



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

DATE: May 17, 2022

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting for the West LA Commons Project

The County of Los Angeles (“County”), as Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) must be prepared for the proposed project described below. The County has prepared this Notice of Preparation (“NOP”) and the accompanying Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study) to provide agencies, organizations and other interested parties with information describing the Project, to identify the Project’s potential environmental effects, and to solicit input regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis.

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 information contained in the EIR. Trustee and responsible agencies should provide comments and input related to the agencies’ respective areas of statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. As a responsible or trustee agency, your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the County when considering any permits that your agency must issue, or other approval for the project.

PROJECT TITLE: West LA Commons

CASE NO.: PRJ2022-000303, Environmental Plan No. RPPL2022000742

PROJECT APPLICANT: West LA Commons, LLC

SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION: The “Project Site” is approximately 8.68 acres, including (i) 3.01 acres of land currently owned by the Judicial Council of California, which the County has an option to purchase, that will be redeveloped (County Property), (ii) 4.62 acres owned by the City of Los Angeles (City) that will be redeveloped (City Property), and (iii) 1.05 acres of land owned by the City of Los Angeles (Library and LAPD Parcels) that, while part of the Project Site, will remain as is, and will not be redeveloped.

The Project Site, which includes portions of the existing West Los Angeles Civic Center, West Los Angeles Courthouse, West Los Angeles Branch Library, and the West Los Angeles LAPD Maintenance Facility, is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard to the north, Corinth Avenue to

the east, Iowa Avenue to the south, and Butler Avenue to the west, as shown on Figure 1, Project Site Location Map, on page 3. The Project Site is bisected by Purdue Avenue. The Project Site is divided into two areas generally west and east of Purdue Avenue.

The County Property, located west of Purdue Avenue, consists of six parcels and includes property addresses: 11400, 11404, 11406, 11408, 11410, and 11412 West Santa Monica Boulevard; 1633, 1641, and 1647 South Purdue Avenue; and 1644 South Butler Avenue.

The City Property consists of two parcels and includes property addresses: 11332, 11338, 11342, and 11344 West Santa Monica Boulevard; 1619, 1645, and 1667 South Corinth Avenue; 11342, 11343, 11345, 11346, and 11358 West Idaho Avenue; 11343, 11347, 11353, 11359, 11407, and 11409 West Iowa Avenue; and 1640, 1652, 1653, and 1657 South Purdue Avenue.

The Library and LAPD Parcels consist of two parcels (including a portion of a parcel associated with the City Property) and includes property addresses: 1656, 1660, and 1666 South Butler Avenue; 11421 West Iowa Avenue; and 11360 West Santa Monica Boulevard. No redevelopment is proposed on the Library and LAPD Parcels

The Project Site is located within the West Los Angeles Community Plan area of the City. However, as noted below, the County is exercising sovereign immunity over the County Property and, therefore, the County Property is not subject to the City's or the County's zoning regulations.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant proposes to redevelop the existing West Los Angeles Civic Center and West Los Angeles Courthouse with a new mixed-use development consisting of residential, neighborhood-serving commercial (retail/restaurant), municipal office, and senior/community center uses (Project) pursuant to the West Los Angeles Civic Center and Courthouse Request for Proposals (RFP) jointly issued by the County and the City on May 15, 2020 (as amended pursuant to subsequent Addendums to the RFP) and to the two subsequent Exclusive Negotiation Agreements entered into between the County and the Applicant and the City and the Applicant.

The Project would provide 926 residential units (495 market-rate and 431 income-restricted housing units with a total of approximately 961,290 square feet of residential floor area), approximately 36,569 square feet of neighborhood-serving commercial (retail/restaurant) uses, approximately 76,341 square feet of municipal office uses, and approximately 23,868 square feet of senior/community center uses. For CEQA environmental analysis purposes, approximately 9,374 square feet of outdoor eating areas adjacent to ground floor restaurant spaces and the senior center is included as commercial floor area,¹ as well as a proposed approximately 27,000-square-foot below-grade retail space within the portion of the Project on the County Property, which would not count as floor area for zoning purposes under either the County's or the City's zoning codes, resulting in a total commercial floor area of approximately 70,965 square feet and a total senior center floor area of approximately 25,846 square feet.

The proposed uses would be located within nine new structures ranging from two- to eight-stories with approximate heights from 43 feet to 100 feet to the top of the building (58 feet to 109 to the top of rooftop mechanical equipment). A total of 1,563 vehicle parking spaces would be provided within a three-level subterranean parking garage to a depth of approximately 52 feet below ground surface. The Project would also include approximately 193,000 square

¹ The 9,374 square feet of outdoor eating areas is comprised of 5,680 square feet of covered and uncovered areas within the portion of the Project on the County Property and 3,694 square feet of uncovered areas within the portion of the Project on the City Property.

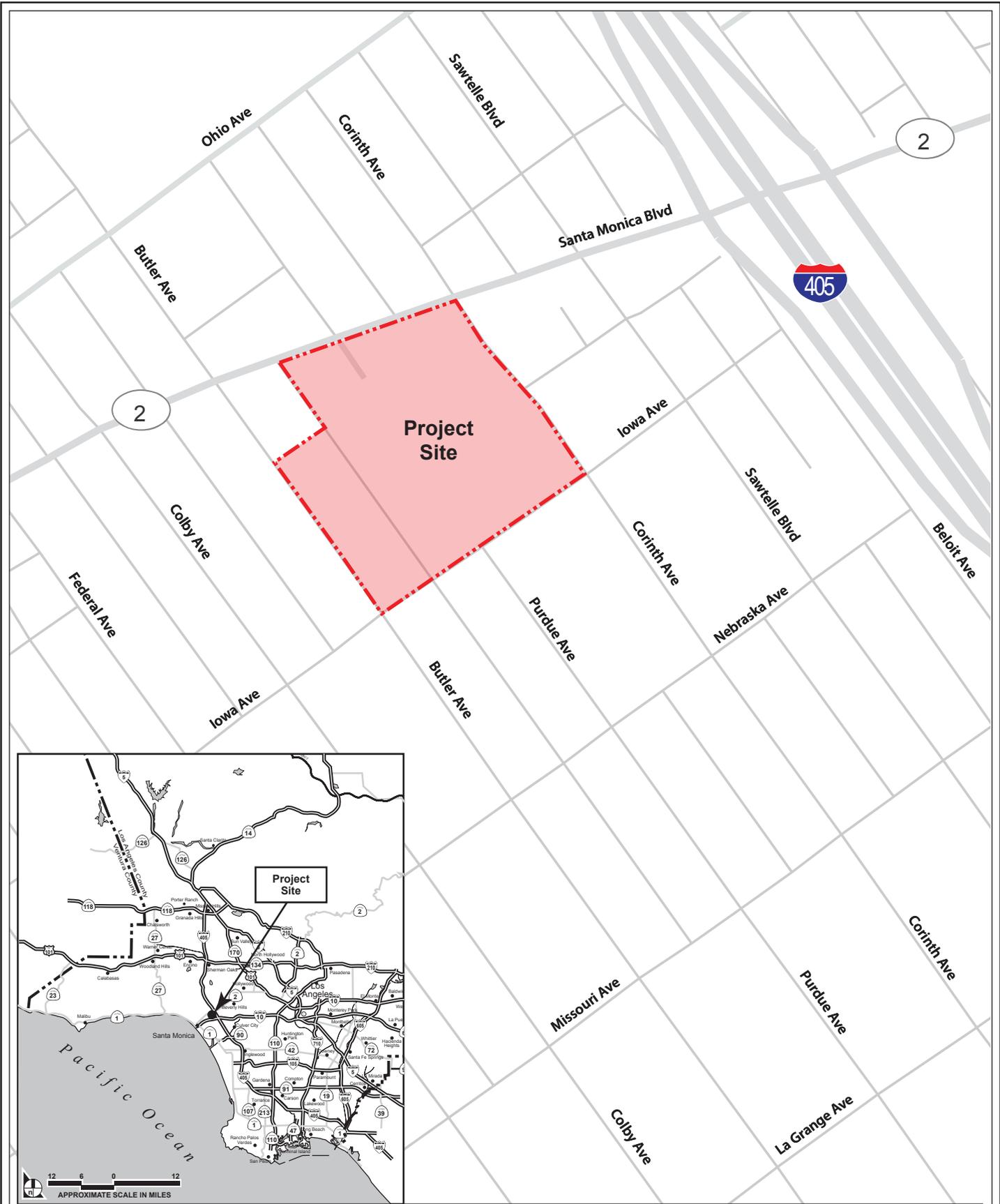


Figure 1
Project Site Location Map

feet of private, common, and publicly accessible open space throughout the Project Site, of which approximately 112,382 square feet would comply with the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) definition of open space. Refer to Figure 2, Conceptual Site Plan, on page 5 for a conceptual site plan of the Project.

The Project would remove or replace most of the existing uses within the Project Site, including removing the approximately 36,995-square-foot West Los Angeles Courthouse building within the County Property and replacing the approximately 41,343-square-foot Municipal building and the approximately 16,800-square-foot Felicia Mahood Multipurpose Center within the City Property. However, the Project would preserve the front, northernmost façade of the existing Municipal building, the bronze screen (or brise soleil) with glass tiles on the eastern façade of the existing Courthouse building, as well as the roof of the existing bandstand structure (which would be refurbished and used as part of the new Open Space Bandstand).

The approximately 12,855-square-foot West Los Angeles Regional Branch Library and the approximately 4,000-square-foot LAPD Vehicle Maintenance Facility on the Library and LAPD Parcels would remain as-is; however, the Project would subdivide and re-align the property lines for the Library and LAPD Parcels. The Library and the LAPD Parcels, as well as the existing improvements, will continue serving library and LAPD functions.

Upon completion, the Project would provide a total floor area of approximately 1,134,442 square feet within the Project Site, including approximately 491,869 square feet of floor area with a floor area ratio (FAR) of approximately 3.75:1 on the County Property and approximately 642,573 square feet of floor area with a FAR of approximately 3.19:1 on the City Property. Combined, the Project would have a FAR of approximately 3.41:1.² A summary of the existing and proposed uses is provided in Table 1, Summary of Existing and Proposed Floor Area, on page 6.

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED: The City has land use jurisdiction over the City Property and will require approval of discretionary entitlements to develop the portion of the Project on the City Property. Accordingly, the City of Los Angeles is identified as a Responsible Agency for the Project. A Responsible Agency under CEQA is a public agency with some discretionary authority over a project or a portion of it, but which has not been designated the Lead Agency (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15381).

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT: Based on a preliminary review of the Project consistent with CCR Title 14, Section 15060, the County has determined that an EIR should be prepared. Consistent with CCR Title 14, Sections 15063 and 15082, the County has identified the following probable environmental effects of the Project, which will be addressed in the EIR for the Project:

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

² Note that the aforementioned square footages do not include the approximately 12,855-square-foot West Los Angeles Branch Library and the approximately 4,000-square-foot LAPD Vehicle Maintenance Facility, which will remain as-is and continue to serve library and LAPD functions.



County Parcels

City Parcels

SEE SHEET L-001 FOR TREE SPECIES
SEE A-1015 SITE PLAN FOR TREE AND SITE DIMENSIONS

Santa Monica Boulevard

Cornith Avenue

Purdue Avenue

Idaho Avenue

Iowa Avenue

Butler Avenue

Colby Avenue

Felicia Mahood Senior Center
2 Stories

(E) Library
Not part of project

The Beacon
6 Stories

The Plaza

The Municipal
5 Stories

Cornith House
8 Stories

The Boulevard
7 Stories

Courthouse Arts Pavilion
5 Stories

Purdue Place
7 Stories

Butler Village (North)
7 Stories

Butler Village (South)
7 Stories

The Butler
7 Stories

(E) LAPP Maintenance
Not part of project

(E) Post Office
Not part of project

Figure 2
Conceptual Site Plan

**Table 1
Summary of Existing and Proposed Floor Area**

Land Use	Existing	Proposed Demolition	Proposed Construction	Net New Floor Area	Total Floor Area On-Site
Residential	0 sf	0 sf	961,290 sf 926 du	961,290 sf 926 du	961,290 sf 926 du
Commercial	0 sf	0 sf	70,965 sf	70,965 sf	70,965 sf
Municipal Office	41,343 sf	41,343 sf	76,341 sf	34,998 sf	76,341 sf
Senior Center/Municipal	53,795 sf	53,795 sf	25,846 sf	(27,949) sf	25,846 sf
Total (West LA Commons)	95,138 sf	95,138 sf	1,134,442 sf	1,039,304 sf	1,134,442 sf
Library	12,855 sf	0 sf	0 sf	0 sf	12,855 sf
LAPD	4,000 sf	0 sf	0 sf	0 sf	4,000 sf
Total (West LA Commons + Library and LAPD)	111,993 sf	95,138 sf	1,134,442 sf	1,022,449 sf	1,151,297 sf

sf = square feet

du = dwelling units

() = negative value

Note: Square footage for the County Property is calculated pursuant to the County definition of floor area for the purpose of calculating FAR. Square footage for the City Property is calculated pursuant to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) definition of floor area for the purpose of calculating FAR. As previously noted, while below-grade uses and outdoor dining areas adjacent to ground floor restaurants within the County Property [pursuant to Los Angeles County Code (LACC) Section 22.04.050(E)] and outdoor uncovered dining areas adjacent to ground floor restaurants and senior center within the City Property [pursuant to LAMC Section 12.03] are not considered floor area for zoning purposes, they are nevertheless counted towards the Project's provided commercial and senior center floor area for a conservative environmental analysis. Without consideration of these areas as floor area, the commercial floor area per the zoning code would be 36,569 square feet and the senior center floor area would be 23,868 square feet.

Source: AC Martin, 2021.

The County has determined that several impact categories are not anticipated to have potentially significant effects. Although not potentially significant, the following will be briefly mentioned in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture/Forestry Resources
- Air Quality (i.e., odors)
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils (i.e., Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault, landslides, septic tanks/alternative wastewater disposal systems)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (i.e., airports and wildland fires)
- Hydrology and Water Quality (i.e., impede flood flows)
- Land Use and Planning (i.e., divide community)
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing (i.e., displacement of housing/people)
- Wildfire

These environmental factors are described in greater detail in the Initial Study, which includes information on the reasons why these environmental topics were determined not to have a significant impact. To provide a complete record of the County's environmental decision-making, environmental issues that do not rise to a level of significance will be addressed in the EIR in a separate section entitled "Impacts Found to Be Less than Significant." For additional information about the Project, please refer to the Initial Study.

NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING: The County will conduct a virtual public scoping meeting for the purpose of soliciting oral comments from interested parties as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR.

All interested parties are invited to attend the virtual scoping meeting to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the EIR. You are not required to take any action. The scoping meeting will include a brief presentation of the project to be addressed in the EIR and will provide attendees with an opportunity to provide oral input to the scope of the EIR. The virtual Scoping Meeting will be held online.

VIRTUAL PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING	Tuesday, June 14, 2022
	6:00 PM–8:00 PM (Pacific Time)—Via Zoom Meeting
	Please click the following link to join the webinar: https://bit.ly/WestLACommonsMeeting
	For dial-in options or for more project information, please visit https://planning.lacounty.gov/case/view/prj2022-000303
	Translation in other languages can be made available at the meeting upon request. Please submit translation requests at least seven business days in advance of the scheduled meeting to jhui@planning.lacounty.gov .
	Si necesita más información por favor llame al (213) 974-6411.

A scoping meeting presentation will be available for viewing at least one week prior to the scheduled June 14 virtual meeting on the County's project webpage (<https://planning.lacounty.gov/case/view/prj2022-000303>).

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), the comment period for the NOP begins on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, and ends on Friday, July 1, 2022. Any comments provided should identify specific topics of environmental concern and your reason for suggesting the study of these topics in the EIR.

If you wish to provide comments on the scope of the EIR or comment on the Initial Study, please send your written or oral comments at the earliest date possible in any of following ways:

<i>Via Mail:</i> Los Angeles County Dept. of Regional Planning 320 W. Temple Street, 13th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012 Attn: Jolee Hui	<i>Via Email</i> (preferred method): jhui@planning.lacounty.gov <i>Via Phone:</i> (213) 893-7011
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Written comments must be received or postmarked by Friday, July 1, 2022. All written comments will be included as Appendices in the EIR and their contents considered in accordance with State and County environmental guidelines.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The NOP and Initial Study are available for public review at the web addresses listed below and the following locations:

- West Los Angeles Regional Branch Library, 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles
- Los Angeles Central Library, 630 W 5th St, Los Angeles
- Westwood Branch Library, 1246 Glendon Avenue, Los Angeles
- Donald Bruce Kaufman–Brentwood Branch Library, 11820 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles
- Palms–Rancho Park Branch Library, 2920 Overland Avenue, Los Angeles

The public is encouraged to visit the County Department of Regional Planning's website to review the Initial Study at:

<https://planning.lacounty.gov/case/view/prj2022-000303>

Thank you for your participation in the environmental review of this Project.