



**DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

**Los Angeles City Planning Commission**

**Date:** December 12, 2013  
**Time:** After 8:30 AM  
**Place:** City Hall, Room 350  
200 N Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Public Hearing:** Held November 5, 2013  
**Appeal Status:** Not Applicable  
**Expiration Date:** Not Applicable

**Case No.:** CPC-2011-927-GPA-ZC-  
HD-SP-CA-M1  
**CEQA No.:** ENV-2009-271-EIR  
SCH No.: 2009011101  
**Related Cases:** CPC-2011-927-GPA-ZC-  
HD-SP-CA and CPC-2011-  
1171-DA  
**Council No.:** 9-Price  
**Plan Areas:** South and Southeast Los  
Angeles  
**Specific Plan:** USC University Park  
Campus; South Los Angeles  
Alcohol Sales  
**Overlay District:** North University Park-  
Exposition Park- West  
Adams Neighborhood  
Stabilization Overlay  
**Certified NC:** Empowerment Congress  
North Area Neighborhood  
Development  
**GPLU:** Community Commercial,  
High Medium Residential,  
Limited Manufacturing  
**Zones:** USC-1A, USC-1B, USC-2  
USC-3  
**Applicant:** City of Los Angeles  
**Co-Applicant:** University of Southern  
California

**PROJECT LOCATION:** University of Southern California University Park Campus Specific Plan (All Subareas)

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** The adoption of Design Guidelines and Concept Streetscape Plan for Jefferson Boulevard (also known as Appendix A and Appendix B of the University of Southern California University Park Campus Specific Plan) is being proposed in fulfillment of the requirements of the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan and Development Agreement which were adopted by the City Council on December 11, 2012 and became effective on January 23, 2013 (Ordinance numbers 182343 and 182344, respectively).

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

1. Pursuant to Article 1, Chapter 1, Sections 11.5.4 and 11.5.7 of the LAMC, the adoption of Urban Design Guidelines for the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan.
2. Pursuant to Article 1, Chapter 1, Sections 11.5.4 and 11.5.7 of the LAMC, the adoption of the Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan (Appendix B of the USC University Park Specific Plan) which will become the official street standard for that portion of W. Jefferson Boulevard designated as a Modified Secondary Highway between Vermont Avenue and Flower Street.
3. Find that the Environmental Impact Report ENV-2009-271-EIR, SCH No. 2009011101 and related Environmental Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, previously certified by the City Council in connection with the adoption of the Specific Plan ordinance, are adequate environmental clearance for this action.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. **Adopt** the Urban Design Guidelines as Appendix A of the USC University Park Specific Plan.
2. **Adopt** the Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan (Appendix B of the USC University Park Specific Plan) which will become the official street standard for that portion of W. Jefferson Boulevard designated as a Modified Secondary Highway between Vermont Avenue and Flower Street.
3. **Find** that the Environmental Impact Report ENV-2009-271-EIR, SCH No. 2009011101 and related Environmental Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, previously certified by the City Council in connection with the adoption of the Specific Plan ordinance, are adequate environmental clearance for this action.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE  
Director of Planning



Ken Bernstein, Principal City Planner



Michelle Levy, City Planner  
Telephone: (213) 978-1198



for Craig Weber, Senior City Planner

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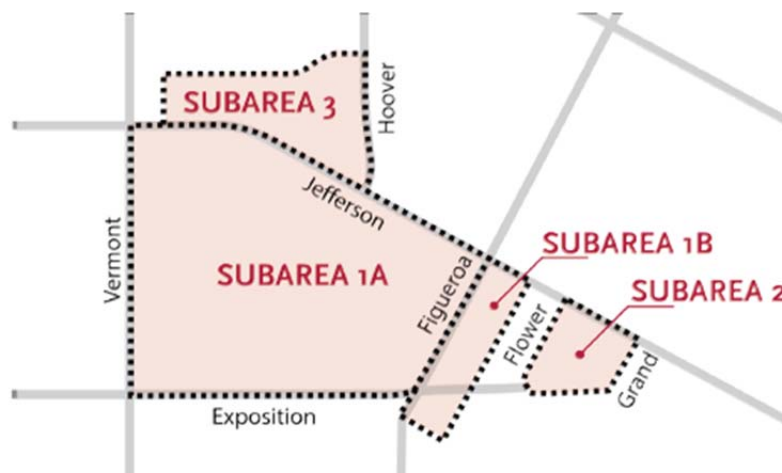
Exhibits are available by visiting the Department of City Planning website:  
[http://www.planning.lacity.org/eir/USC/TOC\\_USC.htm](http://www.planning.lacity.org/eir/USC/TOC_USC.htm)

## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

The proposed project involves the adoption of Design Guidelines and a Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan (also known as Appendix A and Appendix B of the University of Southern California University Park Campus Specific Plan, respectively) in fulfillment of the requirements of the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan and Development Agreement which were recommended by the City Planning Commission in May 2012, adopted by the City Council on December 11, 2012, and became effective on January 23, 2013 (Ordinance numbers 182343 and 182344, respectively).

The already adopted Specific Plan establishes a blueprint for future development on the University of Southern California campus, and in the vicinity. It regulates allowable land uses, building height, open space, setbacks; creates historic preservation standards, and establishes urban design and streetscape standards for the area. The Development Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the University of Southern California ensures a 20-year public benefits program which extends beyond the geographic boundaries of the Specific Plan, and requires a number of street improvements along Jefferson Boulevard, as a public benefit.

The area affected by the proposed Urban Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan is shown on Figure 1, below, and is roughly bounded by: 30th Street and 30th Place to the north; Grand Avenue to the east; Exposition Boulevard to the south; Vermont Avenue to the west and is bisected by Jefferson Boulevard. The Urban Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan are valuable in ensuring that any new development is in harmony with the existing campus and surrounding community. The new Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan propose improvements to existing amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists in keeping with an overall vision for Jefferson Boulevard, and physically improve the existing setting within the core campus and along adjoining streets, in keeping with the already adopted Specific Plan and Development Agreement.



*Figure 1: USC Specific Plan Area*

## **OVERVIEW OF THE ADOPTED SPECIFIC PLAN**

The adopted USC University Park Specific Plan addresses the expansion of University-related uses within the South and Southeast Los Angeles communities in and around the USC Campus. The Specific Plan responds to the University's 2030 Master Plan<sup>1</sup>, an expansion plan driven by the University's desired long term academic, housing, campus and administrative goals that will influence USC's need for space and facilities in the coming years. The University has identified three opportunity sites (Subareas) for the expansion. The Specific Plan regulates the development of these areas and ensures that development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

The Specific Plan allows for a total net new Floor Area of up to 5,042,607 square feet. Within the Specific Plan boundaries the total allowable development potential is regulated by land use category and by Subarea. The major categories of uses (and maximum floor area for all Subareas) include:

- Academic/University Uses (2,837,607 square feet);
- Student and Faculty Housing (5,400 beds and 250 units, 2,226,000 square feet);
- Commercial/Retail (350,000 square feet);
- Hotel/Conference Center (150 rooms/165,000 square feet);
- A University-affiliated K-8 Laboratory School and Educational Academy (80,000 square feet);
- The removal of an existing Fire Station; and
- Public and Private Open Space (12.33 acres)

The Specific Plan identifies three Subareas: Subarea 1, the USC Campus; Subarea 2, East Area; and Subarea 3, the University Village site. Subareas 1 and 1b consist of the core Campus area and related University uses on the east side of Figueroa Boulevard. Subarea 2 is located just east of the Harbor Freeway (US-110) in a predominantly industrial area. Subarea 3, known as University Village, is located to the north of the Campus on Jefferson Boulevard.

Through implementation of the adopted Specific Plan, Subareas 1 and 2 will remain consistent with existing Campus and ancillary University-serving uses. Subarea 3 (University Village), however, is envisioned to change dramatically combining a range of community-serving commercial, retail and entertainment uses, among a well-defined hierarchy of blocks and building typologies linked together by a network of paseos and pedestrian connections. The Specific Plan sets height limits and regulates height transitions, mandates where principal open spaces and primary street frontages must be located, addresses parking standards, and establishes landscaping requirements.

At its meeting on May 10, 2012, the City Planning Commission recommended approval of the Specific Plan, and recommended that the Planning Department return to the Commission at a later date with an enhanced Urban Design program for all Subareas. The City Planning Commission's comments specifically focused on the need for better linkages between the USC Core Campus and Expo line stations, improving connectivity between the Core Campus and the future University Village development in Subarea 3, and improving access for pedestrians and bicyclists (both on perimeter streets and within the campus) that will enhance pedestrian activity along major corridors, especially Hoover Street and Jefferson Boulevard.

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<sup>1</sup> USC Master Development Plan, completed in 2008

Six urban design principles were incorporated into the Specific Plan that provide a framework for the proposed Urban Design Guidelines.

**The Six Urban Design Principles are as follows:**

1. Enhance urban cohesion by providing a mix of uses that embrace the community by emphasizing Jefferson Boulevard as a complete street that weaves together the public realm and academic space as a place for people.
2. Promote diverse architectural character by avoiding bland, uniform development through design that is context-sensitive, embraces architectural diversity, and integrates university buildings into the surrounding neighborhood.
3. Ensure sensitive urban form by creating a vibrant community center that activates key pedestrian and vehicular corridors, encourages a safe environment, and maintains an urban character that is sensitive to nearby residential areas.
4. Promote outward building orientation by ensuring that campus buildings relate to perimeter streets, establishing new connections to the community where the USC Campus fronts on key corridors.
5. Emphasize human scale by framing public space with appropriately scaled buildings and articulated architectural blocks that connect academic gathering spaces to public spaces, including public rights-of-way.
6. Maximize connectivity and improve circulation for area residents, students, employees and visitors by emphasizing multi-modal uses that take full advantage of the proximity of the USC Campus to the Exposition Metro Rail Line while reinforcing linkages to nearby destinations.

Because the designs of individual projects/buildings within the Specific Plan area are still preliminary, the adopted Specific Plan is intended to articulate specific standards that establish the scale of buildings, particularly in Subarea 3, and through development regulations, create a comfortable pedestrian scale. For example, the Specific Plan requires a minimum number of pedestrian connections through Subarea 3 – three along the east-west axes from Hoover Street and four along the north-south axis between Jefferson Boulevard and 30<sup>th</sup> Place. In addition, the Specific Plan includes Urban Design Standards for setbacks, stepbacks, ground floor uses, building transparency, articulation, signage, and building materials. The Urban Design Guidelines (Appendix A) go into further detail on each of these elements of the Specific Plan.

At its May 10, 2012 meeting, the City Planning Commission adopted interim guidelines for Projects within the Specific Plan as a “placeholder” in the adopted Specific Plan (found in Exhibit E, Appendices A and B) and required the Director of Planning to return with the following analyses to fulfill the requirement to create Urban Design Guidelines for all Subareas:

- 1) Walkability / Pedestrian master plan (all Subareas);
- 2) Urban Design Guidelines (all Subareas), including:
  - (a) Applicable guidelines from the Citywide Urban Design Guidelines;
  - (b) Applicable guidelines from the City’s Walkability Checklist;

- 3) Urban Design Guidelines for Subarea 1a (core campus) that address the interface and linkages between the perimeter of the core campus and abutting public rights-of-way;
- 4) Analysis of current and future linkages and connectivity of all Subareas to Expo Light Rail Stations;
- 5) Analysis of current and future linkages and connectivity between Subareas 1a and Subarea 3;
- 6) A Concept Landscape Plan for Subarea 3.

## **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

### **Methodology**

Over the past year, since the Specific Plan's adoption by the City Council, the Planning Department has worked with USC and urban design firm, Melendrez Design Partners ("Melendrez"), to develop a comprehensive set of Urban Design Guidelines for the entire Specific Plan that carry out the core Urban Design Principles identified in the Specific Plan and articulate how these Principles can be achieved on individual projects.

Before the Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan were initiated, Melendrez was tasked with surveying existing conditions in the area (See Exhibit 1; Existing Conditions). The Analysis focuses on perimeter streets within the Specific Plan area, namely: Jefferson Boulevard, Figueroa Street, Vermont Avenue, Exposition Boulevard, and Hoover Street. Urban design components such as existing building heights and massing, setbacks, architectural quality, and the buildings' relationship to the street were evaluated. Jefferson Boulevard between Vermont Avenue and Flower Street was also surveyed to identify on-the-ground opportunities and constraints. The Existing Conditions analysis includes an inventory of existing entrances and access points to the main campus; the characteristics of existing building frontages and setback distances, pedestrian circulation patterns around open spaces on the main campus and beyond, bicyclist travel patterns around the campus and beyond; pedestrian and bicyclist volumes and travel counts. The Existing Conditions analysis also noted the locations of existing streetscape elements in the public right-of-way along Jefferson Boulevard including:

- Street Trees
- Street Lights
- Driveways
- Bus Stops
- Access Points
- Crosswalks
- On-street parking
- Utility cabinets
- Sidewalk widths and curb radii at intersections; and
- Typical cross sections at three points along Jefferson Boulevard

The Existing Conditions report's findings of opportunities and constraints formed the basis for the Urban Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan.

## **Campus History and Background**

In order to shape the future of the campus' expansion, it was instructive to review past Master Planning efforts initiated by the University and design themes on the Core Campus. A Historical Context analysis (Exhibit 1) illustrates the evolution of campus master-planning efforts since the University's founding in 1880, when the Campus was 7.5 acres in size. Over the years, the Campus has expanded around the original University site and has grown to over 200 acres in its current boundaries.

Formal University Park Campus master planning efforts have been of two minds: moving back and forth between embracing the university as an urban campus that connects to the surrounding urban grid, and at time, in response to public safety concerns, centering activity nodes within the campus, essentially severing the University from the surrounding neighborhood.

The Design Guidelines, as drafted, demonstrate a willingness on the part of the University to once again shift to a street- and pedestrian-oriented development pattern. In this way the Design Guidelines ensure that new development within and around the campus provides opportunities for not only those affiliated with the University, but the larger neighborhood, as well, and attempts to rebuild linkages that have been lost over the years.

## **DESIGN GUIDELINES (APPENDIX A)**

The Design Guidelines have been developed to respond to the unique conditions of each Subarea. The Existing Conditions analysis concluded that the greatest opportunity for pedestrian oriented exists on the Core Campus (Subarea 1a) and University Village (Subarea 3). Secondary opportunity sites exist just east of the Campus along Figueroa Street (Subarea 1b), although the University expects to see limited infill opportunities there due to the recently constructed Galen Center and mixed-use student housing ("Icon Plaza") building along the south edge of this Subarea at Exposition Boulevard. Subarea 2 offers some opportunities for improved design and pedestrian orientation; however, the extent to which this area could be made to be pedestrian oriented are limited, due to existing constraints such as narrow sidewalks and the fact that the 110 Freeway creates a physical barrier, separating Subarea 2 buildings from the Core Campus and transit station on Flower Street.

### ***Specific Plan Subareas***

Below is a summary of the salient characteristic of each of the Subareas.

As the core campus area, Subarea 1A is characterized by institutional buildings arranged around plazas and green spaces, with comfortable landscaping, ample bike amenities, and well-lit, pedestrian-friendly walkways and paseos. Walkways are enhanced with special paving and safety devices and pedestrian street crossings are well marked. Subarea 1A is oriented, (as discussed in Exhibit 1) along the historical, orthogonal, street grid, which runs perpendicular to Figueroa Street. This causes some of the street edges along Vermont Avenue and Exposition Boulevard, for example, to be pulled back from, and not parallel to the street, in as much as those streets deviate from the historical orthogonal grid and have a true N-S-E-W axis. The campus is gated around the edges, and there are frequent controlled entries.



Subarea 1B is characterized by buildings with large footprints such as the Galen Center, a large parking garage, and the Radisson Hotel. Buildings are generally oriented toward Figueroa Street to this Subarea, while Flower Street provides access for parking garages, loading areas, etc. Figueroa Street has been enhanced with streetscaping and the University side of the street is gated with frequent access points. The Expo Line, which runs along Flower, has a stop at the corner of the Subarea and enhanced streetscaping has softened the pedestrian experience in this area. New development has provided a well-defined street wall along Figueroa and there is mid-rise residential housing south of Exposition within the Subarea. The freeway wall to the east acts as a major barrier.

Subarea 2 is currently used for University facilities, such as parking, IT, and facilities maintenance buildings, among other uses. The buildings are large in scale and massing and often present large walls and unbroken façades to the street. Landscaping in this area is less prominent than in other Subareas and the freeway wall to the east acts as a major barrier along the west edge. In a few areas, paving has been enhanced and trees have been planted to improve the pedestrian experience. Power lines are not undergrounded.

Finally, Subarea 3 includes a number of mid- and high-rise apartment buildings that are significantly set back from the street behind landscaping. Commercial structures in this area are also mainly set back from the street. There is a pedestrian plaza at Hoover and Jefferson and a new mixed-use development with amenities at Figueroa and Jefferson that opens directly to the sidewalk. Immediately to the north of Subarea 3, there are low-rise apartment buildings and residential structures.

### **Organization of Design Guidelines**

Based on the Existing Conditions analysis, the Design Guidelines establish a definition and hierarchy of street typologies within the Specific Plan area and on perimeter streets:

#### **Street Typologies**

**Primary Corridor.** Multi-modal corridors that should cater to a wide range of users. These corridors should provide:

- A comfortable walking environment for medium to high volumes of pedestrians, unimpeded by barriers
- Pedestrian amenities such as seating and lighting
- Shade trees for comfort
- Direct connection to building and campus

**Secondary Corridor.** Corridors that are primarily for pedestrians and cyclists. These corridors should provide:

- A comfortable walking environment for medium volumes of pedestrians, unimpeded by barriers, etc.
- Places to people watch, sit, and linger
- Bollards rather than curbs to differentiate the pedestrian and vehicular realms, where applicable
- Enhanced sidewalk paving
- Visible and secure bike parking

**Tertiary Corridor.** Multi-modal corridors that should cater to a wide range of users, but may primarily be used for service or vehicular access. These corridors should provide:

- A comfortable walking environment for medium to low volumes of pedestrians, unimpeded by barriers.
- Controlled stops at regular intervals to allow pedestrian and bicyclist crossings.
- Warning signage, lights, or sounds at vehicular / pedestrian conflict points.

**Primary Intersection.** Located at major intersections, these nodes should incorporate:

- Enhanced continental-style crosswalks through widening, special painting, or “all-way crossings”/“Scramble Crossings”.
- Shortened crossing distances for pedestrians where feasible, through curb bulbouts.
- Longer crossing times / shorter wait times.
- Bike signals and wayfinding as applicable.
- Smaller curb radii.
- Directional signage and wayfinding.
- Open space plazas.
- Additional pedestrian amenities, such as lighting and seating.

**Secondary Intersection.** Located at other critical intersections, these nodes should incorporate:

- Enhanced continental or other visible crosswalks.
- Longer crossing times / shorter wait times.
- Smaller curb radii.
- Additional pedestrian amenities, such as lighting and seating.

## WALKABILITY AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

This diagram illustrates the location and interfaces between primary, transit-oriented, secondary, and tertiary corridors, key intersections, transit stations, and entrances to the property.



Figure 2: Walkability and Pedestrian Master Plan

The Design Guidelines further establish sidewalk widths and bike facility requirements, street trees and landscaping guidelines, guidelines for the relationship of walls, fences and gates to the street edge, pedestrian lighting, and a palette for hardscape materials.

### Subarea 1A

Design Guidelines for the Core Campus were culled from the University Park Campus Plan published in 2000, which seeks to promote a complimentary relationship between buildings, landscape, and civic spaces, that remain valid today.

The goals of the plan and guidelines are to:

- Achieve the optimum area capacity by maximum utilization of available real estate
- Achieve a varied, but cohesive architectural quality that enhances the character of the place
- Support and define the public spaces of the campus
- Complete the transition from an urban university with buildings arranged along vehicular streets to a pedestrian oriented environment
- Make a legible, hierarchical pattern of public space

**Design Guidelines for Subareas 1B and 3**

The Design Guidelines for these Subareas draw from the Citywide Residential and Commercial Design Guidelines and draft South Los Angeles New Community Plan Design Guidelines. The Subareas are grouped together because they share similar characteristics and are situated across the street from the Core Campus. Design Guidelines in these subareas envision complete streets along Jefferson Boulevard and Figueroa Street that connect to the transit station at Figueroa and Flower Streets, ground floor uses that create visual interest at the street level and complement an enhanced streetscape, and architectural treatment/articulation of upper floors.

The prime areas of opportunity for attaining high quality design for future developments in Subarea 1B and Subarea 3 include: breaking up large street walls and blocks with building articulation; assuring that all street frontages are treated as “fronts”; introducing paseos and pass-throughs that better connect the subareas, the core campus, and the adjacent transit station; introducing transit-supportive amenities; expanding and enhancing the physical area dedicated to pedestrians, and incorporating landscaping that creates a vibrant neighborhood feel.

Open Space Design Guidelines for Subarea 3 have also been developed for the open space areas and paseos required by the Specific Plan. As indicated in the Specific Plan, Subarea 3 shall contain a minimum of 80,000 sq. ft. of Public Open Space including a full spectrum of Open Space typologies, from smaller more intimate courtyards and paseos, to larger, public, and more civic-oriented plazas. Consistent with the open space typologies of the Core Campus, the goal in Subarea 3 is to create a neighborhood feel with multiple options for recreation, people watching, relaxing, and socializing. The Open Space Design Guidelines specifies a recommended landscape palette for the Subarea to encourage design cohesion and to assure a high aesthetic quality. The actual design and location of open space provided will be determined at the time a Project is submitted to the Director of Planning for review under the Specific Plan procedures.

**Design Guidelines for Subarea 2**

As described above, this Subarea is distinct from the other Subareas within the Specific Plan due to the preponderance of industrial uses. Buildings within this Subarea are used by the University for administrative purposes, which include loading docks along S. Hope Street. The Design Guidelines for Subarea 2 draw from the adopted Citywide Industrial Design Guidelines, and seek to promote infill and/or adaptive reuse of existing industrial buildings. Along with adaptive reuse/infill, other strategies may include: minimizing and screening unsightly nuisances; improving the safety of the pedestrian experience along corridors; adequate and safe vehicular access and maneuverability; providing consistency between the architectural character of the campus; promoting connectivity between adjacent uses while maintaining visual and spatial relationships between adjacent buildings; establishing height and massing buffers and transitions; and strengthening the visual and functional quality of the environment.

***JEFFERSON BOULEVARD CONCEPT STREETScape PLAN (APPENDIX B)***

In keeping with the Urban Design principles of the Specific Plan, the Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape plan will significantly improve both north-south and east-west connections between the core campus and Subarea 3, as well as the Expo line station at Flower and Jefferson.

Over time, Jefferson Boulevard will develop into a street that is:

- Designed to more equitably balance all travel modes, providing facilities and amenities for bike riders, pedestrians, and transit users
- Easy, pleasant, and safe to cross
- Pleasant to walk along and friendly to people of all ages and abilities
- Well-connected into the City's growing bike network, providing a safe and comfortable place to bike ride

In order to fulfill this vision, there are several major improvements planned:

- Removal of on-street parking and configure street with two west-bound lanes, two east-bound lanes, while maintaining the median and turn lane
- Widening of sidewalks from an average width of 10 feet to 14 feet, where space permits
- Addition of 7-foot wide bike lanes east-and west-bound along the curb edge, where space permits
- Addition of pedestrian and bike amenities, such as lighting, benches, signage, and bike racks
- Planting of regularly-spaced trees, with options for bio-swale infiltration planting and understory parkway planting
- New crosswalks and enhancement of existing crosswalks

### **Project Phasing**

Streetscape improvements will be implemented in phases along with proposed building activity on adjacent parcels. Phase I will occur from Orchard Avenue to Hoover Street on the north side of Jefferson Boulevard and south side improvements will occur from Orchard Avenue to the Trousdale Parkway entrance. Streetscape improvements for the rest of Jefferson Boulevard, from Vermont Avenue to Flower Street, will occur in future phases. Since USC does not have ownership of every parcel along Jefferson Boulevard between Vermont Avenue and Flower Street, smaller segments of the Streetscape Plan implementation are outside of the University's control. For this reason, an additional one million dollars has been set aside in the Development Agreement to address street improvements along frontages not owned by USC.

The first phase of the project guarantees the construction of a minimum of one thousand student beds. The build-out of the remaining 4,200 student beds may occur over the lifetime of the Development Agreement (20 years) and may occur in one or two subsequent phases within Subarea 3. While future phases were not specifically laid out in the Development Agreement or the Specific Plan, a Streetscape phasing plan in Appendix B will assure that the full build-out of Jefferson Boulevard will achieve the same standards as Phase 1 and a continuous bike lane at the completion of Phase 1.

### **PUBLIC PROCESS**

The Planning Department and USC initiated the process of developing Appendices A and B shortly after the formal adoption of the Specific Plan and Development Agreement by the City Council.

After the Existing Conditions analysis was completed, Staff began working with Melendrez to draft the Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan. Many of the themes in the draft Design Guidelines are based upon many of the already adopted guidelines in the Citywide Design Guidelines, which went through an extensive public process. Additionally, draft guidelines for

the South and Southeast Los Angeles New Community Plans were incorporated to the extent possible.

The Streetscape Plan is based on the requirements set out in Appendix B (as adopted by the City Council). Staff met with the City's Street Standards Committee on several occasions to ensure that the Streetscape Plan would have buy-in from the departments who would be implementing the standards on future projects. Appendix B, as currently proposed, incorporates the Street Standards Committee's comments.

Drafts of the Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan were then presented to the Department's Urban Design Studio, through its Professional Volunteer Program (PVP). The PVP group met, on Tuesday, January 29, 2013 and again on Monday, June 24, 2013, to review another draft of the Specific Plan Appendices.

After the PVP's comments were incorporated, drafts of the Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Streetscape Plan were shared with interested stakeholders in advance of a public workshop, held on October 30, 2013. The Planning Department notified residents and property owners within 500 feet of the Specific Plan boundaries of the public hearing and workshop. Approximately 42 people attended the public workshop. An official public hearing followed on November 5, 2013, with 119 people in attendance. The final day to submit comments was November 20, 2013.

#### **Input from the Urban Design Studio/Professional Volunteer Program**

Earlier drafts of the Design Guidelines and Concept Streetscape Plan for Jefferson Boulevard were provided to a group of volunteer architects and urban designers organized by the Planning Department's Urban Design Studio, through its Professional Volunteer Program (PVP). The PVP is a group of volunteer architects and designers who meet monthly to weigh in on urban design and walkability issues for large projects. The PVP met on June 24, 2013, reviewed the proposed project, and provided the following comments:

#### **Summary of PVP Input Regarding Appendices A and B – June 24, 2013**

There was general consensus among the Professional Volunteer architects that the Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines, as proposed, met the stated goals of the Specific Plan. The group emphasized the need for greater attention to north-south mobility as they felt that the plan, as presented at that time, focused solely on east-west connectivity. In a previous iteration of the Jefferson Boulevard Streetscape Plan, the north and south sides of Jefferson Boulevard showed equal sidewalk widths. The group questioned whether the north and south sides of Jefferson should receive equal design treatment. Other recommendations from members of the PVP group included:

1. Examine the feasibility of keeping the median and existing street trees
2. Reduce the sidewalk width on the south side of Jefferson
3. Use any remaining curb-to-curb right-of-way to enhance the bike lanes in both directions
4. Examine signalization and establishing a prioritization/hierarchy of users to avoid conflicts at scramble crosswalks
5. Evaluate alternative street tree species such as the Tipuana Tipu or Tulip Tree in lieu of the proposed Ginkgo trees.
6. Develop a comprehensive way-finding program that links destinations on the campus and within Subarea 3 to the campus and beyond, to each of the Metro stations.

7. Discuss how the Jefferson Blvd Streetscape plan intersects with the “MyFigueroa” project.

### **Specific Changes Based on Feedback from the Professional Volunteer Program**

Feedback from the PVP has been incorporated into the proposed Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan. Revisions include:

- Preserving Existing Street Medians and Mature Pine Trees.  
Staff concurred that the existing street medians create a “sense of place” along Jefferson Boulevard. This was an important feature of the streetscape that should be retained.
- Guidelines for improved directional and wayfinding Signage were added (see “Major and Minor Signage”, page 16 of Appendix B) to direct pedestrians and bicyclists to key destinations and to mark entrances to the campus.
- The Streetscape Plan cross section has been modified as follows:
  - Proposed sidewalk widths were narrowed from 17 feet to 14 feet in favor of preserving the street median and striping a buffered bike lane;
  - The Plan proposes a 7-foot bicycle lane, with a 1-foot buffer, in lieu of a 6-foot bicycle lane.
- The Streetscape Plan alleviates conflicts at scramble crosswalks by proposing signage or signalization that would prompt bicyclists to wait for a green signal as pedestrians cross (see Appendix B, page 9 – Typical Condition at Scramble Crossing).

### **Community Issues and Concerns:**

Comments were received on a range of topics. At the public hearing, speakers in favor of the project focused on the aesthetic and practical benefits of the Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan. Most of the concerns expressed focused on two primary issues: the phasing of the project and a desire to see the Streetscape Plan continued west of Vermont Avenue to Western Avenue. Other comments proposed additional street improvements on Jefferson Boulevard and along perimeter campus streets that could tie-in to the Jefferson Streetscape Plan.

### **Extension of Street Improvement Boundaries**

Many commenters expressed a desire to see all street improvements on Jefferson Boulevard extend beyond the proposed boundary of Vermont Avenue to Western Avenue on the west and Grand Avenue on the east. Concern was expressed that stopping at Vermont Avenue will deepen the divide between the University and surrounding community. Questions were raised at the public hearing about how the \$350,000 contribution towards the implementation of bicycle lanes west of Vermont Avenue, as stipulated in the Development Agreement, will be allotted.

### ***Planning Department Response:***

The boundaries of the Jefferson Boulevard Streetscape Plan were considered during the public process of establishing a Development Agreement between the University and the City. Vermont Avenue was considered an appropriate western boundary because it marks the edge of USC’s property ownership. It was determined at the time of drafting the Development Agreement that requiring the University to provide additional street lighting and street trees west of Vermont Avenue would require lengthy legislative and discretionary processes, namely B-permits from the Bureau of Engineering and possibly a Street Lighting Assessment District through the Bureau of Street Lighting, which would require the agreement of the adjoining property owners. Because these processes were not in the University’s control, USC did not



commit to providing street lighting and street trees west of Vermont Avenue. However, the University did commit, through the Development Agreement, to providing \$350,000 in funding toward the Los Angeles Bicycle Planning Trust Fund for the implementation of a continuous bicycle lane along Jefferson Boulevard, from Vermont Avenue to Western Ave. The Development Agreement also stipulates that if a bicycle lane is determined to be infeasible along this portion of Jefferson Boulevard, the funds could be diverted to other bicycle planning efforts in the surrounding area, giving some flexibility in the City's allocation of street improvement funds in the area. Jefferson Boulevard is not identified in the adopted Citywide Bike Plan's next phase of priority streets. Roadway widths and other constraints limit the City's ability to build bike lanes in this area without an impact analysis, a separate and extensive process.

### **Phasing Plan**

Many comments expressed concern regarding the proposed phasing of street improvement on Jefferson Boulevard in two or more phases. The community desires certainty that the improvements in Phase 2 will be implemented in a timely manner in order to achieve the fully built-out streetscape, as shown in Appendix B.

### ***Planning Department Response***

Given that the redevelopment of University Village will occur in phases, only the first of which is specifically mandated in the Specific Plan and Development Agreement, it was important to develop a timeline for the phasing of the street improvements tied to the development of Phase 1. In the area identified as "Area 2" in the Streetscape Plan (between Orchard Avenue and Vermont Avenue), if USC were to build-out the entirety of the Jefferson Boulevard Streetscape Plan at one time, it is expected that certain sections of the street in Phase 2 of the redevelopment scheme would be affected during construction, and may even require demolition and reconstruction. The Planning Department agrees that a phasing plan is necessary to minimize disruption to the street. As an alternative, as outlined in the Development Agreement, USC has the option of constructing the street improvements or depositing a one-time in-lieu fee upon obtaining a B-Permit from the Department of Public Works for the City to construct the improvements.

### **Bicycle Lane Improvements**

The comments also suggested a strong preference for the continuous bike lane alternative in Phase 2, rather than the option of keeping the on-street parking and transitioning the bicycle lane to sharrows between Orchard Avenue and Vermont Ave.

Safety concerns were also raised about potentially dangerous intersections at Jefferson/Vermont and Jefferson/McClintock where bicyclists frequently ride counter to traffic flow. Comments pointed out the importance of clearly identifying and delineating bicycle lanes.

### ***Planning Department Response***

Since the Public Hearing, the Streetscape Plan has been revised to show the continuous bicycle lane and removal of on-street parking alternative in Area 2, between Orchard Avenue and Vermont Avenue, in lieu of sharrows. Additionally, in response to safety concerns, a new crosswalk is being added at Orchard Avenue, where one does not currently exist. This will help bicyclists travel across Jefferson Boulevard and alleviate the dangerous "counterflow" condition occurring between McClintock Avenue and Orchard Avenue.



**Other Streetscape Components**

Some commenters expressed a desire to see bus infrastructure figure more prominently in the plan, specifically a better resolution of bus/bicyclist conflicts addressed in the Streetscape Plan.

The importance of other streetscape components such as regularly spaced trash receptacles and regular maintenance of bus shelters and benches was raised.

One commenter expressed concerns about having a single tree species on the street, suggesting the importance of seeing additional tree species mixed in, rather than a single mono-species.

***Planning Department Response***

Buses are an integral part of the overall vision of Jefferson Boulevard as a complete street. Toward this end, bus shelters are specifically called out in the Streetscape Plan at each bus stop location along Jefferson Boulevard (there are a total of five in this segment of Jefferson Boulevard). With respect to trash receptacles and their maintenance, this is best-addressed at a project level. The University could be required to provide and maintain trash and recycling receptacles, consistent with the standards on page 14 of Appendix B. A single tree species was selected for individual streets in order to establish an identity along the street and a sense of place. Pine trees will remain in the median island along Jefferson Boulevard. The addition of understory planting within the tree wells will complement the selected tree species and provide for a diverse landscape palette.

**Design Guidelines**

One speaker mentioned the importance of achieving compatibility between the new University Village development and the North University Park Specific Plan, just north of 30<sup>th</sup> Place. Specific concerns included a need for better massing and bulk transitions adjacent to the historic district and making the signage design guidelines more restrictive for tall buildings (over 120 feet).

***Planning Department Response***

The Specific Plan addresses height transitions along 30<sup>th</sup> Place, requiring buildings in Subarea 3 to step down to a maximum height of 25 feet at the setback line. The required setback line starts at least 20 feet from the property line. This is consistent with the [Q]R4-1 and North University Park Specific Plan regulations affecting properties to the north of Subarea 3.

In the latest iteration of schematic design for Subarea 3, only one building is proposed to be over 120 feet in height, and this is a tower element. To prevent out-of-scale signage, staff recommends evaluating the signage requirement and possibly creating a more restrictive requirement, as the Commission deems appropriate.

**Better integration with the University's Bike Master Plan**

Comments were received pointing to the need for better integration of the University's own USC Bike Master Plan for the campus with Appendix B, including redesigned bicycle entrances to campus at McClintock Avenue, Watt Way, Hoover Street and Royal Street, and specifically a redesign of the main entry point to the campus at Hoover Street and Trousdale Parkway.

***Planning Department Response:***

The Existing Conditions Analysis and Appendices A and B utilized counts and travel patterns identified in the Bike Master Plan. The Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan have been revised to require the use of Major and Minor wayfinding signage installed at critical locations to better-direct bicyclists and pedestrians at campus entrances. Better signage and signalization at the proposed scramble crosswalks will go a long way in mitigating conflicts. The Specific Plan Appendices speak to the relationship of new buildings on the campus to perimeter and internal campus streets. While redesigning campus entryways and “portals” is encouraged in the Specific Plan Appendices, specific guidelines for achieving these reconfigured entry points and plazas are beyond the scope of the Appendices at this time.

**Displacement of Existing Businesses**

Written comments expressed concerns that the redevelopment of University Village would require the relocation of existing businesses and that the Specific Plan and Development Agreement, as proposed, offer no safeguards against the loss of existing businesses in University Village. Desire was expressed to require the University to ensure that existing retail business can stay open.

***Planning Department Response***

This is an important concern; however, given that this issue was raised previously in connection with the Development Agreement, and tenant relocation assistance has been agreed to by the University, the Department of City Planning recommends no further action on this item.

**Conclusion**

The Specific Plan Appendices mark a historic opportunity to develop a “complete street” in South Los Angeles - one that integrates pedestrians and bicyclists, improves safety along the street, and for the first time creates a unique urban identity for the USC campus that draws cues from the campus and the surrounding neighborhood. Together, the Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Streetscape Plan will ensure that buildings within the Specific Plan meet the long-range goals and policies for area by ensuring high quality architectural treatment, walkable blocks interlinked by open spaces, paseos and storefronts. The outward orientation of buildings toward perimeter streets will activate street edges, invite pedestrians, and encourage people to choose walking or biking in this area. The Plan and its Appendices respond to community concerns regarding mobility and balancing the needs of various users. The Department of City Planning therefore recommends that the City Planning Commission adopt the proposed USC Specific Plan Appendices.

## FINDINGS

1. **GENERAL PLAN FINDINGS.** In accordance with **Charter Section 556**, and consistent with Section 11.5.4 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, the proposed Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan, Appendices A and B of the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan, are in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent, and provisions of the General Plan and its various Elements in that the Appendices promote the implementation of the City's General Plan Framework Element, Transportation Element, South Los Angeles Community Plan, and Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), and serve to implement existing urban design goals, objective and policies found in the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan.

### **Conformance with the USC Specific Plan**

In fulfillment of Section 7.A of the Specific Plan, Appendix A and Appendix B will be in conformance with the six Urban Design Principles, guiding future development of all Subareas and public rights-of-way. Section 7.A reads:

***Urban Design Principles Guiding Future Development.*** *The following six principles shall be used to guide future development within the Specific Plan, including improvements made to public rights of way within the Specific Plan area, as shown on Map 1, and shall be used in the crafting, updating, or amending of any Urban Design Guidelines (Appendix A) and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan (Appendix B) of this Specific Plan:*

1. *Enhance urban cohesion by providing a mix of uses that embrace the community by emphasizing Jefferson Boulevard as a complete street that weaves together the public realm and academic space as a place for people.*
2. *Promote diverse architectural character by avoiding bland, uniform development through design that is context-sensitive, embraces architectural diversity, and integrates university buildings into the surrounding neighborhood.*
3. *Ensure sensitive urban form by creating a vibrant community center that activates key pedestrian and vehicular corridors, encourages a safe environment, and maintains an urban character that is sensitive to nearby residential areas.*
4. *Promote outward building orientation by ensuring that campus buildings relate to perimeter streets, establishing new connections to the community where the USC Campus fronts on key corridors.*
5. *Emphasize human scale by framing public space with appropriately scaled buildings and articulated architectural blocks that connect academic gathering spaces to public spaces, including public rights-of-way.*
6. *Maximize connectivity and improve circulation for area residents, students, employees and visitors by emphasizing*

*multi-modal uses that take full advantage of the proximity of the USC Campus to the Exposition Metro Rail Line while reinforcing linkages to nearby destinations.*

Principle 1: Enhance urban cohesion by providing a mix of uses that embrace the community by emphasizing Jefferson Boulevard as a complete street that weaves together the public realm and academic space as a place for people.

Principle 6: Maximize connectivity and improve circulation for area residents, students, employees and visitors by emphasizing multi-modal uses that take full advantage of the proximity of the USC Campus to the Exposition Metro Rail Line while reinforcing linkages to nearby destinations.

The Specific Plan development standards guide allowable uses, massing, form, height and orientation of buildings in each of the Subareas. The Design Guidelines found in Appendix A further articulate how each future project should interface with the various street and open space typologies. Appendix B will improve circulation and emphasize multi-modal uses to transform Jefferson Boulevard from an existing hub of pedestrian and bicyclist activity to a complete street by: widening sidewalks, providing a 7-foot wide buffered bicycle lane, improving wayfinding signage to improve access to destinations on campus and nearby, and creating a safer, more attractive street environment for all users.

Principle 2: Promote diverse architectural character by avoiding bland, uniform development through design that is context-sensitive, embraces architectural diversity, and integrates university buildings into the surrounding neighborhood.

Appendix A emphasizes the appropriate use of exterior building materials and encourages the use of lasting, high-quality materials, and construction methods. In this way, the Design Guidelines offer flexibility in the design of future projects without being overly prescriptive by requiring adherence to any one specific architectural style.

Principle 3: Ensure sensitive urban form by creating a vibrant community center that activates key pedestrian and vehicular corridors, encourages a safe environment, and maintains an urban character that is sensitive to nearby residential areas.

Principle 4: Promote outward building orientation by ensuring that campus buildings relate to perimeter streets, establishing new connections to the community where the USC Campus fronts on key corridors.

The Design Guidelines in Appendix A address not only the internal circulation and site planning considerations within the Subareas, but also edge conditions along perimeter streets. For example, the guidelines and street typologies describe appropriate fence materials and placement where buildings meet the public realm. The design guidelines go into a greater level of detail than the Specific Plan relative to the implementation of “paseos” and interior streets within Subarea 3. The Design Guidelines describe the appropriate landscape and hardscape material and width of paseos between buildings.

Principle 5: Emphasize human scale by framing public space with appropriately scaled buildings and articulated architectural blocks that connect academic gathering spaces to public spaces, including public rights-of-way.

Together with the setback requirements in the Specific Plan, the pedestrian paseo design guidelines will encourage outdoor seating and informal gathering spaces. The paseos will be scaled relative to the height, massing and bulk of surrounding buildings within the interior of the site. Similarly, the Design Guidelines encourage the siting and orientation of new buildings on the core campus around existing quadrangles, and pedestrian pathways. All buildings adjoining perimeter streets are encouraged to provide direct ground floor entrances to the street, allowing activities to flow outside of the private realm boundary and into the sidewalk and streetscape realm.

### **Conformance with the Transportation Element:**

*Transportation Element - Development Standards and Guidelines:*

*The following may be implemented through (1) guidelines to be adopted by the City Planning Commission and/or City Council or (2) codification (ordinances) enacted by City Council:*

*P12 - Formulate citywide development standards which:*

*Require whenever practicable, driveway access to buildings from side streets or alleys in order to minimize interference with pedestrian access and vehicular movement (for properties with frontage along major or secondary highways).*

*Require, whenever possible, off-street loading/dock facilities for all non-residential buildings, sufficient to accommodate the shipping and receiving needs of such buildings.*

*Require expanded truck loading and turning areas on-site in industrial areas and for large shopping centers.*

*Encourage transit friendly site design, where appropriate. (See also P9). This includes management of curb areas adjacent to transit centers to facilitate smart shuttles and taxi queuing.*

*Protect lower density residential areas from the intrusion of "through traffic" by implementing neighborhood traffic management programs. These programs shall include measures to reduce/control speeding and measures (including partial street closures) to reduce traffic volumes on neighborhood local streets. Any proposed partial street closure shall be subject to approval by LADOT and the Los Angeles Fire Department.*

*P13 - Further refine the Streetscape design objectives and guidelines set forth in this Element (Chapter VI-C.) through formulation of standards which:*

*Set forth flexible, performance-based standards for alternative sidewalk and crosswalk paving materials/textures;*

*Set forth specifications for location and type of street furniture which are flexible and performance-based; and which incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design considerations;*

*Provide clarity and predictability to all entities involved in implementing streetscape projects.*

*P14 - Formulate local standards for designated pedestrian oriented and transit oriented districts to account for each area's unique characteristics*

The proposed Specific Plan Appendices have incorporated design guidelines to allow for vehicular access for autos, trucks and loading facilities while emphasizing pedestrian friendly sidewalk treatments and a network of open spaces and paseos that create inviting destinations off of the major thoroughfares. The City's Street Standards Committee (which included the Bureaus of Street Services, Street Lighting, Urban Forestry, Engineering and the Department of Transportation) provided input throughout the development of the Concept Streetscape Plan to ensure that the proposed program would be feasible and that all entities involved in the future implementation of projects were familiar with the plan. The Plan provides a framework for USC to satisfy its community benefit obligations under the Development Agreement to create street improvements in the area, within a predictable timeframe.

### **Conformance with the South and Southeast Los Angeles Community Plans**

The proposed Specific Plan Appendices are consistent with the South Los Angeles Community Plan policies and in furtherance of the adopted Findings made pursuant to the City Planning Commission's action on the Specific Plan (CPC-2011-927-GPA-ZC-HD-SP-CA).

*Policy 2-4.2. New development should add to and enhance the existing pedestrian street activity.*

*Policy 2-4.9. Require that mixed use projects, where residential and commercial uses are in separate structures, provide adequate access between the residential and commercial uses so that residents can walk conveniently and safely.*

*Objective 16-2 (South Los Angeles Community Plan). To promote Pedestrian Oriented areas and pedestrian routes for commuter, school, recreational use, economic revitalization, and access to transit facilities.*

As described in the Findings above, Specific Plan Appendices A and B will ensure that future mixed-use development and the development of academic buildings on the core campus will provide increased safety and convenience for pedestrians by widening sidewalks along Jefferson Boulevard, adding crosswalks at key entry points to the campus, breaking down large blocks in Subarea 3 into smaller, more walkable streets, and introducing a variety of open space areas for pedestrians to gather along their routes to school, home, and transit facilities.

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

Policy 2-1.4. *Ensure the viability of existing neighborhood stores (i.e., mom and pop) which support the needs of local residents and are compatible with the neighborhood.*

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

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

Policy 2.5-3. *Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.*

While the Specific Plan area currently contains more than enough parking to meet anticipated demand. The Design Guidelines ensures that future parking structures will be located to minimize their visibility along public street level facades. The new mixed-use Project at University Village will be in the same location as the existing University Village center, but will be improved with a wide mix of uses, including sit-down restaurants, student housing, retail, academic spaces, and a grocery store that will draw not only students, but residents from the surrounding community as well as the region.

Objective 5-1. *To preserve existing open space resources and where possible develop new open space.*

The existing University Park Campus already includes substantial passive and active recreation areas available for use by University-affiliated individuals and by members of the general public. These existing open space resources will remain with Project implementation. In addition, the Specific Plan Appendices will provide for new open space areas that may include courtyards, plazas, pedestrian paseos, pedestrian streets, roof terraces, gardens, and other similar outdoor gathering places. In particular, new pedestrian pathways and landscaping will be designed to reinforce the park-like, Campus setting in Subarea 1. Within Subarea 2, landscaped areas and pedestrian pathways will integrate new and existing buildings. The Design Guidelines identify typologies for open space within Subarea 3 that will include various landscaped pedestrian pathways as well as open space areas. Ground level open space will be programmed for public events such as farmers markets, entertainment and other similar events for the entire community. Overall, the Specific Plan's open space provisions in conjunction with the existing open space resources within the Campus will serve the needs of the University and the surrounding community. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan Appendices will be consistent with this objective.

## **2. CONFORMANCE TO PUBLIC NECESSITY, CONVENIENCE, GENERAL WELFARE AND GOOD ZONING PRACTICE.**

Appendices A and B conform to public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice in the following respects:

Adoption of Design Guidelines and will facilitate development consistent with the fundamental concepts of the Community Plans for South and Southeast Los Angeles,

and the Transportation Element, which include preserving and enhancing the characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods while providing new housing opportunities in transit-rich areas; improving the function, design, and economic vitality of commercial corridors; preserving and enhancing the positive traits of existing uses and the community identity; maximizing development opportunities with respect to transit improvements while minimizing adverse impacts; and creating a long-range planning document that provides predictability for future projects.

The Design Guidelines and Jefferson Boulevard Concept Streetscape Plan encourage pedestrian-oriented design elements, context-sensitive building heights and massing, and subtle transitions between different zones and land uses to create better connected, functional, and more livable communities. In summary, the Specific Plan will provide for orderly, logical and functionally integrated development within the Specific Plan area, conforming to good zoning practice.

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS (CEQA)**

The City Council certified Environmental Impact Report No. ENV-2009-271-EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2009011101) and related CEQA Findings on December 12, 2013 (the "Final EIR") in connection with the adoption of the USC University Park Campus Specific Plan and Development Agreement. The Final EIR was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq. The Final EIR serves as the required environmental review for all discretionary or ministerial approvals and permits required to implement the "Project" as described in the Final EIR, which includes the adoption of Design Guidelines and a Concept Streetscape Plan for Jefferson Boulevard.



## **PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Summary of Public Hearing Testimony and Communications Received**

The public hearing on this matter was held at the Galen Center, Founder's Room at 3400 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90089 on Tuesday, November 5, 2013 at 7:00 P.M. A professional Spanish-English interpreter was present.

**Attendees:** Approximately 119 people attended the November 5 public hearing.

**Speakers:** A total of 22 individuals provided formal public testimony.

### **Summary of USC Public Hearing Testimony and Communications**

Most speakers were generally in support of the Project and the future development of Subarea 3. Many of the issues raised at the public hearings during adoption of the Specific Plan adoption were raised again in connection with the Design Guidelines and Streetscape Plan.

Specific issues and themes included:

#### **Street Improvement Boundaries**

- The desires to see all street improvements on Jefferson Boulevard extend beyond the proposed boundary of Vermont Avenue to Western Avenue on the west and Grand Avenue on the east. Concern that stopping at Vermont Avenue will deepen the divide between the University and surrounding community.

#### **Bicycle Lane Improvements**

- Concerns about how the \$350,000 contribution towards the implementation of bicycle lanes west of Vermont Avenue will be allotted.
- Preference for the continuous bike lane alternative, rather than sharrows during intern construction phase (Phase 2 - before full build-out).
- Concerns about potentially dangerous intersections at Jefferson/Vermont and Jefferson/McClintock intersections where bicyclists frequently ride counter to traffic flow.
- The importance of clearly identifying and delineating bicycle lanes (green paint was mentioned).

#### **Phasing Plan**

- Concern was expressed about breaking up the phasing of street improvements in 2 or more phases. The community wants certainty that the improvements in Phase 2 will be implemented in a timely manner in order to achieve the fully built-out streetscape.

#### **Other Streetscape Components**

- The importance of other streetscape components such as trash receptacles and regular maintenance of bus shelters and benches.
- Desire to see bus infrastructure figure more prominently in the plan, specifically a better resolution of bus/bicyclist conflicts addressed in the Streetscape Plan.
- Concerns about having a single tree species on the street. Desire to see additional tree species mixed in, rather than a single species.

**Design Guidelines**

- One speaker mentioned the importance of achieving compatibility between the new University Village development and the North University Park Specific Plan, just north of 30<sup>th</sup> Place. Specific concerns included a need for better massing and bulk transitions adjacent to the historic district and making the signage design guidelines more restrictive.

**Summary of Written Correspondence**

The Department of City Planning received 6 letters in the form of written testimonies, e-mails, a petition which included 416 signatures, and other written comments. The written correspondence represented individuals and the following organizations:

- Hoover Intergenerational Care, Inc. (HIC)
- USC Bicycle Coalition, a chapter of the Los Angeles Country Bicycle Coalition
- Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburger Restaurants, current tenant of University Village
- Church of the Redeemer, and local neighborhood associations
- "Make Jefferson Beautiful" Petition

Written comments echoed the concerns described above. In addition, the following issues were raised:

- Potential for increased traffic congestion at the intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Figueroa Street.
- Desire for an additional crosswalk and break in the street median at Orchard Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard to provide bicyclists and pedestrians an additional crossing opportunity.
- Desire for better integration of the USC Bike Master Plan and Appendix B, including redesigned bicycle entrances to campus at McClintock Avenue, Watt Way, Hoover Street and Royal Street, and specifically a redesign of the main entry point to the campus at Hoover Street and Trousdale Parkway.
- Concerns about displacement of existing businesses with the redevelopment of Subarea 3 and the financial impact this may have.

A detailed discussion of comments in support of the project and community concerns can be found in the Analysis section of this report (pages A-10 through A-15).