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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

DEC 07 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

December 7, 2020

Alan Como, AICP
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
221 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Berggruen Institute Project – Notice of
Preparation (NOP)
SCH# 2020110343
GTS# 07-LA-2020-03432
Vic. LA-405 PM 35.7

Dear Alan Como:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Berggruen Institute Project (Project) involves a development program designed to accommodate the Berggruen Institute's educational and research programs, fellowships, scholars, and administration within a Research Institute campus, as well as to preserve open space. Development and operation of the Project would be implemented through the Berggruen Institute Specific Plan (Specific Plan). Development would be concentrated on approximately 28 acres of the 447-acre Project Site (also referred to as the Specific Plan Area), which would be divided into three Sub-Areas:

- (1) Ridge I, which would include a primary Institute Building comprising meeting rooms, lounge/study areas, offices, an auditorium/lecture hall, a library, storage space and support areas, as well as dining and kitchen facilities, 30 Scholar Units serving as limited-term living quarters for resident scholars, visiting scholars, guests, and limited staff, with supporting uses and amenities such as a Gatehouse and recreational facilities, as well as landscaped outdoor spaces including gardens and courtyards. Ridge I would also include a 301 car parking spaces in a subterranean garage.
- (2) Ridge II, which would include three Scholar Pavilions with a combination of Research Institute uses and/or limited-term scholar living quarters, and 15 parking spaces.
- (3) Open Space, which would allow for hillside preservation, restoration and protection of native habitat, fuel modification zones for fire risk management, and public trails and recreational opportunities in an area comprising 424.4 acres.

The Research Institute could accommodate up to 26 resident scholars at a time plus up to 60 staff, four of whom would reside on-site in Scholar Units, in addition to visiting scholars and guests attending conferences, symposia, and other programs or events. Within the Open Space Sub-Area, portions of two existing trails that pass through the Project Site would be improved and available for public use, consistent with an existing, recorded, open space easement agreement and trail easement agreements. In addition, future growth of up to 63,000 square feet of Research Institute floor area could occur within Ridge I to accommodate future programs and uses, including potential facilities for 16 additional resident scholars and up to 70 additional staff. Earthwork associated with buildout of the Specific Plan would require an estimated 200,000 cubic yards of cut, with 90,000 cubic yards of fill and 110,000 cubic yards of export, plus a possible 30,000 cubic yards of soil import for landscaping purposes.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is Interstate 405. After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans does not expect project approval to result in a direct adverse impact to the existing State transportation facilities. However, Caltrans still looks forward to reviewing the forthcoming Draft Environmental Impact Report for additional project analysis as well as confirmation that the project will result in a net reduction in Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT). Please consider transportation connections to the Project site that do not require a car. The accommodation of people riding bikes and transit is critical to this project's ability to remain accessible and limit the potential to induce excessive VMT.

Additionally, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2020-03432.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief
cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse