

FINDINGS

General Plan/Charter Findings

1. General Plan Land Use Designation.

The subject property is located within the South Los Angeles Community Plan, which was last revised by the City Council on March 22, 2000. The Plan Map designates the project site for Community Commercial land uses. The Community Commercial land use designation includes corresponding zones of CR, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4. The Community Plan Map, through Footnote No. 1, limits the subject property to Height District No. 1. The project site is zoned [Q]C2-1VL-O and is limited to a Floor Area Ratio of 1.5:1, a height limit of 45-feet and a density equivalent to the R3 Zone. Furthermore, the project site is subject to Footnote No. 14 which in part states:

“Notwithstanding Footnote No.1, 100% commercial projects located on Community Commercial-designated properties on Figueroa Street and the west side of Flower Street shall be limited to the existing Height District 1 and a 1.5:1 FAR. However mixed-use (residential/commercial) developments may be designated Height District 2D, provided that the City approves the corresponding zone change to establish the Height District 2D, and provided that no such development exceeds a maximum total floor area ratio (FAR) of 3:1. Commercial uses in such mixed-use projects shall comprise no less than 0.5 and no more than 0.9 FAR. 100% residential development shall not be permitted.”

The goal of Footnote 14, is to encourage the development of traditional (residential/commercial) mixed-used buildings to activate and create a pedestrian environment for the Figueroa Corridor, by mandating a minimum amount of commercial square-footage. The original footnote was placed in the Plan to allow the Figueroa Corridor to permit larger mixed-use building than the former Height District requirement for the area. At the time the footnote was developed for the area, the inclusion of hotels was not taken into account. The addition of hotels (which are considered residential building by the Department of Building and Safety) to the area is needed because of the lack of hotels in the area. The only hotel, which was across from the U.S.C. campus was purchased by the University (Radisson Los Angeles Midtown) and is used for non-hotel uses and hotel uses. Thus there are no full service hotels in the Figueroa Corridor from Exposition Park to downtown Los Angeles. Development of the proposed hotel site will assist in South Los Angeles's and the Figueroa Corridor's ongoing evolution as a mixed-use community with commercial and residential development. The proposed hotel's 275 guest rooms in addition to its new amenities will enhance the built environment of South Los Angeles and provide essential and beneficial services to the community and City. University Park is a regional and international destination including the U.S.C campus and nearby Exposition Park with its museum and athletic stadiums and facilities.

Thus, the General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 is allow hotels uses to apply for Height District 2 (and an FAR of 3.0:1) and exclude hotel projects with 300 guestrooms or less from providing a minimum commercial floor area will permit a large buildings than would otherwise be allowed with a 1.5:1 FAR. This in turn would help accommodate the inclusion of extended stay guest rooms which require a larger floor area than standard size guest rooms. The 275 guest rooms in the proposed Project would also provide new guest accommodation opportunities for faculty and parents visiting the nearby USC campus. There is only one select-service hotel near the USC Campus (the 240-room Radisson

Midtown Hotel at 3540 S. Figueroa Street). The second proposed select service hotel, this one offering extended stay suites, would serve the public convenience and necessity in the USC hotel market area.

Additionally, the General Plan Amendment will encourage projects that will revitalize older commercial corridors. Redevelopment of the property through the use of the additional floor area fulfills the intent behind the Community Plan, by replacing an 53-year old 73-unit motel with a much needed modern hotel to serve the needs of the residents and visitors to the USC neighborhood with accessory commercial services open to both guests of the development and residents of the community. While providing new hotel guest rooms needed to meet the City's growing population, the Applicant's proposed General Plan Amendment fulfills a number of goals important to the City:

Thus, the General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 is allow hotels uses to apply for Height District 2 and exclude hotel projects with 300 guestrooms or less from providing a minimum commercial floor area is necessary to provide consistency and conformity to the land use and zoning provisions of the South Los Angeles Community Plan to facilitate the development of hotels at an appropriate scale within the area.

Upon approval of the concurrent Zone and Height District Change would change the zoning of the subject property from [Q]C2-1VL-O site to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O and would be allowed to built to a Floor Area Ratio of 3.0:1 and have a density consisted with the R4 zone. The proposed Project would be consistent with the proposed revision to Footnote No. 14 and permit development of the Project and it's much needed hotel accommodations.

2. General Plan Text.

- a. **South Los Angles Community Plan.** The Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

Goal 2. A strong and competitive commercial sector which best serves the needs of the community through maximum efficiency and accessibility while preserving the historic commercial and cultural character of the district.

Objective 2-1. To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development

Policy 2-1.1. New commercial uses shall be located in existing, established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.

Policy 2-1.3. Commercial areas should be consolidated and deepened to stimulate existing businesses, create opportunities for new development and off-street parking, expand the variety of goods and services, and improve shopping convenience as well as offer local employment.

Policy 2-1.5. Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.

Objective 2-5. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts.

Policy 2-5.1. Improve the appearance of landscaping and commercial properties.

Policy 2-5.3. Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.

In addition to the land use goal, policies, and objectives described above, the project is consistent with the following design policies within the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan:

Site Planning. Structures shall be oriented toward the main commercial street where a parcel is located and shall avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts by:

- Where appropriate, locate retail and commercial service uses along frontages of commercial developments.
- Providing front pedestrian entrances for businesses fronting on main commercial streets.
- Providing pedestrian access from the front of building to rear parking for projects with wide frontages.
- Requiring site plans which include ancillary structures, service areas, pedestrian walkways, vehicular paths, loading areas, drop off, and landscaped areas.

Height and Building Design. The project is consistent with the following policies regarding height and building design.

- Maximize the area devoted to transparent building elements, such as windows and doors, on front facades. However, facades facing rear parking areas, shall limit such transparent elements to at least 20% of the frontage.
- Require the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations, porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.
- Provide accenting, complementary building materials to building facades.
- Screen mechanical and electrical equipment from public view.
- Screen all rooftop equipment and building appurtenances from public view.
- Require the enclosure of trash areas for all projects.

Light and Glare.

- Install on-site lighting along all pedestrian walkways and vehicular access ways.
- Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways, and away from adjacent residential uses.

The General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 and the Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O would allow a maximum FAR of 3.0 to 1. The project,

at an FAR of 2.90:1, allows for the redevelopment of a large parcel of land within South Los Angeles into a larger hotel with residential (a hotel) and commercial (restaurant/cafe) uses and will result in a demand for local workers and local goods and services. The project will accommodate two different hotel brands within the building. An extended stay hotel brand will operate 150 larger all-suite rooms, and a select service brand will operate 125 standard hotel rooms. There will be one lobby serving both brands on the ground floor with ground floor amenity areas, including a lounge for hotel patrons. An approximately 1,400 square foot public restaurant/café would also be located on the ground floor for general public use. An amenity deck on the second floor podium would provide a pool, barbeque area, and lounge area. An indoor fitness center along with small conference rooms, offices, lounges, and a laundry facility would also be located on the second floor. Parking (173 provided and 171 required) will be provided in one level of subterranean parking and one level at-grade within the hotel building. The proposed building will be approximately 85'-0" to the top of the roof and 94'-0" feet tall to the top of the elevator penthouse above the roof.

The project also promotes economic well-being and public convenience by providing short-term, overnight accommodations within proximity to many of the USC/Exposition Park area and well as to the Metro Exposition Line with access to downtown Los Angeles, Culver City, and Santa Monica.

- b. **South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales Specific Plan.** The project site is located within the boundaries of the South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales Specific Plan, which seeks to regulate off-site consumption alcohol sales within the plan area. Since the proposed project will include the sale of a full line of alcoholic beverage for on-site consumption only in conjunction with the operation of the proposed hotel and restaurant, the Specific Plan is not applicable to the project site.
- c. **Land Use Chapter, Framework Element.** The Framework Element of the General Plan was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, and public services.

The project will support and will be generally consistent with the General Plan Framework Land Use Chapter, as it will introduce a new commercial use to a site currently used as a 72-room hotel and standalone restaurant. In addition, the project will comply with the following goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the General Plan Framework Land Use Chapter as follows:

Goal 3A. A physically balanced distribution of land uses that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a healthful living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more liveable city.

Objective 3.1. Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City's existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.

Policy 3.1.1. Identify areas on the Long-Range Land Use Diagram and in the community plans sufficient for the development of a diversity of uses that serve the needs of existing and future residents (housing, employment, retail, entertainment, cultural/institutional, educational, health, services, recreation, and similar uses), provide job opportunities, and support visitors and tourism.

Policy 3.1.5. Allow amendments to the community plans and coastal plans to further refine General Plan Framework Element land use boundaries and categories to reflect local conditions, parcel characteristics, existing land uses, and public input. These changes shall be allowed provided (a) that the basic differentiation and relationships among land use districts are maintained, (b) there is no reduction in overall housing capacity, and (c) additional environmental review is conducted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act should the impacts of the changes exceed the levels of significance defined and modify the conclusions of the Framework Element's Environmental Impact Report.

Policy 3.1.6. Allow for the adjustment of General Plan Framework Element land use boundaries to account for changes in the location or introduction of new transit routes and stations (or for withdrawal of funds) and, in such cases, consider the appropriate type and density of use generally within one quarter mile of the corridor and station to reflect the principles of the General Plan Framework Element and the Land Use/Transportation Policy.

Objective 3.4. Encourage new multi-family residential, retail commercial, and office development in the City's neighborhood districts, community, regional, and downtown centers as well as along primary transit corridors/boulevards, while at the same time conserving existing neighborhoods and related districts.

The project will contribute toward and facilitate the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability by adding 275 short-term, overnight hotel rooms close to the U.S.C campus and Exposition Park. The project's proximity to the Metro Exposition Line, local and express bus lines and other transit connections will reduce vehicular trips to and from the project, vehicle miles traveled, and improve air pollution; and its location within an existing, high-intensity commercial district along Figueroa Street, (a designated Avenue I will enable the city to conserve nearby existing stable residential neighborhoods and lower-intensity commercial districts. Such attributes support an FAR to 3.0:1.

- d. **Health and Wellness Element.** Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles, the Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan, calls for the promotion of a healthy built environment in a manner that enhances opportunities for improved health and well-being, and which promotes healthy living and working conditions. The proposed project complies with the following policies:

Policy 3.2.1. Pattern of development that considers proximity to public transit corridors and station.

Policy 3.2.3. Land use patterns that emphasize pedestrian/bicycle access

Policy 3.4.1. Encourage new development to be located near rail and bus transit

stations and corridors.

Policies 3.8.4-3.8.6. Promote pedestrian activity (streetscape improvements) in neighborhood districts.

The project locates jobs and commercial space within walking distance to several Metro Local, Rapid, and Express bus stops and the Metro Expo Line stop at Jefferson/USC Station. Short-term and long-term bicycle parking will be available within the building to allow for an alternative mode of transportation to and from the project site. Further, the ground floor includes a 1,400 square-foot restaurant/café to enhance and activate the pedestrian experience on and around the project site.

- e. **Mobility Element.** The Mobility Element of the General Plan (Mobility Plan 2035) is likely to be affected by the recommended action herein through the imposition of street dedications and improvements surrounding the project site. Figueroa Street is designated as an Avenue I under Mobility Plan 2035, dedicated to a half right-of-way width of 45 feet and improved with asphalt roadway and concrete curb, gutters, and a sidewalk. Dedications and improvements have been imposed under the (T) Tentative Classification conditions contained within this staff report.

The proposed project is in conformance with the Mobility Element policies listed below:

Policy 1.2. Implement a balanced transportation system on all streets, tunnels, and bridges using complete streets principles to ensure the safety and mobility of all users.

Policy 2.3. Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.

Policy 2.6. Provide safe, convenient, and comfortable local and regional bicycling facilities for people of all types and abilities.

Policy 2.10. Facilitate the provision of adequate on and off-street loading areas.

Policy 3.3: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.

Policy 3.8. Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.

The project site is well-served by public transit; several Metro Local, Rapid, and Express bus stops and the Metro Expo Line stop at Jefferson/USC Station are within walking distance of the subject property. The project includes 18 short-term and 18 long-term bicycle parking spaces and related facilities in accordance with the provisions of the LAMC. These facilities are located in direct proximity to the street, with designated access intended to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

- f. **Sewerage Facilities Element.** The Sewerage Facilities Element of the General Plan will not be affected by the recommended action. While the sewer system is likely able to

accommodate the total flows for the proposed project, further detailed gauging and evaluation may be needed as part of the permit process to identify a specific sewer connection point. If the public sewer has insufficient capacity then the developer will be required to build sewer lines to a point in the sewer system with sufficient capacity. A final approval for sewer capacity and connection permit will be made at that time. Ultimately, this sewage flow will be conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant, which has sufficient capacity for the project.

- g. **Street Lights.** Any City required installation or upgrading of street lights is necessary to complete the City street improvement system so as to increase night safety along the streets which adjoin the subject property.

3. Charter Findings – City Charter Sections 555, 556, and 558 (General Plan Amendment)

- a. **Amendment in Whole or in Part.** The General Plan Amendment before the City Planning Commission represents an Amendment in Part of the South Los Angeles Community Plan, signifying a change to the physical identity of the project site, which is currently subject to Footnote 14. The Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No 14 would allow the project (a hotel) to be built to a Floor Area Ratio of 3.0:1. The proposed Project will conform with good planning practices because it will be required to provide a mix of, commercial and hotel uses, in an area of the City lacking hotels and near a light-rail station. The original footnote was placed in the Plan to allow the Figueroa Corridor to permit larger mixed-use building than the former Height District requirement for the area. At the time the footnote was developed for the area, the inclusion of hotels was not taken into account. The addition of hotels (which are considered residential building by the Department of Building and Safety) to the area is needed because of the lack of hotels in the area. The only hotel, which was across from the U.S.C. campus was purchased by the University (Radisson Los Angeles Midtown) and is used for non-hotel uses and hotel uses. Thus there are no full service hotels in the Figueroa Corridor from Exposition Park to downtown Los Angeles.

Development of the proposed hotel site will assist in South Los Angeles's and the Figueroa Corridor's ongoing evolution as a mixed-use community with commercial and residential development. The proposed hotel's 275 guest rooms in addition to its new amenities will enhance the built environment of South Los Angeles and provide essential and beneficial services to the community and City. University Park is a regional and international destination including the U.S.C campus and nearby Exposition Park with its museum and athletic stadiums and facilities.

- b. In adopting a General Plan Amendment to Footnote 14, the City finds that based on the above facts the subject property is a part of the significant economic and physical identity expressed by the development, uses and land designations in the immediate area. Allowing additional floor area will permit larger building than would otherwise be allowed with a 1.5:1 FAR. The additional FAR afforded would allow for the construction of larger sized, extended stay suites that will serve a market for visiting academic faculty at USC, visitors to the U.S.C. campus and the museums and athletic facilities at Exposition Park. With the revision to General Plan Amendment Footnote No. 14 (along with a corresponding Height District Change and "D" limitation), a maximum FAR of 3.0:1 is requested for the Project Site. The proposed amendment to General Plan Footnote No. 14 is necessary to allow for additional floor area. The Project taking advantage of the revised footnote will provide an increased tax base in terms of property, sales and transient occupancy taxes to the City that in turn will assist providing the necessary City services that serve the development.

Thus, the City concludes that approval of the Plan Amendment to Footnote No. 14 is an extension of significant and important economic activity in the area. It will allow for the development of a 275-room dual branded full service hotel and address the hotel shortage that currently exists in the USC/Exposition Park neighborhood. Additionally, the project has the potential to generate significant additional jobs and sales tax revenue for the City. The Plan Amendment will also conform the project site to the new physical identity of the area, which has already seen the introduction of an eight-story high medium density residential development.

The Plan Amendment is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan as discussed above. The Plan Amendment will also conform with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice, as detailed below:

Public Necessity and Convenience

The Project is in conformity with public necessity and convenience because it serves to address the hotel shortage that currently exists in the USC neighborhood. The Project will provide 275 new guest rooms in a dual-branded hotel (business hotel brand and an extended stay brand) that will serve visitors to the USC area. The Project will also increase the livability of the neighborhood by providing a mix of land uses, including employment, in close proximity to public transit. The purpose of the General Plan Amendment is to provide a range of land uses and a floor area ratio that allows for the development of a modern hotel that will replace a 53-year old obsolete Vagabond Inn on the Project Site. Currently, because the property is designated Community Commercial and Community Plan Footnote No. 1 limited the development within this land use designation to Height District No. 1, a maximum floor area of 1.5:1 is allowed, thereby depriving the City of 275 rooms of much needed hotel accommodations in the South Los Angeles community. “

The proposed General Plan Amendment would allow a maximum FAR of 3.0:1 in the South Los Angeles Community Plan only for hotels. A concurrent Height District Change is also being requested that would change the zoning from [Q]C2-1VL-O to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O with a “D” Limitation of 3.0:1 FAR.

The proposed Project would be consistent with the proposed revision to Footnote No. 14 and permit development of the Project and it's much needed hotel accommodations. The Project would be compatible and complementary with the commercial buildings in the vicinity, such as the 1-3 story apartment buildings along Shrine Place to the west, the 3-story Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts to the south, the approximately 5-story Shrine Auditorium and the 8-story University Gateway development farther south, and one-story automobile dealership and 1-2 story residential buildings to the east across Figueroa Street. The design of the mixed-use Project would blend in with its neighboring commercial developments.

Public necessity and convenience are also served by allowing additional floor area to provide a 275-room hotel project on a site which developed with an outdated 53 year-old motel in the South Los Angeles Community Plan area near USC where there is a shortage of modern hotels with extended stay guest rooms. The accompanying Height District Change request, allowing additional floor area will permit a larger hotel envelope than would otherwise be allowed with a 1.5:1 FAR. This would help accommodate the inclusion of extended stay guest rooms which require a larger floor area than standard size guest rooms. The additional floor area afforded would contribute to the expected growth and continued vitality of the community by providing additional opportunities business travelers and tourist to stay in the USC area.

Public necessity and convenience are also served by the proposed General Plan Amendment because the amendment will encourage projects that will revitalize older commercial corridors. Redevelopment of the property through the use of the additional floor area fulfills the intent behind the Community Plan, by replacing an outdated 53 year-old motel with a much needed modern hotel to serve the needs of the residents and visitors to the USC neighborhood with accessory commercial services open to both guests of the development and residents of the community. While providing new hotel guest rooms needed to meet the City's growing population, the Applicant's proposed General Plan Amendment fulfills a number of goals important to the City:

Objective 3.9 of The Framework Element of the General Plan states "Reinforce existing and encourage new community centers, which accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of adjacent residents, promote neighborhood and community activity, are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and are developed to be desirable places in which to live, work and visit, both in daytime and nighttime."

The land use chapter of the Framework Element also encourages development "...in proximity to rail and bus transportation corridors and stations." Additionally, "it is intended that a considerable mix of uses be accommodated to provide population supported and enhance activity near the stations. This may encompass a range of retail commercial, offices, personal services, entertainment, restaurants, and housing that serve both transit users and local residents." The highest development intensities are targeted generally "within one quarter mile of the transit stations." Framework Element Transit Station Goal 3K calls for "[t]ransit stations to function as a primary focal point of the City's development."

The Project would meet the goals stated above. The redevelopment of an obsolete hotel into a modern, select-service business hotel will re-inforce USC area as desirable place to live and work and attract more development in the area. Through the intensification of the existing developed property and conversion of its land use, the Project will provide an additional supply of 275 guest rooms (203 net new guest rooms) in the City to accommodate anticipated growth in visitors to the expanding USC neighborhood. Finally, the Project will meet the Framework goal of focusing development near transit stations as it would be located approximately 650 feet of the Jefferson/USC Expo Line light-rail station.

General Welfare

There is no detriment to the general welfare of the City, the surrounding community or the future guests of the Project because the Project density and scope as designed are appropriate for the Site and the surrounding properties. The general welfare is served by the development of a high quality, aesthetically appealing Project that will promote foot traffic because of its ground floor commercial use. The Project does not remove any existing housing stock, and the proposal will serve the general welfare of the City by contributing 275 hotel guest rooms to the City's hotel stock.

Allowing additional floor area will permit a larger hotel than would otherwise be allowed with a 1.5:1 FAR. The additional FAR afforded would allow for the construction of larger sized, extended stay suites that will serve a market for visiting academic faculty at USC. The practical effect of this amendment will be to permit larger guest rooms and the inclusion of larger communal guest areas and meeting rooms in a project. In order to include an extended stay, all suites branded hotel in the Project, larger suites are need that need to be approximately 500 square feet in size to meet industry standards and market demand for such projects. The proposed amendment to General Plan Footnote No. 14 is necessary to

allow for additional floor area. The Project taking advantage of the revised footnote will provide an increased tax base in terms of property, sales and transient occupancy taxes to the City that in turn will assist providing the necessary City services that serve the development.

Good Planning Practices

The General Plan Amendment conforms with good planning practices because a hotel project developed consistent with the proposed General Plan Amendment will be developed in a manner consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods, and it will further the goals of the Community Plan. The proposed Project will conform with good planning practices because it will be required to provide a mix of, commercial and hotel uses, in an area of the City lacking hotels and near a light-rail station. The Project will promote a synergy between commercially-oriented boulevards, the residential uses, and the USC campus adjacent to major thoroughfares.

The Project complies with SB 375 and AB 32 by contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through integrated land use and transportation planning. The key component of greenhouse gas emissions is the reduction of emissions from passenger vehicles, which represents about one-third of overall greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Land use is among the top strategies to reduce such emissions. Compact development, which includes a mix of land uses, access and proximity to transit, and concentrations of population and/or employment, can reduce congestion, lower infrastructure costs, and reduce household expenses related to transportation and energy, according to a 2010 report published by the Urban Land Institute (Land Use and Driving: The Role Compact Development Can Play in Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Evidence from Three Recent Studies). "The key to successful compact development is a land use pattern that has a high-quality pedestrian network and a variety of land uses within walking distance of each other."

The Project's location, less about 650 feet from a Metro station and land use mix (including hotel and commercial employment, public space, and entertainment), give hotel guests and employees the choice to not drive at all or park only once. In addition, existing uses within walking distance include Exposition Park, Saint James Park, fitness gyms, schools, theaters, museums, retail stores, and restaurants. Building 275 new guest rooms in this vicinity will significantly increase the livability around the transit station, and takes into account anticipated population growth, the growth in the USC campus population, and integrated land use with transportation planning. The consequences of not designing for transportation with development include degraded air quality, less livable communities, and a lower quality of life.

- c. **Initiations of Amendments.** In compliance with this sub-section, the amendment to the South Los Angeles Community Plan (General Plan Land Use Element), was initiated by the Department of City Planning, via signature by the Director of Planning's designee, on June 2, 2016.
- d. **Commission and Mayoral Recommendations.** The noticing and hearing requirements of the General Plan Amendment were satisfied, pursuant to LAMC Section 12.32-C.3. The hearing was scheduled, duly noticed, and held in Los Angeles City Hall on February 9, 2017. The City Planning Commission shall make its recommendation to the Mayor upon a recommendation of approval, or to the City Council and the Mayor upon a recommendation of disapproval.

This action is further subject to the following sections of Charter Section 555:

- e. **Council Action.** The Council shall conduct a public hearing before taking action on a proposed amendment to the General Plan. If the Council proposes any modification to the amendment approved by the City Planning Commission, that proposed modification shall be referred to the City Planning Commission and the Mayor for their recommendations. The City Planning Commission and the Mayor shall review any modification made by the Council and shall make their recommendation on the modification to the Council in accordance with subsection (c) above. If no modifications are proposed by the Council, or after receipt of the Mayor's and City Planning Commission's recommendations on any proposed modification, or the expiration of their time to act, the Council shall adopt or reject the proposed amendment by resolution within the time specified by ordinance.
- f. **Votes Necessary for Adoption.** If both the City Planning Commission and the Mayor recommend approval of a proposed amendment, the Council may adopt the amendment by a majority vote. If either the City Planning Commission or the Mayor recommends the disapproval of the proposed amendment, the Council may adopt the amendment only by a two-thirds vote. If both the City Planning Commission and the Mayor recommend the disapproval of a proposed amendment, the Council may adopt the amendment only by a three-fourths vote. If the Council proposes a modification of an amendment, the recommendations of the Commission and the Mayor on the modification shall affect only that modification.

4. **Redevelopment Plan (CRA – Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Area)**

Enacted on June 29, 2011, Assembly Bill 1x-26 (AB 26) revised provisions of the Community Redevelopment Law of the State of California, to dissolve all redevelopment agencies and community development agencies in existence and designate successor agencies, as defined, as successor entities. Among the revisions, the amendments to the law withdrew all authority to transact business or authorize powers previously granted under the Community Redevelopment Law (Section 34172.a.2), and vested successor agencies with all authority, rights, powers, duties and obligations previously vested with the former redevelopment agencies (Section 34172.b). To that end, the CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority, the successor agency to the CRA, approved a Resolution, dated September 20, 2012, affecting the Adelante Eastside, Beach Street, Broadway Manchester, Bunker Hill, Central Business District, Council District 9 Corridors, Central Industrial, Chinatown, City Center, Crenshaw, Crenshaw/Slauson, Normandie, Exposition University Park (Hoover), Hollywood, LA Harbor/Wilmington, Little Tokyo, Pacific Corridors, Pico Union 1, Pico Union 2, Vermont/Manchester, Watts, Watts Corridors, Western/Slauson, Westlake, and Wilshire/Koreatown Redevelopment Project Areas, and which granted authority to the Chief Executive Officer or Designee to review and approve discretionary land use actions and variations to the Redevelopment Plans. Such land use approval would be executed administratively by the delegated officers through building permit sign-off, subject to review criteria, as well as the imposition of the applicable and appropriate conditions.

The project site is located within the boundaries of the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area. The applicant has consulted with the CRA/LA, and has preliminarily reported that the project does not conflict with the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Plan. Nonetheless, approval from CRA/LA is required prior to issuance of any building permits associated with the proposed project.

Zone and Height District Change Findings; “T”, “Q”, “D” Classification Findings

- 5. Pursuant to Section 12.32 of the Municipal Code, and based on these Findings, the recommended action is deemed consistent with the General Plan and is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

The proposed project involves the demolition of an existing two-story 72-room Vagabond Inn and a free standing restaurant and the construction, use, and maintenance of a seven-story dual branded hotel with 275 guestrooms and 1,400 square feet of ground floor commercial area.

The project site consists of one parcel approximately 61,214 square feet of lot area. The South Los Angeles Community Plan designates the project site as Community Commercial. The Community Commercial land use designation includes corresponding zones of CR, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4. The project site is zoned [Q]C2-1VL-O and is limited to a Floor Area Ratio of 1.5:1 per Footnote No.1 of the South Los Angeles Community Plan. However,

Community Plan allows mixed-use projects a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0:1 with the approval of a zone change to Height District 2 (Footnote No.1) and require a commercial Floor Area Ratio of no less 0.5:1 and no more than 0.9:1. As hotels are not explicitly included within the definition of “mixed-use”, the Director of Planning has initiated a Plan Amendment, to amend Footnote No.14 to allow hotels to be included within the definition of mixed-use projects and exclude hotel projects of 300 rooms or less to be excluded from providing a minimum amount of commercial floor area.

With approval of the requested Plan Amendment, the zone change from [Q]C2-1VL to(T)(Q) C2-2D-O will be allow the project to be built to a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0:1 and an R4 density that as permitted by the C2 Zone.

- a. Public Necessity. The Project is in conformity with public necessity and convenience because it serves to address the hotel shortage that currently exists in the USC neighborhood. The Project will provide 275 new guest rooms in a dual-branded hotel (business hotel brand and an extended stay brand) that will serve visitors to the USC area. The Project will also increase the livability of the neighborhood by providing a mix of land uses, including employment, in close proximity to public transit. The purpose of the General Plan Amendment is to provide a range of land uses and a floor area ratio that allows for the development of a modern hotel that will replace a 53-year old obsolete Vagabond Inn on the Project Site. Granting the Zone and Height District Change to the (T)(Q)C2-2D-O Zone with a maximum FAR of 3.0:1, would allow the construction of a 275-room hotel on an under-utilized site, increasing the number of hotels room in South Los Angeles.
- b. Convenience. Granting the proposed Zone and Height District Change would result in a project that is convenient to the public. The project site is centrally located in a residential, commercial, and public facilities-mixed neighborhood within the South Los Angeles Community Plan area. The project site provides convenient vehicular access and public transit opportunities, as it is located just west of Interstate 110 and within walking distance (less than one-half mile) of Jefferson/USC Station along the Metro Exposition Line. Granting the Zone and Height District Change to the (T)(Q)C4-2D Zone would allow the employees and patrons of the hotel and restaurant access and convenience to a variety of modes of transportation.

- c. General Welfare. Granting the Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D will allow an increase in floor area and density, thereby facilitating the development of a new dual branded hotel with 275 guest rooms and ground floor 1,400 square-foot restaurant/café. The proposed project will provide a significant number of jobs within approximately one half mile of a variety of modes of public transit and provide an increased tax base in terms of property, sales and transient occupancy taxes to the City.
- d. Good Zoning Practices. Approval of the Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O allows for more appropriately intense development of the subject property. The Project will promote a synergy between commercially-oriented boulevards, the residential uses, and the USC campus adjacent to major thoroughfares. The Project's location, less about 650 feet from a Metro station and land use mix (including hotel and commercial employment, public space, and entertainment), give hotel guests and employees the choice to not drive at all or park only once. In addition, existing uses within walking distance include Exposition Park, Saint James Park, fitness gyms, schools, theaters, museums, retail stores, and restaurants. Building 275 new guest rooms in this vicinity will significantly increase the livability around the transit station, and takes into account anticipated population growth, the growth in the USC campus population, and integrated land use with transportation planning. Furthermore, the Height District Change to Height District No. 2 would allow the project to be built with a greater FAR than otherwise permitted, and would be consistent with the height of the surrounding area.
- e. "T" and "Q" Classification Findings. Pursuant to LAMC Sections 12.32-G,1 and G,2(a), The current action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with new "T" and "Q" conditions of approval, and project specific conditions of approval imposed herein. Such limitations are necessary to ensure the identified dedications, improvements, and construction notices are issued to meet the public's needs, convenience and general welfare served by the required actions. The conditions that limit the scale and scope of development, are also necessary to protect the best interests of and to assure a development more compatible with surrounding properties and the overall pattern of development in the community, to secure an appropriate development in harmony with the General Plan, and to prevent or mitigate the potential adverse environmental effects of the subject recommended action.

For the reasons stated above, the zone and height district change requests are beneficial in terms of the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice, and are consistent with the General Plan.

Conditional Use (Alcohol)

6. **The project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.**

The proposed project is the construction, use and maintenance of a seven-story hotel and with ground floor 1,400 square-foot restaurant/cafe. The applicant is seeking a Conditional Use to allow the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption located within the ground floor restaurant, second floor meeting rooms and "mini-bars" located within each hotel room in conjunction with the operation of the hotel.

The Proposed Project will include extended stay hotel rooms and perform a function that is essential to the community, City, and region by attracting and retaining short-term and long-term visitors and vacationers in University Park/Exposition Park area, which is a dense, transit rich, regional center with infrastructure to accommodate this compatible use. The convenience of transportation systems, combined with the proximity to employment, retail, restaurants, and entertainment will reduce vehicular trips by hotel guests, who will primarily be visiting for work and vacation. Hotel and retail employees will also benefit from access to these alternate modes of transportation, contributing to goals of reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. An additional benefit will be creation of temporary jobs associated with initial construction and subsequent tenant improvements, as well as permanent job opportunities through operation of hotel and retail spaces.

The surrounding neighborhood has only one select service hotel to serve the numerous visitors to the USC campus, and the addition of the hotel and restaurant/café will perform an essential and beneficial service to the community. Moreover, the service of alcoholic beverages in such a setting has come to be accepted as a normal and desirable complement to food service in quality hotels and restaurants and an expected component of such establishments. In particular, restaurants in a mixed-use project promote pedestrian activity. Since the serving of alcoholic beverages is a normal and expected amenity with meal service for many patrons, approval of the CUBs for the Project would be desirable to the public convenience and welfare.

The hotel and restaurant's quality service and offerings, in food and alcohol, will be a benefit to residents who are currently residing in area, and will also serve as an attraction and amenity to future guests, as many large residential projects are in development in close proximity. The hotel guests of this Project will provide an immediate and steady consumer base for the Project's public restaurant/café. Having a walkable, 24-hour environment is a major attraction to living in and visiting the University Park area, and the Project will contribute to this desired lifestyle. The amenities and fresh aesthetic of the Project will enliven this lot, and improve the vibrancy of this area. Additionally, the enriched activity at the subject Site will serve to create a positive pedestrian experience with outdoor dining and eyes on the street throughout the day and nighttime.

7. The project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

The project site is currently [Q]C2-1VL-O and is proposed to be rezoned to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O and has a land use designation of Community Commercial. The zone permits hotels with the approval of a conditional use. The context-sensitive design of the proposed building is compatible in scale and enhances the character of the neighborhood. The project will connect with the surrounding pedestrian oriented commercial district with ground floor retail and hotel uses that will activate the pedestrian environment, improving safety in the surrounding neighborhood. The project will not adversely affect or degrade adjacent properties, but will instead promote economic well-being and neighborhood revitalization by providing hotel and retail staff and visitors the opportunity to walk to employment, shopping, dining, and entertainment destinations. The Proposed Project will reduce reliance on the automobile by situating hotel and retail uses within an established, dense, transit rich community, which will mitigate traffic congestion, air pollution, and urban sprawl.

The Project Site is immediately surrounded by a mix of office, retail, and residential uses contained in structures ranging from low-rise to mid-rise buildings, which are physically separated from the Project Site by surrounding streets. On the west side of the Site are 1-3 story apartment buildings along Shrine Place. Abutting the Project Site to the south is the 3-

story Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts at USC with the approximately 5-story Shrine Auditorium and the 8-story University Gateway student housing development farther south. Abutting the Site to the north is a 3-story apartment building. On the east side of Figueroa Street opposite the Site are 1-story commercial buildings, surface parking lots for an automobile dealership, and 1-2 story residential buildings. There is one existing hotel (the Radisson Los Angeles Midtown at USC)) located about a half-mile to the south on Figueroa Street. Other hotels are located about a mile to the north adjacent to the Convention Center.

The increased pedestrian presence both throughout the day and into the evening will be beneficial to the public welfare and safety of the surrounding area by putting more eyes on the street. As such, the project as proposed, including the listed terms and conditions, will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

8. The project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any specific plan.

The hotel will be in harmony with the various elements, objectives, and policies of the General Plan and the South Los Angeles Community Plan.

- a. **South Los Angeles Community Plan.** The Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

Goal 2. A strong and competitive commercial sector which best serves the needs of the community through maximum efficiency and accessibility while preserving the historic commercial and cultural character of the district.

Objective 2-1. To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development

Policy 2-1.1. New commercial uses shall be located in existing, established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.

Policy 2-1.3. Commercial areas should be consolidated and deepened to stimulate existing businesses, create opportunities for new development and off-street parking, expand the variety of goods and services, and improve shopping convenience as well as offer local employment.

Policy 2-1.5. Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.

Objective 2-5. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts.

Policy 2-5.1. Improve the appearance of landscaping and commercial properties.

Policy 2-5.3. Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.

In addition to the land use goal, policies, and objectives described above, the project is consistent with the following design policies within the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan:

Site Planning. Structures shall be oriented toward the main commercial street where a parcel is located and shall avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts by:

- Where appropriate, locate retail and commercial service uses along frontages of commercial developments.
- Providing front pedestrian entrances for businesses fronting on main commercial streets.
- Providing pedestrian access from the front of building to rear parking for projects with wide frontages.
- Requiring site plans which include ancillary structures, service areas, pedestrian walkways, vehicular paths, loading areas, drop off, and landscaped areas.

Heightt and Building Design. The project is consistent with the following policies regarding height and building design.

- Maximize the area devoted to transparent building elements, such as windows and doors, on front facades. However, facades facing rear parking areas, shall limit such transparent elements to at least 20% of the frontage.
- Require the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations, porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.
- Provide accenting, complementary building materials to building facades.
- Screen mechanical and electrical equipment from public view.
- Screen all rooftop equipment and building appurtenances from public view.
- Require the enclosure of trash areas for all projects.

Light and Glare.

- Install on-site lighting along all pedestrian walkways and vehicular access ways.
- Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways, and away from adjacent residential uses.

Concurrently with the Conditional Use request, the applicant has applied for a General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 and Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O would allow a maximum FAR of 3.0 to 1. The project, at an FAR of 2.90:1, allows for the redevelopment of a large parcel of land within South Los Angeles into a larger hotel with residential (a hotel) and commercial (restaurant/cafe) uses and will result in a demand for local workers and local goods and services. The project will accommodate two different hotel brands within the building. An extended stay hotel brand will operate 150 larger all-suite rooms, and a select service brand will operate 125 standard hotel rooms. There will be one lobby serving both brands on the ground floor with ground floor amenity areas, including a lounge for hotel patrons. An approximately 1,400 square foot public restaurant/café would also be located on the ground floor for

general public use. An amenity deck on the second floor podium would provide a pool, barbeque area, and lounge area. An indoor fitness center along with small conference rooms, offices, lounges, and a laundry facility would also be located on the second floor. Parking (173 spaces provided and 171 spaces required) will be provided in one level of subterranean parking and one level at-grade within the hotel building. The proposed building will be approximately 85'-0" to the top of the roof and 94'-0" feet tall to the top of the elevator penthouse above the roof.

The project also promotes economic well-being and public convenience by providing short-term, overnight accommodations within proximity to many of the USC/Exposition Park area and well as to the Metro Exposition Line with access to downtown Los Angeles, Culver City, and Santa Monica.

Additional Findings (Alcohol)

9. The proposed use will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community

The request for the sale of a full line of alcohol for on-site consumption for the proposed hotel will not adversely affect the welfare of the community; rather, the proposed hotel use will be a benefit to the community, City, and region. Located in a Community Commercial,

the proposed project will transform facilitate the demolition of an outdated building that is housing a car-oriented hotel and restaurant from the surrounding, into an important focal point that fits within the area's new pedestrian oriented context. By attracting and retaining business visitors and tourists in the area, it will enhance revitalization efforts and further activate the pedestrian experience, which may improve public safety.

Availability of alcoholic beverages is a typical hotel characteristic expected by discerning travelers and a necessity for the hotel to compete with similar businesses in the area. The conditional use would allow for alcohol in a carefully controlled hotel setting, including common areas (small meeting rooms, and guest rooms (through mini-bars and room service). Alcohol will not be a focal point of the Proposed Project. Instead, it will be an amenity that complements other food and beverage options provided to hotel guests and visitors. Alcohol service will be completely on-site and for on-site consumption. With extended stay guestrooms, the hotel's emphasis will be on short-term and long-term business visitors and not on large-scale events and conferences that would draw large numbers of visitors for special events.

The City Planning Commission has imposed numerous conditions to integrate the uses into the community as well as protect surrounding uses from adverse potential impacts. Therefore, the granting the sale of alcohol will not adversely affect the welfare of the pertinent community.

10. The granting of the application will not result in an undue concentration of premises for the sale or dispensing for consideration of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, in the area of the City involved, giving consideration to applicable State laws and to the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control's guidelines for undue concentration; and also giving consideration to the number and proximity of these establishments within a one thousand foot radius of the site, the crime rate in the area (especially those crimes involving public drunkenness, the illegal sale or use of narcotics, drugs or alcohol, disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct), and whether revocation or nuisance proceedings have been initiated for any use in the area.

The Proposed Project is located in a dense, transit rich area of South Los Angeles with tourist destinations, office, commercial, and retail uses and a growing residential population. According to the California State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) licensing criteria for the subject Census Tract No. 2247.00, there are three on-site and two off-site licenses allocated. There are six existing on-site licenses and two off-site licenses.

Of the six establishments with on-site licenses, four have Type 41 License for on-site sales and consumption of beer and wine and two have Type 47 License Type for on-site general sales and consumption as bona-fide public eating places. One establishment having an off-site license has a Type 20 License for off-site sales of beer and wine, and one establishment has a type 21 license for general off-site sales. There are nine establishments within 600 feet of the Property that serve alcohol. In addition, two establishments within 600 and 1,000 feet serve alcohol.

Within the hotel, the Applicant is proposing to add 1) one Type 47 license to cover the on-site hotel uses (lobby lounge, 2nd floor lounge, and podium level pool lounge), and 2) one Type 66 license for in-room alcohol access cabinets ("mini-bars"). A separate type 47 license may be issued to the proprietor of the ground floor restaurants/lounge within the hotel building.

Over-concentration can be undue when the addition of a license will negatively impact a neighborhood. Over-concentration is not undue when approval of a license does not negatively impact an area, but rather such license benefits the public welfare and convenience. Although the census tract is numerically over-concentrated for on-site licenses, the Project will not adversely affect the community welfare because the proposed hotel is a desirable use and a needed use in an area designated for such. The Project will also result in the elimination of one establishment (Trio House) currently operating a restaurant with on-site alcohol sales. The Census tract is also located in an active commercial area where there is a demand for on-site licenses beyond the allocated number and where an over-concentration of licenses is acknowledged. State license allocations are based on population, and this results in a low allocation for the area. The area has had an increase in restaurants with alcohol permits to serve both the expanding residential population of the area, nearby office workers, and tourists.

It is not uncommon to have concentrations of this nature in a dense, urban area that is a regional and internationally known center and destination. Although the local residential population is relatively small, the University Park Area, and the USC campus in particular, is a regional employment center with thousands of employees. Both the visitors and working population would serve to support the concentration of on-site licenses in the area. The addition of the requested entitlements for these same uses will not adversely contribute to an undue concentration within the surrounding community.

- 11. The proposed use will not detrimentally affect nearby residentially zoned communities in the area of the City involved, after giving consideration to the distance of the proposed use from residential buildings, churches, schools, hospitals, public playgrounds and other similar uses, and other establishments dispensing, for sale or other consideration, alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine.**

The Project will not detrimentally affect nearby residentially zoned uses. The Project is located along a prime commercial corridor, so diversity among land uses is not uncommon. The requested entitlement for service of alcohol does not represent the introduction of these uses to the area that does not already have a number of alcohol-serving establishments. In

fact, there is an existing restaurant on the Site (Trio House) that currently serves beer and wine that will be replaced by the proposed Project. Numerous restaurants, bars, and large entertainment venues (Galen Center and Shrine Auditorium) serve alcohol in the area.

The Project will include a 275-room hotel, and it is in the best interest of the hotel operator to making certain that establishments offering alcohol are operated in a responsible manner. The Project's ground floor public restaurant/café is within a contained environment, where monitoring is facilitated and the property owner retains responsibility for strict oversight and compliance with all regulations and conditions.

There are two (2) sensitive uses identified within 1,000 feet of the Property. These are the 32nd Street USC Performing Arts Magnet School at 822 W. 32nd Street and the Kinder Care Learning Center at 2916 S. Hope Street.

The Project Site is located in the Los Angeles Police Department's Southwest. The Proposed Project will cater to tourists and university related visitors who will activate the surrounding area with increased pedestrian activity. In addition, hotel staff will be on site 24 hours a day. Increased activity associated with hotel operations and ongoing presence of eyes on the street may contribute to further crime reduction in the surrounding area.

Alcohol service would be incidental to the hotel's primary operations and managed in accordance with rules and regulations of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Spill-over parking into residential areas is not anticipated due to adequacy of on-site parking and availability of nearby and convenient public transportation options. Therefore, service of alcoholic beverages at the proposed hotel will not detrimentally affect character of development in the immediate neighborhood.

Conditional Use Findings (Hotel)

12. The project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.

The proposed project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood and will provide a service that is both essential and beneficial to the community, the City and the region. The site is currently zoned [Q]C2-1VL-O. Pursuant to LAMC §12.24.W.24(a), a hotel in the C2 zone when any portion of a structure proposed to be used as a hotel is within 500 feet of any residential zone requires approval of a Conditional Use. The proposed hotel site is developed with a two-story hotel that is 53 years old and a small family restaurant (Trio House). The Project is located in the University Park community of South Los Angeles, a highly-urbanized setting with a mix of commercial, educational, and residential uses. University Park, a thriving mixed-use community, is in close proximity to transit and adjacent to the University of Southern California, Exposition Park, and the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District. The proposed hotel's proximity to these destinations will attract tourism and contribute to the economic development of South Los Angeles and Downtown. The hotel's 275 guest rooms in addition to its new amenities will enhance the built environment of South Los Angeles and provide essential and beneficial services to the community and City. University Park is a regional and international destination, and the hotel will provide visitor-serving uses, principally lodging. The hotel's design will complement existing uses nearby, including the Shrine Auditorium and University Gateway student housing development to the south, replacing the aging hotel and restaurant with a new modern hotel which will help improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood.

As such, the Proposed Project will provide a function that is essential and beneficial to the community.

13. The project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

The subject property's location is near an existing Metro station and bus lines in a highly-urbanized setting. The Project site is immediately surrounded by a mix of retail, residential, and educational uses and surface parking lots. Properties within 500 feet have designated General Plan land uses of Medium Density Residential and Community Commercial. Buildings range from low-rise to mid-rise buildings, which are physically separated from the Project site by major highways, secondary streets, and local streets. The hotel, at seven-stories and 85' tall to the top of the roof and 94' tall to the top of the elevator penthouse, will be compatible in size, height, and operations with the existing buildings in the neighborhood, which are largely residential and educational.

The Jefferson/USC Metro Station is approximately 650 feet southeast of the Project site. Two Metro bus lines, several LADOT Commuter Express Lines, and LADOT Dash Line F are located along Figueroa Street directly in front of the Project site.

On the west side of the site are 1-3 story apartment buildings along Shrine Place. Abutting the Project site to the south is the 3-story Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts at USC with the approximately 5-story Shrine Auditorium and the 8-story University Gateway development farther south. Abutting the site to the north is a 3-story apartment building. On the east side of Figueroa Street opposite the site are 1-story commercial buildings, surface parking lots for an automobile dealership, and 1-2 story residential buildings. There is one existing hotel (the Radisson Los Angeles Midtown at USC) located about a half-mile to the south on Figueroa Street. Other hotels are located about a mile to the north adjacent to the Convention Center. Parking requirements for all uses on the subject property will be met. A total of 172 parking spaces for the hotel guest rooms and public restaurant/café are required and 173 spaces will be provided for the hotel. In addition, appropriate security measures, such as security lighting, will be provided on-site. Therefore, as conditioned, the location, size, height, operations and other significant features of the proposed hotel will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

14. The project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any specific plan.

The hotel will be in harmony with the various elements, objectives, and policies of the General Plan and the South Los Angeles Community Plan.

- a. **South Los Angles Community Plan.** The Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

Goal 2. A strong and competitive commercial sector which best serves the needs of the community through maximum efficiency and accessibility while preserving the historic commercial and cultural character of the district.

Objective 2-1. To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development

Policy 2-1.1. New commercial uses shall be located in existing, established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.

Policy 2-1.3. Commercial areas should be consolidated and deepened to stimulate existing businesses, create opportunities for new development and off-street parking, expand the variety of goods and services, and improve shopping convenience as well as offer local employment.

Policy 2-1.5. Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.

Objective 2-5. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts.

Policy 2-5.1. Improve the appearance of landscaping and commercial properties.

Policy 2-5.3. Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.

In addition to the land use goal, policies, and objectives described above, the project is consistent with the following design policies within the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan:

Site Planning. Structures shall be oriented toward the main commercial street where a parcel is located and shall avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts by:

- Where appropriate, locate retail and commercial service uses along frontages of commercial developments.
- Providing front pedestrian entrances for businesses fronting on main commercial streets.
- Providing pedestrian access from the front of building to rear parking for projects with wide frontages.
- Requiring site plans which include ancillary structures, service areas, pedestrian walkways, vehicular paths, loading areas, drop off, and landscaped areas.

Height and Building Design. The project is consistent with the following policies regarding height and building design.

- Maximize the area devoted to transparent building elements, such as windows and doors, on front facades. However, facades facing rear parking areas, shall limit such transparent elements to at least 20% of the frontage.
- Require the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations, porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.
- Provide accenting, complementary building materials to building facades.
- Screen mechanical and electrical equipment from public view.

- Screen all rooftop equipment and building appurtenances from public view.
- Require the enclosure of trash areas for all projects.

Light and Glare.

- Install on-site lighting along all pedestrian walkways and vehicular access ways.
- Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways, and away from adjacent residential uses.

The General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 and the Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O would allow a maximum FAR of 3.0 to 1. The project, at an FAR of 2.90:1, allows for the redevelopment of a large parcel of land within South Los Angeles into a larger hotel with residential (a hotel) and commercial (restaurant/café) uses and will result in a demand for local workers and local goods and services. The project will accommodate two different hotel brands within the building. An extended stay hotel brand will operate 150 larger all-suite rooms, and a select service brand will operate 125 standard hotel rooms. There will be one lobby serving both brands on the ground floor with ground floor amenity areas, including a lounge for hotel patrons. An approximately 1,400 square foot public restaurant/café would also be located on the ground floor for general public use. An amenity deck on the second floor podium would provide a pool, barbeque area, and lounge area. An indoor fitness center along with small conference rooms, offices, lounges, and a laundry facility would also be located on the second floor. Parking (173 spaces provided and 171 spaces required) will be provided in one level of subterranean parking and one level at-grade within the hotel building. The proposed building will be approximately 85'-0" to the top of the roof and 94'-0" feet tall to the top of the elevator penthouse above the roof.

The project also promotes economic well-being and public convenience by providing short-term, overnight accommodations within proximity to many of the USC/Exposition Park area and well as to the Metro Exposition Line with access to downtown Los Angeles, Culver City, and Santa Monica.

Site Plan Review Findings

15. The project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.

There are eleven elements of the General Plan. Each of these Elements establishes policies that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. The majority of the policies derived from these Elements are in the form of code requirements of the LAMC. Except for those entitlements described herein, the project does not propose to deviate from any of the requirements of the LAMC.,

- South Los Angeles Community Plan.** The Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

Goal 2. A strong and competitive commercial sector which best serves the needs of the community through maximum efficiency and accessibility while preserving the historic commercial and cultural character of the district.

Objective 2-1. To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development

Policy 2-1.1. New commercial uses shall be located in existing, established commercial areas or existing shopping centers.

Policy 2-1.3. Commercial areas should be consolidated and deepened to stimulate existing businesses, create opportunities for new development and off-street parking, expand the variety of goods and services, and improve shopping convenience as well as offer local employment.

Policy 2-1.5. Require that projects be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses and development.

Objective 2-5. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts.

Policy 2-5.1. Improve the appearance of landscaping and commercial properties.

Policy 2-5.3. Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.

In addition to the land use goal, policies, and objectives described above, the project is consistent with the following design policies within the Urban Design Chapter of the Community Plan:

Site Planning. Structures shall be oriented toward the main commercial street where a parcel is located and shall avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts by:

- Where appropriate, locate retail and commercial service uses along frontages of commercial developments.
- Providing front pedestrian entrances for businesses fronting on main commercial streets.
- Providing pedestrian access from the front of building to rear parking for projects with wide frontages.
- Requiring site plans which include ancillary structures, service areas, pedestrian walkways, vehicular paths, loading areas, drop off, and landscaped areas.

Height and Building Design. The project is consistent with the following policies regarding height and building design.

- Maximize the area devoted to transparent building elements, such as windows and doors, on front facades. However, facades facing rear parking areas, shall limit such transparent elements to at least 20% of the frontage.

- Require the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations, porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.
- Provide accenting, complementary building materials to building facades.
- Screen mechanical and electrical equipment from public view.
- Screen all rooftop equipment and building appurtenances from public view.
- Require the enclosure of trash areas for all projects.

Light and Glare.

- Install on-site lighting along all pedestrian walkways and vehicular access ways.
- Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways, and away from adjacent residential uses.

The General Plan Amendment to amend Footnote No. 14 and the Zone and Height District Change to (T)(Q)C2-2D-O would allow a maximum FAR of 3.0 to 1. The project, at an FAR of 2.90:1, allows for the redevelopment of a large parcel of land within South Los Angeles into a larger hotel with residential (a hotel) and commercial (restaurant/cafe) uses and will result in a demand for local workers and local goods and services. The project will accommodate two different hotel brands within the building. An extended stay hotel brand will operate 150 larger all-suite rooms, and a select service brand will operate 125 standard hotel rooms. There will be one lobby serving both brands on the ground floor with ground floor amenity areas, including a lounge for hotel patrons. An approximately 1,400 square foot public restaurant/café would also be located on the

ground floor for general public use. An amenity deck on the second floor podium would provide a pool, barbeque area, and lounge area. An indoor fitness center along with small conference rooms, offices, lounges, and a laundry facility would also be located on the second floor. Parking (173 spaces provided and 171 spaces required) will be provided in one level of subterranean parking and one level at-grade within the hotel building. The proposed building will be approximately 85'-0" to the top of the roof and 94'-0" feet tall to the top of the elevator penthouse above the roof.

The project also promotes economic well-being and public convenience by providing short-term, overnight accommodations within proximity to many of the USC/Exposition Park area and well as to the Metro Exposition Line with access to downtown Los Angeles, Culver City, and Santa Monica.

Therefore, the project is in substantial conformance with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and the South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales Specific Plan.

- 16. The project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on neighboring properties.**

The proposed Project will replace a 53-year old obsolete motel and stand-alone restaurant with a modern 275-room dual-branded hotel with a business class brand and an extended stay, all-suites brand. The Project will also include approximately 1,400 square feet of commercial space. Approximately 173 parking spaces will be provided in one level of subterranean parking and one at-grade parking level within the building. The hotel will be approximately 85 feet tall to the top of the roof and 94 feet tall to the top of the elevator penthouse. The building is generally consistent with the commercial and residential buildings in the surrounding area, and would be compatible with existing development on neighboring properties. The arrangement, bulk and height of the Project will be compatible with the office buildings in the neighborhood.

Height/Bulk/Massing

In terms of height, the area immediately surrounding the project site includes multiple high-rise buildings demonstrating that the proposed project fits well within the neighborhood context. The Project Site is immediately surrounded by a mix of office, retail, and residential uses contained in structures ranging from low-rise to high-rise buildings, which are physically separated from the Project Site by Boulevards, Avenues, and non-arterial streets. Properties within 500 feet have designated General Plan land uses of Medium Density Residential and Community Commercial. Other buildings range from low-rise to mid-rise buildings, which are physically separated from the Project Site by major highways, secondary streets, and local streets. On the west side of the project site are one to three-story apartment buildings along Shrine Place. Abutting the Project Site to the south is the 3-story Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts at USC with the approximately five-story Shrine Auditorium and the eight-story University Gateway development farther south. Abutting the Site to the north is a three-story apartment building. On the east side of Figueroa Street opposite the Site are one-story commercial buildings surface parking lots for an automobile dealership and one to two-story residential buildings. Accordingly, the height and FAR of the proposed project is consistent with several existing developments within the surrounding area.

Setbacks

Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.14-C, front, side, and rear yard setbacks are not required for commercial buildings in the C2 Zone. Nonetheless, the project will be setting back all sides. The project observed a 15-foot setback along Figueroa Street, 11 feet along the north and side sounds, and 20-feet in the rear.

Parking & Driveways

Off-street parking for vehicles and bicycles are designed to be compatible with surrounding development. All required off-street vehicular parking will be provided on-site in one subterranean level and one at-grade parking level. Access to parking will be from a vehicular entrance on Figueroa Street. A total of 173 automobile parking spaces, 18 long-term and 18 short-term bicycle parking spaces. The provision of dedicated safe and secure bicycle parking will encourage bicycle use among the residents, employees, and visitors to the Project Site.

Loading Areas

Configuration of loading areas will be compatible with surrounding properties, and all loading areas will be contained on-site. Vehicular access is limited to one guest entrance for

automobiles off Figueroa Street. This configuration is compatible with existing and future development on adjacent and neighboring properties by reducing the amount of curb cuts currently at the subject site, which will create a more pedestrian friendly environment. By containing loading areas on-site and enclosed within the building envelope, the proposed project will limit their visibility from the street.

Lighting & Building Signage

The Proposed Project's lighting scheme will be compatible with surrounding development. Exterior lighting will illuminate on-site facilities in order to provide sufficient lighting for circulation and security, while minimizing impacts on adjacent properties. Ground level lighting for the hotel and retail uses will activate and enhance the pedestrian environment at night.

Landscaping

The Project activates the Figueroa Street by providing the ability to place outdoor dining and landscape features in front of the building but outside of the public right-of-way and by placing street facing tenants on Figueroa Street. Additionally, the Project will provide common open space for hotel guests in the form of extensively landscaped amenity deck on the second floor of the hotel with a swimming pool and lounge.

Trash Collection

Trash collection infrastructure at the Project Site will be compatible with surrounding development. The Proposed Project will provide adequate, on-site space for trash receptacles in order to ensure safe and efficient handling of solid waste. Trash collection infrastructure will be completely enclosed and shielded from pedestrians, as well as surrounding properties.

As described above, the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements, that will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent and neighboring properties.

17. That any residential project provides recreational and service amenities in order to improve habitability for the residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

The Proposed Project does not have a residential component. The Project will improve habitability for its hotel guests by putting these guests in close proximity to recreational facilities and retail amenities on-site that will enhance the guest experience. Guests of the Project will be able to enjoy both the public cafe amenity and the private hotel amenities (swimming pool, lounges, fitness center, etc.). There are two conference rooms on the second floor which might also be made available to community and business groups for meetings, thereby enhancing the neighborhood service function of the Project. Guests will have exclusive access to an outdoor swimming pool, Jacuzzi/spa, cabana, barbecue area, heavily landscaped courtyard, and an indoor fitness center, game room, business center, and breakfast lounge located on the second floor. The hotel amenities are wholly within the Project Site, and are not expected to impact neighboring properties.

Environmental Findings

18. **Environmental Finding.** A Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2016-2467-MND) and corresponding Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) were prepared for the proposed project. The MMP is a document that is separate from the MND and is prepared and adopted as part of the project's proposal. Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires a Lead Agency to adopt a "reporting or monitoring program for the changes made to the project or conditions of approval, adopted in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment." The MND was circulated for public review on December 22, 2016 through January 11, 2017.

The MND document was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to determine if the project would result in a significant impact on the environment. Staff from the Los Angeles Department of City Planning has reviewed the MND and finds that it was prepared in accordance with the City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide and other applicable City requirements. As such, the MND is adequate for CEQA clearance, as noted in Exhibit "C".

On the basis of the whole of the record before the lead agency including any comments received, the lead agency finds that, with imposition of the mitigation measures described in the MND, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. The attached Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the Environmental Review Section of the Planning Department in Room 750, 200 North Spring Street.

19. **Flood Insurance.** The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone C, an area of moderate or minimal hazard from the principal source of flood. Currently, there are no flood zone compliance requirements for construction in these zones.