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DATE: August 19, 2021

TO: Public Agencies, Property Owners, Residents, and Interested Parties

FROM: City of San Juan Capistrano
32400 Paseo Adelanto
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
Contact: David Contreras, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meeting for the El Camino Specific Plan

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of San Juan Capistrano (“City”), in its capacity as lead agency for the El Camino Specific Plan Project (“Project” or “Specific Plan”), has determined that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) should be prepared for the Project. The City will prepare a DEIR to analyze the impacts of the Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, Section 21166 et seq.; “CEQA”).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project will require the following discretionary approvals from the City: a General Plan Amendment, a Code Amendment, and a Rezone to allow for adoptions of the El Camino Specific Plan (Specific Plan). Additional discretionary approvals are required to approve two projects covered by the Specific Plan, described in further detail below.

Overview

The proposed 7.3-acre “El Camino Specific Plan” area would be comprised of three private parcels and nine City-owned parcels, including the Blas Aguilar Adobe, Historic Town Center Park (HTC), and the former Caltrans parcel. As shown in Figure 1, Specific Plan Map, the Project consists of two private active proposed developments: 1) the Ortega Hwy & El Camino Real Mixed Use Project located at the corner of El Camino Real and Ortega Highway, which would reuse the property that formerly housed the Camino Real Playhouse, and 2) the Forster & El Camino Mixed-Use Project at the intersection of Forster Street and El Camino Real. Between these two proposed developments are City-owned parcels that include Historic Town Center (“HTC”) Park and Blas Aguilar Adobe. The proposed Project would designate a portion of these City-owned parcels for a new future performing arts center within HTC Park; however, the Blas Aguilar Adobe would remain in-place. The Project would also include various street and utility improvements to complement the area and provide for the future uses.

Ortega Hwy & El Camino Real Mixed Use Project

This Project area is approximately 1.68 acres with buildings fronting on Ortega Highway and El Camino Real. The proposed development of the site will require the following discretionary approvals: Architectural Control (AC) 21-005, Sign Permit Program (SP) 21-007, Tree Removal Permit (TRP) 21-003 and Site Plan Review (SPR) 21-002. The development will include the demolition of an existing commercial building, the construction of one (1) two-story mixed-use building, and a three-story above ground parking structure. Incorporated into the front of the parking structure fronting El Camino Real will be a retail commercial building. Each of the buildings will consist of the following uses:

- Mixed-Use Building: Retail, Restaurant, and/or Office Uses
- Retail Building: Retail, Restaurant, and/or Office Uses

The mixed-use building's main massing (the two-story retail volumes) will reach a maximum height of 40 Feet 6 Inches (40'-6"). The maximum height of the two 2-story mixed use buildings is 38 Feet 6 Inches (38'-6") as measured from finish floor 0'-0" to the top of the elevator tower. The building comprises a total of 24,850 square feet.

The proposed parking structure and retail building will be a three-story structure consisting of four levels of parking (ground floor included). The Project includes a total of 216 parking stalls proposed for the entirety of the site. The parking structure will account for 197 of the 216 parking stalls, and the residual 19 stalls will be located on the surface parking lot. Attached to the west end of the parking structure is a 2,607 square foot retail building. The proposed single-story building element will be utilized to increase the parking structure's setback from the street, as well as to screen the visibility of the parking structure from El Camino Real. The parking structure setbacks will be as follows:

- Setback from southern property line to parking structure: 19 Feet 3 Inches (19'-3")
- Setback from Blas Aguilar Adobe Museum to parking structure: 26 Feet 9 Inches (26'-9")

Forster & El Camino Mixed Use Project

This Project will be a mixed-use community, incorporating both commercial and residential uses, and will require the following discretionary approvals: Architectural Control (AC) 21-014, Sign Permit Program (SP) 21-018, Tree Removal Permit (TRP) 21-018, Site Plan Review (SPR) 21-003, and Grading Plan Modification (GPM) 21-010. The development will be situated on nearly 3.15 acres of land at the intersection of Forster Street and El Camino Real.

The commercial element of the project will include a free-standing 4,294 square foot restaurant and a 3,100 square foot fitness center attached to the residential building. The two commercial buildings will be located on opposite corners of the Project entrance and face a traffic circle. The buildings will each feature a prominent entry with tile accents and enhanced paving, which will help differentiate the commercial and residential elements of the Project. The restaurant building will have a spacious courtyard for outdoor seating, while the fitness center will feature high ceilings and state of the art design to accommodate a variety of training and fitness applications. Ample bicycle parking will also be provided.

The residential element of the Project will contain ninety-five (95) apartments with a gross area of 110,559 square feet surrounding a resort-style pool and recreational facility. A 3,271 square foot clubhouse building will be located at the entrance to the residences and will serve as a central focal point for the community. The clubhouse building will contain meeting and recreation space for the community's residents. A California room will open on to the pool deck and provide indoor/outdoor recreation space for those using the facilities.

The central residential buildings will be designed in the Spanish Revival Vernacular. The design includes architectural details, fenestrations, and offsets to accentuate the building's design. Similarly, a team of three independent design consultants have collaborated on the project's color palette, with the intent of complementing the City's mission and ranch heritage.

Performing Arts Center

The Camino Real Playhouse has provided the community with a venue to support local theater and events. As part of the Specific Plan, the Playhouse site is being converted to commercial uses; however, members of the community have expressed interest in a new, expanded and enhanced center for performing arts. The City has identified the underutilized portion of the HTC Park as a viable location for a dynamic new Performing Arts Center. The Specific Plan will outline the location for a

potential future Performing Arts Center that will be complementary to surrounding uses and the community.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Project site encompasses approximately 7.3 acres of land in the downtown area of the City of San Juan Capistrano. The Ortega Hwy & El Camino Real Mixed Use portion of the Project site is located at 31776 El Camino Real on a 1.68-acre property (Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 124-160-27, -55, -57, and -63). The Forster & El Camino Mixed Use Project portion of the Project site is located at 31878 Camino Capistrano on a 3.15-acre property (Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 124-160-37, -51, and -52). The central portion of the Project site includes the Blas Aguilar Adobe and HTC Park (Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 124-160-08, -09, -10, -11, -12, and -27). The Project site is located south of Ortega Highway, east of El Camino Real, and both west and north of Del Obispo Street. Local access to the Project site would be provided by El Camino Real and Camino Capistrano. Regional access to the site would be provided by Interstate 5 (I-5), which is located approximately 568 feet northwest of the Project site.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, the City has determined that an EIR will clearly be required for this Project, and that preparation of an Initial Study will not be prepared. The DEIR will evaluate the probable environmental effects of the Project, including the following:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems

The following topics are anticipated to be less than significant or no impact and do not warrant an in-depth analysis in the EIR: Agricultural & Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Wildfire.¹

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a scoping meeting in an open-house format from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on **Monday, August 30, 2021** at the San Juan Capistrano Community Center located at 25925 Camino Del Avion, San Juan Capistrano. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to present the proposed Project, describe the DEIR process and receive public comments. The City invites interested parties to participate in the scoping meeting to learn more about the Project, ask questions, and submit comments.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: This Notice of Preparation ("NOP") is also available for review at the following locations:

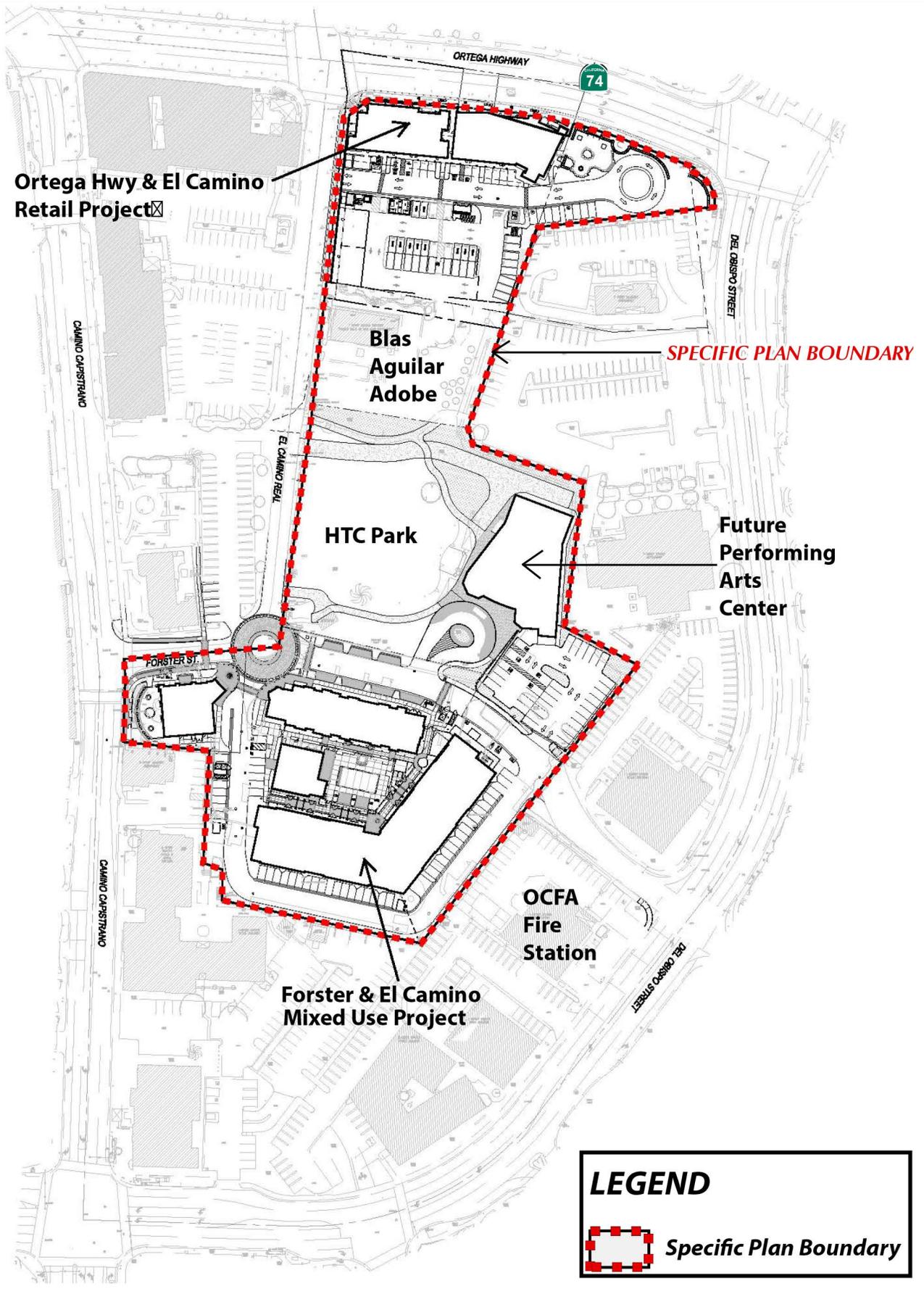
- City of San Juan Capistrano, Development Services Department, 32400 Paseo Adelanto, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
- San Juan Capistrano Library, 31495 El Camino Real, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

¹ *The Project site is not designated for significant farmland or forest land, does not contain a known mineral resource with regional or local value, and is not on lands classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone.*

The NOP can also be viewed on the City's website at the following address:
<http://sanjuancapistrano.org/Departments/Development-Services/Planning-Zoning/Environmental-Documents>

WRITTEN COMMENTS: All interested parties, including the public, responsible agencies, and trustee agencies, are invited to provide comments and input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be addressed in the DEIR. Responsible and trustee agencies should provide comments and input related to the agencies' respective areas of statutory responsibility. Comments received during the scoping period will be considered during preparation of the DEIR. Written comments must be submitted to the City of San Juan Capistrano by **Monday, September 20, 2021 at 5:30p.m.** to be timely for consideration in the preparation of the EIR. Please direct your comments by e-mail or U.S. mail to:

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LEGEND

 *Specific Plan Boundary*

Source(s): Blue Peak Engineering (06-30-2021)