

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section describes the proposed project, including the project applicant, project location, a description of the major project characteristics, project objectives, and a list of discretionary approvals needed for project approval.

2.1 PROJECT APPLICANT

City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring Street, Room 667
Los Angeles, CA 90012

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site encompasses 5.66 acres at the northeast corner of Alameda Street and First Street on the edge of the Little Tokyo community, in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles. The site is immediately adjacent to the new Little Tokyo/Arts District Metro Gold Line Station. Figure 2-1 shows the regional location of the project site and Figure 2-2 shows the location of the project site within the site vicinity.

2.3 EXISTING SITE CHARACTERISTICS

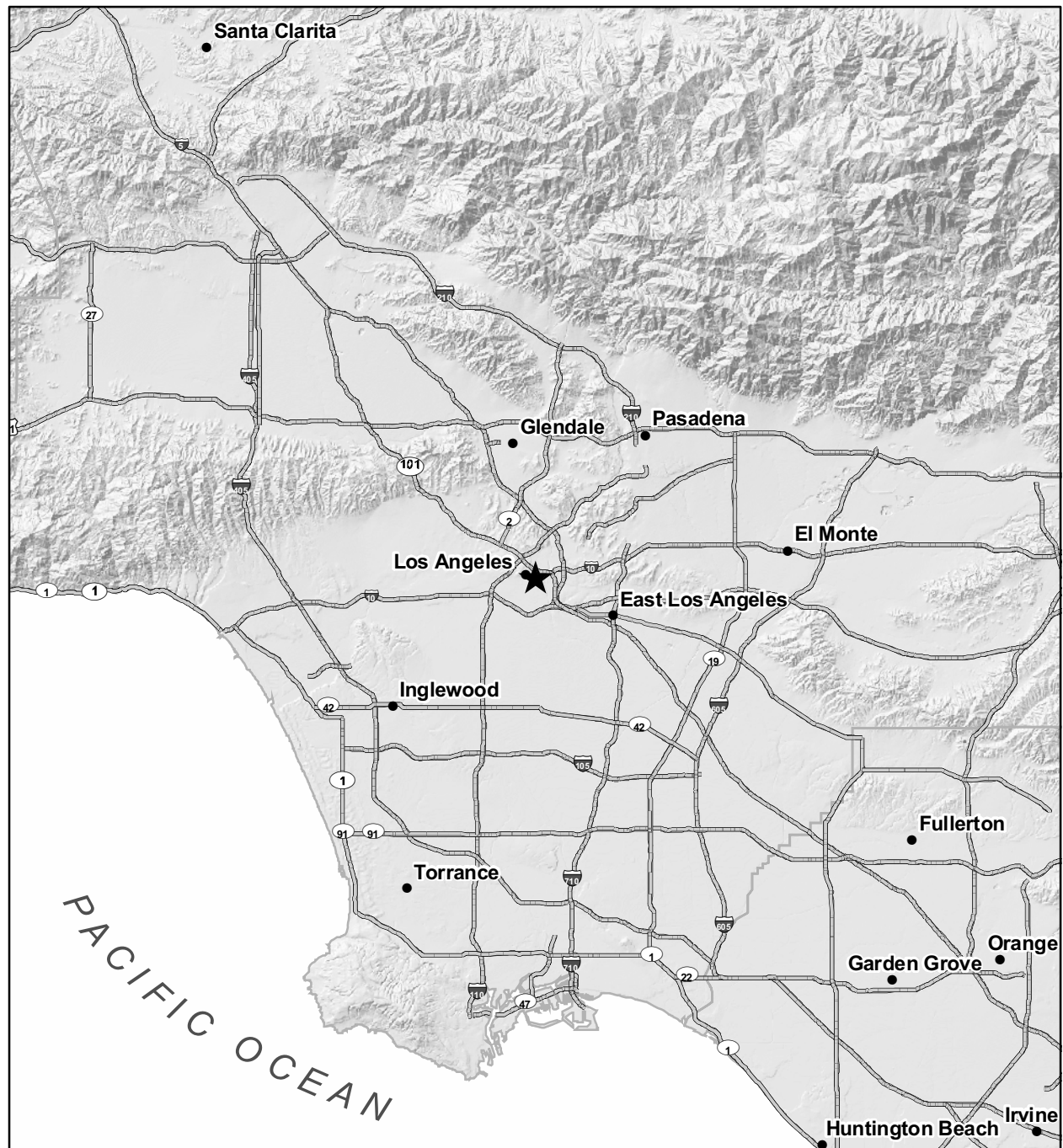
Existing project site characteristics are summarized in Table 2-1. General descriptions of the site and surrounding area follow.

2.3.1 Existing Development and Uses

The project site is located in a highly urbanized setting at the northeast corner of Alameda Street and 1st Street at the edge of the Little Tokyo community in downtown Los Angeles, in the Central City North Community Plan Area. The project site is owned by the City of Los Angeles. It is generally flat and primarily covered with impervious surfaces. Banning Street and Turner Street run through the project site in an east-west direction; however, both of these street segments that are located on the project site are currently closed to traffic. Figure 2-3 shows photos of existing onsite conditions.

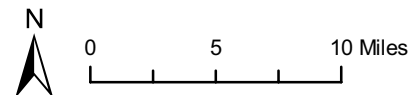
Existing development on the project site includes a public parking lot and an approximately 19,500 square foot (sf) office building. Vehicular access to the site is currently available via a driveway off of Temple Street. Regional access to the site is provided by U.S. 101, Interstate 10 (I-10), I-5 and State Route 110 (Harbor Freeway).

Surrounding land uses include a Department of Water and Power facility located across East Temple Street to the north of the site; a Veterans' Affairs Hospital located to the northwest of the site on the northwest corner of Alameda Street and East Temple Street; the Little Tokyo/Arts District Metro Gold Line Station immediately adjacent to the west of the site; the Geffen Contemporary at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) and the Japanese American National Museum located across Alameda Street to the west of the project site; a



Source: ESRI, 2004.

★ Project Location



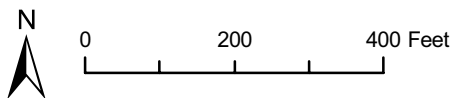
Site Location

Figure 2-1
City of Los Angeles





Aerial source: Google Earth Pro, 2009.



Project Site Location

Figure 2-2
City of Los Angeles



Photo A - View of the existing public parking lot at the project site.



Photo B - View of the Little Tokyo Gold Line Transit Station.



Photo C - View of the skyline from the project site.



Photo D - View of the existing office building at the project site.

Site Photographs

Figure 2-3
City of Los Angeles



Table 2-1
Summary of Existing Site Characteristics

Property Owner	City of Los Angeles
Total Lot Size	5.66 acres
Existing Uses	Surface parking, office building
Current General Plan Designations	Regional Commercial and Heavy Manufacturing
Current Zoning	Commercial (C2) and Heavy Industrial (M3)
Surrounding Land Uses:	
North	Department of Water and Power Facility, Veterans' Affairs Hospital
South	Restaurant, surface parking lot, multi-family residential buildings, Sogo/Chugokaya Hotel
East	City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Center, Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
West	Little Tokyo/Arts District Metro Gold Line Station, Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Japanese American National Museum

restaurant and surface parking lot to the southwest of the site on the southwest corner of First Street and Alameda Street; multi-family residential buildings, a car wash and the Sogo/Chugokaya Hotel located across First Street to the south of the site; and a City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Center and the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple located immediately east of the site. An aerial photo showing the land uses surrounding the project site is provided on Figure 2-4.

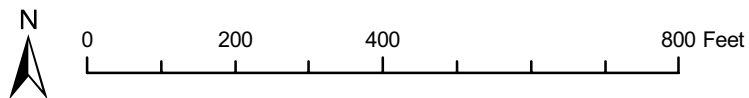
2.3.2 Regulatory Setting

The Los Angeles General Plan designates the majority of the project site as Regional Commercial, while a portion of the northwest corner of the site is designated as Heavy Manufacturing. Similarly, the majority of the site is zoned C2, Commercial, while the portion of the northwestern corner of the site within the Heavy Manufacturing land use designation is zoned M3, Heavy Industrial.

The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan is comprised of 35 community plans that are intended to guide future development within the City. The project site is within the area of the Central City North Community Plan. Applicable provisions and policies of the Community Plan are discussed in Section 4.7, *Land Use and Planning*.



Aerial source: Google Earth Pro, 2009.



Surrounding Land Uses

Figure 2-4
City of Los Angeles

2.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

2.4.1 Land Uses

The City of Los Angeles owns the 5.66-acre project site, which is occupied by a surface parking lot a vacant and a 19,500 square foot (sf) medical office building. The City plans to sell the site to a private developer. In March 2008, the City issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a private developer to secure the right to develop the site. In response to the RFP, the City received several proposals for various development ideas. Each of the proposals differed in design, size, and scale. However, the common theme in each of the proposals was that of a mixed use development. The EIR was prepared in anticipation of the sale of the project site by the City to a private owner for the development of a mixed use project.

The proposed project involves a General Plan amendment, zone change (including height district change) and other necessary approvals to allow for the development of mixed retail, office, community space, creative live/work units and residential development. Although no specific development is proposed at this time, it is anticipated that the project site could accommodate a maximum of 1.2 million square (sf) feet of floor space that includes a variety of uses. The estimated amount of each specific use that could be accommodated at the site is shown in Table 2-2.

**Table 2-2
Anticipated Onsite Land Uses**

Use	Amount
Retail	200,000 sf
Office	500,000 sf
Community Space	25,000 sf
Creative Live/Work	75,000 sf (83 residential units plus 18,750 sf of commercial space)
Multiple Family Residential	400,000 sf (445 units)
Total	1,200,000 sf

Note: The average size of the proposed residential units and creative live/work units is assumed to be 900 sf. It is anticipated that 75% of the floor space of each creative live/work unit would be devoted to living area and 25% would be commercial space.

Anticipated development on the project site includes an estimated 743,750 sf of non-residential space, including 200,000 sf of retail space, 500,000 sf of office space, 25,000 sf of community



space, and 18,750 sf commercial space within live/work units. The residential component of onsite development would encompass an estimated 456,525 sf. It is anticipated that 445 multiple family residences would be developed onsite and that the live/work component of onsite development would include an additional 83 residential units, for a total of 528 residences.

The maximum floor-to-area ratio (FAR) of onsite development would be approximately 5:1 and the maximum height of onsite development is anticipated to be 16 stories above-grade.

Although the maximum amount of onsite development would be 1.2 million sf, no specific development is proposed at this time; therefore, the size of each project component could vary from what is shown above. In order to determine how changes in the mix of onsite uses would affect the demand for utilities and the generation of vehicle trips, “equivalency tables” have been developed. The equivalency tables use conversion factors from one land use to another in order show how changes in the mix of land uses would change the demand for utilities or the generation of vehicle trips. The equivalency tables can be found in Appendix B.

As part of the proposed project, Hewitt Street would be extended north through First Street, up to East Temple Street. The alignment of the proposed Hewitt Street extension forms the eastern boundary of the project site. In addition, the segment of Turner Street in the northern portion of the site, which is currently closed to traffic, would be vacated. In addition, portions of Banning Street may also require vacation. A portion of Banning Street was approved for vacation by the City on December 16, 2008 (vacation approval 04-0234).

The Metro Regional Connector Transit Corridor (Corridor) project, if built, would create an almost two-mile transit link between the Metro Gold and Metro Blue Line light rail transit (LRT) systems through downtown Los Angeles. The potential Corridor has multiple configurations in the design phase. One of the configurations would place a portion of the Corridor in the southern portion of the project site. This configuration could affect the layout of development on the site, though it is anticipated that the site would still be able to accommodate the same maximum level of development. However, no definitive plans have been created and the alignment of the Corridor is speculative at this time. Furthermore, the Corridor is not expected to be constructed until at least 2018, while the projected buildout year for the project site is 2015. When the alignment of the Corridor is determined and plans are complete, the Corridor project would be subject to future environmental review to determine any potential environmental impacts associated with development of the Corridor. The EIR is currently being prepared and this possible alternative is among those being studied. If the Corridor configuration crosses through the project site and has the potential to affect development of the project site, additional environmental review under CEQA may be needed to address potential environmental effects of the Corridor and how it affects onsite development.

2.4.2 Parking and Site Access

Parking would be provided onsite, primarily in subterranean levels. However, it is expected that some parking, including loading/unloading spaces, would be provided at-grade. It is anticipated that site access would be provided via a driveway on East Temple Street and a driveway on the proposed Hewitt Street extension.

2.4.3 Construction Phasing

In order to accommodate the proposed project, the existing 19,500 sf office building and surface parking lot onsite would be demolished. In addition, onsite construction would include excavation, grading and other site preparation activities. Construction would be expected to take a total of approximately 18 to 24 months, though construction of individual project components could occur in multiple phases.

2.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of the proposed project is to provide high quality, economically viable mixed use development that:

- *Promotes economic vitality while serving the needs of the community through a collection of well designed, safe, and accessible buildings;*
- *Is compatible with surrounding development;*
- *Enhances the Little Tokyo community;*
- *Implements planning objectives of the General Plan Framework and the Central City North Community Plan;*
- *Maximizes development on an underutilized site within the urban core with a viable and attractively designed mixed-use project that serves local and regional needs;*
- *Supports regional mobility goals by locating high density uses along a major transit corridor and immediately adjacent to the Little Tokyo/Arts District Metro Gold Line station, thereby reducing vehicle trips and infrastructure costs;*
- *Encourages pedestrian activity by introducing to the area a diverse mix of uses that include a diverse array of services; and*
- *Provide a level of parking that is appropriate for a transit-oriented site located in an urban area to encourage transit use.*

2.6 REQUIRED APPROVALS

The City of Los Angeles has sole discretion to approve the Mangrove Estates Site Mixed Use Project. Project approval may entail the approval of:

- *General Plan Amendment*
- *Zone Change (including Height District Change)*
- *Tract Map/Subdivision*
- *Street Vacations (The segment of Turner Street in the northern portion of the site, which is currently closed to traffic, would be vacated. In addition, portions of Banning Street may also require vacation.)*
- *Site Plan Review*
- *Variances for Parking Reductions*
- *Other entitlements as necessary*

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