



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
RECOMMENDATION REPORT



ITEM 4

City Planning Commission

<b>Date:</b>	April 10, 2014	<b>Case No.:</b>	CPC-2011-3034-GPA
<b>Time:</b>	After 8:30 a.m.*	<b>CEQA No.:</b>	ENV-2004-1950-EIR (SCH No. 2004101084) and addendum: ENV-2012-1035
<b>Place:</b>	Los Angeles City Hall 200 N. Spring Street, Room 350 Los Angeles, CA 90012	<b>Incidental Cases:</b>	none
<b>Public Hearing:</b>	February 7, 2014	<b>Related Cases:</b>	none
<b>Appeal Status:</b>	General Plan Amendment is not appealable.	<b>Council No.:</b>	14 - Huizar
<b>Expiration Date:</b>	June 12, 2014	<b>Plan Area:</b>	Northeast Los Angeles
		<b>Certified NC:</b>	Lincoln Heights
		<b>GPLU:</b>	various
		<b>Applicant:</b>	City of Los Angeles and University of Southern California Kristina Raspe / Brian League
		<b>Representative:</b>	Armbruster, Goldsmith, & Delvac, LLP

**PROJECT LOCATION:** **University of Southern California Health Sciences Campus**  
*San Pablo Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Valley Boulevard;  
*Alcazar Street*, between Eastlake Avenue and Soto Street;  
*Eastlake Avenue*, between Alcazar Street and San Pablo Street;  
*Norfolk Street*, between San Pablo Street and Soto Street;  
*Playground Street*, between Norfolk Street and Alcazar Street; and  
*Biggy Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Eastlake Avenue

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** **The redesignation of street classifications in the vicinity of the University of Southern California Health Sciences Campus**, as part of a streetscape beautification program. The redesignation would generally reduce roadway widths, increase sidewalk widths, and allow for the redistribution of on-street parking spaces.

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

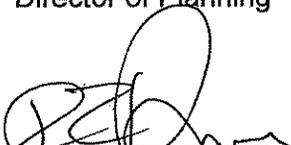
1. Pursuant to City Charter Section 555 and Section 11.5.6 of the Municipal Code, a **General Plan Amendment** to the Transportation Element of the General Plan and the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan to redesignate the following:
  - a. the portion of *San Pablo Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Valley Boulevard, from a Secondary Highway to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - b. the portion of *Alcazar Street*, between Eastlake Avenue and Soto Street, from a Collector Street to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - c. the portion of *Eastlake Avenue*, between Alcazar Street and San Pablo Street, from a Collector Street to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - d. the portion of *Norfolk Street*, between San Pablo Street and Soto Street, from a Local Street to Modified Collector Street designation;

- e. the portion of *Playground Street*, between Norfolk Street and Alcazar Street, from a Local Street to Modified Local Street designation;
  - f. the portion of *Biggy Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Eastlake Avenue, from a Local Street to Modified Local Street designation;
2. Pursuant to Section 21082.1(c) of the Public Resources Codes (California Environmental Quality Act), review and consideration of Environmental Impact Report No. **ENV-2004-1950-EIR** (State Clearinghouse No. 2004101084) and Addendum **ENV-2012-1035**;

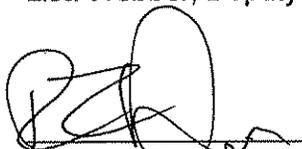
#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

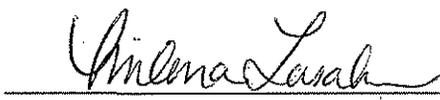
1. **Approve and Recommend** that the City Council **Adopt** the **Addendum** to the previously certified Environmental Impact Report (ENV-2004-1950-EIR) and **Adopt** the **Mitigation Monitoring Program, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and required Findings**, as provided in the environmental evaluation of the Environmental Impact Report;
2. **Approve and Recommend** that the Mayor and City Council **Adopt** a **General Plan Amendment** to the Transportation Element of the General Plan and the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan to redesignate the following:
  - a. the portion of *San Pablo Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Valley Boulevard, from a Secondary Highway to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - b. the portion of *Alcazar Street*, between Eastlake Avenue and Soto Street, from a Collector Street to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - c. the portion of *Eastlake Avenue*, between Alcazar Street and San Pablo Street, from a Collector Street to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - d. the portion of *Norfolk Street*, between San Pablo Street and Soto Street, from a Local Street to Modified Collector Street designation;
  - e. the portion of *Playground Street*, between Norfolk Street and Alcazar Street, from a Local Street to Modified Local Street designation;
  - f. the portion of *Biggy Street*, between Zonal Avenue and Eastlake Avenue, from a Local Street to Modified Local Street designation;
3. **Adopt** the attached Findings;
4. **Advise** the applicant that, pursuant to California State Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, the City shall monitor or require evidence that mitigation conditions are implemented and maintained throughout the life of the project and the City may require any necessary fees to cover the cost of such monitoring.

MICHAEL LOGRANDE  
Director of Planning

  
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**ADVICE TO PUBLIC:** \*The exact time this report will be considered during the meeting is uncertain since there may be several other items on the agenda. Written communications may be mailed to the Commission Secretariat, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (Phone No. 213-978-1300). While all written communications are given to the Commission for consideration, the initial packets are sent to the week prior to the Commission's meeting date. If you challenge these agenda items in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing agendized herein, or in written correspondence on these matters delivered to this agency at or prior to the public hearing. As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to this programs, services and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or other services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request not later than three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by calling the Commission Secretariat at (213) 978-1300.

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- B – Citywide Standard Street Dimensions (for reference)
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## PROJECT ANALYSIS

### Project Summary

The proposed project involves the redesignation and improvement of several public streets along the University of Southern California (USC) Health Sciences Campus (HSC) in Northeast Los Angeles. The General Plan Amendment requests a change in the street designations and standards for six streets within the campus area, generally allowing for reduced street widths and increased sidewalk and parkway widths.

As part of a coordinated multi-agency effort with the Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation, these modified street standards could then be implemented by USC as part of a campus-wide street beautification program. In general, the proposed program would include the undergrounding of utilities, roadway restriping, sidewalk widening, and the installation of new decorative paving, crosswalks, street lights, street trees, landscaping, and identifying signage. These improvements would be funded by the University, and bonded to ensure completion.

To improve site circulation, USC has also agreed to extend the eastern terminus of Norfolk Street to create new campus access from Soto Street. In order to complete this extension, USC would dedicate a portion of its private property for public street purposes to realign the street and preserve the existing recreational facilities adjacent to Hazard Park. The University has also agreed to maintain all curbside parking immediately adjacent to the park. However, outside of this immediate park area, about half of the remaining metered on-street parking spaces along the campus would be removed and phased-out over a ten-year period in order to accommodate other street enhancements and pedestrian improvements. After ten years, if traffic conditions dictate, another quarter of the original metered street parking spaces could also be removed.

Staff recommends approval of the General Plan Amendment for the redesignation of six streets, since the request would allow USC to carry out a campus-wide street beautification program, improving multi-modal circulation and safety in the area, and directly realizing city-supported policies for walkability within the designated pedestrian-oriented district.

### Background

The 79-acre University of Southern California (USC) Health Sciences Campus (HSC) is located within the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan area, approximately three miles east of downtown Los Angeles, approximately one-half mile north of the I-10 Freeway and roughly one-half mile east of the I-5 Freeway. The campus is generally bordered by Valley Boulevard to the north, Soto Street to the east, Zonal Avenue to the south, and Mission Road to the west. The campus is also situated adjacent to its Los Angeles County partner medical facility (LAC+USC) to the west, Los Angeles County Department of Power and Water facilities to the north, and adjacent to two community parks, Lincoln Park to the north and Hazard Park to the south.

The campus currently provides a number of academic and medical research facilities, as well as medical office, hospital and clinical treatment centers. As part of USC's long-range plan for the expansion and redevelopment of the HSC, the campus anticipates adding several new buildings, improving internal linkages and open spaces, as well as committing to a significant investment in public infrastructure through a campus-wide street beautification program.

Currently, circulation through the campus is provided via a system of six roadways which primarily serve campus facilities and parking lots and provide access to the adjacent county facilities and public city parks. A majority of the streets within the campus are one to three

blocks in length, do not accommodate through-traffic, and terminate at other streets or surrounding parks. These streets are generally improved to wider street widths than required by their respective street designations and also maintain fairly wide travel lanes. San Pablo Street, Alcazar Street, and Eastlake Avenue generally provide three travel lanes, one lane in each direction with a center turn lane, while Norfolk Street, Playground Street and Biggy Street generally provide two travel lanes, with one lane in each direction. In addition, curbside metered or unrestricted parking is provided on both sides of most streets.

The Transportation Element and Land Use Element (Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan) of the City's General Plan designate each of the six roadways as follows, with allowable dimensions for each street designation determined by the Citywide-adopted Standard Plan for Standard Street Dimensions:

- *San Pablo Street* is designated as a Secondary Highway. Secondary Highways are intended to supplement the through-traffic carrying characteristics of major highways in a grid system, and generally carry higher traffic volumes. Standards call for 90-foot wide right-of-ways, with 70-foot wide roadways and 10-foot sidewalks.
- *Alcazar Street and Eastlake Avenue* are designated as Collector Streets. Collector Streets are meant to assist local traffic flow to major and secondary highways. Standards call for 64-foot wide right-of-ways, with 44-foot wide roadways and 10-feet of sidewalk and parkway.
- *Norfolk Street, Biggy Street, and Playground Street* are designated as Local streets. Local Streets generally provide access to abutting property and serve local areas rather than accommodate through-traffic. Standards call for 60-foot wide right-of-ways, with 36-foot wide roadways and 12-feet of sidewalk and parkway.

In order to construct public street improvements which deviate from the standards as described above, the General Plan designation for each street would need to be amended to a modified designation and a new right-of-way and roadway dimension for each street segment would also need to be adopted.

To implement the street beautification program, construction plans complying with these new dimensions could then be submitted to the Bureau of Engineering at the Department of Public Works as part of the B-permit process. Other project details such as paving materials, street trees, street lighting, and utility placement would be reviewed by respective bureaus within the Department of Public Works and Department of Water and Power. Changes to traffic control devices or configuration of travel and parking lanes would be reviewed by the Department of Transportation. In addition, the removal of any curbside metered parking spaces would require a payment to the City, as determined by the Department of Transportation, to offset the expected loss of meter revenue for a period of ten years.

In order to reduce the overall construction time for the project and minimize disruption to the campus and community, the City Council passed a motion on September 8, 2012 to authorize the Bureau of Engineering and other departments to begin processing B-permit plans concurrently with the General Plan Amendment request. Concurrent processing would lessen lag time between the construction work for the undergrounding of utilities, which is currently underway, and any future streetscape improvements.

#### ***Related Cases***

There are no related street redesignation cases in the vicinity.

***City Agency Reports Received***

Prior to the completion of the Hearing Officer's report, letters from the following Agencies were received:

The *Department of Transportation* reviewed the original project plans and issued a letter, dated March 6, 2013, stating that the proposed street modification would not result in any significant traffic impacts to local access and circulation, would not reduce the number of existing travel lanes in the area, and would be able to accommodate existing and future traffic demands around the campus. While supportive of the project's goal to enhance the pedestrian environment surrounding the campus, DOT also highlighted several concerns about the project, namely the loss of on-street parking, lost parking meter revenues, specific design standards, and implementation of the City's Bicycle Plan. In response to DOT's letter, the applicant has since submitted revised plans and additional information, and has agreed to a phased approach for the street parking removal to satisfy the recommendations of the Department.

**Staff Analysis*****Project Detail***

The General Plan Amendment request proposes to downgrade the designation of San Pablo Street from a Secondary Highway to Modified Collector Street, upgrade Norfolk Street from a Local Street to Modified Collector Street, and otherwise add the "Modified" prefix to Alcazar, Eastlake, Biggy, and Playground Streets.

Although the street designations, street widths, and sidewalk widths of these six streets are proposed to be modified, the existing public right-of-way (ROW) widths for each street would be maintained, in many cases providing for a wider public right-of-way than required by the original street designation. Within this right-of-way, typically three travel lanes would be accommodated along most streets, and wider sidewalks and landscaped parkways would be provided.

*San Pablo Street*, currently a Secondary Highway, is located at the core of the campus, connecting Lincoln Park and Hazard Park for a length of three blocks. As part of the street redesignation, San Pablo would be deemphasized for vehicular traffic between Norfolk and Alcazar Streets by replacing a portion of the roadway set aside for traffic and street parking to instead construct wider sidewalks, reaching widths of up to 23-feet through the central portion of the campus. However, San Pablo Street would still retain the same number of existing travel lanes, as well as all curbside parking on the east side of the street adjacent to Hazard Park.

*Alcazar Street*, a main east-west thoroughfare for the campus, would also remove all street parking to install widened sidewalks on its western and eastern ends. The central segment of Alcazar Street between San Pablo and Playground Streets, as well as the entire width of *Eastlake Avenue*, would only sacrifice street parking on one side of the street to accommodate increased sidewalk widths.

The east-west *Norfolk Street* corridor, as well as *Biggy Street*, would both essentially maintain all street parking and similar street and sidewalk widths.

*Playground Street* is the only roadway that is proposed to be widened, with a two-foot decrease in the sidewalk width and with removal of all street parking. The loss of sidewalk width and street parking would instead be used to accommodate three travel lanes on the roadway.

As part of the street beautification program, USC would then improve these six streets to the proposed standards, as well as improve the existing sidewalks and parkways along the east side of Soto Street and both sides of Zonal Avenue, but with no changes to the designations of these two adjacent streets.

In addition, some flexibility has been woven into the proposed street section plans, so that if future development and traffic conditions warrant the need for added capacity within the campus street system, one lane of street parking could be replaced with a new travel lane on the following street segments: the central east-west segments of both Alcazar Street and Norfolk Street (both between San Pablo and Playground Streets), and the entirety of Biggy Street.

The following table summarizes the street designations and proposed changes for each distinct street segment discussed:

	Existing Designation	Proposed Designation	Proposed Changes to Existing Street Parking or Sidewalks	Proposed Changes to Existing Travel Lane Configurations
<b>San Pablo St.</b>	Secondary Highway	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove all street parking, except:</li> <li>- Maintain parking east side of street, adjacent to Hazard Park</li> <li>- Widen sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 3 travel lanes</li> <li>* Eventually remove center turn lane b/w Norfolk and Alcazar and reduce to 2 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Alcazar St.</b> (WEST: Eastlake to San Pablo)	Collector Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove all street parking</li> <li>- Widen sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 3 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Alcazar St.</b> (CENTER: San Pablo to Playground)	Collector Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove north side street parking</li> <li>- Widen sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 3 travel lanes</li> </ul>
			<p><b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove all parking</li> </ul>	<p><b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase to 4 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Alcazar St.</b> (EAST: Playground to Soto)	Collector Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove all street parking</li> <li>- Maintain sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 5 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Eastlake Ave.</b>	Collector Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove all street parking, except:</li> <li>- Maintain parking on the south side between Biggy and Alcazar</li> <li>- Widen sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 3 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Norfolk St.</b> (WEST: San Pablo to Playground)	Local Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain most of sidewalk</li> <li>- Maintain all street parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain 2 travel lanes</li> </ul>
			<p><b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove street parking on the north side</li> </ul>	<p><b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase to 3 travel lanes</li> </ul>
<b>Norfolk St.</b> (EAST: Playground to Soto) NEW ROAD	Local Street	Modified Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construct new roadway and sidewalk</li> <li>- Construct street parking on the south side of the street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construct 3 travel lanes</li> </ul>

<b>Biggy Street</b>	Local Street	Modified Local Street	- Maintain sidewalk - Maintain street parking on both sides <b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b> - Remove street parking on the east side	- Maintain 2 travel lanes  <b>BASED ON TRAFFIC DEMAND:</b> - Increase to 3 travel lanes
<b>Playground St.</b>	Local Street	Modified Local Street	- Reduce sidewalk - Remove all street parking	- Increase to 3 travel lanes

**STREETS TO BE IMPROVED, BUT NO REDESIGNATION REQUIRED:**

<b>Soto St.</b> (West side only)	Major Highway Class II	same	- Construct new 12-foot wide sidewalk and complete the roadway on existing dirt area	- No change
<b>Zonal Avenue</b>	Secondary Highway	same	- Maintain sidewalk	- No change

***Project Phasing***

Construction work on the street improvements would be undertaken in a phased approach, expected to last approximately two years. The first phase would begin with improvements to the west side of Soto Street and the construction of the new Norfolk Street extension. The next phase of street improvements would be located on the eastern portion of the campus, continuing with Norfolk Street, San Pablo Street, and Alcazar Street. Work would then move on to the western end of the campus along Eastlake Avenue, Biggy Street, and Zonal Avenue. Improvements along Playground Street would only be anticipated when additional development along the street would be constructed, requiring additional travel lanes.

***Parking Removal Phasing***

Responding to the City's Department of Transportation's concerns about loss of on-street parking for residents and revenue for the City (letter dated March 6, 2013), several of the streets mentioned above have been designed to accommodate flexible configurations, allowing for metered on-street parking to remain for an interim period, in lieu of immediately adding new vehicular travel lanes. The phased approach to the removal of on-street parking spaces would defer the installation of channelized center lanes until necessary traffic conditions are met, allowing for a more gradual and monitored parking removal program. Although the project plans state that these lanes could be converted to traffic lanes after a specific period of ten years, any conversion and removal of metered parking would not be automatic after those ten years, but would continue to be at the discretion of the Department of Transportation, and would only be warranted based on traffic demands.

As a result of this phased approach, about half (200 spaces) of the existing metered on-street parking within the campus area would be removed and phased-out over a ten-year period in order to accommodate other street enhancements and pedestrian improvements. After ten years, if traffic conditions dictate, another quarter (106 spaces) of the original metered street parking could also be removed if approved by the Department of Transportation. However, approximately one quarter (103 spaces) of the original street parking throughout campus would be slated for preservation, including all curbside parking immediately adjacent to Hazard Park and two street segments on the western edge of the campus. To minimize parking impacts on park-users, USC has also committed to construct a new metered lot on University property with 40 parking spaces to serve Hazard Park, and the Norfolk Street extension would generate eight additional metered street parking spaces along the new roadway.

**Summary of Public Testimony**

The February 7, 2014 public hearing for the project was attended by the project's representatives and approximately thirty individuals, with seven neighborhood members speaking in support of the project (including representatives from the LA32 Neighborhood Council, Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council, Lincoln Heights Chamber of Commerce, Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce, and the Mexican Consulate Ventanilla De Salud program), and with three community members speaking in opposition of the project (including representatives from the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council, and Friends of Hazard Park and Wetlands).

In addition, two letters in support were received from the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council and Hillside Village Property Owner's Association, and three letters in opposition to the project were received from the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council, and from a neighborhood resident.

The project's representative outlined the past and future expected growth of the campus, which would be coupled with a commitment from USC for a significant investment in public infrastructure. These planned infrastructure upgrades would include pedestrian-friendly enhancements such as widened sidewalks, reduced roadway widths, and safer pedestrian crossings. Other aesthetic and safety improvements, some already underway, would include the undergrounding of utilities and installation of new paving, LED street lights, street trees and parkway landscaping. The project's traffic consultant also noted that there would be no reduction in travel lanes as part of the project, and that intersection improvements and the extension of Norfolk Street would be expected to improve circulation through a more balanced distribution of traffic throughout the street system.

As a result of numerous meetings with the community and Council Office, USC had also agreed to several other public benefits apart from the street redesignation and improvement plans, including a 21,000 sq-ft private land dedication for the extension of Norfolk Street. By realigning the street at a northward location, this would prevent the demolition of existing recreational facilities in the public right-of-way alignment next to Hazard Park. The University had also committed to other park improvements, including an investment in park upgrades, amenities, programming, and parking.

Members of the public in favor of the project were supportive of the new realignment of Norfolk Street, noting that USC had incorporated community input about the street and park improvements. The overall development of the campus, and upgrades to public streets and park facilities would serve as a positive catalyst for the livability and economic health of the area. More specifically, the street beautification program would also create a greener, safer, pedestrian-friendly, and more connected neighborhood.

However, members of the public also voiced concerns about the project:

- **Environmental impacts** such as increased traffic, noise, and air pollution, would be a burden on the community and the EIR did not sufficiently address the full impacts of the project. Specifically, air quality impacts from the campus development could negatively affect children's' health. The Norfolk Street extension would also destroy a portion of a wetland, diminish the tranquility and peace of the park, and remove needed parking.
- **Traffic impacts** have not been adequately addressed in the traffic study. Specifically, the following traffic concerns were raised: narrowing roadways into the campus will negatively affect internal circulation, roadway widths should not be reduced because of the need to accommodate emergency vehicles and on-street parking, the intersection of

Soto and Alcazar Streets has frequent congestion and accidents, and a new campus entrance from Soto Street onto the extension of Norfolk Street is not necessary.

- **Adjacent LA County facilities would be impacted**, and the roadway configurations need to be revised to adequately accommodate daily use by large maintenance vehicles entering County facilities along Alcazar Street and San Pablo Street. Existing County facilities on these sites provide essential services to maintain critical public infrastructure throughout the County.
- **Public benefits are insufficient**, and the public improvements offered are primarily for the benefit of USC, and not for the community. Although many community groups expressed support for the new location of Norfolk Street, there was not direct support for the remainder of USC's project. Suggestions for additional public benefits included dedicating more private USC property for parkland purposes and a job placement plan for the immediate community.
- **Community Outreach** was also a stated concern, with some residents stating that more community cooperation is needed, with appropriate Spanish translation services, and greater accessibility to case files and environmental documents.

### ***Staff Response***

After review of the submitted environmental documents and consultation with the Department of Transportation, Staff found that these documents were adequately prepared and fully addressed the impacts of the street redesignation project. The submitted traffic study revealed that the proposed improvements would even slightly improve roadway traffic conditions, which already operate at free-flow standards (Level of Service A), with little to no congestion.

In response to concerns from Los Angeles County agencies about the potential effects on access to its adjacent facilities, the applicant began consultations with the County Department of Power and Water to revise project plans for Alcazar and San Pablo Streets. As a result, minor changes to the project plans have been proposed along the north side of Alcazar Street, including moving a traffic island on the western terminus south by 6-ft to widen the west bound travel lane, and creating a lengthier transition from the 8-ft sidewalk near Soto Street to the wider sidewalk beginning at a point west of Playground Street. These revised plans are currently under review by LA County DPW and both parties are actively working towards a solution to ensure safe approaches to the entrances of these critical county facilities. Proposed roadway standards for Alcazar Street allow a variable roadway width adjacent to County facilities to accommodate a pending solution to these access concerns.

Although traffic and general access is expected to improve for the campus, adequate parking for patrons of Hazard Park remains a primary concern when considering the loss of on-street parking for the campus. The cultural and recreational importance of the park to the community is evident as a well-used public amenity. Therefore, to appropriately ensure proper public access to the park, all street parking directly adjacent to the park will be maintained, new curbside parking will be constructed along the new Norfolk Street extension, and the University will commit to a new 40-metered-space parking lot to serve the park. To more firmly ensure the retention of the remaining parking adjacent to the park and on the west side of the campus, it is recommended that permanent parking be incorporated into the new street diagrams for these sections of Norfolk Street, San Pablo Street, Eastlake Avenue, and Biggy Street.

The park-adjacent parking lot and other public benefits negotiated by the Council Office and community are expected to be implemented by the University through Council Office agreements and oversight, and are currently in process.

## **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA)**

### ***Framework Element***

The General Plan Framework identifies the general USC HSC and LAC+USC medical campus as a "Pedestrian-Priority District" and "Community Center", where intensification or growth can be targeted, and as a focal point for surrounding residential neighborhoods. These districts are meant to accommodate land uses, design buildings, and implement streetscape amenities that enhance pedestrian activity. Pedestrian-oriented districts should incorporate amenities to make pedestrian activity a pleasant experience, such as street trees and landscaping, benches, trash receptacles, pedestrian-oriented lighting and signage, and attractive paving materials, bicycle amenities, and other "slow street" techniques.

In line with the standard characteristics of a Community Center, the street redesignation and beautification program would continue to solidify the educational and medical campus as a focal point of the community through integrated landscape and hardscape features along connecting public streets and parks. The project would also directly implement the goals of a Pedestrian-Priority District by increasing and emphasizing pedestrian space within public right-of-ways and significantly investing in pedestrian amenities.

The Framework also refers to community plans for insight on specific policies towards plan amendments that would be reflective of the local needs:

### ***Land Use Element - Community Plan***

The Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan designates the six streets within the campus for Secondary Highway, Collector Street, and Local Street vehicle capacities and standards. The applicant requests that these streets be redesignated to allow for modified standards which are better suited for the pedestrian use of the campus and medical facilities.

The Northeast Community Plan also includes some relevant land use issues, goals, objectives, policies, and programs that must be considered when evaluating the proposed project. In general, the Community Plan has identified the need to provide necessary access and street improvements to accommodate traffic generated by new development, to promote pedestrian-oriented areas and greenways, and to encourage cohesive streetscape design through attractive landscaping, street furniture, street lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, signage, and screening of utilities. The proposed street redesignation and campus beautification project would be in-line with these Community Plan policies.

### ***Land Use Element - Redevelopment Plan***

The project site is also within the Adelante Eastside Redevelopment Plan, previously administered by the Community Redevelopment Agency. The principal goals of the Adelante Eastside Plan are to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the community, upgrade public improvements, increase commercial choices, and revitalize the commercial and industrial base of the area. The redesignation of streets within the campus to provide for a more walkable and integrated campus layout would significantly improve the surrounding public infrastructure, preserve and enhance the existing HSC as a unique commercial and institutional resource of the community, and would be consistent with the policies and goals of the Plan.

### ***Transportation Element***

The Transportation Element designates the six streets within the campus for Secondary Highway, Collector Street, and Local Street vehicle capacities and standards, and also provides guidance with policies on transit, circulation, and accessibility. In general, these policies support the street redesignation and beautification program with the following underlying goals: the upgrade and maintenance of the street system, collaboration with private sector entities on

improvement projects, the facilitation of vehicular and pedestrian movement, and enhancements for the pedestrian-oriented nature of community centers.

***Transportation Element - 2010 Bicycle Plan***

The 2010 Bicycle Plan, a part of the Transportation Element, does not identify any of the six streets for specific bike improvements. However, two adjacent campus streets are called out, with Soto Street classified as a "Bike Lane" and Zonal Avenue as a "Bike Route". As part of the Bicycle Plan's Five-Year Implementation Plan, Soto Street is expected to be improved with a painted bike lane from 8th Street to Huntington Drive, which would run along the eastern side of Hazard Park and the campus. As part of the street beautification program, the University expects to replace the unimproved portion of Soto Street with additional roadway area and a new 12-foot wide sidewalk on the west side of the street. These improvements would be compatible with the Bike Lane designation and planned capital improvements for the street. To complement these improvements, traffic calming measures such as bulb-outs, paving, and signage will be included in the design of other campus street plans to create a safe and inviting environment for bicyclists within the campus area.

***Transportation Element Update***

The Transportation / Mobility Element of the General Plan is currently being updated by the Department of City Planning, with citywide plans to update streets to a new system of classifications and standards. Any modified street standard plans approved as part of this General Plan Amendment will be preserved and carried over to the proposed Mobility Element.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

***General Analysis for Campus Expansion***

The submitted environmental study, which reviewed the overall HSC expansion over seven development sites, as well as the street redesignation and improvement project, did identify significant and unavoidable project impacts in the following categories: air quality and greenhouse gas emissions from construction and operation, construction noise, and operational traffic. In addition, the report identified impacts on aesthetics and utilities, which could be mitigated to a less than significant level. Overall, the campus expansion and street improvements will be subject to mitigations in the following categories identified in the EIR:

- **Aesthetics.** Providing pedestrian-oriented building design, landscaping, lighting, street improvements, and undergrounding of utilities.
- **Air Quality.** Compliance with Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) regulations, meeting additional exhaust standards for construction equipment, encouraging transit-use throughout the campus.
- **Noise.** Using sound-reduction practices during construction, and operational noise mitigation on a separate site (Site D).
- **Traffic.** Improving several street intersections and highway access ramps.
- **Utilities.** Implementing water conservation and waste reduction measures.

Specific mitigations that would be applicable to the street improvement program would include: maintaining construction areas and barriers in a visually attractive manner, undergrounding any new utilities, Department of Public Works approval for street tree installation, complying with AQMD regulations, minimizing construction emissions, completing intersection improvements, and facilitating construction waste reduction and recycling. A majority of these mitigations are inherent in the construction of the project, as required by the SCAQMD and the Municipal Code, or have already been implemented. All applicable traffic mitigations have already been completed, including new turn lanes and traffic signal modifications at Soto Street and Alcazar Street, and a traffic signal at San Pablo and Alcazar Streets. A new traffic signal is expected at

San Pablo Street and Zonal Avenue once a certain development threshold is reached in the future. These traffic improvements are compatible with the street redesignation plans.

Overall, some of these impacts for the campus-wide development could be mitigated to a sufficient level, while other impacts would be significant and unavoidable. Therefore, a Statement of Overriding Considerations recognizes that significant and unavoidable impacts would result from implementation of the overall campus expansion, but also considers the project's benefits, which would outweigh and override these impacts. Specific benefits of the street redesignation project would include: a significant investment in public infrastructure and park facilities, the creation of new construction jobs in the area, the continuation of a walkable and integrated campus design, and improved vehicular circulation around the campus.

### ***Traffic Impacts***

A Traffic Analysis, conducted by Gibson Transportation Consulting, issued on June 28, 2012, analyzed potential traffic impacts resulting from the envisioned long-term development of the Health Sciences Campus. The report analyzed four flexible development alternatives, resulting in vehicle trips equivalent to the development of 465,000 square-feet of medical research facilities and 120,000 square-feet of medical office and clinical facilities, with options to include student housing and hotel uses. Streetscape improvements, including the narrowing of roadways and completion of the Norfolk Street extension, were also considered as part of the campus' long-term development plan.

The report noted that although roadway widths would be narrowed for most of the campus streets, this would primarily be accomplished through the removal of parking lanes, leaving the existing number of travel lanes intact for nearly all of the streets. In some cases, streets with two travel lanes would gain a new center turn lane. Additionally, the extension of Norfolk Street to Soto Street would provide new access into the campus, providing relief to other major access points such as Alcazar and San Pablo Street, and helping to more evenly distribute traffic throughout the HSC.

The report analyzed existing 2010 traffic conditions throughout the campus and established that vehicular traffic along the main five campus streets was flowing freely with minimal congestion, at a Level of Service (LOS) A. The report also reviewed the potential traffic impacts from the proposed limited campus expansion, including the development of new HSC facilities and the street improvement and extension plans, and found that all of the street segments would be anticipated to continue to operate at a LOS A, with some segments even showing improvement.

Lastly, the report postulated future conditions assuming a significant amount of additional development to occur over the following thirty years, including long-term campus-wide growth plans under consideration for USC as well as the adjacent County facilities. Similarly, under this scenario, where increased future growth would be compounded with the campus expansion, the campus streets would continue to operate at a LOS A, with the exception of a segment of Norfolk Street, which would operate at a LOS B for westbound traffic and LOS C for eastbound traffic. Even so, if USC's street plans were never realized, future conditions would leave Norfolk Street in a worse position operating at a LOS D (approaching unstable flow).

**Conclusion**

The proposed redesignation and adoption of new standards for six streets within the USC Health Services Campus area would allow for a more "complete street" design of the local circulation system, with added capacity and amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic. Increased travel lanes, wider sidewalks, and traffic-calming measures would ensure a safer and more accessible multi-modal system. Proposed pedestrian amenities as part of the street beautification program would also promote continuity in design and landscaping for the campus area, and would be in-line with the Community Center and Pedestrian-Priority District designations and policies of the General Plan.

In response to public input, the street plans are being revised to accommodate vehicles entering the adjacent Los Angeles County maintenance facilities. Concerns about the retention of public curbside parking have also been addressed by permanently preserving on-street parking adjacent to Hazard Park, and phasing the removal of on-street parking contingent on traffic conditions and approval from the Department of Transportation.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Modified Collector Street and Modified Local Street designations and new street standards, which support the policies of the Land Use and Transportation Elements of the General Plan.



## FINDINGS

### A. General Plan/Charter Findings

1. **Framework Element.** The General Plan Framework is a guide for the City to implement growth and development policies by providing a comprehensive, long-range view of the City of Los Angeles as a whole. It allows for amendments to the community plans which further refine land use boundaries and categories to reflect local conditions, street characteristics, and public input. The Framework plan denotes the general University of Southern California Health Sciences Campus area as a "Community Center" and a "Pedestrian-Priority District", and the Plan encourages the implementation of streetscape amenities and traffic-calming measures that enhance pedestrian activity.

The attached street standards will ensure that the proposed General Plan Amendment will assist the City in achieving its goal of fostering community centers through safer and more accessible street design, as well as adhering to the goals and policies of the Framework Plan and associated Elements.

2. **General Plan Street Designation.** The subject streets are located within the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan, updated and adopted by the City Council on June 15, 1999, as part of the Land Use Element. These streets are also identified in the Transportation Element of the General Plan, updated and adopted by the City Council on September 8, 1999, and designated as Secondary Highway, Collector Street, or Local Streets. However, these streets currently carry vehicle capacities below those identified as typical for Secondary Highway purposes and standards. The recommended plan amendment would change these designations to Modified Collector Street and Modified Local Street capacities with modified standard plans for street and sidewalk widths. The proposed street designation and modified standards are in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan as reflected in the adopted Land Use and Transportation Elements.
3. **General Plan Text.** The **Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan** text includes the following relevant goals, objectives, policies and programs:

**GOAL 10: A SYSTEM OF FREEWAYS, HIGHWAYS AND STREETS THAT PROVIDES A CIRCULATION SYSTEM WHICH SUPPORTS EXISTING, APPROVED, AND PLANNED LAND USES WHILE MAINTAINING A DESIRED LEVEL OF SERVICE AT ALL INTERSECTIONS.**

**Objective 10-1** To comply with Citywide performance standards for acceptable levels of service and ensure that necessary road access and street improvements are provided to accommodate traffic generated by all new development.

**Policy 10-1.1** Maintain Levels of Service for streets and highways not to exceed LOS "D" for secondary arterials, collector streets, and local streets; not to exceed LOS "E" on Major Highways or in the community's major business districts.

**GOAL 13 A SYSTEM OF SAFE, EFFICIENT AND ATTRACTIVE PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND EQUESTRIAN ROUTES.**

**Objective 13-2** To promote pedestrian-oriented areas, greenways, and pedestrian routes for commuter, school, recreational use, economic revitalization, and access to transit facilities.

In addition, the Community Plan also lists recommendations for Public Works agencies to encourage the importance of streetscape design during public right-of-way improvement projects and to maximize opportunities for the undergrounding of utilities. The Plan also recommends the following applicable criteria for comprehensive streetscape and landscape programs: prioritizing special districts such as pedestrian-oriented districts, including drought-tolerant and high-quality landscaping, minimizing the visibility of utilities, and installing functional and complementary street furniture, lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage.

The proposed street redesignation would support the above listed policies of the Plan and would promote pedestrian-oriented areas by transforming car-centric streets within the campus to better accommodate multi-modal transit, while still maintaining high Level of Service standards on the vehicular circulation system. The redesignation would also better serve pedestrian traffic with widened sidewalks, traffic bulb-outs for safer street crossings, and other traffic calming measures, with the additional benefit of encouraging a bicycle use. As a result of the redesignation, a street beautification program could be implemented, providing significant pedestrian amenities such as those directly endorsed in the Community Plan text. The streets are not subject to any Community Plan footnotes and are otherwise not located within any other specific plan or special land use district.

Text from the **Transportation Element** of the General Plan also includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, policies and programs:

**Objective 4** Maintain pedestrian-oriented environments where appropriate.

**Policy 4.4** Identify pedestrian priority street segments (through amendments to the Community Plans) in which pedestrian circulation takes precedence over vehicle circulation, and implement guidelines to develop, protect, and foster the pedestrian-oriented nature of these areas.

**Objective 9** Ensure that adequate maintenance of the street system is provided to facilitate the movement of current and future traffic volumes, as well as emergency services.

**Objective 10** Make the street system accessible, safe, and convenient for bicycle, pedestrian, and school child travel.

The objectives of the Transportation Element support the street redesignation and beautification program, since the street project collaboration with the University would serve to upgrade and maintain the street system while facilitating vehicular and pedestrian movement through the completion of the new Norfolk Street extension, intersection and traffic signal improvements to mitigate traffic demand, and increased sidewalk widths and safety features. The beautification program would also foster the pedestrian-oriented nature of the area with improvements to aesthetics, landscaping, and safety.

The site is also located within the **Adelante Eastside Redevelopment Plan** area and is in general conformance with the Redevelopment Plan and its amendment. The alteration and realignment of streets is allowed under the Adelante Eastside Redevelopment Plan Section 504.2.

Therefore, the recommended street standards and improvement program meet the objectives of the General Plan and are consistent with the proposed general plan street designation.

## **B. Environmental (CEQA) Findings**

### *Background*

On July 18, 2006, the City of Los Angeles certified Environmental Impact Report ENV-2004-1950-EIR (SCH 2004101084) (the "Certified EIR") for the University of Southern California's Health Sciences Campus Project ("HSC Project"). The Certified EIR analyzed the development of between 585,000 and 765,000 square feet of additional academic and medical-related floor area within seven sites, respectively referred to as Development Sites A, B, C, D, E, F and G (the "Original Project"). Specifically, under the Original Project, up to 120,000 square feet of medical clinic uses could be developed with the remainder of the Health Science Campus ("HSC") together with up to 465,000 square feet of academic and/or medical research facilities. In addition, in the event on-site development were to reach 765,000 square feet, a maximum of 45,000 square feet of medical clinic development and 720,000 square feet of academic and/or medical research uses could be constructed.

The Certified EIR concluded that the Original Project would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts: Air Quality, regional NOx, ROC and localized PM (Construction); Air Quality, NOx (Operations); Noise (Construction); and Traffic and Circulation. The Certified EIR concluded that, after mitigation, the Original Project would result in less than significant impacts in the following impact areas: Visual Resources; Agricultural Resources; Air Quality, regional CO, SOx and PM and localized CO, SO2 and NO2 (Construction); Air Quality, regional ROC, SOx, CO and PM and CO hotspots (Operations); Air Quality, AQMD Consistency; Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Surface Hydrology, Hydrology and Groundwater; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise (Operational); Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Parking; and Utilities/Service Systems.

The University desires to develop new student housing and hotel uses to support the other uses on the HSC, modify the maximum amount of square footage to be developed, and implement pedestrian and streetscape improvements along local streets, (collectively, the "Modified Project"). The pedestrian and streetscape improvements (the "Streetscape Improvements") would include modified roadway classifications to allow for narrowing of streets while maintaining traffic lanes and capacity along most roadway segments, widening sidewalks, planting additional trees, improving pedestrian lighting, installing street furniture, improving the streetscape with enhanced paving, and placement of monument signs. The monument signs would be installed at the northwest and southwest corners of Alcazar and Soto Streets. Additional improvements in connection with the monuments signs may include decorative wrought iron fences with integral brick columns, brick pavers with concrete bands, and landscaping and irrigation.

An Addendum to the Certified EIR (the "Addendum") has been prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the Modified Project, including the Streetscape Improvements. The Addendum was prepared under the authority of CEQA Guidelines §15164(a), which requires a lead agency to prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary, but none of the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines §§ 15162 and 15163 calling for preparation of a subsequent or supplemental EIR have occurred.

The City Planning Commission of the Los Angeles, acting through the Planning Department, is the "Lead Agency" for the Modified Project evaluated in the Addendum. The Addendum concluded that, like the Original Project, the Modified Project would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts: Air Quality, regional NOx and ROC; Air Quality, NOx

(Operations); Noise (Construction); and Traffic and Circulation. However, the Addendum shows that that the Modified Project's significant impacts are not substantially greater than the Original Project's. The Addendum also concluded that, after mitigation, the Modified Project, like the Original Project, would result in less than significant impacts in the following impact areas: Visual Resources; Agricultural Resources; Air Quality, regional CO, SOx and PM and localized CO, SO2 and NO2 (Construction); Air Quality, regional ROC, SOx, CO and PM and CO hotspots (Operations); Air Quality, AQMD Consistency; Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Surface Hydrology, Hydrology and Groundwater; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise (Operational); Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Parking; and Utilities/Service Systems. The Addendum also concluded the Modified Project would reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts to localized (construction) emissions of the Original Project to less than significant.

The Streetscape Improvements originally contemplated extending Norfolk Street through a dedicated but unimproved public street adjacent to Hazard Park. Following completion of the Addendum, the University revised the Hazard Park extension in response to community concerns and the input from Councilman Jose Huizar. As currently proposed, the proposed Norfolk Street extension will shift to the east on property currently owned by the University which will be dedicated to the city for public street purposes. This reconfiguration and dedication of University property will avoid potential disruption of Hazard Park, provide the city additional park land and provide improved access to Hazard Park and the Health Sciences Campus. In addition the Norfolk Street extension will provide additional on street parking for the public.

### *Findings*

The Lead Agency finds that the Certified EIR, Addendum and supporting technical studies (collectively, the "Environmental Documents") were prepared in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency finds that the Planning Department has independently reviewed, analyzed, and where appropriate modified, the Environmental Documents for the Streetscape Improvements and that the Environmental Documents reflect the City's independent judgment.

The Lead Agency finds and determines that the information contained in the Environmental Documents is adequate for matters related to the General Plan Amendment to allow for Streetscape Improvements, which is before the Lead Agency, and that the Lead Agency has reviewed and considered the information contained therein pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines and the City CEQA Guidelines, along with other factors related to this matter.

The Lead Agency finds and determines that, based on the information set forth in the Environmental Documents with respect to the potentially significant impacts analyzed in the Certified EIR, the Streetscape Improvements will not create any new or result in any substantial increase in the severity of previously identified potentially significant impacts in any of the analyzed environmental impact categories and that no new mitigation measures are identified in the Environmental Documents that would modify the mitigation measures in the Certified EIR, which are incorporated into the Environmental Documents by reference.

The Lead Agency finds and determines that, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15162(a)(3), nothing in the Environmental Documents or with respect to the Streetscape Improvements contains or constitutes new information of substantial importance that was not known or could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the Certified EIR was certified as complete.

The Lead Agency finds and determines that no additional environmental impacts other than those identified in the Certified EIR will have a significant effect or result in a substantial or potentially substantial adverse effect on the environment as a result of the Streetscape Improvements.

The Lead Agency finds and determines pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15091(a)(1) that changes and alterations have been required by the City and incorporated into the Streetscape Improvements which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects as identified in the Certified EIR and the Environmental Documents.

The Lead Agency finds and determines pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15093; that certain economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits of the Streetscape Improvements outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, all of which are identified in the Certified EIR and the Environmental Documents.

The Lead Agency finds and determines that the modification to the Streetscape Improvements will not result in any new or greater impacts than disclosed in the addendum, and will in fact reduce the Streetscape Improvement's less than significant impacts on Hazard Park.

The Lead Agency finds and declares that substantial evidence for each and every finding made herein is contained in the Environmental Documents, the administrative record, staff reports, and information provided by the applicant and its representatives, each and all of which are incorporated herein by this reference. Moreover, the Lead Agency finds and declares that where more than one reason exists for any finding, each reason independently supports such finding, and that any reason in support of a given finding individually constitutes a sufficient basis for that finding.

#### *MMRP*

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MMRP") includes all of the mitigation measures identified in the Certified EIR and Addendum applicable to the Street Improvements and has been designed to ensure compliance with such measures during implementation of the Streetscape Improvements. In accordance with CEQA, the MMRP provides the means to ensure that the mitigation measures are fully enforceable. In accordance with the requirements of Public Resources Code §21081.6, the City Planning Commission hereby adopts the MMRP and finds that the environmental impacts of the Streetscape Improvements have been mitigated to the extent feasible by the applicable mitigation measures identified in the MMRP, incorporated by reference and located in the administrative file, and finds that the Streetscape Improvements meet the mitigation monitoring program requirements of Public Resources Code §21081.6. The MMRP includes an additional air quality mitigation measure that reflects current regulatory requirements and best practices (see Mitigation Measure D-9). The MMRP also includes certain traffic mitigation measures that are under construction or have been completed (see Mitigation Measures C-1, C-5, C-7, and C-15).

Each of the applicable mitigation measures referenced in the MMRP shall be conditions of the Streetscape Improvements approval to be monitored and enforced by the City pursuant to the building permit process and the MMRP.

To the extent feasible, each of the other findings and conditions of approval made by or adopted by the City in connection with the Streetscape Improvements are also incorporated herein by this reference.

The custodian of the documents or other material which constitutes the record of proceedings upon which the City's decision is based is the City of Los Angeles, Planning Department, located at 200 North Spring Street, Room 750, Los Angeles, California 90012.

*Statement of Overriding Considerations.*

As described in the Final EIR and Addendum, development of the Streetscape Improvements would have significant adverse impacts on the environment that cannot be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Section 15093(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides that when a project is approved which will result in the occurrence of significant effects that cannot be avoided or substantially lessened, the lead or decision-making agency shall state in writing the reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record.

The following impacts are not mitigated to a less than significant level for the Streetscape Improvements: Air Quality, NOx and ROC; Air Quality, NOx (Operations); Noise (Construction); and Traffic and Circulation. Accordingly, the City Planning Commission adopts the following Statement of Overriding Considerations.

The Lead Agency recognizes that significant and unavoidable impacts will result from the implementation phase of the Streetscape Improvements. Having: (i) adopted all feasible mitigation measures; (ii) rejected alternatives to the proposed project; (iii) recognized all significant unavoidable impacts; and (iv) balanced the benefits of the project against the Streetscape Improvements' significant and unavoidable impacts, the City Planning Commission hereby finds that the benefits of the Streetscape Improvements outweigh and override the significant unavoidable impacts for the reasons stated below.

The following stated reasons summarize the benefits, goals and objectives of the Streetscape Improvements, and provide the rationale for the benefits of the Streetscape Improvements. These overriding considerations of economic, social, aesthetic and environmental benefits of the Streetscape Improvements justify adoption of the Streetscape Improvements and approval of the Environmental Documents. Many of these overriding considerations individually would outweigh the adverse environmental impacts of the Streetscape Improvements.

- The Streetscape Improvements are conceived of as part of a larger design for a campus that is better integrated into the community and serves as an asset and resource in the community.
- The Streetscape Improvements will help promote walkability and provide improved vehicular circulation around the campus for patients, visitors, students, faculty and staff, the vast majority of who currently commute to campus.
- The Streetscape Improvements will keep intact an existing park by modifying the Norfolk Street roadway extension and integrating it with a well-designed and pedestrian-friendly project that ties into USC's campus wide beautification improvements to create a unique campus identity.
- The Streetscape Improvements will increase outdoor space, improve connections within the HSC, and enhance linkages between the adjacent Lincoln Park and Hazard Park.

- The Streetscape Improvements will provide \$1,000,000 in improvements to Hazard Park, as well as additional public parking spaces for use by park visitors.
- The Streetscape Improvements will generate new construction jobs, the majority of which will be hired from the local and regional market.



## PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMUNICATIONS

### Public Hearing

A public hearing regarding the project was held at Los Angeles City Hall on February 7, 2014. The public hearing was attended by the project's representatives and approximately thirty individuals, with seven neighborhood members speaking in support of the project (including representatives from the LA32 Neighborhood Council, Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council, Lincoln Heights Chamber of Commerce, Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce, and the Mexican Consulate Ventanilla De Salud program), and with three community members speaking in opposition of the project (including representatives from the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council, and Friends of Hazard Park and Wetlands).

### Summary of Public Hearing Testimony

#### *Speakers in Support:*

At the February 7, 2014 public hearing, the project applicant, Laurie Stone, of University of Southern California, first spoke and presented the project and entitlement requests, highlighting the following:

- USC facilities have grown to 80 acres, with approximately 11,000 people.
- The project would be pedestrian-friendly and improve accessibility by widening sidewalks and reducing roadway widths for easier pedestrian crossings.
- The removal of street parking will be phased over time.
- The project will include bike amenities and sharrows lanes.
- The project is a \$47 million investment, with \$12 million for undergrounding of utilities.
- The project will include LED street lights and new trees.
- The completion of the Norfolk Street connection to Soto Street is important for circulation
- Public outreach has included multiple meetings with stakeholders over 18 months.
- Norfolk Street will be moved north, through a 21,000 sq-ft private land dedication by USC, valued at \$1.5 million.
- USC has also agreed to over \$1 million in benefits to Hazard Park for fitness, a play structure, jogging path, basketball courts, and 10-years of funding for programs.
- The Lincoln Heights NC supports the Norfolk Street realignment.
- USC is aware that the LA County Department of Power and Water is concerned about widening and access to their adjacent properties, and USC will work to ensure appropriate access.
- LA City Department of Transportation and Department of City Planning have reviewed the project and have found no additional impacts.
- A 2012 City Council motion allowed for concurrent processing of the GPA and B-permits.

Next, several community members spoke in support of the project. First, a resident and representative of the LA32 Neighborhood Council (NC) and member of the Land Use Committee added the following information:

- The neighborhood was initially concerned about the original Norfolk Street location through existing recreational facilities.
- Hazard Park has a rich historic and ecological past, which includes wetlands.
- The Land Use Committee supports the new realignment of Norfolk Street.
- The full Neighborhood Council will consider the matter at a later date.

Two local business owners and members of the Lincoln Heights Chamber of Commerce (LHCC) also added their support and stated:

- They endorse USC's master plan as a positive improvement to the area.
- The campus is important to Lincoln Heights.
- There is a Broadway corridor study for a trolley car, and the project will act as a first step
- The Development Committee of the LHCC fully supports the project.

The Co-Chair of the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council Planning Committee stated:

- The NC supports the alternate realignment of Norfolk Street and is in favor of the streetscape improvements. He added a NC letter of support for the Norfolk extension.

A representative from the Ventanilla De Salud program of the Mexican Consulate added:

- His organization works with USC on various programs and supports the project.
- The project will create a safer, pedestrian-friendly, and more connected neighborhood.
- The project includes park improvements and over 700 trees.
- USC has listened to the community's concerns about the Norfolk Street extension.

Next, a member of the Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce provided the following support:

- His organization holds many events at USC.
- The project will create wider and greener streets.
- The project will encourage more business events at USC.
- The Chamber supports the project.

Lastly, another member of the LA32 Neighborhood Council stated:

- NC support of the project is currently pending.
- As an individual, he supports the beautification project and fixing surrounding streets.
- The project has incorporated community input, and should provide local job opportunities
- Quimby funds should be used to reinvigorate several local parks, including Hazard Park.

#### *Speakers in Opposition:*

Several speakers from the neighborhood added concerns and statements in opposition to the proposal. First, a member of the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council Transportation and Environment Committee outlined the following issues:

- Last year, the NC submitted a Community Impact Statement in opposition to the original alignment of Norfolk Street through existing recreational facilities (submitted copy to file).
- The project would result in traffic, noise, and pollution impacts.
- There is currently a major traffic problem and accidents at Soto and Alcazar Streets.
- An adequate traffic study for the project has not been completed.
- The project is in Council District 14, not Council District 1.
- San Pablo Street is a wide street and major roadway into the campus and narrowing the street will affect the internal circulation.

A representative of the Friends of Hazard Park and Wetlands and the Sierra Club added:

- USC should dedicate more parkland from their property.
- The community needs to be approached and provided with Spanish translation.
- The EIR is outdated and does not sufficiently address the project impacts.
- The EIR showed there will be air quality impacts from the campus development projects, and recent studies describe several negative impacts that air pollution has on children.
- There is no job placement plan for the immediate community for these large projects.
- The project shouldn't be expedited, and should be done correctly with community cooperation.

A member of the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee stated:

- He had grown up in the area, and the park is a valuable resource for the community.
- He is also concerned about the overall development planned for the area.
- The improvements are all for the benefit of USC, not for the community.
- The community does not support the full project; they only support the new realignment of Norfolk Street, which will avoid removing existing recreational facilities.
- There are already eight vehicular entrances into campus, another one is not necessary.

*Applicant Response:*

Next, the project representative, Dale Goldsmith, of Armbruster, Goldsmith, and Delvac, spoke to respond to some of the community comments:

- The project's traffic impacts have been analyzed by the traffic consultants, Gibson Transportation, and have been approved by the LA City Department of Transportation.
- There will be no reduction in travel lanes on Alcazar Street.
- Norfolk will be realigned to not go through park facilities.
- USC will provide forty new metered public parking spaces adjacent to Hazard Park.
- The project includes ample public benefits, including new trees, undergrounded utilities.
- The project supports the City's Walkability policies.
- The 2012 Addendum to the EIR contains the most current CEQA standards.
- The project plus ambient air quality levels will still remain less than significant and below air quality thresholds.

The traffic consultant, Pat Gibson, of Gibson Transportation, added clarification on traffic issues:

- The extension of Norfolk Street will take pressure off of Alcazar Street and Soto Street and will provide for a more balanced distribution of traffic throughout the street system.
- Intersection improvements at Soto and Alcazar Streets will also improve circulation.
- There will be no reduction in travel lanes on Alcazar Street.

### **Written Communications Received**

Two letters in support and three letters in opposition to the project were received prior to the completion of the Staff Report.

One of the letters of support was submitted by the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council, indicating that at its December 19, 2013 meeting, the Neighborhood Council passed a motion to support USC's proposed construction of a street extending Norfolk Street to Soto Street on USC-owned land as a reasonable accommodation of community concerns. In addition, the Hillside Village Property Owner's Association included a January 12, 2014 letter issuing similar support of the new alignment of the Norfolk Street extension.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works issued a letter dated February 6, 2014, objecting to sections of the Alcazar and San Pablo Street redesignations. As long-standing owners of two properties on the north side of Alcazar Street adjacent to the campus, the County noted that the existing County and County Flood Control District facilities on these sites provide essential services to maintain critical public infrastructure throughout the County. The operation of both facilities require frequent trips by large maintenance vehicles, for which safe sight distance and turning radii must be maintained, and the proposed roadway configurations on Alcazar Street (between Eastlake Avenue and Soto Street) and San Pablo Street (between Alcazar Street and Valley Boulevard) would need to be revised to adequately address these issues. In addition, the County stated that the Environmental Impact Report did not adequately address these potential impacts on traffic and on existing County properties.

The Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council issued a letter of opposition indicating that at its August 28, 2013 meeting, the Neighborhood Council passed a Community Impact Statement against the original alignment for the proposed Norfolk Street extension through park facilities. The statement also expressed concerns about the increase of noise, traffic and pollution of the proposed street extension, which would destroy a portion of a wetland, diminish the tranquility and peace of the park, and remove needed parking. A third letter was received from a community resident citing the following issues: the hearing notice was incorrectly posted online and with incorrect information, the case file and environmental documents are not easily accessible, the environmental needs to be recirculated, roadway widths should not be reduced since the roads need to accommodate emergency vehicles and needed on-street parking, and that the City of Los Angeles is not complying with State and General Plan requirements.

In addition, materials were received from a representative of the Friends of Hazard Park and Wetlands and the Sierra Club, who provided two USC research studies which issued conclusions that air pollution from both regional and traffic-related air sources is linked to childhood health problems, including autism and asthma.

**USC HSC CAMPUS  
EXISTING AND PROPOSED STREET CLASSIFICATIONS**

4/10/2014

Street Segment Location		Existing		Proposed	
		Classification	Dimensions [a]	Classification	Dimensions
<b>San Pablo Street</b>					
1	between Zonal Avenue and Eastlake Avenue/Norfolk Street	Secondary Highway	58' Roadway Varies 75'-93' ROW	Modified Collector Street	40' Roadway Varies 75'-93' ROW
2	between Eastlake Avenue/Norfolk Street and Alcazar Street	Secondary Highway	58' Roadway 90' ROW	Modified Collector Street	32' Roadway 90' ROW
3	between Alcazar Street and Valley Boulevard	Secondary Highway	58' Roadway Varies 77'-83' ROW	Modified Collector Street	Varies 34'-58' Roadway Varies 77'-83' ROW
<b>Alcazar Street</b>					
4	between Eastlake Avenue and San Pablo Street	Collector Street	62' Roadway 80' ROW	Modified Collector Street	34' Roadway 80' ROW
5	between San Pablo Street and Playground Street	Collector Street	64' Roadway 80' ROW	Modified Collector Street	Varies 44'-64' Roadway 80' ROW
6	between Playground Street and Soto Street	Collector Street	64' Roadway 80' ROW	Modified Collector Street	64' Roadway 80' ROW
<b>Eastlake Avenue</b>					
7	between Alcazar Street and Biggy Street	Collector Street	60' Roadway 80' ROW	Modified Collector Street	46' Roadway 80' ROW
8	between Biggy Street and San Pablo Street	Collector Street	60' Roadway 80' ROW	Modified Collector Street	40' Roadway 80' ROW
<b>Norfolk Street</b>					
9	between San Pablo Street and Playground Street	Local Street	41' Roadway 60' ROW	Modified Collector Street	40'-41' Roadway 60'-62' ROW
10	between Playground Street and Soto Street ( <i>New Norfolk Street</i> )	Local Street	~ 60' ROW	Modified Collector Street	46' Roadway 71' ROW
<b>Biggy Street</b>					
11	between Eastlake Avenue and Zonal Avenue	Local Street	40' Roadway 60' ROW	Modified Local Street	40' Roadway 60' ROW
<b>Playground Street</b>					
12	between Alcazar Street and Norfolk Street	Local Street	30' Roadway 50' ROW	Modified Local Street	34' Roadway 50' ROW

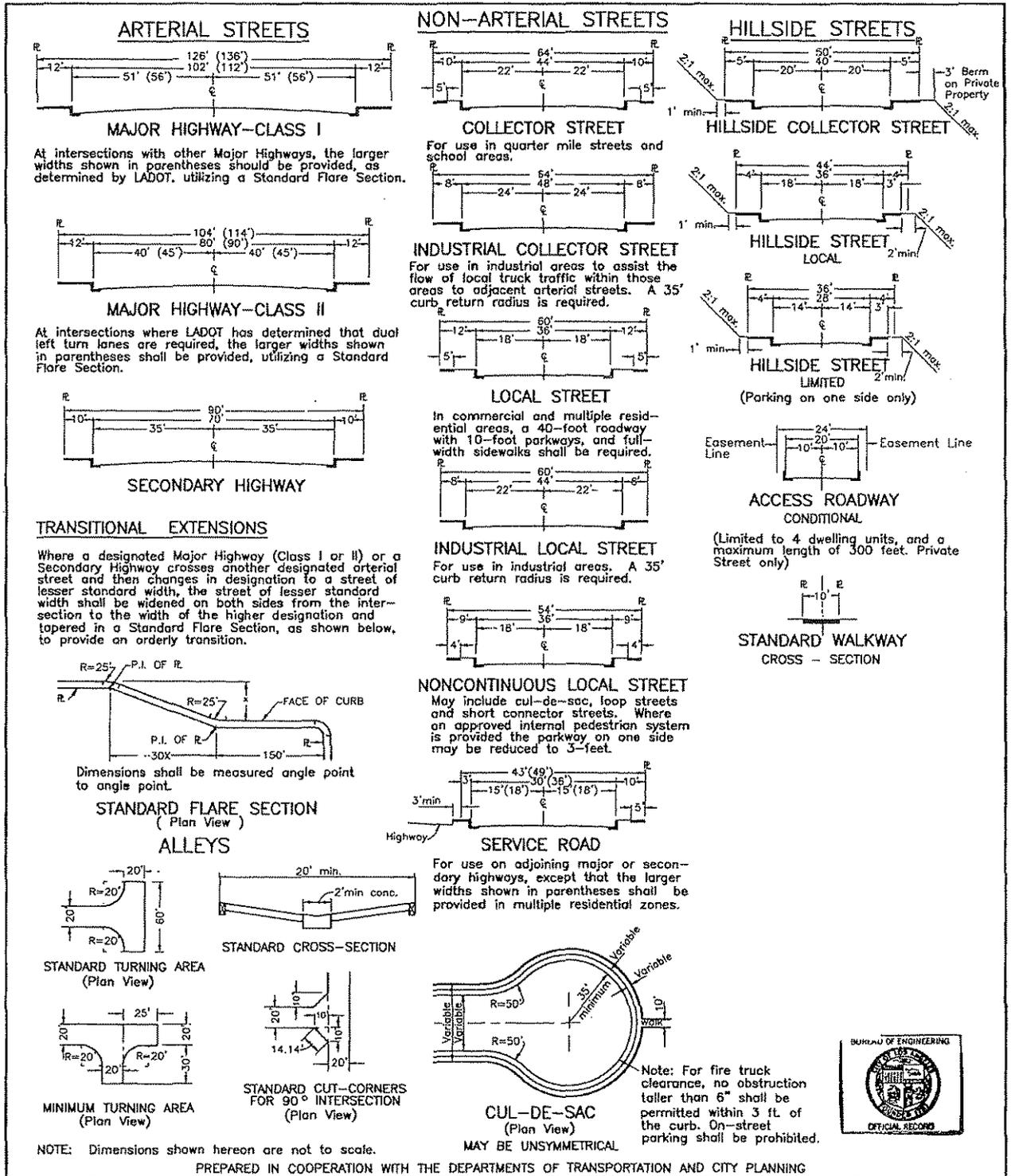
**Notes**

[a] Existing roadway and right of way dimensions (Year 2012).

General Note No. 1: Roadway widths may be altered to accommodate other roadway and sidewalk features such as crosswalk bump-outs, median islands, vehicle turn-outs, turn lanes, etc. and shall be subject to review and approval by BOE, DOT, and DCP.

General Note No. 2: Right-of-way width may be slightly altered by DCP in coordination with BOE and DOT.

General Note No. 3: Additional sidewalk easements may be required behind driveways or access ramps where sidewalk widths are less than 10-feet, in order to comply with ADA guidelines.



PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND CITY PLANNING

BUREAU OF ENGINEERING		DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		CITY OF LOS ANGELES	
<b>STANDARD STREET DIMENSIONS</b>				<b>STANDARD PLAN S-470-0</b>	
SUBMITTED <i>March 25</i> , 1999 <i>Clark R. Rogius</i> ENGINEER OF DESIGN <i>Robert H. ...</i> DEPUTY ENGINEER APPROVED <i>MAR 25 1999</i> <i>Thomas ...</i> CITY ENGINEER				APPROVED <i>Francis ...</i> 4-6-99 GENERAL MANAGER, DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION DATE <i>Constance ...</i> 4/6/99 DIRECTOR OF PLANNING DATE ADOPTED <i>MA</i> CITY PLANNING COMMISSION	
DESIGNED BY		DRAWN BY		CHECKED BY	
M. EGOLF, J.E.F. A.S.R.		R. TANABE		L. GANAJA	
SUPERSEDES		REFERENCES		D-22549	

THIS STANDARD PLAN BECOMES EFFECTIVE ON NOVEM

**EXHIBIT B**  
**Citywide Street Standards**  
 CPC-2011-3043-GPA  
 Date: 4/10/2014

## STANDARD STREET CONDITIONS

1. City Council may, by ordinance, adopt specific standards for individual streets which differ from these official standard street dimensions. Community Plans should be reviewed for designation of Pedestrian Priority Street Segments of arterial streets which would require wider sidewalks than those indicated on this Standard Plan.
2. Sidewalk widths for non-arterial streets shall be the minimum shown hereon. Greater widths, up to full width between curb and property line, with tree wells, shall be required where commercial and multiple residential frontage, schools, areas of heavy pedestrian traffic or other special circumstances indicate the need.
3. Except for special conditions or as otherwise provided, sidewalk shall be placed as close to the property line as possible.
4. Where sidewalk is constructed adjacent to the curb it shall have a minimum width of 10 feet inclusive of curb thickness except for hillside streets, noncontinuous local streets and industrial streets.
5. Where sidewalk is constructed on the fill or low side of a hillside street, a berm may be required on private property.
6. Easements may be required in addition to the widths shown hereon, where necessary for the installation of public utilities or for widened sidewalks (minimum 15-foot width) adjacent to transit stations.
7. Fifty-foot curb radii (instead of the standard 35' curb radii) shall be provided for cul-de-sacs in industrial areas.
8. Private street development should conform to the standard public street dimensions shown on this sheet, where appropriate. Variations may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
9. For intersections of streets the following dedications shall apply:
  - a. Intersections of arterial streets with any other street: 15'x15' cut corner OR 20' curved corner radius.
  - b. Intersections of non-arterial and/or hillside streets: 10'x10' cut corner OR 15' curved corner radius.
10. Hillside Collector Streets. In hillside areas where topography or other environmental considerations, documented to the satisfaction of the City Engineer, would render full street improvements infeasible, the roadway width of the hillside collector street may be reduced to no less than 32 feet, provided that parking is limited to one side only.

