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September 24, 2026

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Subject: Results of Focused Bat Surveys for the Proposed Riverwalk at Studio City Development Project in Studio City, California (LSA Project No. 20263096)

Dear Ms. Bonstelle:

This letter documents the results of focused bat surveys performed for the proposed Riverwalk at Studio City Development Project (project). The project site is located in Studio City, California, and is bounded by Valleyheart Drive to the north, Ventura Boulevard to the south, Whitsett Avenue to the east, and Fairway Avenue and the Terraces Office Building to the west (Figure 1; all figures are provided in Attachment A). The proposed project would result in the construction of three seven-story buildings that will contain apartments and commercial space for retail and restaurants. Although the proposed project activities are located in an urbanized setting and on a site already developed for commercial and retail use, some of the structures and trees within the project area may be used by urban-adapted bat species for roosting.

Bats roosting in structures can be subject to project-related impacts, including direct mortality, if they are present during construction activities. Various regulations afford protections to bats, which are classified as indigenous nongame mammal species, regardless of their status under the California or federal Endangered Species Acts. These regulations include Title 14, Section 251.1, of the California Code of Regulations, which prohibits harassment (defined in that section as an intentional act that disrupts an animal's normal behavior patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering) of nongame mammals (e.g., bats), and California Fish and Game Code Section 4150, which prohibits "take"¹ or possession of all nongame mammals or parts thereof. Any activities resulting in bat mortality (e.g., the destruction of an occupied bat roost that results in the death of bats), disturbance that causes the loss of a maternity colony of bats (resulting in the death of young), or various modes of nonlethal pursuit or capture may be considered "take" as defined in Section 86 of the California Fish and Game Code. In addition, impacts to bat maternity colonies,

¹ Take is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill."

which are considered native wildlife nursery sites, could be considered potentially significant under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A focused bat habitat assessment was performed during the day on August 14, 2026, to determine whether suitable roosting habitat for bats is present in structures and trees that will be removed by the proposed project. This survey also evaluated whether the property includes habitat for protected species of bats under California Government Code Section 65913.4(a)(6)(J) identified as candidate, sensitive, or species of special status by state or federal agencies² as required for a statutory CEQA exemption for a housing development project pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21080.66 and the following provisions.

Marginally suitable day-roosting habitat was identified at one of the structures and in several palm trees (*Washingtonia robusta*), and a follow-up nighttime acoustic and emergence survey was performed on the evening of August 14, 2026, to determine whether roosting bats were present. Although one species of bat (Mexican free-tailed bat [*Tadarida brasiliensis mexicana*]) was acoustically detected flying over the proposed project site, no suitable habitat for protected bat species (as defined above) was identified on the proposed project site and there was no evidence during this survey that protected bat species occur within the proposed project site.

BAT NATURAL HISTORY

Day roosts serve to protect bats from predators and the elements during the day while resting and/or rearing their young. In humanmade structures such as buildings and bridges, these roosts are usually in small cavities or crevices. Bat species that commonly use humanmade structures for roosting include the Mexican free-tailed bat, big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), and Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*). Bats may also day roost in crevices, cavities, or the foliage of trees. Several bat species roost in the frond “skirts” of palm trees, including western yellow bats (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), which are considered an obligate palm-roosting species. Other species in addition to western yellow bat that are known to roost in palm trees include the western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*),³ western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis*), Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis mexicana*), big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), and canyon bat (*Parastrellus hesperus*).⁴ It is presumed based on their roosting ecology that any *Myotis* species (*Myotis* spp.) is likely to use palm trees for roosting. With the exception of Mexican free-tailed bat, big brown bat, and California myotis, all of these bat species are designated as either a “Species of Special Concern” or “Special Animal” by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

² This section also describes fully protected species, or species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (i.e., federally listed species) or the California Endangered Species Act (i.e., state listed species); however, there are no fully protected, federally listed, or state listed bat species in California.

³ Formerly known as *Lasiurus blossevillii*. Baird, A.B., J. K. Braun, M.A. Mares, J.C. Morales, J.C. Patton, C.Q. Tran, and J.W. Bickham. 2015. Molecular systematic revision of tree bats (Lasiurini): doubling the native mammals of the Hawaiian Islands. *Journal of Mammalogy* 96(6), 1255–1274.

⁴ Bat Rescue, Project Wildlife, San Diego Humane Society. From 2002–2022.

Some types of day roosts where bats are particularly vulnerable to disturbance include maternity colonies in which female bats congregate to give birth and raise young, and hibernacula, where bats congregate to enter a period of hibernation during the winter months. Because bats have separate roosting and foraging habitat requirements, it is expected that some bats may use one area for foraging and another for roosting. While more extensive and direct impacts to bats occur through roost removal, destruction, or disturbance, indirect impacts such as decline of prey base due to loss or modification of foraging habitat can also be substantial. Therefore, when assessing an area with regard to proposed alterations to habitat, a landscape-level approach is required to adequately determine potential impacts to bats.

METHODS

Daytime Habitat Assessment

During the day on August 14, 2026, LSA Senior Biologist and bat specialist Jill Carpenter and LSA Senior Biologist Sara Louwsma conducted a daytime bat roosting habitat assessment at the proposed project site. The habitat assessment consisted of visiting all buildings within the site on foot and examining them for features such as crevices or recessed spaces that may be suitable for use as day- and/or night-roosting habitat. The biologists also inspected the buildings for the presence of bats or any bat sign (e.g., guano, urine staining, or vocalizations) indicating current or past use of an area by roosting bats. In addition, all of the trees on site were examined for exfoliating bark, cracks, splits, or hollows that could be used by bats for roosting. Palm trees were evaluated for the presence of dead frond “skirts” that can provide roosting habitat. Structures and trees that contained suitable day-roosting habitat were also assessed for their potential to be used as maternity roost sites by colonies of bats.

Nighttime Acoustic and Emergence Survey

A nighttime acoustic and emergence survey was performed on the evening of August 14, 2026, to determine whether any features that were identified as potential habitat are occupied by any day-roosting bats. This survey was also conducted to visually estimate the approximate number of any bats utilizing the potential roosting habitat, to assess the level of bat foraging and roosting activity within the proposed project area and the immediate vicinity, and to identify bat species present by recording and analyzing echolocation calls. The nighttime bat survey was conducted during the peak period (June 1–August 15) of the bat maternity season (April 1–August 31) to enable detection of bat maternity colonies if present at the site.

The survey was initiated 20 minutes before sunset and continued until 1.25 hours after sunset to determine whether any of the roof shingles or skirted palm trees were used by bats for roosting. The nighttime survey was performed under ideal survey conditions; specifically, during warm temperatures appropriate for the season with winds below 5 miles per hour, and the moon was only 6 percent illuminated. Chrissy Kent and Julia Lung assisted Ms. Carpenter and Ms. Louwsma with performing the exit counts, operating acoustic equipment, and documenting observations to correlate with the acoustic recordings collected during the survey. During the emergence period, each biologist was positioned at a vantage point that optimized visibility of any bats that could exit

or enter the roof shingles and trees. Each biologist used night-vision goggles (military-grade PVS-7, Generation 3) when light levels became too low to adequately see with the unaided eye.

Anabat Swift (Titley Scientific) ultrasound detectors (“bat detectors”) were used to collect acoustic data to aid in identifying any bat species roosting within the building and trees being surveyed or occurring in the vicinity, and secure digital (SD) memory cards were used to record the call files. It is important to note that not all bats recorded next to potential roost sites are those exiting or entering the roost feature in question. Some are foraging bats en route to or from other areas. It is essential, therefore, to have observers on site in order to correlate calls with visual observations. It is also important to note that the species composition and activity levels recorded during a single nighttime visit to any site may not necessarily reflect long-term patterns of use (e.g., seasonal and nightly use of an area).

Acoustic data were subsequently analyzed using SonoBat 30 acoustic analysis software. Species identifications of acoustic data, where possible, were made by comparing call recordings with a library of “voucher” calls from known hand-released bats. Some limitations are inherent in acoustic monitoring and in the analysis of acoustic data; these include (but are not limited to) human bias and past experience in data interpretation, as well as the fact that some species are not equally detectable or may not be recorded at all. Some bats (e.g., Mexican free-tailed bats) emit loud low-frequency echolocation calls that can be recorded from great distances and will be overrepresented in the data, while “whispering” bats (e.g., Townsend’s big-eared bats [*Corynorhinus townsendii*]) emit faint calls that may not be recorded at all. In addition, not all echolocation call sequences are identifiable because different bat species may use similar types of echolocation calls, or the same species may use different types of echolocation calls based on the perceptual task and the immediate environment or habitat. Because the flight behavior and foraging patterns can differ among species, visual observation during the survey often aids in making more definitive identifications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Daytime Habitat Assessment

The site is developed for commercial/retail uses and consists of pavement associated with the parking lots, several commercial and retail buildings, sidewalks, and ornamental landscaping. Representative site photographs are provided on Figures 2 and 3. With the exception of Carney’s Restaurant, which comprises three rail cars and a small building with a shingled roof, all of the buildings have a modern, blocky design and lack features that would provide crevice or cavity habitat for roosting bats. However, several of the shingles on the roof of the small building at Carney’s restaurant do have small crevices that could support small numbers of roosting bats.

Trees were also evaluated for their potential to provide roosting habitat for bats. The proposed project site is bordered by Mexican fan palms that appeared to have been recently trimmed. In fact, almost all of the palm trees had been trimmed to the point that they completely lacked any dead frond “skirts”; however, a handful of trees along Ventura Boulevard had a few dead fronds that could provide roosting habitat albeit of marginally suitable quality. The remaining trees within the

proposed project site are nonnative ornamental trees. None of these trees contained crevice or cavity habitat suitable for use by day-roosting bats. Although the developed nature of the project site is not very conducive to insect abundance or diversity and therefore is not expected to provide good foraging opportunities for bats, suitable foraging habitat for bats is present in the immediate vicinity of the project site, including the mature sycamore trees just outside the northern border of the project side along Valleyheart Drive, native vegetation along the Zev Yaroslavsky Los Angeles River (LA River) Greenway approximately 150 feet away from the project site, and the LA River itself. The presence of foraging habitat within close proximity can increase the likelihood that urban-adapted bat species could roost within the project site; however, it should be noted that the roosting habitat observed within the proposed project area was not high quality and that no bats or sign of bats (e.g., guano, staining, or vocalizations) were observed during the habitat assessment.

Nighttime Acoustic and Emergence Surveys

No bats were observed emerging from the shingled roof at Carney's Restaurant or from any of the skirted palm trees during the nighttime acoustic and emergence survey conducted on August 14, 2026. There is no evidence that bats roost within any of the structures or trees within the project area. Furthermore, the biologists noted that parking lot lights turned on throughout the project area early in the emergence period, and some of these lights directly illuminated the shingle roof at Carney's Restaurant. Bats do not typically roost in features that are illuminated or where the exits from the roost are illuminated;^{5,6} therefore, it was not surprising that no bats were observed emerging from that structure. In addition, no bats were incidentally observed flying anywhere within the proposed project area during the nighttime acoustic and emergence survey.

Bat echolocation calls were recorded during the survey period, indicating some bat activity within the proposed project area during the emergence period. All of the recorded bat echolocation calls were identified as belonging to Mexican free-tailed bats. The first bat detected was at 20:17, which was 36 minutes after sunset; the next was recorded 10 minutes later at 20:27. The majority of bat activity was recorded from 20:36 until the conclusion of the emergence period at 20:56, during which time a Mexican free-tailed bat was recorded once every few minutes. No feeding buzzes indicating foraging behavior were recorded, and given that over 45 minutes had elapsed since sunset, all of these bats were presumably commuting through the project vicinity. Mexican free-tailed bats are one of the most common urban bat species; this is attributed to their proclivity to roost in humanmade structure like bridges and buildings as well as their ability to eat a diverse array of insect prey and forage in a wide variety of habitats. Notably, no Yuma myotis bats were detected during the survey. Along with Mexican free-tailed bat, Yuma myotis is one of the most commonly detected urban bat species in Southern California and is often found in proximity to the LA River.⁷

⁵ Boldogh, S. D., D. Dobrosi, and P. Samu. 2007. The Effects of the Illumination of Buildings on House-Dwelling Bats and Its Conservation Consequences. *Acta Chiropterologica* 9:527–534. doi:10.3161/1733-5329 (2007)9[527:TEOTIO]2.0.C;2

⁶ Rydell, J., J. Eklöf, and S. Sánchez-Navarro. 2017. Age of Enlightenment: Long-Term Effects of Outdoor Aesthetic Lights on Bats in Churches. *Royal Society Open Science* 4(8):161077. Website: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rsos.161077> (accessed August 2026).

⁷ Personal observations.

However, because these bats forage primarily on aquatic emergent insects and because survey efforts were focused on the project site, which is completely developed and set back from the river, it is likely that any Yuma myotis in the project vicinity were within the river channel where they could not be detected by the bat detectors within the project site.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although marginally suitable habitat for day-roosting bats is present in the shingled roof at Carney's Restaurant and the very small frond skirts of some of the palm trees, no bats were seen emerging from any of these areas. Given the presence of the parking lot lights coupled with the marginal quality of the potential roosting habitat in the roof and the palm trees within the project area, it is substantially more likely that bats roost in the trees along Valleyheart Drive, in skirted palm trees observed on the other side of the LA River, or in bridges and culverts along the LA River than within the project site. Mexican free-tailed bats were the only species detected during the emergence survey and were detected over 0.5 hour after sunset and later, suggesting that these bats were commuting through the area from off-site roosting sites. No direct impacts to roosting bats are anticipated from the proposed project because the roosting habitat within the project site has marginal suitability and no evidence of roosting bats was observed.

While these areas are outside of the proposed project site, the Los Angeles River corridor and the tree-lined Valleyheart Drive likely serve as commuting corridors and may also provide roosting and foraging habitat in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project. Multiple studies indicate that night lighting can be very disruptive to foraging and roosting behaviors.⁸ It is possible that bats commuting along the edges or roosting in the vicinity of the proposed project site could be affected by nighttime lighting from the proposed project site. It would be beneficial for bats that occur in the project vicinity if the proposed project is able to incorporate design features that resulted in less light overspill into the vicinity of Valleyheart Drive and the Los Angeles River than is currently produced by the existing development on the proposed project site. Well-designed lighting allows people to see at night while also reducing light pollution that can affect wildlife in adjacent areas. This can be accomplished by focusing light within the development and limiting backlight, uplight, and glare (sidelight) to the greatest extent feasible per the Backlight, Uplight and Glare (BUG) classification system established by the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES).⁹ Wildlife-friendly light fixtures include luminaires falling at or below the 2500 Kelvin color temperature spectrum with low "BUG" ratings¹⁰ and may also incorporate light shielding and/or brightness adjustment.

⁸ Voigt, C.C., et al. 2018. *Guidelines for Consideration of Bats in Lighting Projects*. EUROBATs Publication Series No. 8. Bonn, Germany: UNEP/EUROBATs Secretaria

⁹ Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. 2011. *Luminaire Classification Systems for Outdoor Luminaires Technical Memoranda (TM) 15-11*.

¹⁰ The "BUG" rating system refers to "Backlight," "Uplight," and "Glare" and was developed by the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) and the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) to provide a consistent method to evaluate the effects of stray light from outdoor lighting.

If you have questions regarding this report or would like to discuss the project further, please contact me at (949) 553-0666.

Sincerely,

LSA Associates, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill M. Carpenter", written in a cursive style.

Jill Carpenter
Senior Biologist/Bat Specialist

Attachment: A: Figures

ATTACHMENT A

FIGURES

Figure 1: Project Location

Figure 2: Representative Site Photographs

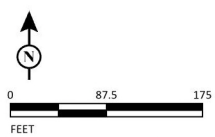
Figure 3: Representative Site Photographs



LSA

 Project Site

FIGURE 1



SOURCE: Nearmap (4/9/2026)

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Riverwalk at Studio City
Project Location



Representative view looking west along Valleyheart Drive, which borders the project site and the Los Angeles River and may provide both foraging habitat and a commuting corridor for bats. It is also possible that the large sycamores and palm trees on the right side of the frame but outside of the project site could provide roosting habitat for bats.



View of the roof shingles at Carney's Restaurant. Some of these roof shingles contain crevices that could be used by day-roosting bats; however, no bats emerged from these shingles during the nighttime survey.



Representative view of the palm trees along Ventura Boulevard. Many of these trees had very small frond "skirts" that are marginally suitable for day-roosting bats; however, no bats emerged from any of these trees during the nighttime survey.



Representative view of heavily trimmed palm trees found throughout much of the project site. These do not contain any roosting habitat for bats.



Representative view of the Staples building, which has relatively modern architecture lacking crevices and cavity spaces consistent with the buildings found throughout the rest of the project site.



Representative view of the Pinz bowling and restaurant building, which has relatively modern architecture lacking crevices and cavity spaces consistent with the buildings found throughout the rest of the project site.



Representative view of the backside of the Pinz bowling and restaurant building, which has relatively modern architecture lacking crevices and cavity spaces consistent with the buildings found throughout the rest of the project site.



Representative view of the building at the eastern end of the site, which has relatively modern architecture lacking crevices and cavity spaces consistent with the buildings found throughout the rest of the project site.