


Department of Public Works

Bureau of Engineering  
Report No. 2

June 20, 2016  
CD No. 14

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD  
PUBLIC WORKS OF THE CITY  
of Los Angeles California  
AND REFERRED TO THE CITY COUNCIL  
JUN 20 2016

  
Executive Officer  
Board of Public Works

**CHANNEL 35 STUDIO RELOCATION PROJECT (PROJECT) CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) COMPLIANCE AND PROJECT APPROVAL (WORK ORDER NO. E1907457)**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the requirements of the CEQA, adopt and forward this report and transmittals to the Los Angeles City Council with the following recommendations:

1. Review and consider the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
2. Find that, on the basis of the whole record, there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the City's independent judgment and analysis.
3. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
4. Approve the project as described in the Initial Study.
5. Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring Program.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Project has a budget of \$22,250,000. The funding source for this portion of the project originates from the City's Public Education and Governmental Access (PEG) Fund and is currently a part of the City's Information Technology Agency's (ITA) five-year budget plan. The Pico House structural retrofit project has a budget of \$3,100,000. The funding source for this portion of the project is the City's Municipal Improvement Corporation of Los Angeles Fund, specified for the El Pueblo area.

**TRANSMITTALS**

1. Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Channel 35 Studio Relocation Project, dated April 2016.
2. Mitigation Monitoring Program, dated April 2016.

**DISCUSSION**

***Background***

The ITA has been working with the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) to relocate the Channel 35 currently leased studio in Little Tokyo to a City-owned property in the Los

Angeles Plaza Historic District. The City's asset management policy is to reduce private lease agreements by either purchasing property or retrofitting existing City property to reduce expenditures. Therefore, approximately 18,000 square feet of existing building space in the Merced Theatre and Masonic Hall would be rehabilitated to accommodate the studio's needs. The proposed project would be funded by the City's PEG Fund and is currently a part of the ITA's five-year budget plan. The ITA budget plan report includes recommendations to upgrade existing analog studio equipment to a digital system to allow the ITA to better serve the residents of Los Angeles in their efforts to provide necessary information regarding City government policies and services, as well as various issues facing the community.

### ***Project Description***

The proposed Project includes the design and construction of a new digital television studio, within the Merced Theatre and Masonic Hall in the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Park in the City of Los Angeles. In order to utilize the three-story Merced Theatre and two-story Masonic Hall for studio use, the proposed Project would require extensive structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing retrofits. A ramp and elevator structure would also be installed to provide Americans with Disabilities Act access and equipment loading to all floors of the building. The proposed Project would also structurally retrofit the three-story Pico House, located directly adjacent to the Merced Theatre on the northeast. The structural systems of the Pico House, Merced Theatre, and Masonic Hall are tied together and require a coordinated structural retrofit design to ensure the structures act as one during an earthquake. Both the Merced Theatre and Masonic Hall have received a number of retrofits and rehabilitations over the years. As a result, much of the interior historic fabric has been removed and lost during past projects.

The proposed Project has been planned and designed consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The project will retain, restore, repair, and appropriately replace portions of the property from its period of significance that contribute to its historic integrity, while making other compatible alterations in non-character-defining features and spaces that preserve the property's historical and architectural value. While there would be changes to the buildings, the buildings would receive a new use that requires minimal to no changes of the defining characteristics and site of the resources. Therefore, the impact related to historic resources would be less than significant.

### ***Public Participation and Public Review***

The proposed draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was circulated for public review and comment from February 25, 2016 to March 16, 2016. A notice of intent/availability was published in the Los Angeles Times on February 25, 2016. A notice of intent/availability was mailed to interested parties and to owners and occupants of properties adjacent to the proposed Project site. The notice was also filed with the City and County Clerk. The draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was available for review at the Little Tokyo Branch Library, the Chinatown Branch Library, the Council District No. 14 District Office, the El Pueblo De Los Angeles Office, the BOE Environmental Management Group's Office, and on-line at the BOE's Website.

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One correspondence commenting on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was received during the public review period. Copies of the correspondence along with response can be found in the "COMMENTS AND RESPONSES" section of the Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Transmittal No. 1). None of the comments received necessitated changes in the Project or the conclusion or findings of the Initial Study or in the mitigation measures of the Mitigation Monitoring Program (Transmittal No. 2).

**Project Schedule**

The above recommended actions are necessary steps before completing design and advertising for bids. In order to meet project delivery deadlines, the project schedule anticipates the advertisement of the bid package for construction bids on September 30, 2016. Therefore, Council action is needed by August 29, 2016 to facilitate this project's schedule.

( MEM MK RMK ALM )

Report reviewed by:

Respectfully submitted,

BOE (ADM and ARC)



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