SECTION 1
Introduction

This Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA) has been prepared pursuant to Section 21155.2 of the California Public Resources Code (PRC).

Project Title: 7940 Lankershim Boulevard

Project Location: 7940 North Lankershim Boulevard (7918-7946 North Lankershim Boulevard and 11650-11664 West Strathern Street)
Los Angeles, CA 91605

Lead Agency: City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning
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Los Angeles, CA 90012

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1.1 Project Description Summary

The subject of this SCEA is a proposed mixed-use development known as the 7940 Lankershim Boulevard Project. The Project Site is an irregular-shaped parcel bordered by North Lankershim Boulevard to the west and West Strathern Street to the north. To the immediate east of the Project Site are single-family residential uses and Blythe Street. Two commercial properties are currently located on the Project Site which includes a one-story commercial building, a one-story office building, and associated surface parking and storage areas. The Project would demolish the existing structures to construct the Project.

The Project proposes the development of a seven-story mixed-use development consisting of 432 multi-family residential units and approximately 22,000 square feet of ground floor commercial uses. The Project would be approximately 87 feet in height and would include a total square footage of approximately 678,328 square feet (sf) and a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3.32:1. The residential component/portion would include 72 one-bedroom units, 180 two-bedroom units, and 180 three-bedroom units. A total of 11 percent of the proposed residential units (48 units) would be designated as restricted affordable housing for Extremely Low Income Households or
Very Low Income Households. Five percent of the proposed residential units (22 units) would be designated as restricted affordable housing for Extremely Low Income Households, and six percent of the proposed residential units (26 units) would be designated as restricted affordable housing for Very Low Income Households.

Up to 541 parking spaces (432 residential and 109 commercial parking spaces) would be provided in structured parking located within one subterranean level and on above-ground level. All parking would be fully enclosed and screened from public view. The Project would provide 224 bicycle spaces in the structured parking (30 short term bicycle spaces and 194 long term bicycle spaces).

Open space areas and amenities for residents would be include a central courtyard that would be landscaped and open to the sky. Other amenities would include a community room, recreational room, swimming pool and spa area, pet park, and private balconies.

Discretionary entitlements, reviews, and approvals required for implementation of the Project would include, but would not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Pursuant to the Los Angeles Municipal Code Section (LAMC) Section 12.32-F, a Zone Change and Height District Change to change the zone from C2-1VL and R1-1 to RAS4-1-CUGU. and pursuant to LAMC Section 11.5.11(e) and the California Government Code Section 65915(k), three (3) Developer Incentives to permit:
  - Open Space to be located adjacent to a subject use as listed in LAMC Section 12.18-E.2(d) pursuant to LAMC Section 13.18-F.3(a);
  - An increase of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to 3.32:1 in lieu of the required FAR required by LAMC Section 12.21.4;

- A parking ratio of 1 parking space per dwelling unit in lieu of the required parking spaces required by LAMC Section 12.21-A.4; Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.24-W,1, a Master Conditional Use Permit for the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages in an approximately 14,000 square foot retail store/pharmacy for off-site consumption and for the sale and dispensing of beer and wine in two approximately 4,000 square-foot restaurants for on-site consumption; and

- Pursuant to LAMC Section 16.05, a Site Plan Review for a project that creates more than 50 dwelling units.

- Approval of other permits, ministerial or discretionary, may be necessary in order to execute and implement the Project. Such approvals may include, but not limited to: landscaping approvals, exterior approvals, storm water discharge permits, grading permits, haul route permits, and installation and hookup approvals for public utilities and related permits; and

- Adoption of the Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA).
1.2 Background Information on Senate Bill 375 and the SCEA

The State of California adopted Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), also known as “The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008,” which outlines growth strategies that better integrate regional land use and transportation planning and that help meet the State of California’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction mandates. SB 375 requires the State’s 18 metropolitan planning organizations to incorporate a “sustainable communities strategy” (SCS) into the regional transportation plans to achieve their respective region’s greenhouse gas emission reduction targets set by CARB. Correspondingly, SB 375 provides various California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining provisions for projects that are consistent with an adopted applicable SCS and meet certain objective criteria; one such CEQA streamlining tools is the SCEA.

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the metropolitan planning organization for the County of Los Angeles (along with the Counties of Imperial, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and Ventura). On April 7, 2016, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted the 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016–2040 RTP/SCS). For the SCAG region, CARB has set GHG emissions reduction targets at 8 percent below 2005 per capita emissions levels by 2020, and 13 percent below 2005 per capita emissions levels by 2035. The 2016–2040 RTP/SCS outlines strategies to meet or exceed the targets set by CARB. By Executive Order, approved June 28, 2016, CARB officially determined that the 2016–2040 RTP/SCS would achieve CARB’s 2020 and 2035 GHG emission reduction targets.

SB 375 allows the City, acting as lead agency, to prepare a SCEA as the environmental CEQA Clearance for “transit priority projects” (as described below) that are consistent with SCAG’s 2016–2040 RTP/SCS.

1.3 Transit Priority Project Criteria

SB 375 provides CEQA streamlining benefits to qualifying transit priority projects (TPPs). For purposes of projects in the SCAG region, a qualifying TPP is a project that meets the following four criteria (see PRC Section 21155 (a) and (b)):

1. Is consistent with the general use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in the SCAG 2016–2040 RTP/SCS;

2. Contains at least 50 percent residential use, based on total building square footage and, if the project contains between 26 percent and 50 percent nonresidential uses, a floor area ratio of not less than 0.75;

3. Provides a minimum net density of at least 20 dwelling units per acre; and

4. Is within one-half mile of a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor included in a regional transportation plan.
1.4 SCEA Process and Streamlining Provisions

Qualifying TPPs that have incorporated all feasible mitigation measures, performance standards or criteria set forth in the prior applicable EIR (SCAG’s 2016–2040 RTP/SCS Program EIR) and that are determined to not result in significant and unavoidable environmental impacts may be approved with a SCEA. The specific substantive and procedural requirements for the approval of a SCEA include the following:

1. An initial study shall be prepared for a SCEA to identify all significant impacts or potentially significant impacts of the TPP, except for the following:
   
   a. Growth-inducing impacts, and
   
   b. Project-specific or cumulative impacts from cars and light trucks on global warming or the regional transportation network.

   Note: All relevant and feasible 2016–2040 RTP/SCS Program EIR mitigation measures shall be incorporated into the Project prior to conducting the initial study analysis.

2. The initial study shall identify any cumulative impacts that have been adequately addressed and mitigated in a prior applicable certified EIR. Where the lead agency determines the impact has been adequately addressed and mitigated, the impact shall not be cumulatively considerable.

3. The SCEA shall contain mitigation measures that either avoid or mitigate to a level of insignificance all potentially significant or significant effects of the project required to be identified in the initial study.

4. A draft of the SCEA shall be circulated for a public comment period not less than 30 days, and the lead agency shall consider all comments received prior to acting on the SCEA.

5. The SCEA may be approved by the lead agency after the lead agency’s legislative body conducts a public hearing, reviews comments received, and finds the following:
   
   a. All potentially significant or significant effects required to be identified in the initial study have been identified and analyzed, and
   
   b. With respect to each significant effect on the environment required to be identified in the initial study, either of the following apply:
      
      i. Changes or alterations have been required in or incorporated into the project that avoid or mitigate the significant effects to a level of insignificance.
      
      ii. Those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.
6. The lead agency’s decision to review and approve a TPP with a SCEA shall be reviewed under the substantial evidence standard.

1.5 Required Findings

The City of Los Angeles finds, based on the information contained in Section 2 (Project Description), Section 3 (SCEA Criteria and Transit Priority Project Consistency Analysis), Section 4 (Initial Study Checklist), and Section 5 (Sustainable Communities Environmental Impact Analysis) of this document, the City finds that preparation of a SCEA in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21155.2(b) is appropriate for the Project for the following reasons:

- The Project is consistent with the general use designations, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the area of the Project Sites in the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS) prepared by SCAG, which is the metropolitan planning organization for the City.

- The State Air Resources Board, pursuant to subparagraph (H) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 65080 of the Government Code, has accepted SCAG’s determination that the sustainable communities strategy adopted by SCAG in the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS would, if implemented, achieve the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

- The Project qualifies as a transit priority project pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21155 in that the Project contains more than 50 percent residential use; provides a minimum net density greater than 20 units an acre; and is within one--half mile of a major transit stop or high--quality transit corridor included in a regional transportation plan;

- The Project is a residential or mixed-use project as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21159.28(d);

- The Project incorporates all feasible mitigation measures, performance standards, or criteria set forth in the prior environmental reports and adopted findings made pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081, including the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR);

- All potentially significant or significant effects required to be identified and analyzed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in an initial study have been identified and analyzed in an initial study; and

- As outlined in detail in Section 5 (SCEA Initial Study Checklist) and Section 6 (Sustainable Communities Environmental Impact Analysis) changes or alterations have been required in or incorporated into the Project that avoid or mitigate the significant effects to a level of less than significant.

1.6 Organization of the SCEA

Based on the information presented above, the SCEA for the Project is organized as follows:
• **Section 1. Introduction:** This section provides introductory information about the Project and background information regarding SB 375, lists the TPP criteria, and describes the required content of the SCEA.

• **Section 2. Project Description:** This section provides a detailed description of the environmental setting and the Project, including Project characteristics and environmental setting.

• **Section 3. Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment Criteria:** This section includes a discussion of the Project’s consistency with the TPP criteria listed above and demonstrates that the Project satisfies all necessary criteria for approval of a SCEA as set forth in California PRC Sections 21155.2, and 21159.28(a).

• **Section 4. Incorporation of 2016-2040 RTP/SCS Program EIR Mitigation Measures:** This section also identifies all of the mitigation measures contained in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for SCAG’s 2016–2040 RTP/SCS Program EIR and a discussion of the applicability of the mitigation measures to the Project.

• **Section 5. SCEA Initial Study Checklist:** This section contains the completed Initial Study Checklist and assesses the significant level under each environmental impact category.

• **Section 6. Sustainable Communities Environmental Impact Analysis:** Each environmental issue identified in the Initial Study Checklist contains an assessment and discussion of Project-specific and cumulative impacts associated with each subject area. Where the evaluation identifies potentially significant effects, as identified on the Checklist, mitigation measures are provided to reduce such impacts to less-than-significant levels.

• **Appendices:** Includes various documents, technical reports, and information used in preparation of the SCEA and can be found in the case file for ENV-2019-808-SCEA at the Department of City Planning.