

OC Public Works
OC Development Services
County Administration South
601 North Ross Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701

May 31, 2024

Project: [Discretionary Approval Request for a Site Development Permit as SECTION 7-9-64 f2 allows - for walls between 6' and 8' tall within required rear and side yard setback areas.](#)

Robert Strege & Laura Grad Residence
12921 Villa Rose Drive, Santa Ana, Unincorporated Orange County, CA
APN 393-061-45, Lot 6 of Tract No. 7598

Dear OC Development Services Planners,

Per Zoning Code Sec 7-9-64 (f) Modifications and exceptions to rear yard wall height provisions are permitted to allow for walls eight (8) feet and under subject to the approval of Site Development Permit by the Director.

Due to the steep 13.5' high terrain drop of the property's rear/back yard directly outside of the residence, the Scope of Project includes construction of several terraced retaining walls within the 25' rear yard setback, and within one of the 9.95' side yard setbacks of property to allow the owners space for an outdoor living area and edible gardening.

The block retaining walls, as measured from lowest soil level, range from 3.5' to 4.5' in height with a 3.5' barrier rail atop ([indicated in blue](#) on Site Development Plan SD-1), to solid 7' to 8' high block retaining walls ([indicated in Orange](#) on Site Development Plan SD-1).

- There is currently no fence or wall on the rear yard property line.
- There are 6' high chain-link and vinyl fencing on the side property lines.
- There is currently a small deck and tall shrub hedges in the 25' rear yard setback and one of the 9.95' side yard setbacks where these proposed retaining walls are located.

Findings to support approval of these proposed block retaining walls six (6) to eight (8) feet in height, and the combination of 3.5 to 4.5 foot retaining walls with a 3.5' barrier railing on top, as shown on the Site Development Plan should be granted under this code due to the following

1. The height and location of the rear yard walls as proposed are interior to lot and will not result in or create a traffic hazard as these walls are not located adjacent to a road, street, alley or driveway.
2. The location, size and design of the rear yard proposed retaining walls will not create conditions that may be objectionable, detrimental or incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity. The 'under 8' block wall' covers only one half of the rear yard Property line length. Several examples of similar retaining conditions within the surrounding community can be

viewed from this property. Pictures and address of these neighborhood walls are in attachment labeled '*Neighborhood Retaining Walls: Examples over 6' High.*' In addition, each of the proposed terraced walls will be softened with plant material.

- Proposed Retaining Wall Lengths within the rear yard setback include:
 - A block retaining wall between 7' and 7.75' high located along 51' of the 108.74' rear property line and is 8" from the rear property line to allow the wall to be softened with plant material/vines.
 - 4.5' to 5.5' from the face of the above wall is a second terraced block retaining wall, 4' high, with a 3.5' barrier rail on top of the wall. Screening plant material will be between these two walls to soften the walls.
 - These two walls extend 6' into the 9.95' side yard setback.
 - A 29' long, 4' high, block retaining wall with a 3.5' barrier rail on top is located directly adjacent to the rear property line.
 - Two additional radius retaining walls with heights ranging from 6 to 7.5' high are also located within the 25' rear yard setback to create terraces for fruit trees and a vegetable garden.

Please let us know if there is anything else needed from us and/or what our next step is.

Thank you for your consideration,

Janet Eldridge

Landscape Architect



Environment Unlimited, Inc

825 Fee Ana St. Placentia, CA 92870

714-524-2218 (O)

714-524-2624 (FAX)

Janet@Environment-Unlimited.com

*Neighborhood Retaining Walls:
Examples over 6' High
May 2024*

**OC Public Works
VARIENCE REQUEST FOR:
Site Development Permit Process
Terraced Retaining Walls 6' to 8' High
in Rear and Side Yard Setbacks**

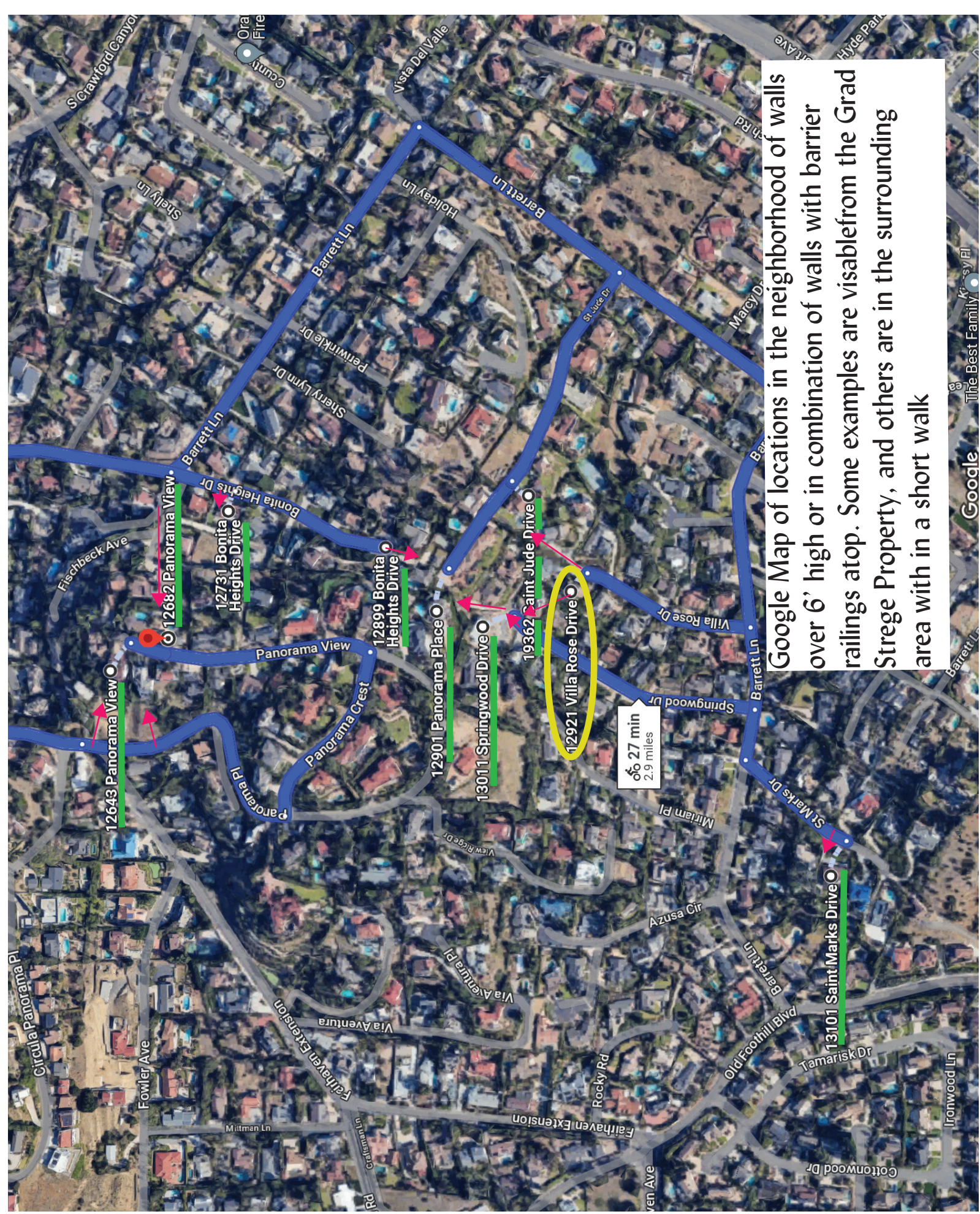
**Grad and Strege Residence
12921 Villa Rose Drive
Santa Ana, CA
AP No 393-061-45**

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Google Map of locations in the neighborhood of walls over 6' high or in combination of walls with barrier railings atop. Some examples are visible from the Grad Stregre Property, and others are in the surrounding area with in a short walk

12643 Panorama View

12682 Panorama View

12731 Bonita Heights Drive

12899 Bonita Heights Drive

12901 Panorama Place

13011 Springwood Drive

19362 Saint Jude Drive

12921 Villa Rose Drive

27 min
2.9 miles

13101 Saint Marks Drive

*Phototaken from back slider of
Grad and Stege Residence
13011 Springwood Dr, Santa Ana*



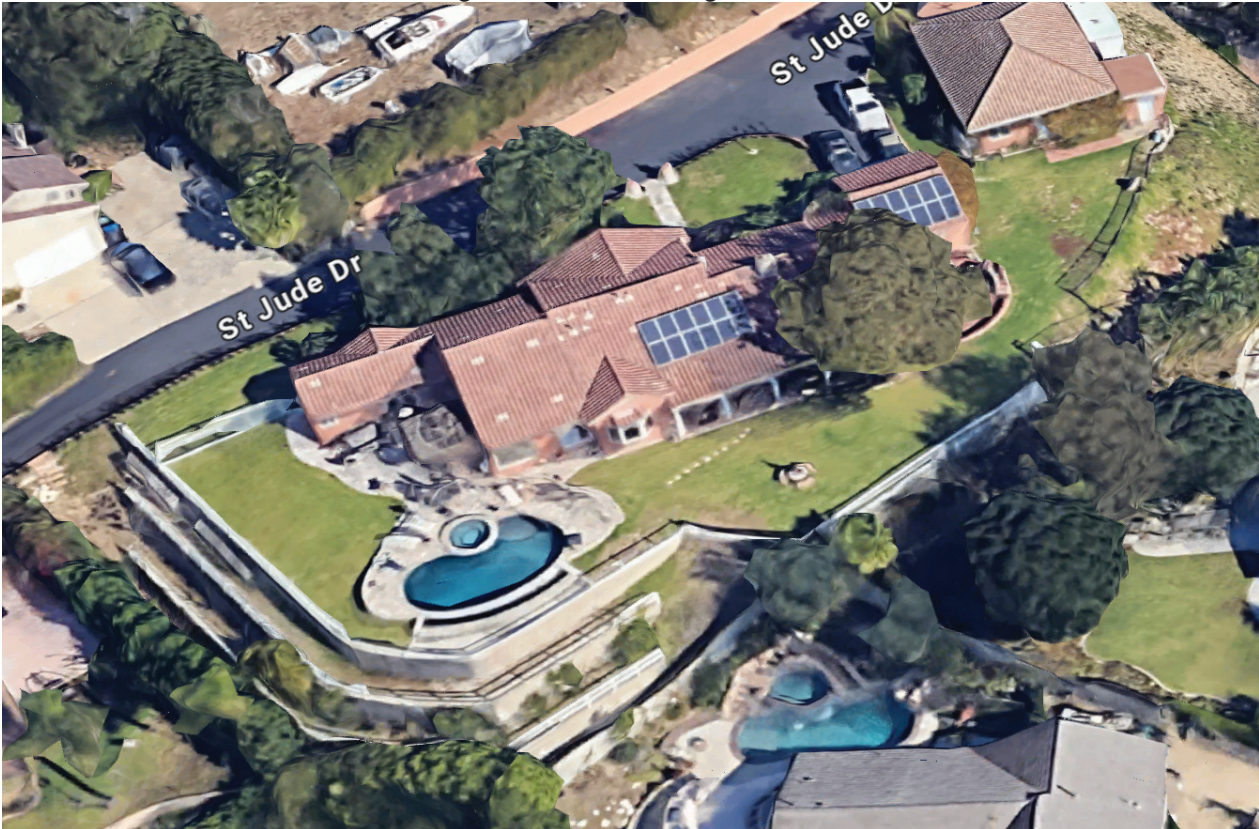
Back House Retaining Wall:
12901 Panorama Place, Santa Ana

Bottom House/Wall next to:
13011 Springwood Dr, Santa Ana



19362 St Jude Dr

Multiple retaining terraced rear and side walls with barrier rails all exceeding 6' overall in height



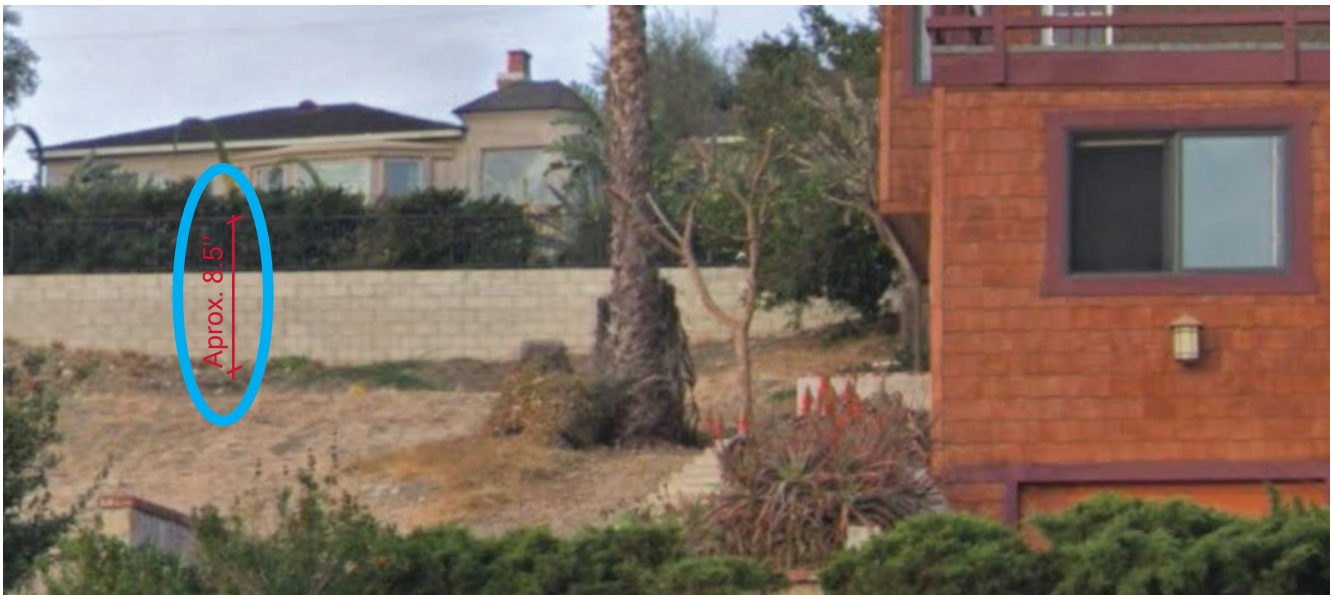
12643 Panorama View, Santa Ana





12899 Bonita Heights Dr, North Tustin
over 10' wall plus barrier atop

Rear yard of 12682 Panorama, North Tustin
5' wall with 3 1/2' railing on top



12901 Panorama Place, Santa Ana



13101 St. Marks Dr., Santa Ana



12731 Bonita Heights Dr, Santa Ana

