

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 REGIONAL SETTING

Pasadena is located approximately 12 miles to the north and east of downtown Los Angeles. The City itself is located within the West San Gabriel Valley, at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. The City is world renowned for several of its architectural landmarks, arts, institutions and events. The city's popular shops and restaurants blend comfortably with tree-lined streets, distinctive neighborhoods, historic buildings and a vibrant cultural scene.

The City of Pasadena is approximately 23 square miles in area. The City also has a designated sphere of influence area adjacent to the southeastern boundaries of the City (generally north of Huntington Drive and west of Rosemead Boulevard) which is about 883 acres in size. According to the 2000 Census, Pasadena's population was 133,936. According to the California Department of Finance, the City's population in 2007 is estimated to be 147,262, which is an increase of 13,866 from 2000 (Department of Finance, May 2007).

Pasadena is roughly bounded by two open space corridors along the eastern and western perimeters of the City. The open space corridors are situated along two drainages, Arroyo Seco Stream and Eaton Wash. Residential areas bound each of these areas of open space and extend along the northern and southern boundary of the City, surrounding the City's commercial core.

The City enjoys a subtropical and semi-arid climate. The average daytime and nighttime temperatures are 77 degrees and 52 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively, with summer highs typically in the 80s and winter lows in the 40s. Pasadena receives an average annual rainfall of about 20 inches, which primarily falls between the winter months of November and March.

Regional access to Pasadena is provided by the 110 Freeway, State Route 134, and the 210 Freeway. The 110 Freeway connects the City to Downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena, and other areas of the southern California region. The SR-134 and 210 Freeway serve as an east/west corridor, providing access to Ventura and Riverside Counties. The Metro Gold Line provides regional rail access throughout Los Angeles County. Arroyo Parkway, Colorado Boulevard, and Los Robles Avenue are major arterials with Fair Oaks Avenue and Lake Avenues minor arterials that provide for local circulation throughout the City.

3.2 PROJECT SITE SETTING

The project site is located at the southeast corner of Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue. The project site is located within the Central District Specific Plan Area and also within the Pasadena Playhouse sub-district. The project site encompasses 57,762 square-feet, or about 1.3 acres. The northern portion of the property is developed with a two-story commercial building that is currently vacant. The southern portion of the property is developed with surface parking for the furniture store. The building was built in 1916, added onto in 1927, and substantially altered in 1945. The building is not historically significant pursuant to the City's Central District Historic Resources Survey of 2003. There are 11 ornamental street trees along El Molino and Colorado Boulevard, with 17 additional trees onsite in landscaped areas within and



adjacent to the existing parking lot at the rear of the building. The project site is located between two historic resources: the Arcade Lane building is located adjacent the eastern project boundary, while the Pasadena Playhouse is located opposite the project site to the west across El Molino Avenue. The project site is bounded by Colorado Boulevard on the north and by a strip of land that is associated with the Arcade building on the south. Green Street is located about 64 feet south of the southern property boundary.

El Molino Avenue abuts the western boundary of the site and is a de-emphasized street pursuant to the City's Mobility Element. This classification is intended to limit future street improvements that would allow for increased traffic loading on El Molino Avenue in an effort to protect the residential character of neighborhoods abutting the street throughout the City.

The area surrounding the project site is highly urbanized, containing a mix of uses that include commercial uses such as a retail stores, cafes and restaurants; theatre uses including the Pasadena Playhouse and the Laemmle movie theatre opposite the site on the north side of Colorado. The Playhouse District retains many of the original buildings constructed during the 1920s and 1930s. Building styles range from 1920s period revival architecture to contemporary commercial and residential buildings. Building heights range from one to 10 stories. Most structures in the immediate project vicinity are one and two stories in height, with some exceptions such as churches and the Playhouse tower. Several taller buildings are nearby on Colorado Boulevard, including the five-story Trio Apartments on the northwest corner of Colorado Boulevard and El Molino, and the seven-story Bank of the West building further to the west on Colorado Avenue. The three-story Arcade Lane building, dating from 1927, is directly east of the project site.

3.3 CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual events that, when evaluated together, are significant or would compound other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are the changes in the environment that result from the incremental impact of development of the proposed project and other nearby projects. For example, traffic impacts of two nearby projects may be inconsequential when analyzed separately, but could have a substantial impact when analyzed together.

Section 15130 of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires a discussion of cumulative impacts. The discussion of related or cumulative projects may be drawn from either a "list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts" or a "summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact."

Planned and pending developments in the site vicinity are listed in Table 3-1. As indicated, projects within a ½ mile radius of the project site include approximately 1,256 dwelling units and 461,687 square feet of commercial development.



**Table 3-1
 Planned and Pending Projects in the Site Vicinity**

Address	Residential (DU)	Commercial (SF)	Description
44 S Madison Ave.	22	8,000	22 Condo Units and 8,000 sq ft retail with 338 parking spaces replacing 113 space surface lot
301 E Colorado Blvd.	56	8,000	8,000 SF retail, 56-unit luxury condos (Montana)
556 E Colorado Blvd.	0	111,830	10,910 SF retail, 1,550 SF restaurant, and 99,370 SF medical office
592 E Colorado Blvd.	16	3,500	Demo 1,440 SF retail shoe repair and 400 SF take out restaurant, construct 3,500 SF retail and 16 condos
621 E Colorado Blvd.	304	14,602	304-unit residential; 14,602 SF retail, 420 public parking and 456 residential parking
1010 E Colorado Blvd.	0	18,236	Demo 2,434 SF rental car office and 14,000 SF bank and construct new 18,236 SF bank (Citizen's Bank)
62 N El Molino Ave.	104	n/a	(Part of Mill Creek Project at 686-717 E Union, 44-48 N El Molino) Demo 3,207 SF office and construct 104 apts and ground floor retail office
747 E Green St.	30	13,000	Construct 30 condo & 13,000 SF TV Studio
936 E Green St.	46	7,700	Remove 11,000 SF and construct 46-unit Condominiums and 7,700 SF retail
141 S Hudson Ave.	9	3,565	9-unit condo, 3,090 SF office, and 475 SF retail
151 S Hudson Ave.	9	3,500	9 condominium units and 3,500 SF dental office
171 S Hudson Ave.	20	9,000	Demo 6,800 SF office and construct 20 condominiums and 9000 SF office
251 S Hudson Ave.	17	0	17 condos
233 N Hudson Ave.	23	0	23 condos
85 S Lake Ave.	103	24,000	The Lofts at South Lake, 103 apartments and 24,000 SF retail
203 N Lake Ave.	0	212,817	204,910 SF office, 4,236 SF bank, 3,671 SF restaurant
220 N Lake Ave.	106	9,200	106 condos; 9,200 SF retail
240 N Madison Ave	180	0	180-unit student housing (138 new)
128 N Oak Knoll Ave.	53	0	53 condos
135 N Oakland Ave.	n/a	n/a	Fuller Seminary Master Development Plan
680 E Walnut St.	59	7,557	Construct 59 Condos and 7,557 SF retail
712 E Walnut St.	28	3,396	Walnut Place 28 apartments, 3,396 SF retail



**Table 3-1
Planned and Pending Projects in the Site Vicinity**

Address	Residential (DU)	Commercial (SF)	Description
770 E Walnut St.	71	3,784	Demolish one commercial building, two SFR, and three apartment buildings and construct 103,000 sq-ft mixed use, including 71 units, 1500 sq-ft restaurant, 2284 sq-ft general commercial, and 144 parking spaces
Total	1,256	461,687	

Source: Related Projects within ½ mile radius, City of Pasadena Department of Transportation, March 28, 2007.

Notes: DU = dwelling units; SF = square feet

