

II. Project Description

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1. Introduction

The Sunset Gower Studios (Project Site) is currently occupied by creative offices, production support, sound stages, and a vacant restaurant, which together comprise 616,602 square feet of floor area,^{1,2} not including 1,400 square feet of existing service areas.³ The Sunset Gower Studios Enhancement Plan (the Project) proposes improvements, which could occur in phases, on a 15.9-acre portion (693,432 square feet) of the existing 16.5-acre Project Site.⁴

The Project would preserve and enhance most of the existing buildings on the Sunset Gower Studios and develop new studio-related creative office, production office/production support and storage uses within three new buildings totaling 627,957 square feet of floor area. The three new buildings would range from five to 18 stories, up to 300 feet in height. The Project would remove 160,611 square feet of existing floor area, consisting of 125,521 square feet of creative office floor area, 29,444 square feet of production support floor area, and 5,646 square feet of sound stage floor area. The approximately 1,400 square

¹ All square-footage numbers represent floor area as defined by the Los Angeles Municipal Code. Specifically, floor area includes the area in square feet confined within the exterior walls of a building, but not including the area of the following: exterior walls, stairways, shafts, rooms housing Building-operating equipment or machinery, parking areas with associated driveways and ramps, space dedicated to bicycle parking, space for the landing and storage of helicopters, and basement storage areas.

² The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is developing a new substation to serve the existing uses on the Project Site and will be utilizing area that is currently occupied by a portion of Building 70. As part of this interim work, the Applicant will demolish approximately 7,750 square feet of the existing Building 70 and would create an open space in which LADWP can install its infrastructure. The existing floor area calculation does not include the approximately 7,750 square feet for floor area that is currently part of Building 70 that will be removed as part of this LADWP work that will be completed prior to commencement of the Project's approval or construction.

³ The existing service areas totaling approximately 1,400 square feet do not meet the LAMC definition of floor area and are not included in the total existing floor area of the Project Site.

⁴ The northwest corner of Sunset Gower Studios (1448 N. Gower Street) is under separate ownership, no development is proposed for the property, and no entitlements are sought for the property. However, because it is integrated into and a part of the Sunset Gower Studios it is included as part of the 16.5-acre Project Site for purposes of environmental review. Entitlements are only sought for development that would occur on 15.9 acres of the Project Site.

feet of existing service areas would also be removed. Overall, the Project would result in a net increase of 467,346 square feet of floor area.

The Project would provide parking consistent with the requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). The Project Site's existing 1,398 parking spaces would remain. The Project proposes up to 1,335 new parking spaces, comprised of: (i) up to 525 spaces within a new parking structure with six above-grade levels and three subterranean levels; (ii) up to 531 spaces within three subterranean parking levels below the existing basecamp⁵ and below a proposed 1,450-square-foot bicycle parking facility; and (iii) up to 279 spaces within three subterranean levels below one of the new buildings. Thus, upon Project buildout, up to 2,733 parking spaces could be provided within the Project Site.

The Project would also include landscaped courtyards and walkways to connect the proposed buildings, new street trees, and the addition of architectural treatments to the existing parking structures along Gordon Street.

2. Environmental Setting

a. Project Location

The approximately 16.5-acre Sunset Gower Studios is located at 1438 North Gower Street within the Hollywood Community Plan area of the City of Los Angeles. The Sunset Gower Studios is bounded by Sunset Boulevard to the north, Gordon Street to the east, Fountain Avenue to the south, and Gower Street to the west. A vicinity map is provided in Figure II-1 on page II-3, and an aerial view of the Project Site and vicinity is included in Figure II-2 on page II-4.

b. Surrounding Land Uses

The Project Site is within the highly urbanized Hollywood Community Plan area, characterized by a mix of uses within a range of building types, such as historic and modern low- to high-rise buildings with commercial/retail uses, tourist and entertainment-related commercial/retail uses, offices, hotels, educational institutions, and single-family and multi-family residences. In general, the major arterials in the vicinity of the Project Site, include Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood Boulevard, and Santa Monica Boulevard, and are lined with commercial, industrial, and some residential mixed-use developments, with residential neighborhoods primarily interspersed between the major arterials.

⁵ *The existing basecamp comprises the exterior surface production parking and production staging area located in the interior of the Project Site.*

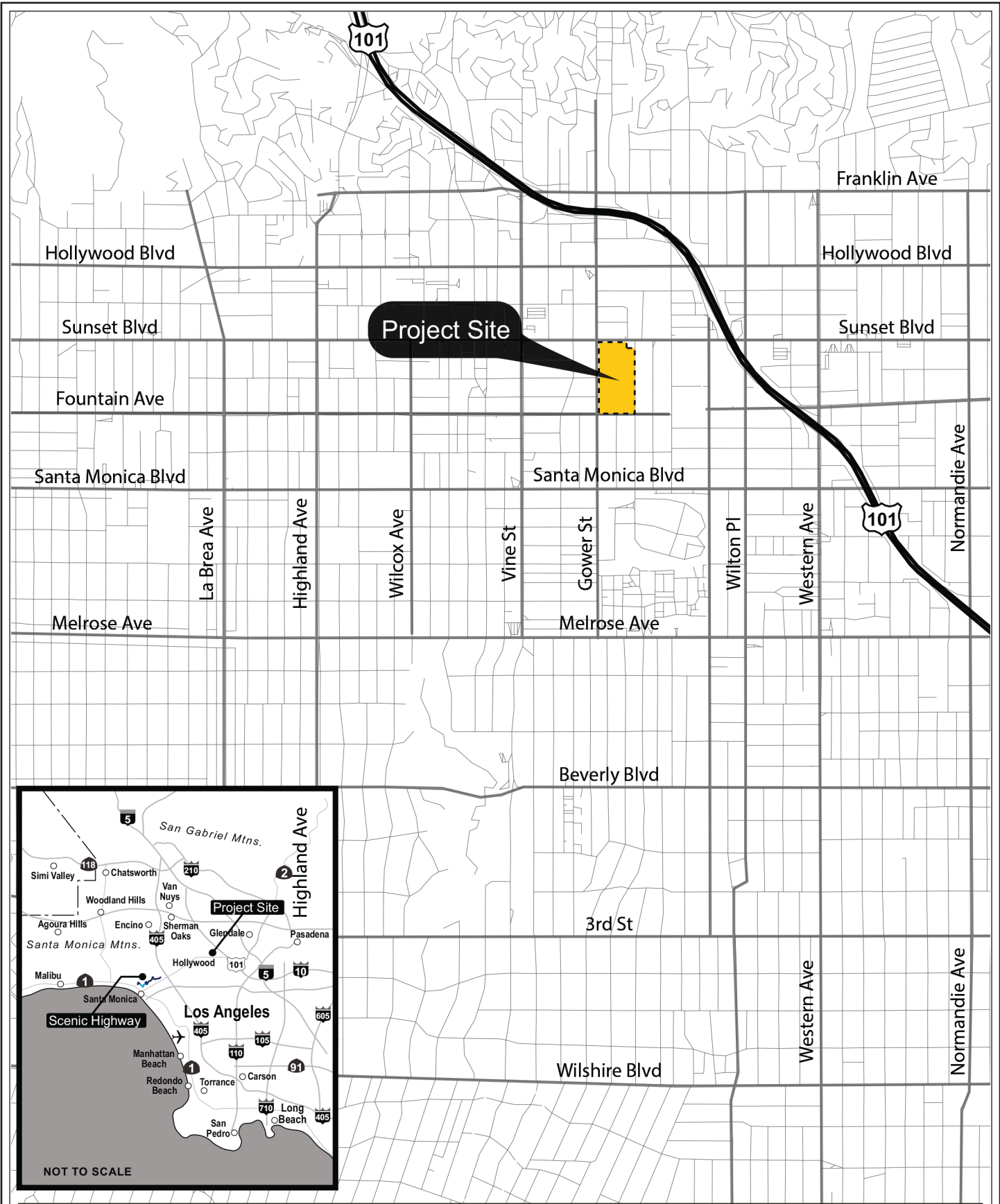


Figure II-1
Project Location Map

Source: Los Angeles County GIS, 2015; Eyestone Environmental, 2018.

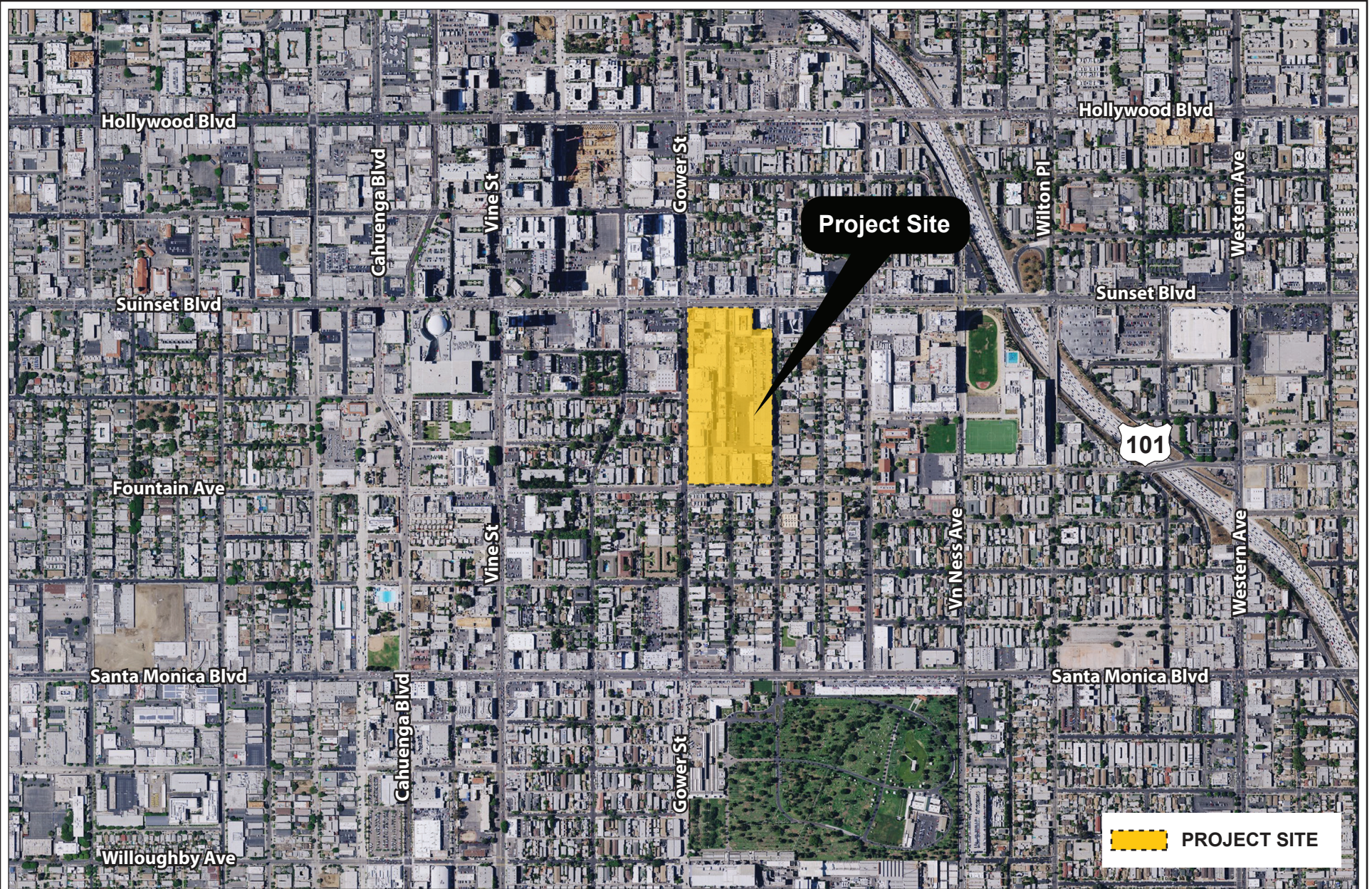


Figure II-2
Aerial Photograph of the Project Vicinity

Land uses surrounding the Project Site specifically include retail and restaurant uses within the Sunset Gower Plaza, Siren Studios, a motel, and other commercial/retail uses to the north, along Sunset Boulevard; the EastWest Studios, Emerson College, and single- and multi-family residential uses to the east, along Gordon Street; single- and multi-family residential and commercial uses to the south, along Fountain Avenue; and commercial, retail, restaurant, and multi-family residential uses to the west, along Gower Street.

c. Freeways and Transit

As shown in Figure II-1 on page II-3, primary regional access in the vicinity of the Project Site is provided by the Hollywood Freeway (US-101), which runs generally north-south approximately 0.4-mile east of the Project Site. Major arterials providing regional access to the Project Site and vicinity include Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood Boulevard, Van Ness Avenue, and La Brea Avenue. As illustrated in Figure II-3 on page II-6, the Project Site and vicinity are also well served by public transit provided by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation DASH. Several bus stops are located along Sunset Boulevard and Gower Street, including Metro bus line 2, DASH Hollywood, and DASH Hollywood/Wilshire. The Metro Hollywood/Vine Station is located approximately 0.6-mile northwest of the Project Site.

3. Project Site Background and Existing Conditions

a. Project Site Background

The Sunset Gower Studios has been developed with studio-related uses since 1918. Columbia Pictures occupied the Project Site from 1924 until 1972, when Columbia Pictures relocated to Burbank. In 1976, the Pick Vanoff Company purchased the studio lot and the name was changed to Sunset Gower Studios. At that time, the Sunset Gower Studios became a rental facility for independent film companies and includes facilities for music recording. In 2004, Sunset Gower Studios was purchased by GI Partners and, since 2007, has been owned by Hudson Pacific Properties.

b. Existing Project Site Conditions and Operations

The Project Site is an existing major motion picture and television studio. As summarized in Table II-1 on page II-7, existing development within the Project Site includes 616,602 square feet of floor area, consisting of 378,978 square feet of creative office space, 56,050 square feet of production support, 175,058 square feet of sound stages, and 6,516 square feet of restaurant space. Currently, activities on the Project Site include the production of motion pictures, television, and commercials on indoor and outdoor sets, in production offices, pre- and post-production activities, and related administrative functions;

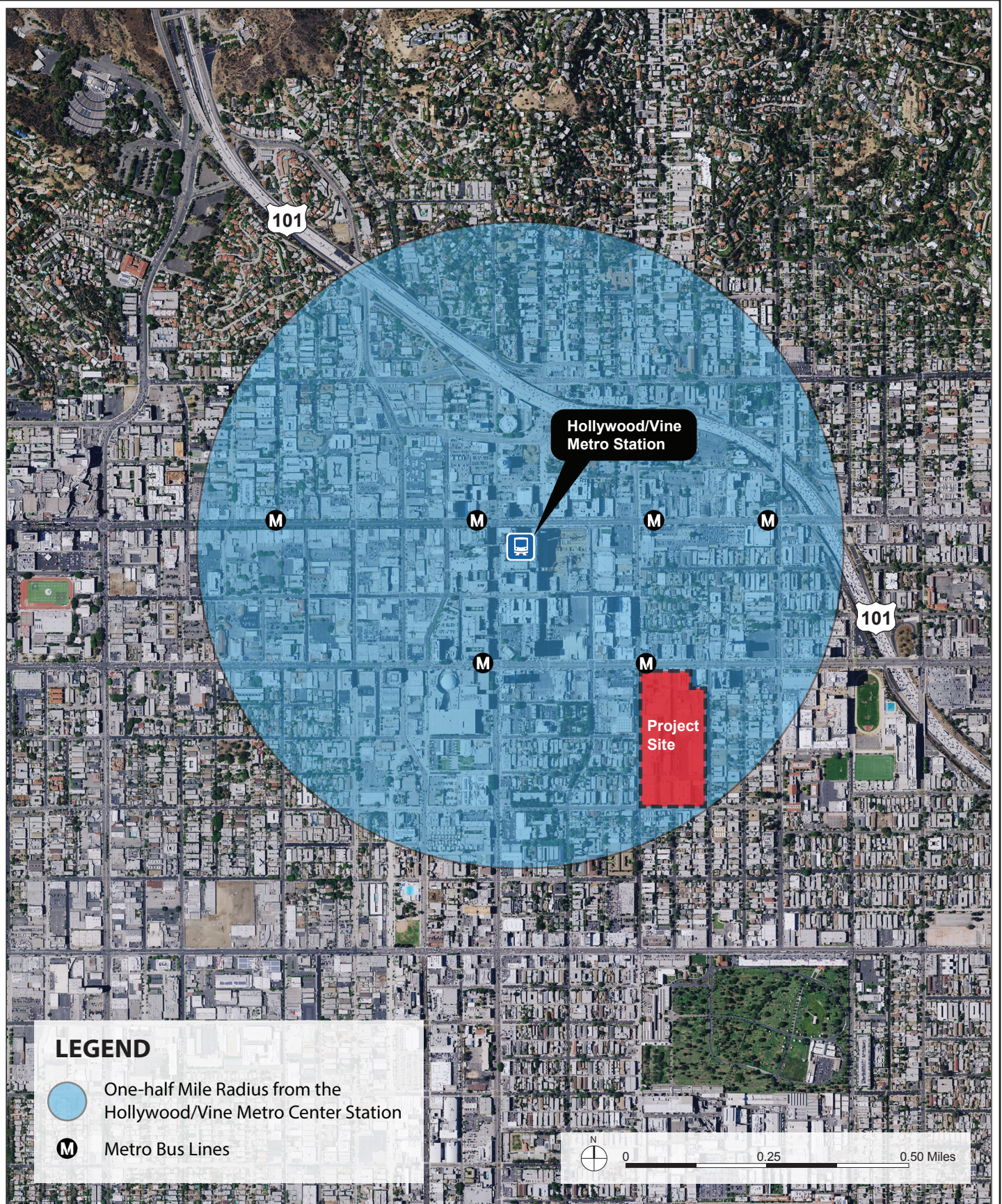


Figure II-3

Location of Project Site within a Transit Priority Area

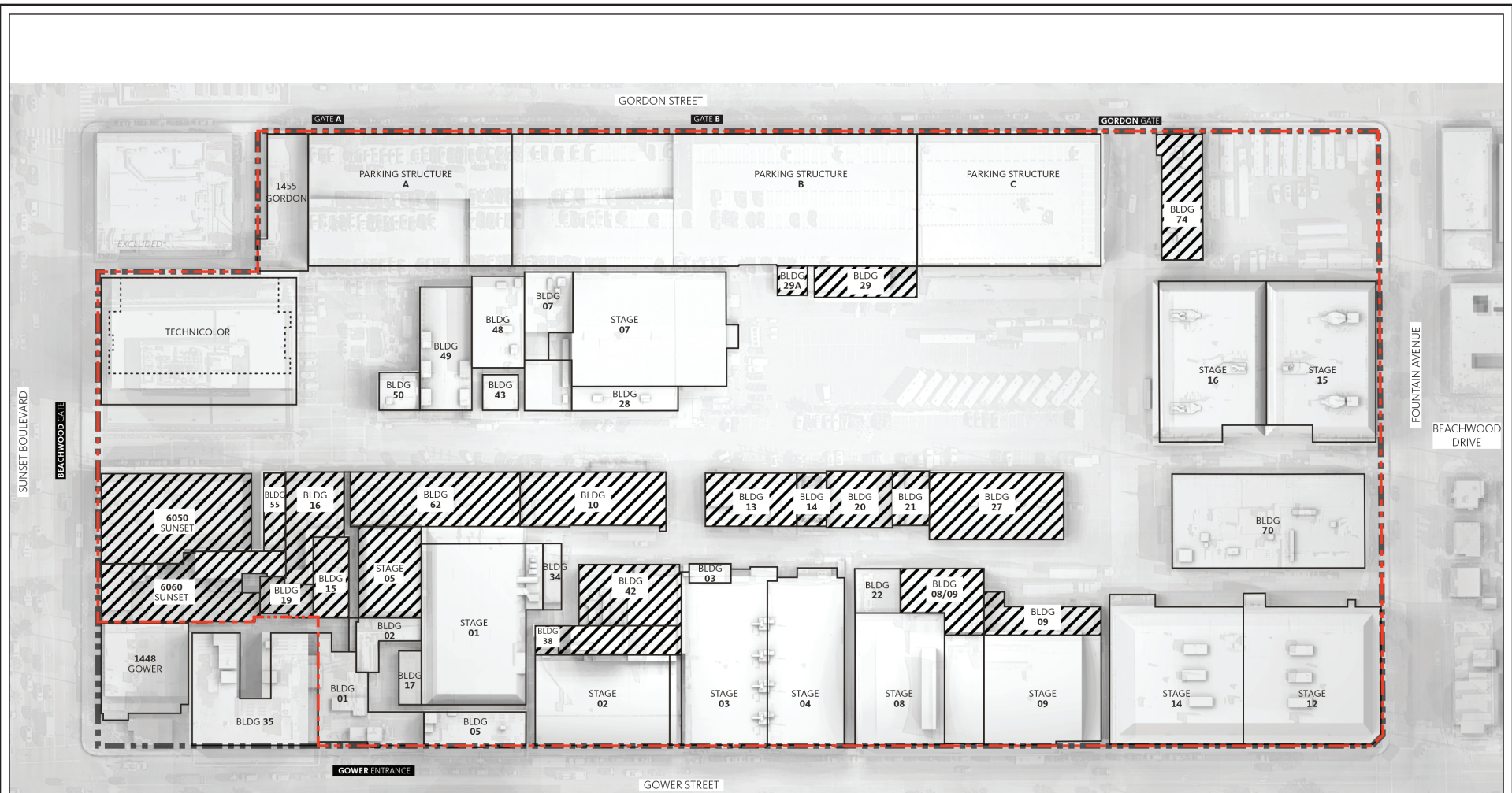
**Table II-1
Existing Uses on the Project Site**

Use	Total (sf) ^{a,b}
Creative Office	378,978 sf
Production Support	56,050 sf
Sound Stages	175,058 sf
Restaurant (currently vacant)	6,516 sf
Total Existing	616,602 sf
<p><i>sf = square feet</i></p> <p>^a <i>In accordance with LAMC Section 12.03, floor area is defined as “[t]he area in square feet confined within the exterior walls of a building, but not including the area of the following: exterior walls, stairways, shafts, rooms housing building-operating equipment or machinery, parking areas with associated driveways and ramps, space for the landing and storage of helicopters, and basement storage areas.”</i></p> <p>^b <i>The existing service areas totaling approximately 1,400 square feet do not meet the LAMC definition of floor area and are not included in the total existing floor area of the Project Site.</i></p> <p><i>Source: Gensler, 2017.</i></p>	

and operates 24 hours a day. Filming activities may occur at any time of day and any day of the week, including evenings and weekends. Most filming is closed to the public.

The Project Site includes three parking structures providing a total of 1,398 parking spaces. The northwest corner of Sunset Gower Studios (1448 N. Gower Street), which includes a five-story office building and an approximately 6,500-square foot single-story building, is included as part of the overall 16.5-acre Project Site, though no approvals are being sought for 1448 N. Gower Street and no development is proposed for the separate legal lot. The existing vacant structure located at 1448 N. Gower Street was previously used as a restaurant. The Project Site also includes approximately 1,400 square feet of service areas.

A site plan of the existing uses within the Project Site is provided in Figure II-4 on page II-8. The majority of the sound stages are located along Gower Street. Existing parking structures are located along Gordon Street and the creative office and production support uses are spread across buildings that are mostly centrally located on the Project Site and also front on Sunset Boulevard and Gower Street.



- Existing to Remain
- Proposed Demolition
- Entitlement Area (Property Line)
- Project Site

Figure II-4
Existing Site and Proposed Demolition Plan

The Project Site contains limited to sparse landscaping in the form of non-native/non-protected trees,⁶ hedges, and shrubs. The Project Site is enclosed with restricted access and on-site security, with access limited to the tenants and their guests.

Vehicular access to the Project Site is provided along Sunset Boulevard at North Beachwood Drive and along Gordon Street. Both access points have 24-hour security and gates. Emergency and limited vehicular access is provided along Fountain Avenue. Limited pedestrian access is also provided along Gower Street through a gated entry and pedestrians can also enter the Project Site through a secure gate off of Sunset Boulevard.

c. Land Use and Zoning

The Project Site is located within the Hollywood Community Plan area and has a Limited Manufacturing General Plan land use designation with corresponding zones of MR1, M1, P, and PB zones.

The Project Site is zoned M1-1 (Limited Industrial, Height District 1), which permits MR1 uses (Restricted Industrial), limited industrial and manufacturing uses, any enclosed C2 uses, wireless telecommunications, and household storage. Studio production and office uses are a permitted use in the MR1 Zone. As such, they are also permitted in the M1 Zone. Height District 1 within the M1 Zone has no height limit but restricts the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to 1.5:1. The Project Site is located in a Transit Priority Area, as defined by Zoning Information File 2452.⁷

As described above, the Project Site is an existing major motion picture and television studio. Existing development within the Project Site includes creative office space, production support, and sound stages.

4. Project Objectives

Section 15124(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that the project description shall contain “a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project.” Section 15124(b) of the CEQA Guidelines further states that “the statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project.”

⁶ *The City of Los Angeles Protected Tree Regulations apply to Oak, Southern California Black Walnut, Western Sycamore, and California Bay tree species that are native to Southern California, and excludes trees grown by a nursery or trees planted or grown as part of a tree planting program.*

⁷ *The City's Zone Information and Map Access System (ZIMAS) confirms the Project Site's location within a Transit Priority Area, as defined in the City's Zoning Information File No. 2452.*

The underlying purpose of the Project is to provide television, video, and motion picture production facilities, while supporting the evolving needs of the entertainment industry for office space, enhanced post-production facilities, and other studio-related facilities. As set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, the Project's basic and fundamental objectives are provided below.

- Consistent with the Hollywood Community Plan to further the development of Hollywood as a major center of entertainment and to perpetuate its image as the international center of the motion picture industry, substantially augmenting the existing studio/media-related office and office production uses within an existing studio campus to ensure continued viability of the studios.
- In support of the Hollywood Community Plan to promote economic well-being and public convenience through encouraging the revitalization of the motion picture industry; and creating a secure campus environment where media and entertainment related uses are consolidated with production, post-production, and administrative offices in order to maximize creativity and productivity.
- Consistent with the General Plan to maintain significant historic and architectural districts while allowing for the development of economically viable uses, establishing clear guidelines for the preservation of the historic character of the Project Site while providing upgraded office space and production-supporting uses on the Project Site in a manner that respects and preserves the majority of identified historic districts.
- Augment, expand, and diversify an existing studio site along a transit corridor within a high activity area where media and entertainment related uses are consolidated with production, post-production, and administrative offices within a single site to promote sustainability and reduce vehicle miles traveled, with associated reductions in air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Design and construct economically-viable and technologically advanced creative office and production support spaces with the integrated density, infrastructure, parking, and technology to attract high-quality media and creative office tenants along a key corridor in Hollywood and to meet the existing and anticipated future demand of the movie, television, and entertainment industry and to allow flexibility to incorporate future technology advances.
- Provide an enhanced studio campus environment that creates new media-related employment opportunities serving movie, television, and entertainment industries, as well as construction jobs, providing opportunities for local and regional economic growth as well as locating jobs on a site that is easily accessible via public transportation.

- Enhance the identity of the Project Site as a movie, television, and entertainment industry area and enhance the visual appearance of the Project Site by providing architecturally distinct development.
- Provide adequate and safe circulation, staging, and parking that satisfies the unique demand of the film production industry with direct access to the proposed uses, adequate truck and trailer circulation, and maintenance of the production “basecamp” to allow for the flexible and efficient staging of trucks and trailers needed for film and television productions, and to enhance efficiency and safety.

5. Description of the Project

a. Project Overview

The proposed Project’s studio-related creative office, production office/production support and storage uses would be provided within three new buildings (referred to herein as Buildings A, B, and C). To build the proposed improvements, the Project would demolish 160,611 square feet of existing floor area, including 125,521 square feet of creative office floor area, 29,444 square feet of production support floor area, and 5,646 square feet of sound stage floor area, as shown in Figure II-4 on page II-8. Approximately 1,400 square feet of existing service areas would also be removed.⁸

Overall, as shown in Table II-2 on page II-12, the Project would remove 160,611 square feet of existing floor area and develop 627,957 square feet of floor area, resulting in a net increase of approximately 467,346 square feet of floor area. When averaged across the 15.9-acre portion of the Project Site on which improvements are proposed, the 15.9-acre portion of the Project Site would have a FAR of 1.47:1, which would be below the existing FAR limitation of 1.5:1.⁹ Upon buildout of the Project, up to 2,733 parking spaces (inclusive of the existing 1,398 parking spaces to remain) would be provided within the Sunset Gower Studios. A Conceptual Site Plan of the proposed development is provided in Figure II-5 on page II-13.

As shown in Figure II-5, Building A would be located along Sunset Boulevard, and Buildings B and C would be centrally located within the Project Site. A proposed parking structure would be located in the southeastern portion of the Project Site, at the corner of Gordon Street and Fountain Avenue and connect with the three subterranean levels of

⁸ *The existing service areas totaling approximately 1,400 square feet do not meet the LAMC definition of floor area and are not included in the total existing floor area of the Project Site.*

⁹ *The Project’s FAR is calculated based on the 15.9-acre portion of the Project where improvements are proposed, which is the only portion of the Project Site owned by the Applicant, and the portion of the Project Site to which the conditional use permit for floor area averaging is being sought.*

**Table II-2
Summary of Proposed Floor Area**

Land Use	Existing	Proposed Demolition	Proposed Construction	Net New
Creative Office	378,978 sf	(125,521 sf)	599,335 sf	473,814 sf
Production Support	56,050 sf	(29,444 sf)	27,172 sf	(3,272) sf
Sound Stages	175,058 sf	(5,646 sf)	—	(5,646) sf
Restaurant	6,516 sf	—	—	—
Total	616,602 sf	(160,611 sf)	627,957 sf^a	467,346 sf^a
<i>sf = square feet</i> ^a <i>Includes proposed 1,450-square-foot bicycle parking facility.</i> <i>Source: Eyestone Environmental, 2020.</i>				

parking under basecamp. An approximately 1,450-square-foot bicycle parking facility containing 182 long-term bicycle parking spaces, restrooms, and showers would be located adjacent to Building B and above the subterranean parking under basecamp.

Building A would contain approximately 478,851 square feet of creative office space, comprising 18 stories with a height of 300 feet. Three levels of subterranean parking would be provided in Building A. As illustrated in Figure II-5 on page II-13, the Project would locate the tallest building along Sunset Boulevard, similar to other developments in the vicinity. The proposed buildings would be designed in a contemporary architectural style. Building A would feature varying façade planes articulated by sawtooth windows, glass curtain walls, and exposed black steel beams. The overall mass of Building A would feature discrete volumes, thereby reducing its scale and enhancing its visual interest on the street and in the larger urban context. Further, the design would be distinguished by landscaped outdoor decks and recessed terraces providing both outdoor space and shaded areas. In addition, the design would include varied glass profiles as well as a high level of architectural detailing that pays homage to the historic structures on the studio lot.

Building B would contain approximately 68,600 square feet of creative office and production support space, comprising five stories with a height of approximately 89 feet. Building C would contain approximately 79,000 square feet of creative office and production support space, comprising six stories with a height of approximately 89 feet. The design of Buildings B and C would incorporate historic elements into a modern style to complement Building A. Buildings B and C would feature varying façade planes articulated by steel-frame windows, curtain walls, exposed black steel beams, textured concrete, and polycarbonate panels. Buildings B and C would also be distinguished by distinctive massing and

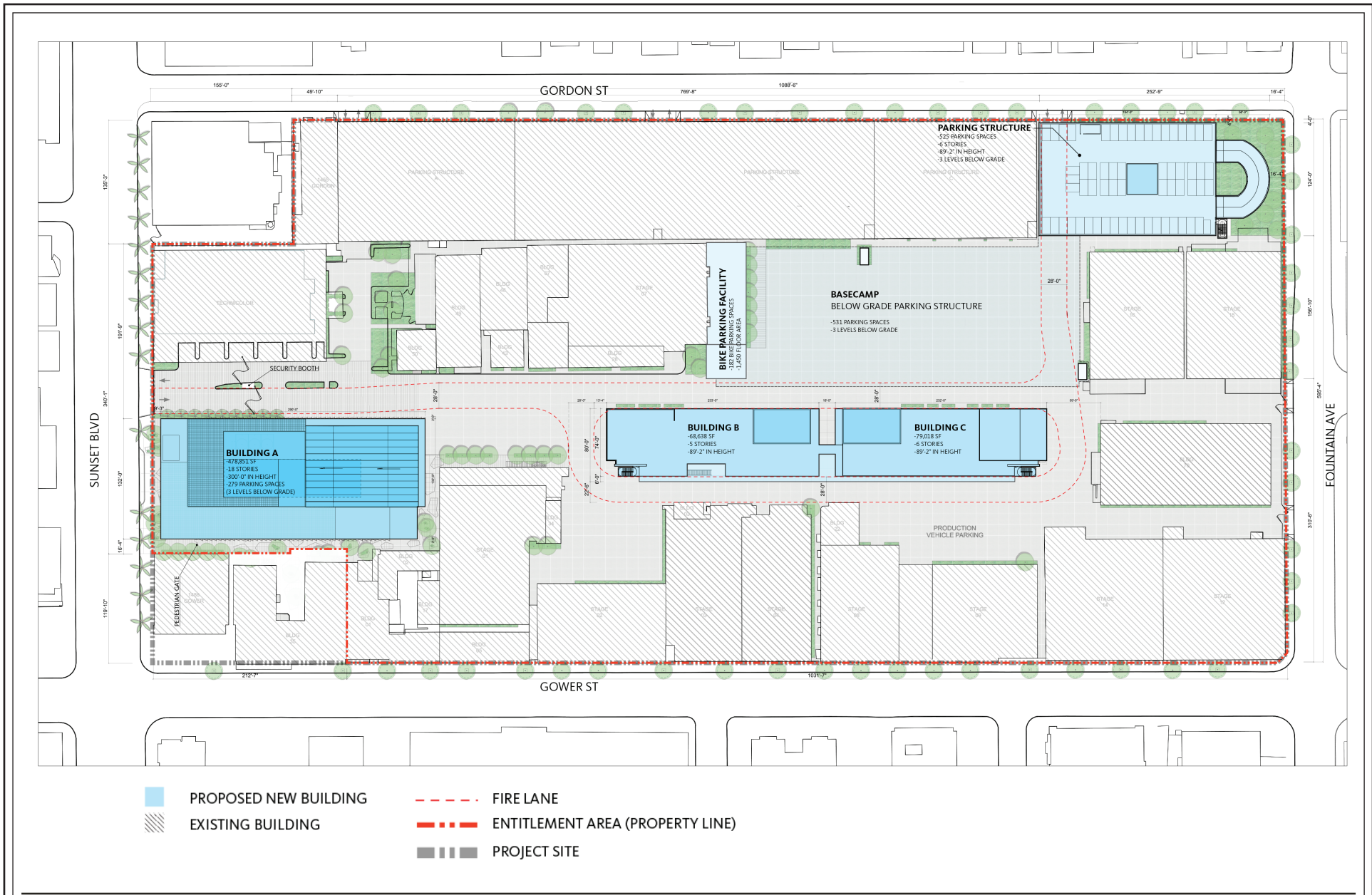


Figure II-5
Conceptual Site Plan

landscaped terraces along with a palette of materials (i.e., steel I-beams and metal sash windows) which link the design to the traditions of film studios.

Three buildings on the Project Site could individually be eligible for historic status. The Project proposes to retain two of these: the building at 1440 Gower Street and the building at 1455 Gordon Street. The third building, at 6050 Sunset Boulevard, would be demolished. The Project Site also contains buildings that, while not individually eligible for historic status, could comprise a collection of buildings that constitute a historic district as a result of their definable association with the motion picture industry in Los Angeles. Because there are potential historical resources on the Project Site, a Historic Resources Plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the Project to guide the preservation of a majority of the Project Site's historical resources, as well as construction of new structures. The Historic Resources Plan would include detailed guidelines for the rehabilitation and preservation of most of the existing buildings that contribute to a potential Historic Studio District following Project development.

b. Access and Parking

As shown in Figure II-5 on page II-13, existing vehicular access to the Project Site would be maintained and provided via the existing driveways along Sunset Boulevard and Gordon Street. Pedestrian-only access would continue to be provided along Gower Street and through the Sunset Boulevard gate.

The Project would provide parking consistent with the LAMC and could provide up to 1,335 new parking spaces, comprised of: (1) up to 525 spaces within a new parking structure with six above-grade levels and three subterranean parking levels; (2) up to 531 spaces within three subterranean parking levels below the existing basecamp and below a proposed 1,450-square-foot bicycle parking facility; and (3) up to 279 spaces within three subterranean levels below Building A. The proposed subterranean parking levels would extend to a maximum depth of 42 feet. The Project would comply with City requirements for providing electric vehicle charging capabilities and electric vehicle charging stations within the new parking facilities. In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the LAMC, approximately 284 bicycle parking spaces consisting of 102 short-term spaces and 182 long-term spaces would be provided.

c. Internal Landscape Areas

As shown in Figure II-6 on page II-15, the landscape plan would create a variety of landscaped gathering areas to enhance the existing pedestrian environment internal to the Project Site, including a paseo, a central plaza area, courtyards, and roof gardens and terraces. These areas would include trees, accent paving, seating, and other landscaping features throughout the Project Site.



Figure II-6
Conceptual Landscape Plan

d. Lighting and Signage

The Project would include low-level exterior lights adjacent to the proposed buildings and along pathways for security and wayfinding purposes. In addition, low-level lighting to accent signage, architectural features, and landscaping elements would be incorporated throughout the Project Site. All lighting would comply with current energy standards and codes, as well as design Requirements, while providing appropriate light levels. Project lighting would be designed to provide efficient and effective on-site lighting while minimizing light trespass from the Project Site, reducing sky-glow, and improving nighttime visibility through glare reduction.

Specifically, all on-site exterior lighting would be automatically controlled via photo sensors to illuminate only when required and would be shielded or directed toward areas to be illuminated to limit spill-over onto nearby residential uses. Where appropriate, interior lighting would be equipped with occupancy sensors and/or timers that would automatically extinguish lights when no one is present. All exterior and interior lighting shall meet high energy efficiency requirements utilizing light-emitting diode (LED) or efficient fluorescent lighting technology.

Proposed signage would be designed to be aesthetically compatible with the existing and proposed architecture of the Project Site and would comply with the Los Angeles Municipal Code. Proposed signage would include identity signage, building and tenant signage, and general ground level and way-finding pedestrian signage. No off premises or billboard advertising is proposed as part of the Project. The Project would not include signage with flashing, mechanical, or strobe lights. New signage would be architecturally integrated into the design of the proposed buildings and would establish appropriate identification for the proposed uses. Project signage would be illuminated via low-level, low-glare external lighting, internal halo lighting, or ambient light. Exterior lighting for signage would be directed onto signs to avoid creating off-site glare. Illumination used for Project signage would comply with light intensities set forth in the LAMC and as measured at the property line of the nearest residentially zoned property.

e. Project Sustainability

The Project would be constructed to incorporate environmentally sustainable design features required by the Los Angeles Green Building Code and the sustainability intent of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design (LEED) green building program to achieve LEED Silver certification or equivalency. LEED standards would be incorporated to reduce energy and water usage and waste, thereby reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions. The Project would incorporate, but not be limited to, the following features to support and promote environmental sustainability: Energy Star appliances; reduced indoor water use by at least 20 percent; plumbing fixtures (water closets

and urinals) and fittings (faucets) that exceed the performance requirements specified in the Los Angeles Municipal Code; weather-based irrigation system; and water-efficient landscaping with use of drought tolerant plants in up to 60 percent of the proposed landscaping. The Project would also utilize sustainable building strategies and would incorporate the use of environmentally friendly materials, such as non-toxic paints and recycled finish materials wherever possible.

f. Anticipated Construction Schedule

The timing of construction of specific elements of the Project would depend on the business needs at the time. Project construction could occur in phases, with construction potentially commencing in or before 2024 and buildout completed in 2028. Construction activities would include demolition of existing uses, grading and excavation, and construction of new structures and related infrastructure. Construction of Building A and Parking Structure would require approximately 39 months, construction of the subterranean parking structure would require approximately 15 months, and construction of Buildings B and C would require approximately 18 months. Approximately 280,000 cubic yards of soil would be hauled from the Project Site during the excavation phase. The haul route from the Project Site is anticipated to be via Sunset Boulevard to the Hollywood Freeway (US-101) to the east.

6. Requested Permits and Approvals

The discretionary entitlements, reviews, permits and approvals required to implement the Project may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Pursuant to LAMC Sections 12.24 T.3(b) and 12.24 U.14, a Vesting Conditional Use Permit for a Major Development Project;
- Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.24 W.19, a Conditional Use Permit to allow Floor Area Ratio Averaging in Unified Developments;
- Pursuant to LAMC Sections 12.22 A.23, 12.24 W.27, and 12.24 F a Conditional Use Permit for a Commercial Corner Development;
- Pursuant to LAMC Section 16.05, Site Plan Review to for a development project which results in an increase of 50,000 gross square feet of non-residential floor area; and
- Pursuant to LAMC Section 17.15, Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 80310 for merger and subdivision purposes.
- Other discretionary and ministerial permits and approvals that may be deemed necessary, including but not limited to; additional necessary entitlements,

clearance related to the Hollywood Redevelopment Plan, temporary street closures, demolition permits, grading permits, excavation permits, foundation permits, street tree removal permits, and building permits.

To implement the Project, various other approvals, permits and actions would be required by the City of Los Angeles and other responsible agencies. City departments, commissions, and bodies that may use this Draft EIR in their decision-making process include the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Public Works, the City Planning Commission, and the City Council. Other agencies may include, for example, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.