

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR or EIR) has been prepared for the 1020 S. Figueroa Street Project (the Project). Jia Yuan USA Co., Inc., the Applicant, proposes to develop a mixed-use residential, hotel, and commercial Project on an approximately 2.7 acre (116,660 square feet [sf]) 'L'- shaped site (Project Site). The Project Site is bounded by S. Figueroa Street to the west, S. Flower Street to the east, Olympic Boulevard to the north, and 11th Street to the south. The Project Site is located in the southwest portion of the Downtown community of the City of Los Angeles (City) which falls within the South Park district of the Central City Community Plan Area. The Project Site is in a highly urbanized and active area adjacent to LA LIVE, Staples Center Arena, Microsoft Theater, and in close proximity to the Los Angeles Convention Center. The Project Site is currently developed with the nine-story, 178-room Luxe City Center Hotel (Luxe Hotel) and surrounding surface parking lots.

The Project would demolish the Luxe Hotel, surface parking, and related improvements on the Project Site in order to construct a new mixed-use residential, hotel, and commercial development. The Project would include up to approximately 1,129,284 sf of floor area (approximately 9.7:1 FAR) in three towers atop a eight level podium (Podium) with four levels above grade and up to four levels below grade (parking). The Project would include a total of up to 300 hotel rooms, 650 residential condominium units, and up to approximately 80,000 sf of restaurant, retail, and other commercial uses. The residential tower (Residential Tower 1) located at the corner of S. Flower Street and 11th Street would be 32 stories and would include up to 290 residential units. The residential tower (Residential Tower 2) at the intersection of S. Figueroa Street and W. Olympic Boulevard would be 38 stories and would include up to 346 residential units. Located on southwest portion of the Project Site directly across from Staples Center Arena at the corner of S. Figueroa Street and 11th Street, the 34-story Hotel Tower would include up to 300 hotel rooms, along with banquet facilities, conference space and amenities. Retail, restaurant and other commercial uses would be located at the first and second level of the Podium along all street frontages. The third and fourth level of the Podium would include hotel amenities and 14 live/work loft units. Parking for vehicles would be provided within up to four subterranean levels of the Podium with primary access from W. Olympic Boulevard, S. Flower Street, and 11th Street.

The Project would provide a 5,000 sf outdoor public plaza along S. Figueroa Street that would support connectivity between the Project and LA LIVE while also encouraging pedestrian activity and an active streetfront. The outdoor plaza would incorporate landscape features, seating, and potential for public art display areas. In addition, the Project would include the Podium Garden Terrace, located at the top of the Podium that would serve each of the three towers for Project residents, guests and hotel patrons. The Podium Garden Terrace would feature a bar and dining area near the Hotel Tower, open areas for adult and children recreational activities, pools, strolling/exercise areas for pets, and quiet/passive areas with shaded zones. The top level of the residential towers would include rooftop amenity decks for use by residents, and the top/penthouse level of the Hotel Tower would include a rooftop amenity deck with a pool, bar, lounge, and greenspace areas for hotel patrons and visitors.

A. PURPOSE OF THE DRAFT EIR

The purpose of this Draft EIR is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental impacts resulting from the Project. The City is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality

Act (CEQA) responsible for preparing this Draft EIR. This Draft EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), and the State *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.). The principal State *CEQA Guidelines* sections governing content of this document are Sections 15120 through 15132 (Contents of an EIR), and Section 15161 (Project EIR).

The City is responsible for processing and approving the Project pursuant to CEQA Statute Section 20167. The City will consider the information in this Draft EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process, including the Initial Study and a Final EIR. The EIR will be used in connection with all other permits and all other approvals necessary for the construction and operation of the Project. The EIR will be used by the City's Department of City Planning; Department of Building and Safety; Department of Transportation (LADOT); and Department of Public Works, including the Bureaus of Engineering and Sanitation; and other responsible public agencies that must approve activities undertaken with respect to the Project.

In accordance with Section 15121 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, this Draft EIR provides specific information regarding the environmental effects associated with development of the Project Site, and ways to minimize any significant environmental effects through mitigation measures or reasonable alternatives to the Project. For some effects, significant environmental impacts cannot be mitigated to a level considered less than significant; in such cases, impacts are considered significant and unavoidable. In accordance with Section 15093(b) of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts where impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels), the agency must state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. This is known as a "statement of overriding considerations."

This document analyzes the environmental effects of the Project to the degree of specificity appropriate to the actions by the Project, as required under Section 15146 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*. This analysis considers the actions associated with the Project, to determine the short-term and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This EIR discusses both the direct and indirect impacts of this Project, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. CEQA requires the preparation of an objective, full disclosure document to inform agency decision-makers and the general public of the direct and indirect environmental effects of the proposed action, including mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives that can reduce or eliminate any identified significant adverse impacts.

B. EIR SCOPING PROCESS

In compliance with the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the City has taken steps to provide opportunities to participate in the environmental process. During the preparation of the Draft EIR, an effort was made to contact various State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments and inform the public of the Project. As further described below, this included the distribution of an Initial Study and Notice of Preparation (NOP), which included noticing for a Public Scoping Meeting.

1. Initial Study

In accordance with Section 15063(a) of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the City prepared an Initial Study. The Initial Study determined that the Project had the potential to result in significant impacts associated with a number of environmental issues. As a result, the Initial Study determined that this Draft EIR should address those issues where the Project could result in significant environmental impacts and consider mitigation measures.

The Draft EIR focuses primarily on changes in the environment that would result from the Project, individually and cumulatively with other development projects. The Draft EIR identifies potentially significant direct and indirect impacts resulting from construction and operation of the Project, and provides Project Design Features and mitigation measures to reduce or avoid such effects. Based on public input and the results of the Initial Study, this Draft EIR addresses environmental effects in the following areas:

- Aesthetics
 - Visual Character
 - Views
 - Light and Glare
 - Shading
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
 - Archaeological and Paleontological Resources
 - Historical Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise and Vibration
- Population, Housing, and Employment
- Public Services
 - Fire Protection
 - Police Protection
 - Libraries
 - Parks and Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
 - Water Supply

– Wastewater

Based on the Initial Study, issues for which no significant impacts are anticipated to occur are addressed in Chapter 6, *Other CEQA Considerations*, of this Draft EIR. See also the Initial Study in Appendix A-2 of this Draft EIR.

2. Notice of Preparation

Pursuant to the provision of Section 15082 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the City circulated an NOP to State, regional, and local agencies, and members of the public for a 31-day period commencing February 3, 2016 and ending March 4, 2016. The purpose of the NOP was to formally convey that the City was preparing a Draft EIR for the Project, and to solicit input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the Draft EIR. See Appendix A-1, *NOP*, of this Draft EIR.

3. Public Scoping Meeting

The NOP included notification that a public scoping meeting would be held to further inform public agencies and other interested parties of the Project and to solicit input regarding the Draft EIR. The public scoping meeting was held on February 18, 2016 from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at the LUXE City Center Hotel within the Project Site, located at 1020 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015. The meeting was held in an open house or workshop format and provided interested individuals, groups, and public agencies the opportunity to view materials, ask questions, and provide oral and written comments to the City regarding the scope and focus of the Draft EIR as described in the NOP and Initial Study. The presentation materials and other documentation from the Scoping Meeting are provided in Appendix A-3, *Scoping Meeting Materials*, of this Draft EIR.

4. Comments Received

Nine written comment letters and emails responding to the NOP were submitted to the City. Responses to the NOP were provided by various public agencies and organizations, including the California Native Heritage Commission, California Department of Transportation, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, South Coast Air Quality Management District, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians, and three individuals/other interested parties. In addition, approximately five individuals attended the public scoping meeting. Public comments received during the NOP circulation period are provided in Appendix A-4, *NOP Comments* of this Draft EIR and summarized in the Executive Summary, Section D, Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved.

C. FORMAT OF THE DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR includes an Executive Summary, eight Chapters, and appendices, which are organized as follows:

Executive Summary. This section of the Draft EIR provides an overview of the entire document in a concise, summarized format. It briefly describes the Project (location and key Project features), the CEQA review process and focus, identifies effects found to be significant and unavoidable, identifies areas of controversy, provides a summary of the Project alternatives (descriptions and conclusions regarding comparative impacts), and provides a

summary of Project impacts, Project Design Features and mitigation measures, and the level of impact significance following implementation of mitigation measures.

- 1.0 Introduction.** This section provides a summary of the Project, describes the purpose of the EIR, including CEQA compliance requirements, steps undertaken to date regarding implementation of the CEQA process, and also summarizes the Draft EIR's organization.
- 2.0 Project Description.** This section describes the location, objectives, and physical and operational characteristics of the Project.
- 3.0 General Description of Environmental Setting.** This section presents an overview of the Project's environmental setting, including on-site and surrounding land uses. This section also provides a list and the mapped locations of past, present, and probable future projects considered in the analysis of potential Project contributions to cumulative impacts.
- 4.0 Environmental Impact Analysis.** This section contains the environmental setting, regulatory framework, methodology, thresholds of significance, Project characteristics and/or Project Design Features, Project-specific and cumulative impact analyses, mitigation measures, and conclusions regarding the level of significance after mitigation for each of the following environmental issues: (1) Aesthetics – Visual Character, Views, Light and Glare, Shading; (2) Air Quality; (3) Cultural Resources – Archaeological and Paleontological Resources, Historical Resources; (4) Greenhouse Gas Emissions; (5) Hazards and Hazardous Materials; (6) Land Use and Planning; (7) Noise and Vibration; (8) Population, Housing, and Employment; (9) Public Services – Fire Protection, Police Protection, Libraries, Parks and Recreation; (10) Transportation and Traffic; and (11) Utilities and Service Systems – Water Supply, and Wastewater.
- 5.0 Alternatives.** This section describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including the No Project/No Build Alternative, Reduced Density Alternative, and Residential with Ground Level Commercial Alternative. This section also evaluates the environmental effects of the alternatives for each issue area analyzed in the Draft EIR.
- 6.0 Other CEQA Considerations.** This section includes a discussion of issues required by CEQA that are not covered in other chapters. This includes significant unavoidable impacts, reasons why the Project is being proposed notwithstanding significant unavoidable impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, energy, growth-inducing impacts, potential secondary effects caused by the implementation of the mitigation measures for the Project, and effects found not to be significant.
- 7.0 References.** This section lists the references and sources used in the preparation of this Draft EIR.
- 8.0 List of EIR Preparers and Organizations and Persons Contacted.** This section lists the persons, public agencies, and organizations that were consulted or who contributed to the preparation of this Draft EIR.

The Environmental Analyses in this Draft EIR are supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix A – Notice of Preparation (NOP), Initial Study, Scoping Meeting Materials, and NOP Comments
 - A-1 NOP
 - A-2 Initial Study
 - A-3 Scoping Meeting Materials
 - A-4 NOP Comments
- Appendix B – Lighting Study
- Appendix C – Air Quality Technical Report
- Appendix D – Cultural Resources Documentation
 - D-1 Native American Consultation Documentation
 - D-2 Paleontological Records Search Results
 - D-3 Historical Resources Assessment Report
- Appendix E – Greenhouse Gas Technical Report
- Appendix F – Soil and Soil Gas Investigation
- Appendix G – Noise and Vibration Technical Report
- Appendix H – Population, Housing, and Employment Data
- Appendix I – Public Services
 - I-1 Los Angeles Fire Department Correspondence
 - I-2 Civil Engineering Report
 - I-3 Los Angeles Police Department Correspondence
 - I-4 Los Angeles Public Library Correspondence
 - I-5 Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks Correspondence
- Appendix J – Transportation and Traffic
 - J-1 Traffic Study and LADOT Approval Letter
 - J-2 Traffic Calculations for Project Alternatives
- Appendix K – Utilities and Service Systems
 - K-1 Water Supply Assessment
 - K-2 Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Sewage Generation Factors

D. PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR is subject to a 45-day review period in which the document is made available to responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties. In compliance with the provision of Sections 15085(a) and 15087(a)(1) of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the City, serving as the Lead Agency: (1) published a Notice of Completion and Availability (NOCA) of a Draft EIR which indicated that the Draft EIR was available for review at the City’s Planning Department (Environmental Analysis Section, 200 N. Spring Street, Room 750, Los Angeles, CA 90012); (2) provided copies of the NOCA and Draft EIR to the Los Angeles Central Library, Felipe de Neve Branch Library, Little Tokyo Branch Library, Chinatown Branch Library and Pico Union

Branch Library (3) posted the NOCA and the Draft EIR on the City's website (<http://www.lacity.org>); (4) prepared and transmitted a Notice of Completion (NOC) to the State Clearinghouse; (5) sent a NOCA to all property owners within 500 feet of the Project Site; and (6) sent a NOCA to the last known name and address of all organizations and individuals who previously requested such notice in writing or attended public meetings about the Project. Proof of publication is available at the City. The public review period commenced on September 8, 2016 and will end on October 25, 2016 for a total of 48 days.

Any public agency or members of the public desiring to comment on the Draft EIR must submit their comments in writing or send them via email to the following address prior to the end of the public review period:

Mail: Christina Toy- Lee
Major Projects and Environmental Analysis Section
Department of City Planning
200 N. Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles, California 90012
Fax: (213) 978-4656
Email: Christina.toy-lee@lacity.org

Upon the close of the public review period, the City will proceed to evaluate and prepare responses to all relevant oral and written comments received from public agencies and other interested parties during the public review period. A Final EIR will then be prepared. The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR, possible revisions to the Draft EIR, comments submitted by responsible agencies or reviewing parties during the public circulation period for the Draft EIR, and City responses to those comments. After the Final EIR is completed and at least 10 days prior to its certification, responses to comments made by public agencies on the Draft EIR will be provided to the commenting agencies.

