



Planning Department  
Community Development Department, Town of Los Gatos  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95030

November 14, 2025

**Re: La Terra 4, 230 La Terra  
Project Description/ Letter of Justification**

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of Greenridge Terrace, LLC, I am pleased to present this new project to the Town of Los Gatos. The proposed project is a new two story single family residence with an attached four car garage. This letter accompanies the submitted building plans and additional exhibits for the above referenced project, and contains descriptions of the property, the neighborhood, and how it complies with the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines.

**EXISTING PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

The property is located on Lot #4 of the new community referred to as La Terra, previously called The Vistas of Los Gatos. This parcel is vacant, with street improvements and all utilities stubbed out. The property is 4.55 acres with a 33.4% overall average slope, resulting in a 43,560 SF net lot size. The parcel sits on the west side of La Terra court where the road is fairly flat. There is a significant amount of flat area on the lot near the road, but it is all in the front setback. The rest of the LRDA is downhill.

Most of the developed area does not have existing trees with the exception of the left side. Most of them are oaks. A total of 12 oak trees are proposed for removal. A nice large live oak tree between the main house and ADU will be saved.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION**

It is worth mentioning that the proposed development closely follows the preliminary designs presented during the subdivision approval process, including overall siting, massing, grading, minor exceptions and tree removals. This property was identified as being a visible site from the viewing platforms, so the design maintains the 18' and 28' height limits.

The proposal includes the construction of a two story, 5,006 square foot home (994 SF below the 6,000 SF maximum allowed), which includes an attached 4 car garage, a front porch, a covered loggia and an open veranda. The residence also incorporates a 2,281 SF finished basement. The home is placed in the long narrow strip of LRDA parallel to the front setback. No firetruck turnaround is necessary.

The home runs lengthwise parallel to the contours and the street, with a one story appearance from the road. Because the lot slopes downhill from the street, the home appears sunken and the finished floor is about 6 feet below the street. On this upper floor are the main living areas, main suite, office and a guest suite. On the lower floor are 3 bedroom suites, a gym, and a rec room all

which daylight on the downhill, western side. Dozens of large mature oak trees will remain onsite and provide screening from below.

The exterior style of the proposed residence is contemporary with a combination of flat and low pitched roofs and clean detailing. Exterior materials include integral color smooth stucco, composite wood-like siding and a large format, smooth stone veneer. "Bent plane" elements add character and define the front entry. The roof will be finished in a PVC membrane. Dark bronze, aluminum framed exterior doors and windows will be used to provide clean shadow lines. (See color samples on the Exterior Elevation sheets for specifics)

### **GRADING**

The siting of the residence was dictated by the extremely limited LRDA, the bulk of which is in the front setback area. The home has a long narrow shape, parallel to the contours. This helps to reduce the amount of cut and fill and keeps the home at a low profile. The home's finished floor sits about 6 feet below the street. Site grading is limited to what's necessary for vehicular and occupant access. The only grading exceptions requested are at the front yard for access to the residence and garage. Preliminary Grading and Drainage plans prepared by the civil engineer details the cuts, fills, retaining walls and earthwork quantities.

All of the yard areas are placed in the LRDA. There is a proposed pool and patio area between the main residence and the ADU which takes advantage of a continuous level area and requires no exceptions for cut or fill. See the exceptions exhibit on the site plan.

### **LANDSCAPING**

A preliminary landscape plan is included with the application. The main structural feature is a linear swimming pool on the lower terrace level. It and all the patios fit nicely inside the LRDA. A majority of the proposed plantings are California natives indigenous to the immediate area and are from the Town's plant list for Hillside areas. The landscaping is relatively minimal and encompasses a 30-40 foot radius from the house and driveway. The majority of the property will remain untouched with wild grasses and mature oak trees.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH HILLSIDE DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES**

The proposed home specifically addresses the Hillside Design Standards & Guidelines as follows:

#### **II. CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS:**

- The proposed home preserves views and minimizes visibility from the viewing platform.
- The site has a very limited LRDA. The proposed home is sited almost entirely within the LRDA, with a minor exception.

#### **III. SITE PLANNING:**

- The proposed home will be benched into the site and sits over the basement/lower floor.
- The proposed driveway takes advantage of the existing dirt road to access the only LRDA/ building pad of the site.
- Proposed activity areas are placed such that the majority are within the LRDA.

#### **IV. DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY:**

- The proposed home floor area totals 5,616 sf. When including the 400 SF allocation for the garage, the home is 996 sf below the maximum allowed.

**V. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:**

- The contemporary styling and warm earth toned color palette relates perfectly with the natural setting of La Terra.
- The materials proposed are natural stone veneer, wood like siding, and stucco that will blend into the hillside. All meet stringent WUI classified fire resistant materials.
- All exterior surfaces to meet the 30 LRV requirement.

**VI. SITE ELEMENTS:**

- No entry gates are proposed.
- All developed areas are within 30 feet of the home, leaving 90%+ of the property untouched.

**VII. LANDSCAPE DESIGN:**

- All of the perimeter trees have been preserved along with several near the home
- All proposed plantings are California natives and/or drought tolerant.
- Landscaping is proposed at all retaining walls to soften their appearance.
- Proposed trees and shrubs are located in a natural and irregular pattern to blend with the natural landscape.

**EXCEPTIONS**

The following exceptions to the HDS&G are requested:

- Some cut above 4' vertical feet is proposed. It is necessary to access the house and garage.

**CONCLUSION**

This house has been conceived from the beginning to be compatible with both the neighborhood and the site. The size, mass, color and exterior style are in keeping with the surrounding properties and will enhance the neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Gary Kohlsaat  
Architect C19245