

KING TACO RESTAURANT
1118 North Cypress Avenue
CHC-2025-5720-HCM
ENV-2025-5721-CE

FINDINGS

- The King Taco Restaurant “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” as the first permanent location for the King Taco restaurant, a long-standing business in Cypress Park and an important Latino commercial business.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The King Taco Restaurant meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as the first permanent location for the King Taco restaurant, a long-standing business in Cypress Park and an important business reflecting Latino commercial identity.

With the establishment of King Taco, Raul O. and Maria G. Martinez not only created the first taco truck in the United States but also introduced the Mexican style soft shell taco to the wider public and revolutionized the Latino culinary scene in Los Angeles. Within a decade of King Taco opening, soft shell tacos were sold in an increasing number of restaurants and there were over 3,500 hot food trucks and 500 taco trucks operating within Los Angeles. In this manner, the Martinezes helped make the taco truck an important part of Latino culture in Los Angeles and provided a sense of cultural identity to many immigrant communities. Over the 50 years the restaurant has been operating, the popularity of King Taco has grown substantially, and restaurant locations have expanded beyond Los Angeles. King Taco continues to serve as a Los Angeles staple, with its original restaurant, the subject property, being a pillar of Latino culinary identity in Cypress Park.

The subject property retains a high level of integrity of location, feeling, materials, design, workmanship, setting, and association to convey its significance. Most of the alterations reflect an expansion of the business due to its growing popularity.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 “*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.*”

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 “*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*”

The designation of the King Taco Restaurant as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to an Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

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Furthermore, none of the exceptions to the Categorical Exemption Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed Project. The proposed Project will not result in significant cumulative impacts from successive projects of the same type in the same place. The Project does not involve unusual circumstances as it is in a similar location, topography, and streetscape as other Historic-Cultural Monuments in the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan Area. The Project will not damage scenic resources in a state scenic highway. The Project site is not on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 related to hazardous waste sites. The Project will also not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2025-5721-CE was prepared on January 13, 2025.