



**COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**

May 29, 2026

Melania Gourehzar  
513 W. Wilson Ave.  
Glendale, CA 91203

**VIA EMAIL:** MELANIA@TEDDESIGNBUILD.COM

**RE: Project No. 25-0003603 (Hillside Development Permit) - Approved  
Located at 1821 N. Bel Aire Drive**

Dear Mrs. Gourehzar,

This letter is to notify you that the Community Development Director has approved your application for a Hillside Development Permit (HDP) to allow for the construction of the following scope of work: (1) proposed 584 square foot rear patio cover addition to the existing single-family residence; (2) grading activity that includes 53 cubic yards of new fill area to expand the existing rear yard; and (3) new retaining wall, ranging in height between 5'-0" to 8'-0", to allow for the proposed rear yard expansion. In addition, the Project includes the demolition of an existing rear deck. Enclosed is the HDP approval with the Project's conditions of approval.

Please be advised that the decision of the Community Development Director will become final fifteen (15) days from the date of this letter unless the decision is appealed to the Planning Commission. Any appeal of the Director's decision must be submitted to the Planning Division with the applicable filing, in accordance with the adopted Citywide 2025-26 Fee Schedule fee, prior to the expiration of the fifteen (15) day appeal period, or 5:00 p.m. on June 15, 2026.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact me by phone at (818) 238-5250 or by email at [erendon@burbankca.gov](mailto:erendon@burbankca.gov).

Sincerely,

EDUARDO RENDON  
Assistant Planner  
Community Development Department

Attachments: View Study  
Approved Plans

**Community Development Department Director's Decision**

**DATE:** May 26, 2026

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**PROJECT TITLE:** Project No.25-0003603 – Hillside Development Permit

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**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 1821 N. Bel Aire Drive

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**APPLICANT:** Melania Gourehzar

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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Project proposes to legalize the construction of a covered rear patio, the expansion of the rear yard and a retaining wall with a maximum height of 8 feet located at the rear yard of the property in the R-1 (Single Family Residential) and designated Hillside area ("Project Site").

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**ZONING:**           R-1                                **GENERAL PLAN:**           Low Density Residential          

**MUNICIPAL CODE CONFORMANCE:** The Project was reviewed by staff and determined to be consistent with the development standards and regulations of Burbank Municipal Code (BMC). Per BMC Section 10-1-606(l), an exception has been granted to allow the proposed rear retaining wall to exceed the maximum height of 4 feet to a maximum height of 8 feet, provided that staff were able to make the four (4) required findings to allow this requested exception.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** The Project has been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Section 15303(e) of the CEQA Guidelines pertaining to new construction of accessory structures such as walls and fences.

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**DATE SIGN POSTED ON-SITE:**           May 15, 2026          

**DATE PUBLIC NOTICE MAILED:**           May 1, 2026          

**DATE OF DIRECTOR'S DECISION:**           May 29, 2026          

**END OF APPEAL PERIOD:**           June 15, 2026          

Eduardo Rendon, Assistant Planner  
Planning Division (818) 238-5250

 FOR  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director

**HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. 25-0003603**  
**(1821 N. Bel Aire Drive - Melania Gourehzar, Applicant and John Saado, Property Owner)**

**Findings for Granting a Hillside Development Permit**

The Community Development Director finds the proposed Project satisfies the requisite findings contained in the Burbank Municipal Code (BMC) Section 10-1-607(D)(3) necessary for approval of the Hillside Development Permit, subject to the attached conditions of approval.

*a) The vehicle and pedestrian access to the house and other structures do not detrimentally impact traffic circulation and safety or pedestrian circulation and safety and are compatible with existing traffic circulation patterns in the surrounding neighborhood. This includes but is not limited to: driveways and private roadways, access to public streets, safety features such as guardrails and other barriers, garages and other parking areas, and sidewalks and pedestrian paths.*

The Project Site is currently developed with an existing single-family residence with a driveway and walkway located on the front yard. The Project, as proposed, would affect the existing rear yard area. Specifically, the scope of the Project includes a new 584 SF rear covered patio attached to the rear of the existing house with grading (fill – 53 cubic yards) activity to expand the existing rear yard area. Therefore, the Project would not affect the existing vehicular or pedestrian circulation on the property. Since the Project will not detrimentally impact traffic circulation and safety or pedestrian circulation and safety and will remain compatible with existing traffic circulation patterns in the surrounding neighborhood, this finding can be made.

*b) The house and other structures are reasonably consistent with the natural topography of the surrounding hillside.*

The proposed Project would affect the rear yard area of the subject property. The proposed patio cover would be attached to the rear of the existing house. The proposed retaining wall with a height ranging from 5'-0" to 8'-0" would be needed to expand the existing rear yard area, requiring grading activity to accommodate approximately 53 cubic yards of new yard area. The expansion of the rear yard towards the south of the property line will not go beyond the rear yards of the existing neighboring properties. Also, the new retaining wall will not exceed the BMC maximum allowable height requirements for stand-alone wall/fence located in the rear yard. Given these conditions, staff has determined that the Project Site will remain reasonably consistent with the existing topography that is similar to the adjacent neighboring properties' existing improvement of their rear yards. Therefore, this finding can be made.

*c) The house and other structures are designed to reasonably incorporate or avoid altering natural topographic features.*

The Project requires grading activity to accommodate the proposed rear yard expansion. The grading activity consists of filling 53 cubic yards of new rear yard area. The proposed retaining wall, ranging in height between 5'-0" to 8'-0", are needed to allow for the grading activity to create a flat area for the expansion of the rear yard. The proposed expansion of the rear yard would not affect the existing topographic downslope feature of the site. The Project would allow the owner to expand their rear yard up to the point where the abutting neighboring properties currently have their rear yard improved upon. Therefore, this finding can be made.

*d) The house and other structures will not unnecessarily or unreasonably encroach upon the scenic views from neighboring properties, including both downslope and upslope views.*

The Project will not have an unreasonable impact on surrounding upslope or downslope views of properties in the surrounding neighborhood. As identified in the View Study prepared for this project, the proposed retaining wall will not unnecessarily or unreasonably encroach on the scenic views from the neighboring properties. The southward expansion of the rear yard would also not go beyond the rear yard improvements of the existing neighboring properties. As part of the View Study, staff analyzed view impacts using photographs, site plan, elevation drawings, topographic elevation contours, and conducted a site visit on January 8, 2026, to observe potential view impacts of the Project to the surrounding area. This finding can be made.

*e) For the purpose of evaluating required finding (e) above, a view study must be submitted with all Hillside Development Permit applications documenting the impacts of the proposed structure(s) on views from adjacent properties. The view study must be prepared in a manner approved by the Director or his/her designee and contain all information and documentation deemed necessary by the Director for the purpose of analyzing view impacts and establishing setback lines for view determination to Section 10-1-606(E). This study is separate from the Ridgeline setback analysis required by Section 10-1-606(D).*

A view study is required as part of the Hillside Development Permit process to analyze the impact of the proposed development on views from adjacent properties. As a part of the View Study, a site visit was conducted on the property on January 8, 2026, to analyze the view impacts of the proposed patio cover, yard extension and retaining wall on adjacent properties. Pictures of the property were captured from various angles to assess the potential impacts of the development on the views from the neighboring properties. The View Study concluded that the Project would not affect the existing views from surrounding properties. Therefore, this finding can be made.

*f) The view impact of the proposed project must be considered by the Director, or Planning Board or City Council if appealed, and may be used as a basis for requiring modifications to a project or denying a Hillside Development Permit due to inability to make the required finding:*

The Project potential impacts on views were analyzed by staff using photographs, site plan, elevation drawings, topographic elevation contours, and a site visit that occur on January 8, 2026. Staff have determined that the project would not affect the existing views of the neighboring properties. Therefore, this finding can be made.

### Exceptions to the Development Standards

In the Hillside area, exceptions to the development standards required by Section 10-1-603 for the R-1 Zone may be granted through approval of a Hillside Development Permit per Burbank Municipal Code Section 10-1-606(I) and is subject to making the required four (4) findings below.

The applicant requests the following exception as part of the Project:

- An exception to allow a proposed rear retaining wall with a height ranging from 5'-0" to 8'-0" in lieu of the maximum retaining wall height of 4'-0" located in the rear yard per BMC Section 10-1-603(H)(3)(c).

The analysis of the required findings for approval of an exception is as follows:

1. *The exception is not detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare.*

The proposed construction of a retaining wall, ranging in height between 5'-0" to 8'-0", located in the existing rear yard area of the Project Site would not have any detrimental impacts related to public health, safety, or general welfare. The retaining wall would be required to meet standards of the State Building Code and the City's Building and Safety Division Code requirements ensure the structure is built to be safe. The retaining wall, at these proposed heights, is required to accommodate the proposed leveled expansion of the existing open patio area. The proposed expansion of the rear yard area would not extend beyond the existing and improved rear yard areas of the abutting neighbors to the east and west. Therefore, staff is able to make this finding.

2. *Granting of the exception does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other projects and/ or properties in the vicinity.*

The proposed retaining wall is located at the rear yard of a downslope lot. The presence of unique lot features such as steep slope at the rear portion of the lot necessitates filling (approximately 53 cubic yards of net grading) to install the retaining wall to enable the property owner to utilize an expanded rear yard that is usable as an open patio area. The proposed retaining wall, ranging from 5'-0" to 8'-0", is not anticipated to impact the downslope views of the adjacent properties since the rear yard expansion would not go beyond the existing rear yard areas of the adjacent properties. Condition of approvals are recommended for the proposed

retaining wall including landscape screening along the entire length of the retaining wall in the rear yard and the use of decorative material for the retaining wall (ex. slump stone). Additionally, the retaining wall height will not grant special privilege inconsistent with the limitations on other properties in the vicinity.

3. *The exception does not permit or encourage development inconsistent with the character of existing development in the neighborhood.*

The proposed retaining wall, ranging in height between 5'-0" to 8'-0", will be located in the rear yard along the downward sloping area of the lot. The retaining wall is consistent with other rear yard retaining walls within the neighboring properties. The adjacent property to the east contains existing retaining walls that provide slope stabilization as a means to make full use of the lot, as the general topography of the area descends steeply downward. Therefore, the proposed retaining wall will be compatible with and consistent with the existing development pattern in the surrounding neighborhood.

4. *There are special conditions or unique characteristics applicable to the subject property and/or the surrounding neighborhood due to the location in the hillside area that justify granting of the exception. Such conditions or characteristics may be related to topography, location, orientation, or other issues that do not generally apply to properties or neighborhoods located outside of the hillside area.*

The proposed patio cover will not exceed the main dwelling's existing height of 16'-6" and the proposed expansion and the proposed height of retaining wall, ranging in height between 5'-0" to 8'-0" are necessary to provide the required stabilization for the unique sloping conditions on site. The proposed expansion and retaining walls will not go beyond the existing rear yard areas of the adjacent properties and therefore, the exception to the location and design of the retaining walls are justified to grant the exception.

**HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. 25-0003603**  
**(1821 N. Bel Aire Drive – Melania Gourehzar, Applicant and John Saado, Property Owner)**

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

**PLANNING DIVISION**

1. Project No. 25-0003603, a Hillside Development Permit, approves a proposal to legalize a 584 square foot rear patio cover addition to the existing single-family residence; grading activity that includes 53 cubic yards of new fill area to expand the existing rear yard; and a new retaining wall ranging in height of 5'-0" to 8'-0", to allow for the proposed rear yard expansion located at 1821 North Bel Aire Drive in the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) zoning district within the designated Hillside area.
2. The proposed retaining walls shall not exceed the height of 8'-0" as allowed with the exception through the approval of the requested Hillside Development Permit.
3. The Project require that all retaining walls facing downslope areas must be of decorative material (ex. slump stone) and screened with vegetation throughout the length of the retaining wall.
4. This permit shall expire if the scope of work is not initiated within one year of the date of this approval (May 29, 2027) unless the Property Owner has diligently developed the proposed Project as shown by the issuance of grading, foundation, or building permit and the construction of substantial improvements.
5. The operation/construction on the site shall remain in substantial conformance with the request and with the application materials submitted by the applicant on June 27, 2025, and the Project plans stamped approved on May 29, 2026, and placed on file in the office of the Planning Division.
6. Pursuant to Burbank Municipal Code (BMC) Section 10-1-19401, the Applicant, including their successors and assignees, shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Burbank (the City) and its agents, officers, employees, agencies, boards, commissions, or City Council from any claim, action or proceeding brought against the City, its agents, officers, employees agencies, boards, commissions, or City Council to attack, set aside, void or annul the subject approval and environmental determination under the California Environmental Quality Act or National Environmental Policy Act by the City, its agents, officers, employees, agencies, commissions, or City Council. The indemnification shall include damages awarded against the City, if any, cost of suit, attorney's fees, administrative expenses, and other costs and expenses incurred in connection with such action, including, but not limited to, all such City costs and expenses incurred by enforcing this indemnification provision. This duty to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the

City and its agents, officials, employees, agencies, boards, commissions, or City Council shall apply even if the applicant fails or refuses to enter into the indemnification agreement. In the event of a legal challenge, the provisions under BMC Section 10-1-19402 shall be followed.

7. The permittee shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws. Violation or conviction of any of those laws in connection with the use will be cause for revocation of this permit.
8. This permit may be modified or revoked by the City should the determination be made that the structure or conditions under which it was permitted present detrimental impacts on neighboring properties.
9. The permittee shall list these conditions of approval in all construction plans submitted to the Building Division for a building permit and shall also provide a separate written document outlining how, or where, each of the conditions have been addressed in the building permit plan set for all City Division/Department conditions enclosed and provide the same number of copies as building plan sets submitted for Building Plan Check.
10. By signing and/or using this Hillside Development Permit, the permittee acknowledges all the conditions imposed and accepts this permit subject to those conditions and with full awareness of the provisions of the Burbank Municipal Code. Failure of the permittee or property owners to sign these conditions does not affect their enforceability by the City or other responsible entity. These conditions are binding upon all future property owners and occupants of the subject property.
11. The exterior materials and designs used during construction shall match those depicted on the approved set of plans stamped on May 29, 2026. Any modifications to the exterior materials must be reviewed and approved by the Planning Division prior to installation.

## **BUILDING DIVISION**

12. All projects shall comply with Title 9, Chapter 1, of the Burbank Municipal Code, and the **2022 edition of the California Building Code**, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Green Building Standards and Building Energy Efficiency Standards, including all intervening Cycles.
13. Plans and reports submitted for Plan Check Review are to be submitted electronically. For more information about the online submittal process, please

contact the Building Division at 818-238-5220 or via email at [eplancheck@burbankca.gov](mailto:eplancheck@burbankca.gov).

14. All conditions of approval are to be reproduced on the construction document drawings as part of the Approved Construction Set.
15. All Departments that have provide Conditions of Approval are to review drawings and provide final approval via online electronic review, prior to issuance of Building Permit.
16. Separate Permits will be required for the following:
  - a. Grading & Shoring
  - b. Pool, Spa, & Equipment
17. Project lies within the City of Burbank Mountain Fire Zone.
  - a. All construction is required to meet Burbank Municipal Code 9-1-1-701A.1.1
18. A Civil plan is required showing the proposed changes to the site grading to accommodate the garage and driveway. Topographical contour lines are to be indicated, showing existing and proposed contours.
19. Grading and drainage plans may be required, and a separate Grading & Shoring Permit may be required. Geotechnical report to be submitted along with Grading & Shoring Permit Application.
20. The foundation shall comply with California Building Code Section 1808.7, for foundations on or adjacent to slopes. A soils report will be required.
21. A stamped setback certification by a Licensed Surveyor will be required to certify the location of the new construction in relation to the setbacks prior to the first foundation inspection.
22. New or Addition/Alteration construction projects within the City of Burbank are subject to MWELo review.
  - a. Full structure demolition and new construction are required to provide a full MWELo plan check set for review.
  - b. New or replacement landscape areas for residential and non-residential projects between 500 (new) and 2,500 (replacement) square feet requiring a building or landscape permit, plan check, or design review will be required to complete, either a Performance or Prescriptive Compliance Method. Full house demolition will require MWELo review, either prescriptive or performance, no exceptions.
23. The California Division of Mines and Geology Active Fault Near-Source Zones Map for Burbank indicates the city is within 2 km - 5 km of the Verdugo and Hollywood Faults. Structural design of construction projects must address the impact of the Near-Fault Zones.

24. Construction projects must comply with Best Management Practices for construction and stormwater runoff requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System MS4 Permit.
25. The City's mandatory Construction & Demolition Debris Diversion Ordinance requires the recycling and diversion of at least 65% of construction and demolition debris. A refundable deposit and non-refundable administrative fee will be collected prior to permit issuance. The Ordinance applies to all demolitions and to new construction, additions, remodels, renovation, tenant improvement and alteration projects over 500 square feet in scope of work.
26. Plans submitted for plan check must be stamped by State-licensed architect or engineer unless the project is one of the following listed below and complies with conventional light wood frame construction requirements in the CBC:
  - Wood-framed, single-family dwellings not more than two stories in height;
  - Wood-framed, multi-family dwellings not more than two stories in height, and limited to four dwelling units per parcel;
  - Wood-framed, garages or accessory structures for single-family dwellings not more than two stories in height;
  - Non-structural or non-seismic storefronts, interior alterations or additions.
27. A Building Permit may be issued to the Property Owner provided that the work is limited to:
  - A single-family dwelling of wood frame construction not more than two stories and a basement in height.
  - Garages or other structures appurtenant to single-family dwellings of wood frame construction not more than two stories and basement in height.
  - Nonstructural or non-seismic alterations or additions.
28. Approved hours of construction are:

Monday – Friday	7:00 am to 7:00 pm
Saturday	8:00 am to 5:00 pm

No construction is permitted by contractors or subcontractors after hours, on Sunday or on City holidays without prior written request and approval from the Community Development Department.

## **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

29. Show width and location of all existing and proposed easements [BMC 9-1-1-3203]. Plans must show 5' public utility easement at the rear of the property.
30. Applicant shall protect in place all survey monuments (City, County, State, Federal, and private). Pursuant to California Business and Professions Code Section 8771,

when monuments exist that may be affected by the work, the monuments shall be located referenced by or under the direction of a licensed land surveyor or licensed civil engineer legally authorized to practice to practice land surveying, prior to construction, and a corner record or record of survey of the references shall be filed with county surveyor. A permanent monument shall be reset, or a witness monument or monuments set to perpetuate the location if any monument that could be affected, and a corner record or record of survey shall be filled with the county surveyor prior to the recording of a certificate of completion for the project.

31. No permanent structure is permitted in any public right-of-way or any public utility easements/ pole line easements [BMC 7-3-701.1, BMC 9-1-1-3203].
32. No building appurtenances for utility or fire service connections shall encroach or project into public right-of-way (i.e. streets and alleys). Locations of these appurtenances shall be shown on the building site plan and the off-site improvements plans [BMC 7-3-701.1].
33. Any work within the public right-of-way must be permitted and approved by the Public Works Department before construction can commence. All construction work in the public right-of-way must comply with Burbank Standard Plans and must be constructed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer. A Public Works Excavation Permit is required. The excavation permit requires a deposit acceptable to the Public Works Director to guarantee timely construction of all off-site improvements. Burbank Standard Plans can be accessed at;  
<http://file.burbankca.gov/publicworks/OnlineCounter/main/index.htm>
34. On-site drainage shall not flow across the public parkway (sidewalk) or onto adjacent private property. It should be conveyed by underwalk drains to the gutter through the curb face or connected to a storm drain facility [BMC 7-1-117. BMC 7-3-102].
35. No construction material shall be placed within the public right-of-way without a "Street Use" permit issued by the Public Works Department.
36. Plans should include easements, elevation, right-of-way/ property lines, dedication, location of existing/ proposed utilities and any encroachments.
37. Any portion of the public parkway (sidewalk, curb, gutter, driveways, landscape, etc.) that is broken, uneven or uplifted at the end of the project must be reconstructed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer. The repairs and/ or reconstruction will be required whether the damage is pre-existing or is a result of the project. Contact the Public Works Inspection Office at (818)238-3955 to have these areas inspected and identified after obtaining a Public Works Excavation Permit [BMC 7-3-501].

38. If any utility cuts or construction related impacts are made on Kenneth Road or Kingsway Drive adjacent to the property, applicant will have to restore the street fronting the property per City of Burbank paving requirements.
39. Additional impacts to street triggered by this project could extend the paving restoration limits.
40. Best Management Practices shall apply to all construction projects and shall be required from the time of land clearing, demolition or commencement of construction until receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy [BMC 9-3-407].
41. Certain construction and re-construction activities on private property will need to comply with post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs), which include Sections 8-1-1007 and 9-3-414.D of the BMC authorizing the City to require projects to comply with the Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan provisions and the City's Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance. For questions on these requirements, please contact the City's Building Division.
42. No visual obstructions shall be erected or maintained in the 5' by 5' visibility cut-off above 3' high or below 10' high at the intersection of street and driveway [BMC 10-1-1303(C)].

#### **BURBANK WATER & POWER – ELECTRIC**

43. Applicant must relocate the existing electrical service panel. To relocate the panel please contact the Residential Service Planner to obtain a confirmation of electric service for the permanent power. Prior to final plan approval, contact the Residential Service Planner to determine the new service location and to discuss BWP's electric service requirements. A load schedule should be provided at that time.

#### **PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

44. Trees located in grass area shall be installed with Arbor Guards.
45. Street trees to remain.
46. Must comply with Art in Public Places Ordinance if building costs are over \$500,000.
47. Tree Protection Zone for Parkway tree must be shown on the plans. This must be called out to be in place to construction and during the entire construction process.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

48. The owner and the owner's architect and/ or contractor are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable provisions of fire life/ safety codes. Failure

to cite a specific code requirement in this preliminary document does not relieve the applicant of such responsibility. Such compliances may include but are not limited to fire department access for firefighting, including fire department vehicle access, fire water supplies and appurtenances.