained in place and will be protected during construction. Some

exceptionally small oak trees (none exceed 2-inch size DBH) in this area of the park were planted in recent years as part of Arbor Day events and the like, and some of these trees may require relocation. Lastly, a small-scale children's playground will be placed southwest of the walnut tree grove – this new facility will help protect the walnut trees and other park trees by providing active young children with appropriate alternative climbing apparatus, thereby lessening the incidence of tree limb damage caused by climbing.

Accordingly, the staff determination is that the project will have no impact on biological resources, inclusive of the walnut trees and oak trees.

**16. Recreation. (b)** *Does the project include recreational facilities, or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, that have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

The project involves updating some existing park features, repairing and/or replacing some badly deteriorated features, construction of a small (2,900 s.f.) children's playground, and improving park accessibility for disabled persons. Associated grading activity (approximately 860 total c.y., with net export of approximately 800 c.y.) will be minimal, concentrated within only existing developed portions of the park. At less than 1.5 acres the entire project area comprises less than 5.7% of the total park area (26.5 acres). BMPs will be followed for all grading and construction activities.

Consequently, the project will not result in any adverse physical effects on the environment.

**21. Mandatory Findings of Significance.**

The project involves updating some existing park features, repairing and/or replacing some badly deteriorated features, construction of a small (2,900 s.f.) children's playground, and improving park accessibility for disabled persons. Associated grading activity (approximately 860 total c.y., with net export of approximately 800 c.y.) will be minimal, concentrated within only existing developed portions of the park. At less than 1.5 acres the entire project area comprises less than 5.7% of the total park area (26.5 acres). BMPs will be followed for all grading and construction activities. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

Furthermore, given that other projects in the vicinity are of a low number and of a very small scale (only two proposed new single-family homes and one proposed replacement single-family home on existing lots in the Old Topanga Canyon area), the Wild Walnut Park project will not cause environmental impacts which contribute to cumulatively considerable or significant environmental impacts.

Lastly, the Wild Walnut Park project is entirely focused on improving public safety and accessibility at the park, while also maintaining and protecting the substantial biotic species and habitat; therefore, the project will not have environmental effects that will cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

## Discussion of Exceptions to Categorical Exemptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)

- (a) **Location.** Wild Walnut Park is located at the intersection of two locally designated scenic roadways: Old Topanga Canyon Road and Mulholland Highway. The 26.5-acre park contributes substantially to the scenic value of both roadways in this particular location because of the heavily vegetated hillsides and many oak trees and walnut trees that make up so much of the park area. The proposed project will affect less than 1.5 acres of the total park area (roughly 5.7% of the total park area). Moreover, this area of the park is already substantially developed with a dirt & gravel parking lot, mulched trails, wooden fences, picnic tables, benches, trash cans, and informational signs. Additionally, this area of the park also contains an existing wireless telecommunications facility, an underground telecommunications equipment vault, and electrical power transmission lines and poles.

The proposed improvements are necessary to improve public safety, afford disabled access to park facilities, and to maintain adequate protections for the walnut and oak trees. Grading aspects of the work will be minimal (830 c.y. of cut, 30 c.y. of fill, and a net export of 800 c.y.), with most of the grading necessary for relocation of the entry driveway, re-shaping and leveling of the parking lot (for accessibility purposes), and minor corrections to the perimeter (roadside) drainage swales. The proposed new structures (portable restroom enclosure and an informational kiosk) are quite small – no larger than a car or truck, and no lighting will be introduced to the park as part of this project. Colors and materials will be muted and earth-toned, consistent with the City's adopted Scenic Corridor Guidelines.

The Calabasas 2030 General Plan indicates within the Conservation Element (Figure IV-2) that Wild Walnut Park is located within an area that contains California Walnut Woodlands. The project will be accomplished entirely within the existing developed area of the park (approximately 1.5 acres, and comprising less than 5.7% of the total park area). Almost 95% of the park will remain untouched, thereby preserving all existing habitats, flora and fauna, inclusive of the many existing walnut and oak trees scattered throughout the hillside portions of the park. Furthermore, the project will maintain three existing specimen walnut trees in their current location and conditions, while replacing a short 2-rail wooden perimeter fence surround, and introducing a narrow crushed granite style pathway in order to afford access to disabled persons. Meanwhile, existing oak trees in the project area will likewise be maintained in place and will be protected during construction. Some exceptionally small oak trees (none exceed 2-inch size DBH) in this area of the park were planted in recent years as part of Arbor Day events and the like, and some of these trees may require relocation. Lastly, a small-scale children's playground will be placed southwest of the walnut tree grove – this new facility will help protect the walnut trees and other park trees by providing active young children with appropriate alternative climbing apparatus, thereby lessening the incidence of tree limb damage caused by climbing.

*Accordingly, the "location" exception does not apply.*

- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** Given that other projects in the vicinity are of a low number and of a very small scale (only two proposed new single-family homes and one proposed replacement single-family home on existing lots in the Old Topanga Canyon area), the Wild Walnut Park project will not cause environmental impacts which contribute to cumulatively considerable or significant environmental impacts, and, *the "Cumulative Impact" exception does not apply.*

- (c) Significant Effect Due to Unusual Circumstances. The project involves updating some existing park features, repairing and/or replacing some badly deteriorated features, construction of a small (2,900 s.f.) children's playground, and improving park accessibility for disabled persons. Associated grading activity (approximately 860 total c.y., with net export of approximately 800 c.y.) will be minimal, concentrated within only existing developed portions of the park. At less than 1.5 acres the entire project area comprises less than 5.7% of the total park area (26.5 acres). The proposed improvements are necessary to improve public safety, afford disabled access to park facilities, and to maintain adequate protections for the walnut and oak trees. Almost 95% of the park will remain untouched, thereby preserving all existing habitats, flora and fauna, inclusive of the many existing walnut and oak trees scattered throughout the hillside portions of the park.

*Accordingly, there are no unusual circumstances associated with the park or the proposed park improvements, and there is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.*

- (d) Scenic Highways. The project will not result in damage to any scenic resources located within any designated state scenic highway corridor. Neither Old Topanga Canyon Road nor Mulholland Highway are state designated scenic highways, even though both roadways are designated local scenic corridors. Furthermore, as stated previously in this report, the project will not result in any significant impacts to the scenic corridors.

*Accordingly, the "Scenic Highways" exception does not apply.*

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites. No hazardous waste sites are on or near the subject property.

- (f) Historical Resources. No historic resources are located on the Wild Walnut Park property. Old Topanga Canyon Road, however, is a locally designated historic landmark. The relocation of the park entrance drive to a position approximately 40 feet south of the current location on Old Topanga Canyon Road will be a substantial safety benefit because it will increase the distance between the driveway and the roadway intersection. The current driveway access is also generally uncontained and haphazard in configuration; the new driveway entrance will be clearly defined and constrained to a narrower width.

*Accordingly no substantial adverse change will occur to historic Old Topanga Canyon Road, and the "Historic Resources" exception does not apply.*