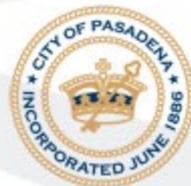


**Quasi-Judicial Action:
Appeal of Design Commission's Concept
Design Review Approval for a New
Research & Development Project
1364 East Green Street**

City Council

March 2, 2026





Project Background

Planning & Community Development

- On August 8, 2025, the applicant filed an application for Concept Design Review (CDR) for a new research & development (R&D) project at 1364 E. Green Street.
- On December 9, 2025, the Design Commission (DC) reviewed the application and continued the application.
- On January 27, 2026, DC unanimously approved the CDR application (5-0) with conditions of approval and adopted a Categorical Exemption.
- On February 9, 2025, an appeal was filed by Building a Better Pasadena, LLC.



Project Background

Planning & Community Development

- **Project Details**
 - > 41,573-square-foot site at the southeast corner of E. Green Street and S. Holliston Avenue.
 - > One building; three-to-four-stories (93,539 sq. ft.).
 - > 260 at-grade and subterranean parking spaces.
 - > Research & Development (R&D) land use.
- The project meets all applicable development standards of the Zoning Code including the East Colorado Specific Plan and the R&D standards.
- The R&D land use is allowed by right.
- No Variances are required.
- The only entitlement required is Design Review.



Project Background

Planning & Community Development

- Design Review is a 3-phase process: Preliminary Consultation, Concept Design Review and Final Design Review. Each phase builds upon the other, as the applicant must respond to comments provided at each phase.
- Applicable Design Guidelines:
 - > Design-related Goals & Policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan.
 - > Design Guidelines in the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan.
 - > Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Residential Districts



Council's Purview

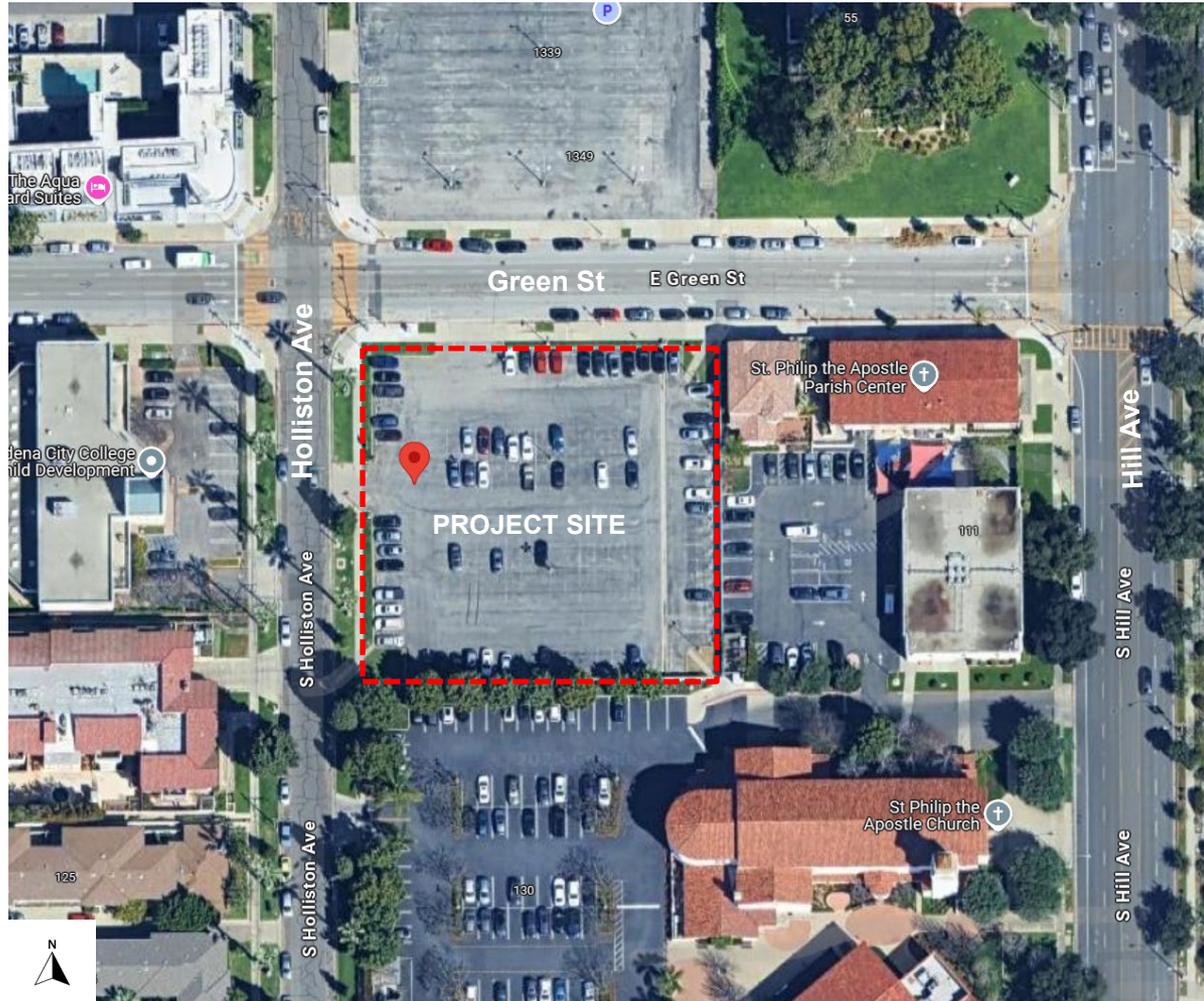
Planning & Community Development

- City Council's review is limited to the Environmental Review and the Design Review (specifically, the project's consistency with applicable design guidelines):
 - > Cannot reduce size of the building beyond what the Zoning Code allows.



Project Background

Planning & Community Development



Aerial Photograph of Project Site



North and West Elevations

Planning & Community Development





Renderings

Planning & Community Development



North & east elevations
Looking SW along Green Street from Hill Avenue Library Site



Renderings

Planning & Community Development



North & West Elevations
Looking SE from the corner of Green Street & Holliston Avenue



Renderings

Planning & Community Development



West & South Elevations
Looking NE from Holliston Avenue



Appeal Points

Planning & Community Development

- The appellant makes two points related to the approval:
 1. Insufficient analysis to support the Categorical Exemption; and
 2. The project is not consistent with General Plan/Specific Plan/Zoning Code.



Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- *Findings for Categorical Exemption cannot be made as there are sufficient technical inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the published technical studies. Furthermore, the studies fail to fully study and understand the impacts with the associated use relative to the operation of the building.*



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Staff finds that the project qualifies for a CE under Class 32, In-Fill Development Projects.
- To qualify for this exemption, a project is required to meet the following criteria:
 - > Consistent with General Plan designation & applicable policies and with zoning designation & regulations.
 - > Site within City limits, less than 5 acres, substantially surrounded by urban uses.
 - > Site has no value as habitat for special status species.
 - > Approval of project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Project will adhere to applicable regulations & permitting requirements and will not have impacts to water quality.
- EcoTierra Consulting and Fehr & Peers, environmental consulting firms, completed the noise, air quality and traffic technical studies to support the CE, which conclude that there will be less than significant impacts on the environment.
- The appeal application did not state the specific inconsistencies and inaccuracies that the appellants allege in the published technical studies or the aspects of the project operation that the technical studies allegedly fail to fully study or understand.
- However, during the DC review, several concerns were raised.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- **Noise & Vibration.**
 - > A Noise & Vibration Analysis for the project was prepared by EcoTierra and considered various local, state and federal guidance.
 - > Both construction and operation.
 - > Reviewed for potential impacts to sensitive receptors including St. Phillips church, school & community center; PCC Child Development Center and various apartments.
 - > Noise and vibration impacts were found to be below all relevant criteria. **No significant impact.**



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- **Air Quality.**
 - > An Air Quality Analysis for the project was prepared by EcoTierra following methodology in the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD's) Air Quality Analysis Handbook.
 - > Both construction and operation.
 - > Reviewed for potential impacts to sensitive receptors including St. Phillips church, school & community center; PCC Child Development Center and various apartments.
 - > Construction and operational emissions found to be below SCAQMD thresholds. **No significant impact.**



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Traffic.
 - > Metric 1: Vehicle-Miles-Traveled (VMT) analysis was conducted as required by the CEQA Guidelines.
 - Project VMT per capita is below threshold. **No impact.**
 - > Metric 2: Safety
 - Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment). **No impact.**



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- **Local Mobility Analysis Conducted (Non-CEQA).**
 - > Purpose: to understand the effect of the project on the local transportation network and whether any local improvements would need to be made to accommodate the project.
 - > Intersection Operational Analyses
 - Intersection Level-of-Service (LOS) – operate acceptably
 - Exclusive Turn-Lane Queuing – adds to existing queuing issue
 - > Neighborhood Intrusion/Cut-through (if needed)
 - None meet criteria for study. Holliston Ave is a Project access.
 - > Active Transportation Review
 - No negative effect on existing pedestrian/bike/transit infrastructure.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Main concerns heard related to traffic:
 - > Project would cause congestion on nearby streets and intersections.
 - > Project driveways would cause conflicts with school pick-ups/drop-offs, pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - > Project would cause queues to extend beyond storage capacity or add to an existing queuing issue.
- Appellants conducted a traffic study.
- DOT has reviewed the study and concluded that no further study is required and no effects were identified that were not already addressed.
- DOT staff can provide more detail.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Other criteria for all CEs (exceptions to the exemptions):
 - > Location – classes 3-6 & 11 only.
 - Project qualifies for class 32
 - > Significant cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place.
 - No other proposed projects of the same type in the same place as the proposed project (closest comparable example is over a mile west at 26 N. Euclid Ave.)
 - > Unusual circumstances.
 - Project is an allowed land use on a standard, flat, rectangular parcel at a standard street intersection in a developed urban area of the City.
 - > Scenic highways.
 - No scenic highways in the vicinity of the project.
 - > Hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.
 - Project is not on a list of hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #1

Planning & Community Development

- Other criteria for a CE (exceptions to the exemptions):
 - > Substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.
 - “Substantial adverse change” means physical demolition, destruction, relocation or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.
 - The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project demolishes or adversely alters those physical characteristics of that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the state or local register of historic resources.
 - Property is a surface parking lot and does not contain any historic resources.
 - St. Philip the Apostle Church & School is adjacent to the east and south, but is not a designated historic resource and has not been evaluated for historical significance.
 - The church was designed by significant architect Roland Coate and built in 1950. Other buildings on the site were built between 1961 and 2021.
 - The project would not demolish or alter any of the physical characteristics of the St. Philip the Apostle Church and School property.
 - If the church and school were determined to be historically significant, the setting surrounding the church and school has changed significantly and would not contribute to its potential historical significance.
 - Therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.



Appeal Point #2

Planning & Community Development

- *The project is inconsistent with the fundamental provisions of the City's General Plan, and East Colorado Specific Plan and Zoning Code relating to design review.*



Staff Response to Appeal Point #2

Planning & Community Development

- The appeal application does not state specific inconsistencies of the project with the General Plan, the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan or the Zoning Code however as part of past hearings concerns have been raised that the project is too large and does meet the intent of these plans.
- Property is designated Medium Mixed Use in the General Plan.
 - > Designation is “intended to support the development of multi-story buildings with a variety of compatible commercial (retail and office) and residential uses. Development is characterized by shared open spaces, extensive landscaping, small to medium separations between buildings, and shared driveways and parking. Sites may be exclusively commercial or exclusively residential, or with buildings vertically integrating housing with non-residential uses.”
- Property is also consistent with a number of General Plan policies that encourage land use diversity, job opportunities, innovation and R&D flex space.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #2

Planning & Community Development

- **East Colorado Specific Plan.**
 - > Property is within the Mid-City Innovation District
 - Plan states: “Green Street is characterized by a combination of general office, retail, and medical office uses, in addition to government and PCC-related uses east of Michigan Street, including the State of California Employment Development Department and the PCC Child Development Center. Caltech, another institutional anchor located a quarter-mile to the south of the ECSP area, also contributes to the demand for office and R&D uses in the area.”
 - > Project is consistent with ECSP policies related to providing new development that is compatible with surrounding residential uses and educational assets.
 - Policy 7.c states: “Leverage proximity to higher learning and educational events on PCC and Caltech campuses to create economic benefits for local businesses and encourage growth in the local R&D and technology sectors.”



Staff Response to Appeal Point #2

Planning & Community Development

- **Zoning Code.**
 - > Research & Development land use is permitted by right in the EC-MU-N zoning district.
 - > Project complies with all applicable standards:
 - Setbacks
 - Stepbacks
 - Modulation
 - Frontage
 - Open Space
 - Parking
 - > Historic adjacency standards do not apply. St. Philips site is not a designated historic resource.



Staff Response to Appeal Point #2

Planning & Community Development

- Zoning Code.

- > In 2024, Council adopted R&D to establish flexible development standards to incentivize R&D uses (for height, floor area and parking), streamline the review process and reduce permit fees.
- > Project is consistent with R&D ordinance that allows:
 - The height limit of the base zoning district to be exceeded by a maximum of 12 feet (excluding the appurtenance height). The height limit for the base zoning district is 51 feet. The proposed building has a height of 63 feet and complies.
 - » Note: All buildings in the ECSP may exceed the base height limit by 12 feet over 30 percent of the building footprint.
 - Appurtenances to exceed the height limit by 18 feet. 15 feet is proposed.
 - Mechanical space and appurtenances to be excluded when calculating floor area ratio. The FAR maximum for the base zoning district is 2.25 or 93,539 square feet.

The proposed building has a floor area of 100,366 square feet, of which 6,827 square feet is devoted to mechanical space and appurtenance.

Excluding the mechanical space and appurtenance, the size of the building is 93,539 square feet and complies.



Design Review Finding

Planning & Community Development

- The project, upon implementation of the conditions of approval, will comply with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines in the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan, and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-family Districts
 - > The project is consistent with the Medium Mixed Use land use designation of the site in the General Plan and many of the General Plan's guiding principles, goals and policies.
 - > The project is consistent with the East Colorado Specific Plan Mid-City Innovation District and EC-MU-N zoning designation.
 - > Staff and the Design Commission reviewed the project for consistency with the design guidelines and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Districts.
 - The project integrates with the pedestrian experience through its street orientation and pedestrian access points along Green Street.
 - Modulation and articulated stepped back massing is respectful to the surrounding context.
 - Contemporary design with high quality materials, rational grid configuration, high levels of transparency that respond to the solar orientation of each façade.
 - Landscape design softens the development.
 - Design is inspired by a number of precedents of the same style within the larger context due to its proximity to E. Colorado Blvd., PCC, and Caltech and similar newer and older commercial, office, and institutional buildings of various architectural styles.
 - Nearest adjacent parcel (St. Philip the Apostle church & school) has improvements located between 26 and 295 feet away from the proposed building.
 - Recommended conditions will ensure further compatibility through study of the mechanical screening and fourth-floor step-back from the south façade.



Design Evolution

Planning & Community Development

- **Preliminary consultation comments:**

- > Study how project responds to context, particularly PCC buildings of similar scale & approved hotel at Colorado/Hill.
- > Consider differentiating facades based on solar exposure.
- > Consider stepping fourth floor at the south side.
- > Consider further differentiating the fourth floor from those below.
- > Further study & minimize mechanical screen.
- > Ensure high-quality & durable materials.





Design Evolution

Planning & Community Development

- Revised design presented to DC on December 9, 2025:

- > Addresses how project responds to PCC buildings of similar scale & approved hotel at Colorado/Hill.
- > Differentiates facades based on solar exposure.
- > All sides of the fourth floor stepped back from floors below.
- > Fourth floor design significantly differentiated from those below.
- > Mechanical screen materials changed and lowered from 18' to 16'.
- > Materials & articulation further refined.





Design Evolution

Planning & Community Development

- Revised design presented to DC on January 27, 2026 (current design):

- > Softens roof canopy edge.
- > Lowers mechanical screen from 16' to 15'.





Appellant's Design Concerns

Planning & Community Development

Concern	Suggested Modification	Staff Response
South elevation mass/scale	Increase south setback, Provide additional 4 th floor stepback	Project complies with setbacks, DC included condition to study 4 th -floor additional stepback.
Mechanical screen prominence	Reduce screen height, reduce mechanical area, adjust colors to reduce visibility	DC included condition to this effect.
Privacy/overlook	Reduce windows on south & east, add screening	Windows on south & east are reduced due to solar orientation. Solar canopies proposed on south side, but no screening.
Architectural compatibility	Make ground floor more substantial/solid, modify metal panel colors	Colors/materials will be reviewed during Final Design Review.
Pedestrian Scale	Enlarge PAOS, provide more substantial landscaping, reduce ground-floor height	Landscaping will be reviewed during Final Design Review.
Driveway/school interface	Add warning systems at driveways, Add landscape buffers at Green St. driveway	Landscaping will be reviewed during Final Design Review.



Staff Recommendation

Planning & Community Development

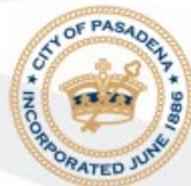
It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA under Class 32, infill development projects;
2. Find that the project will comply with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines in the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Residential Districts; and
3. Deny the appeal and approve the application for Concept Design Review subject to the conditions in Attachment B, which shall be further reviewed by the Design Commission during Final Design Review.

**Quasi-Judicial Action:
Appeal of Design Commission's Concept
Design Review Approval for a New
Research & Development Project
1364 East Green Street**

City Council

March 2, 2026





Applicable Design Guidelines

Planning & Community Development

Design-Related Policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan:

- 4.10: Locate and design buildings to relate to and frame major public streets, open spaces, and cityscape. New development at intersections should consider any number of corner treatments, and should balance safety and accessibility concerns with the vision of the area and the need for buildings to engage the street and create a distinct urban edge.
- 4.11: Require that development demonstrates a contextual relationship with neighboring structures and sites addressing such elements as building scale, massing, orientation, setbacks, buffering, the arrangement of shared and private open spaces, visibility, privacy, automobile and truck access, impacts of noise and lighting, landscape quality, infrastructure, and aesthetics.
- 7.1: Design each building as a high-quality, long term addition to the City's urban fabric; exterior design and buildings material shall exhibit permanence and quality, minimize maintenance concerns, and extend the life of the building.
- 7.2: Allow for the development of a diversity of buildings styles. Support innovative and creative design solutions to issues related to context and environmental sustainability.
- 7.3: Require that new and adaptively re-used buildings are designed to respect and complement the defining built form, massing, scale, modulation, and architectural detailing of their contextual setting.
- 10.7: Encourage sustainable practices for landscape materials, landscape design, and land development.
- 23.3: Provide appropriate setbacks, consistent with the surrounding neighborhood, along the street frontage and, where there are setbacks, ensure adequate landscaping is provided.
- 25.4: Require that new development protect community character by providing architecture, landscaping, and urban design of equal or greater quality than existing and by respecting the architectural character and scale of adjacent buildings.



Applicable Design Guidelines

Planning & Community Development

East Colorado Boulevard Specific Plan:

Goal 1: A public realm, including sidewalks, paseos, plazas, and pocket parks, that are safe and accessible to the general public and contribute to the ECSP area's overall identity and sense of place.

Policy: 1.c: Enhanced Storefronts. Promote enhanced storefronts that engage the public realm with street-oriented entrances, modulated facades, and pedestrian amenities in the public realm.

Goal 5: Complementary building forms that fit the scale of the neighborhood and support a vibrant, walkable district.

Policy 5.a: Architectural Diversity. Allow for a range of architectural styles and forms that provide visual interest and quality design through massing and façade standards.

Policy 5.b: Scaled Transitions. Provide upper floor setbacks where new development is adjacent to lower density residential districts.

Goal 6: Ample access to open space for both passive and active enjoyment.

Policy 6.b: Commercial Open Space. Require large nonresidential or mixed-use projects to provide open space for residents, employees, and visitors.

Policy 6.c: Quality Design. Introduce open space design standards meant to create usable and functional open space for residents, employees, and visitors alike.

Policy 6.d: Urban Greening. Use all open space areas to further environmental goals – such as carbon sequestration and reducing the urban heat island effect – through tree planting, stormwater capture, and native landscaping.

Goal 14: A commercial corridor supported by a mix of uses and housing opportunities connected by an enhanced public realm.

Policy 14.c: Pedestrian-Oriented Design. Balance the needs of auto-oriented uses with the desire for a walkable neighborhood character and enhanced pedestrian mobility by requiring pedestrian-oriented site design and features.

Policy 14.d: Lower-Scale Character. Maintain character to reflect existing form and strengthen neighborhood identity.



Applicable Design Guidelines

Planning & Community Development

Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-family Residential Districts:

- 2.2 Activating the street. New multi-family and mixed-use buildings should be designed with frontages that activate the street by providing direct access to their ground floor dwellings and commercial spaces.
- 5.1: Provide well-marked, articulated building entrances oriented to streets and public space.
- 11.1 All buildings should incorporate: A full array of architectural elements associated with their chosen style; the compositional, structural, and constructional logic associated with that style; and the material logic associated with that style.
- 11.2 The style of a new building should be clear and consistent, whether traditional or contemporary. Hybrid projects are discouraged.
- 11.4 Contemporary architecture. Buildings designed in contemporary styles may adhere to a set of rules that is established and followed through by the designer. The design strategy must be described in conformance with Appendix A3 (Preliminary Review).
- 13. The means and methods of construction of new buildings should contribute to their durability, usefulness, and compatibility.
- 14.1 Details. Window and door assemblies should be chosen that conform to the precedents of traditional styles or the intentions of contemporary design in terms of material, dimension, and detail.
- 14.3 Configurations. The orientation and proportion of openings should be consistent with the architectural language chosen for a project. Openings should relate to one another according to a clear system of composition and structure.
- 18 Landscape and hardscape. Landscape and hardscape should enhance the character of new buildings, address the Pasadena climate, and facilitate sustainable water use and drainage strategies.
- 18.1 Compatibility. Landscape and hardscape design should be compatible with the chosen architectural style of a building.



Aerial

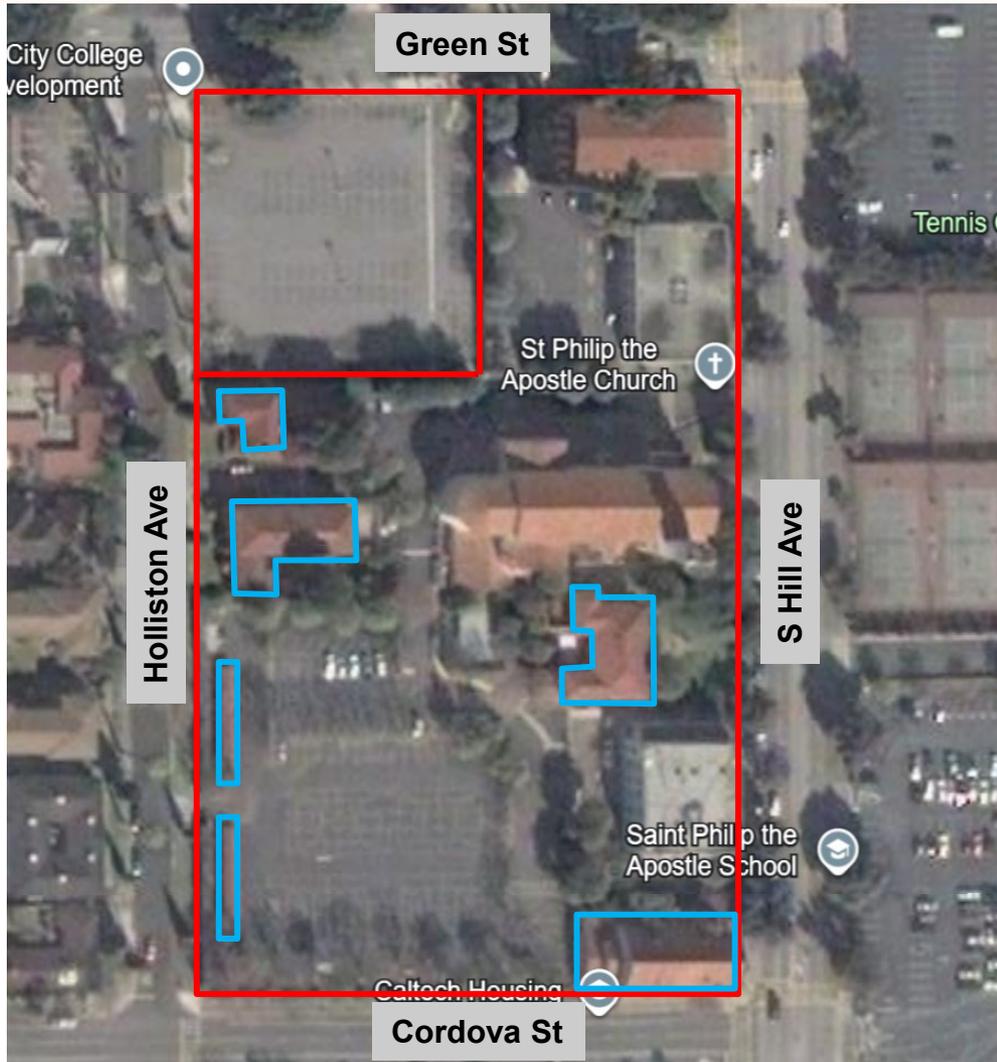
Planning & Community Development





St. Philip Campus Changes

Planning & Community Development



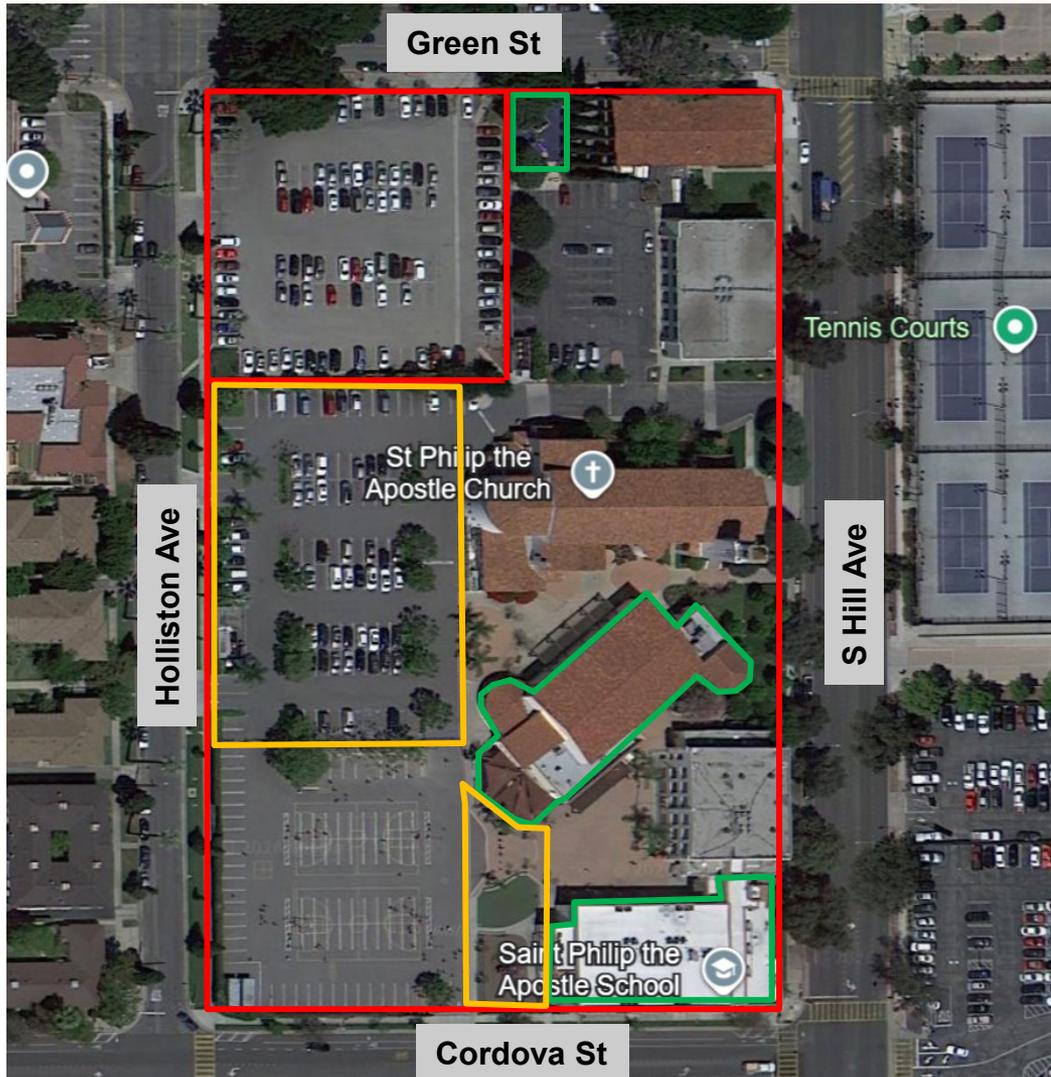
-  Property line
-  Buildings demolished since 2005

PASADENA



St. Philip Campus Changes

Planning & Community Development



-  Property line
-  Buildings constructed since 2006
-  Parking or hardscape reconfigured since 2006

PASADENA



East Colorado Specific Plan

Planning & Community Development

Mid-City Innovation District

GOAL #7. A supportive environment for new development and businesses that is compatible with surrounding residential uses and educational assets.

Policy 7.c. PPC and Caltech. Leverage proximity to higher learning and educational events on PCC and Caltech campuses to create economic benefits for local businesses and encourage growth in the local R&D and technology sectors.



Subareas

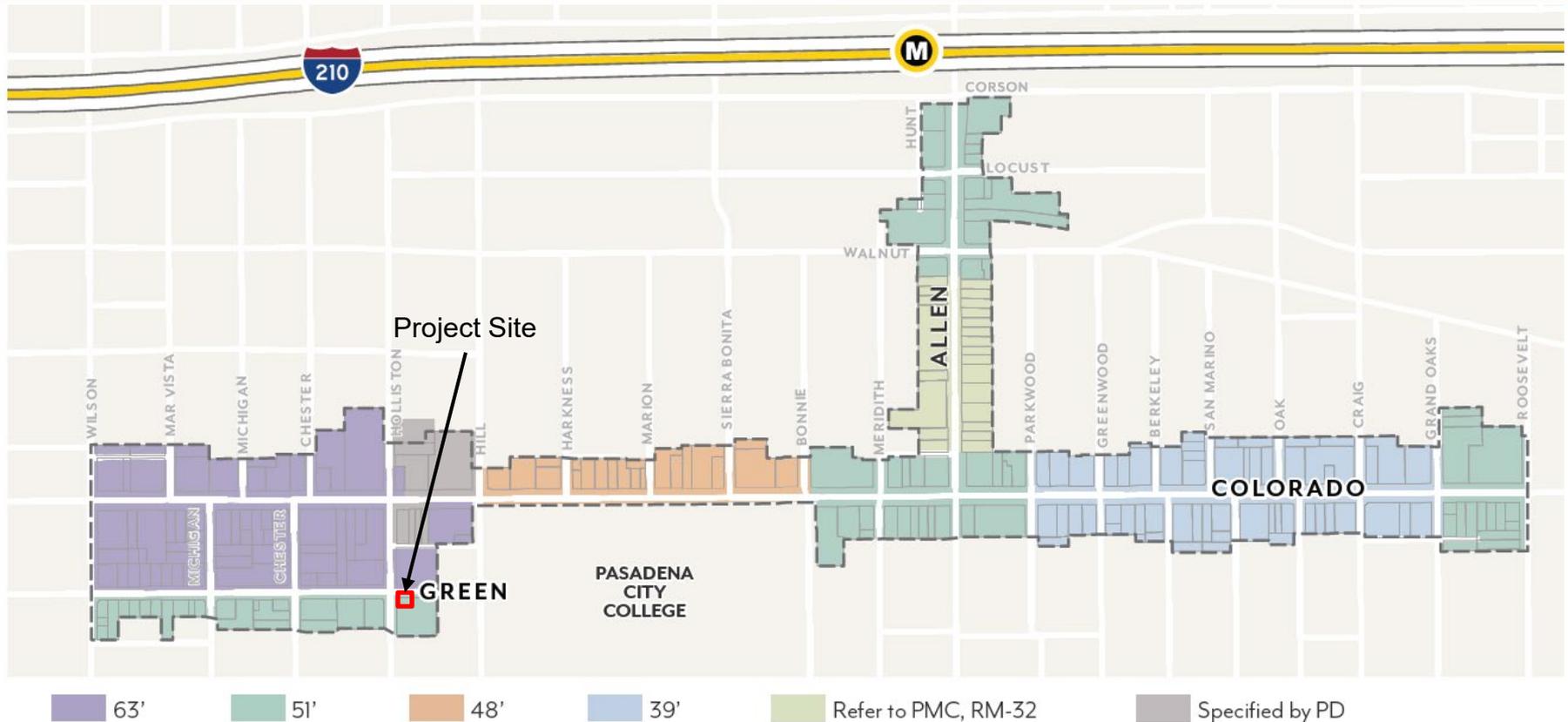
- | | |
|---|---|
|  Mid-City Innovation District |  Eastern Corridor |
|  College District |  Allen Transit |
|  Gateway |  Allen Residential |

PASADENA



Allowable Height

Planning & Community Development



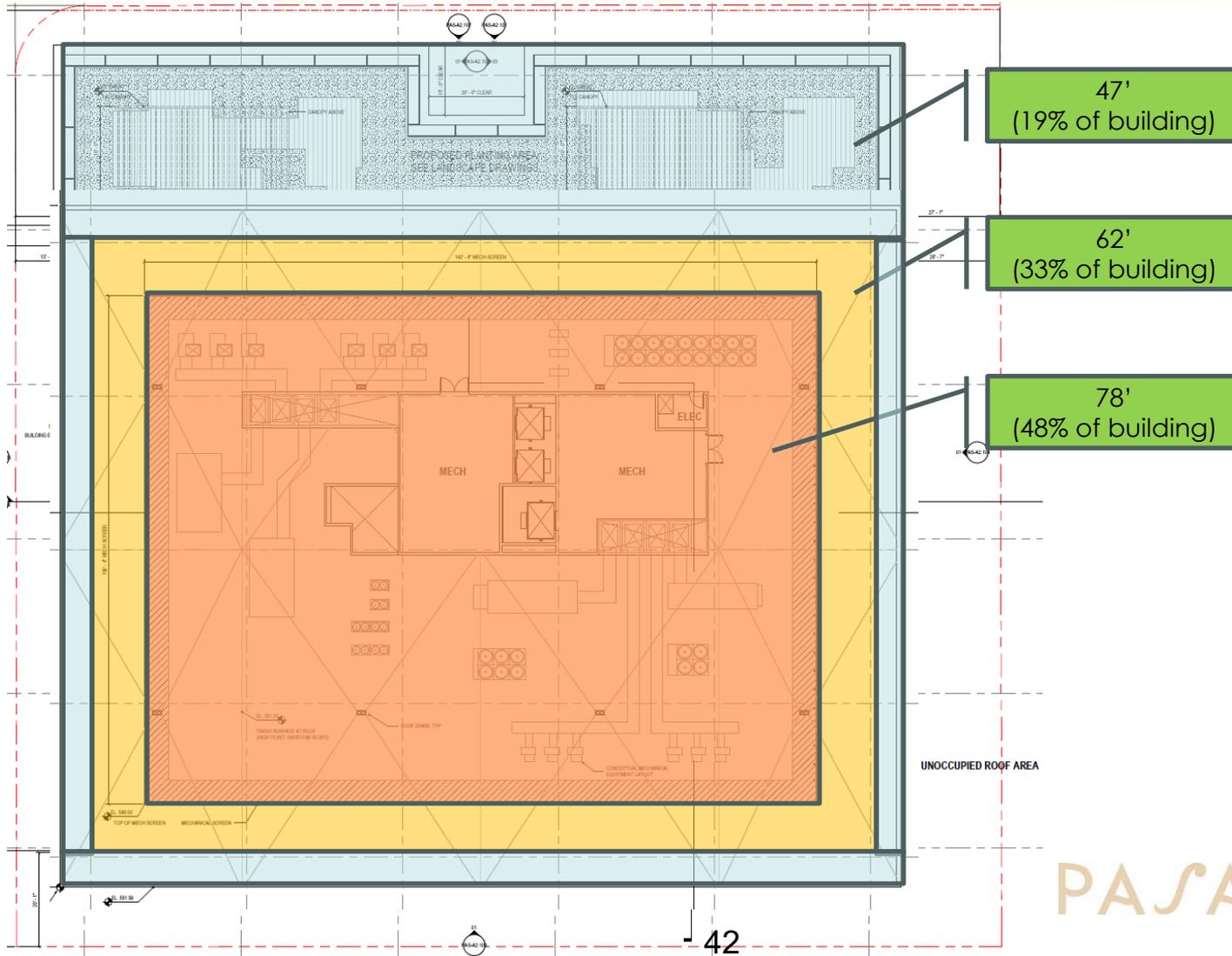
- A. **Building Height.** Projects shall not exceed the height limits set in Map 6.1-3.
1. Height is measured per PMC 17.40.060.
 2. Maximum height for massing adjacent to street or interior property lines may be limited by required stepbacks; see Section 6.1.5.
 3. Exceptions allowed for Varied Roof Lines (6.1.3.B) and projecting features such as appurtenances and railings per PMC 17.40.060.

- B. **Varied Roof Lines.** A maximum of 30 percent of a building's footprint may exceed the height limit set in Map 6.1-3 by up to 12 feet.
1. This allowance is not applicable to other development standards relating to building scale such as stepbacks. It may not be used in combination with a concession for building height when utilizing PMC 17.43.



Proposed Height

Planning & Community Development



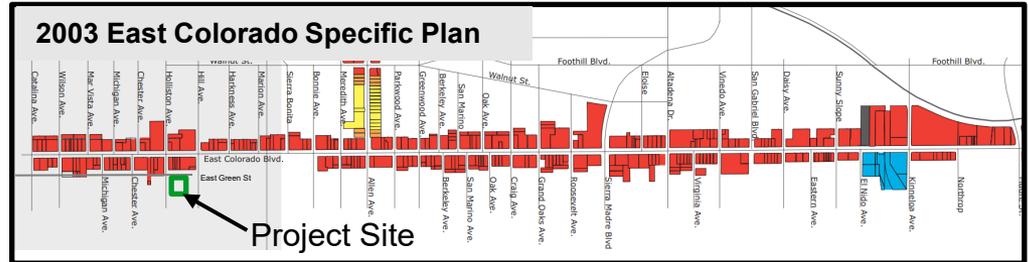


Site Zoning

Planning & Community Development

Prior to 2022

- Not in the 2003 East Colorado Specific Plan
- South side of Green Street was also not in the specific plan
- Site zoned Commercial General (CG)
- Allowed by-right:
 - *R&D – Offices*
 - *R&D – Non-Offices*



2022

- Site included in the updated 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan.
- South side of Green Street was also included.
- Site zoned EC-MU-N
- Allowed by-right:
 - *R&D – Offices*
 - *R&D – Non-Offices*





R&D Ordinance (2024)

Planning & Community Development

Targeted amendments:

1. R&D Land Use

- > Consolidate the definition from R&D Office and R&D Non-Office into R&D
- > Allow by-right in areas where R&D was already allowed.
- > Introduced as an allowed use with a CUP in the PS Zone, limited to parcels not owned by PUSD or used as a K-12 school as of December 4, 2023

2. Conditional Use Permit Requirement

- > Remove CUP requirement for major construction projects over 25,000 square feet
- > Remove the MCUP requirement for projects over 15,000 square feet in TOD areas

3. Parking Flexibility

- > Allow a parking space ratio of 2 parking spaces per every 1,000 square feet of gross floor area

4. Building Height

- > Allow additional 12 ft to building height by-right
- > Allow additional height with an MCUP

5. Appurtenance Rooftop Coverage

- > Allow additional rooftop coverage of 75% for appurtenance height of 18 ft
- > Allow additional coverage and appurtenance height with an MCUP



R&D Ordinance (2024)

Planning & Community Development

Targeted amendments (continued):

6. Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

- > Exempt mechanical spaces from the FAR requirements

7. Open Space

- > Reduce Open Space requirements for the use up to 60% and exclude mechanical space from the gross floor area calculation in relation to open space requirements

8. Frontage (Ground Floor) Requirements

- > Remove the ground floor prohibition for R&D uses in Central District, East Colorado, and South Fair Oaks Specific Plans
- > Clarify that the use prohibition would remain in the Central District Specific Plan in the CD-MU-C zone along two key corridors:
 - Colorado Boulevard (within the Old Pasadena and Playhouse area)
 - South Lake Avenue within the CD-CL zone (east side of Lake Avenue)



R&D Ordinance (2024): Definition

Planning & Community Development

Old R&D Definitions:

- > R&D Office: Facilities that are primarily office uses for scientific research. This use can include the design, development, and testing of biological, chemical, electrical, magnetic, mechanical, and/or optical components in advance of product manufacturing. This use does not involve the fabrication, mass manufacture, or processing of the products.
- > R&D Non-Office: A laboratory facility that is primarily used for non-office scientific research. This use can include the design, development, and testing of biological, chemical, electrical, magnetic, mechanical, and/or optical components in advance of product manufacturing. This use does not involve the fabrication, mass manufacture, or processing of the products.

Definition simplified to:

- > Remove the distinction between office and non-office.
- > Allow fabrication and manufacturing for research and development purposes.
- > Clarify that fabrication, manufacturing, or processing of products for mass distribution is not allowed.

New R&D Definition:

Facilities that are used for research and development. This use can include the design, development, assembling, prototyping and testing of, but not limited to, biological, chemical, electrical, magnetic, mechanical, and/or optical components or processes in advance of product manufacturing. This use may include fabrication and manufacturing for research and development purposes. This use does not involve the fabrication, manufacturing, or processing of products for mass distribution.



Development Adjacent to Religious Facilities

Planning & Community Development

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Residential Care (2025), same site



Pasadena Presbyterian Church, A/C Hotel across the street



PASADENA



Development Adjacent to Religious Facilities

Planning & Community Development

First Baptist Church of Pasadena, Office Tower across the street, parking structure adjacent



All Saints, The Westin and Western Asset



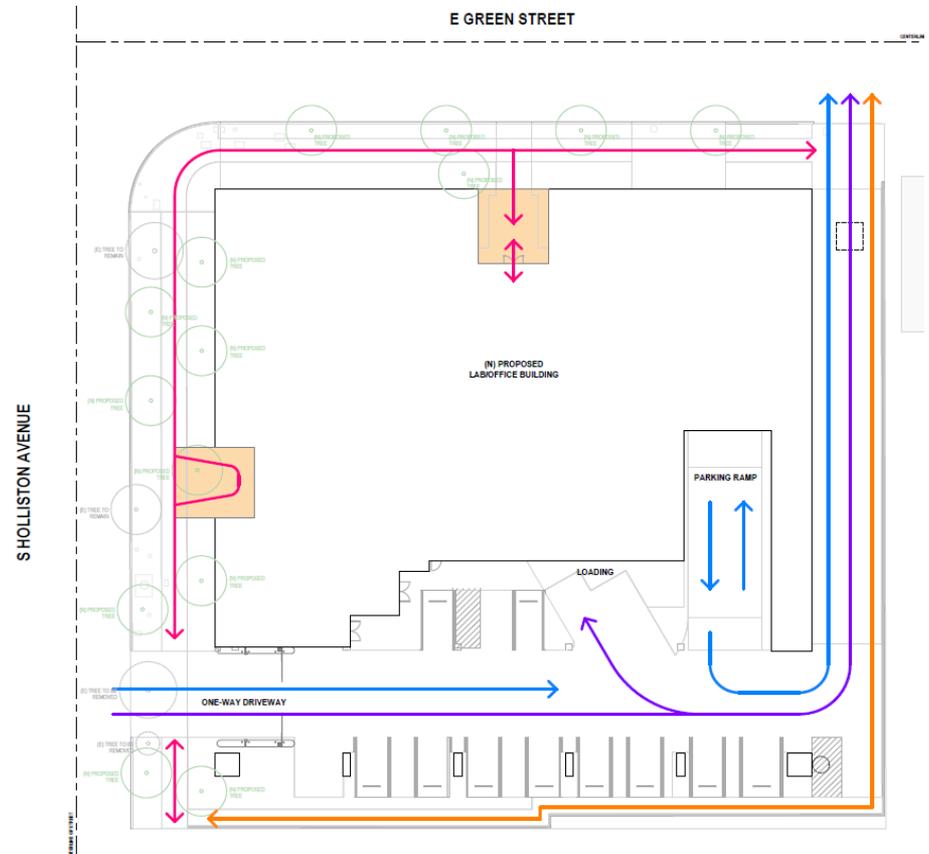


Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

Safety at Driveways

- Inbound on Holliston Ave and outbound on Green St
- Ramp to underground parking is within the site, not at the driveway





Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

Safety at Driveways (cont.)

- Per PMC, driveways designed to allow visibility for 50 feet or to property line from driveway
- Finding: Driveways are designed in accordance with PMC to minimize conflicts with pedestrians



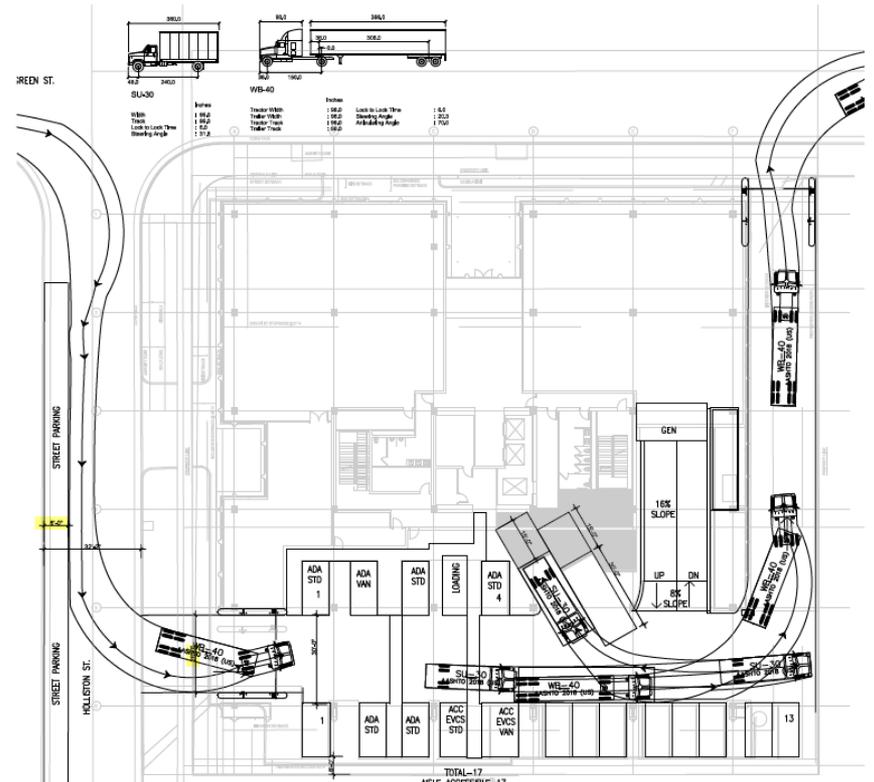


Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

Truck Access

- Simulated to ensure Holliston Ave had sufficient width to accommodate largest vehicle
- Design vehicle: WB-40 or semi-trailer truck
- Finding: Holliston Ave has sufficient width





Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

- **Study Peak Periods**

- Per Guidelines, standard study peak periods are AM and PM commute periods
- School peak periods are drop-off (overlap with AM) and pick-up times (earlier than PM)
- School peak periods can be studied when Project is a school
- Existing traffic counts collected while school in session
- Project outbound driveway on Green St would not conflict with school activity on Holliston Ave
- Existing traffic counts show that traffic is higher at PM peak than at pick-up



Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

- **Land Use Assumptions for Analyses**

- LMA and CEQA have different methodologies for trip generation
- LMA uses ITE Trip Generation Manual, which has R&D Land Use, and analyzes traffic operations and circulation during peak hour conditions
- CEQA uses City's Travel Demand Model, which categorizes R&D under the General Office land use category umbrella, and focuses on daily travel characteristics



Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

- Land Uses in Model

- Model Area 2

Land Use Type	Units	Model Area 1	Model Area 2	Model Area 3	Model Area 4
Single-Family (SFU)	units	8.93	9.79	10.30	8.76
Multi-Family (MFU)	units	6.11	6.90	7.21	6.49
Senior Citizen Housing	units	1.88	2.06	2.06	1.55
Lodging	ksf	2.82	3.09	3.09	2.58
Retail	ksf	35.72	46.35	39.14	36.05
Personal Services	ksf	41.36	44.29	45.32	36.05
Restaurant	ksf	51.70	82.40	82.40	72.10
Entertainment	ksf	36.66	41.20	40.17	39.14
Automotive Related	ksf	79.90	87.55	87.55	87.55
Auto Dealership (new in 2017)	ksf	26.17	28.68	28.68	28.68
Office	ksf	11.28	10.30	10.30	9.79
Medical Office	ksf	23.50	30.90	30.90	30.90
Government Office	ksf	28.20	61.80	28.84	28.84
Hospital	ksf	14.10	16.48	15.45	17.51
Religious Facilities	ksf	11.28	10.30	12.36	12.88
Cultural	ksf	26.32	28.84	28.84	25.75
Police and Fire Services	ksf	6.58	6.70	7.21	6.70
Park and Recreational Facilities	acres	23.50	26.78	25.75	25.75
Industrial	ksf	1.88	1.55	2.06	1.55
Utility Facilities	acres	18.80	25.75	25.75	25.75
Elementary and Middle School	students	1.22	1.24	1.34	1.44
High Schools	students	1.32	1.44	1.44	1.44
College	students	0.47	0.52	0.82	0.93
SCAG Retail ¹	employees	30.08	36.05	37.08	33.99
SCAG Office ¹	employees	3.29	3.61	3.81	3.09
SCAG Industrial ¹	employees	2.82	3.09	3.09	3.09
SCAG Educational ¹	employees	2.16	2.37	2.37	2.37



Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

- **Trip Generation Rates**

- ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition
- Trip rates per 1,000 SF

Land Use	Daily Trip Rate	AM Peak Hour Trip Rate	PM Peak Hour Trip Rate
R&D	11.08	1.03	0.98
Office	10.84	1.52	1.44



Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

- **Accounting for Nearby Development**

- VMT (CEQA) uses the land use assumptions based on City's General Plan. The VMT metric is Project VMT per capita, which compares the VMT per capita of the Project with the citywide baseline VMT per capita to determine whether it is more VMT-efficient than the rest of the City.
- LMA uses an annual growth rate to increase the existing traffic counts to account for future growth. The growth rate includes anticipated nearby developments, including hotel.
- Sensitivity analysis shows that even if the hotel's trips were added to our cumulative analysis, it would not change the conclusions of LMA.



Transportation Comments Received

Planning & Community Development

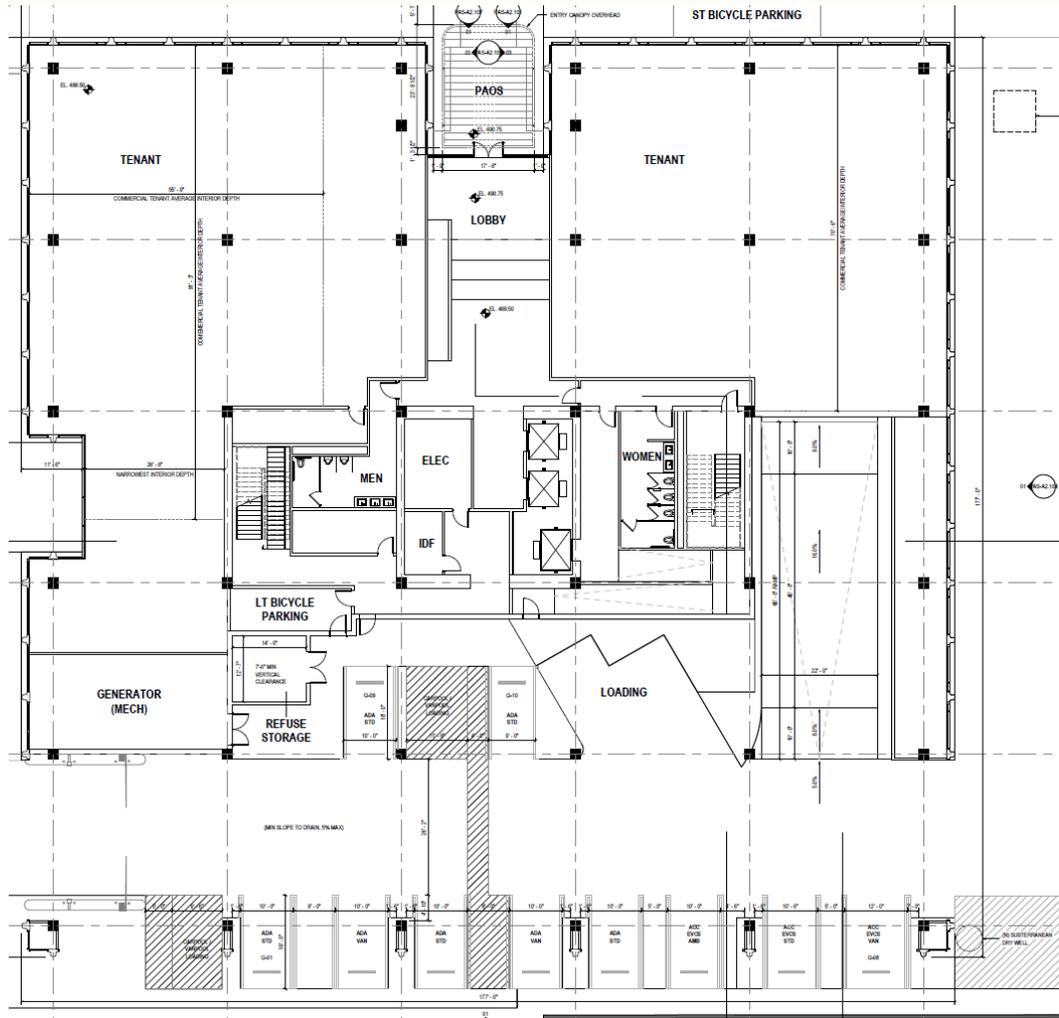
- **Intersection Operation Analysis - Queuing**

- Purpose: study whether the Project would cause queues to extend beyond storage capacity or add to an existing queuing issue. Identify corrective measures, if feasible, including TDM.
- LMA found that there are existing queuing issues at Hill/Cordova (NBL) and Hill Ave/Del Mar Blvd (NBL and SBL) and the Project would add to these queues.
- Project is already committed to TDM measures.
- Project is not responsible for fixing an existing deficiency.
- Per Guidelines, microsimulation may be considered when Synchro doesn't produce queue lengths comparable to existing observed conditions. Not the case for these intersections.



Ground Floor Plan

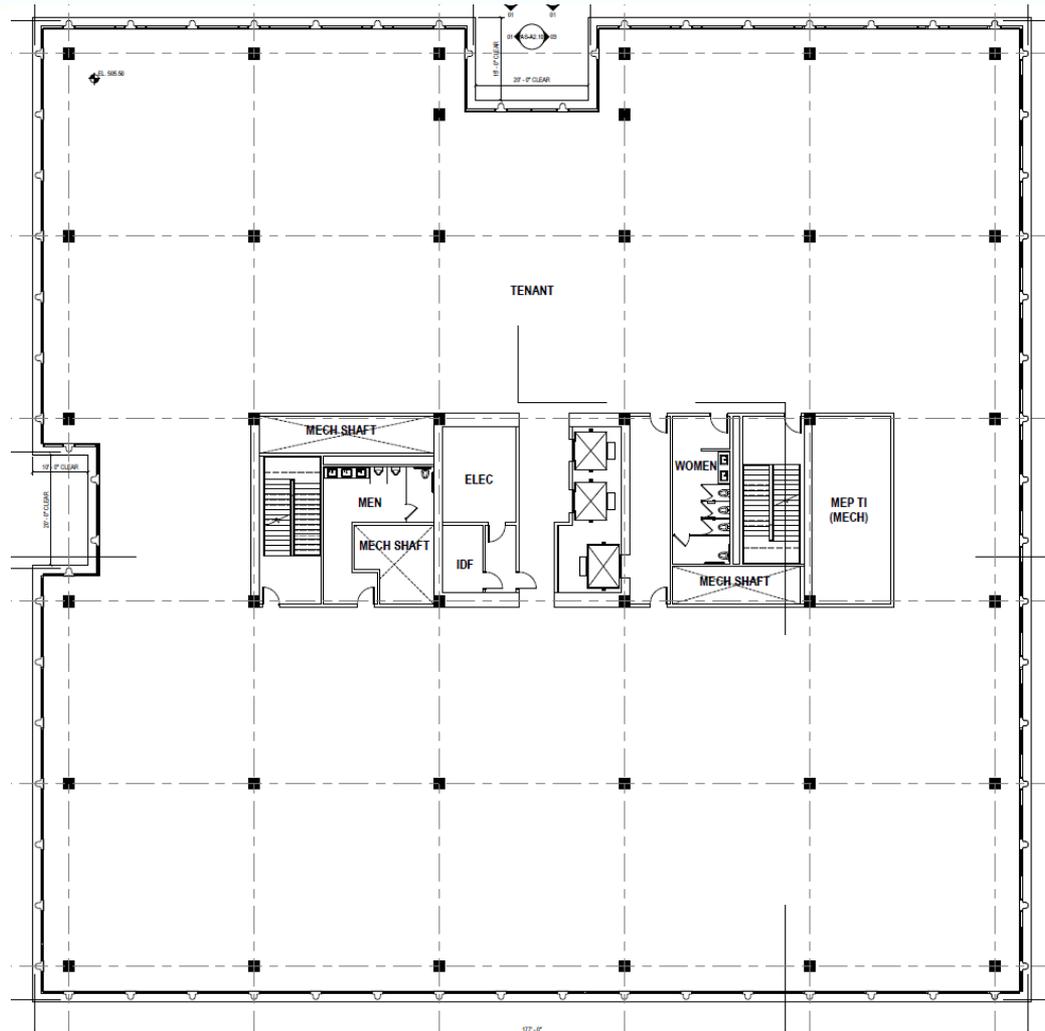
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Second Floor Plan

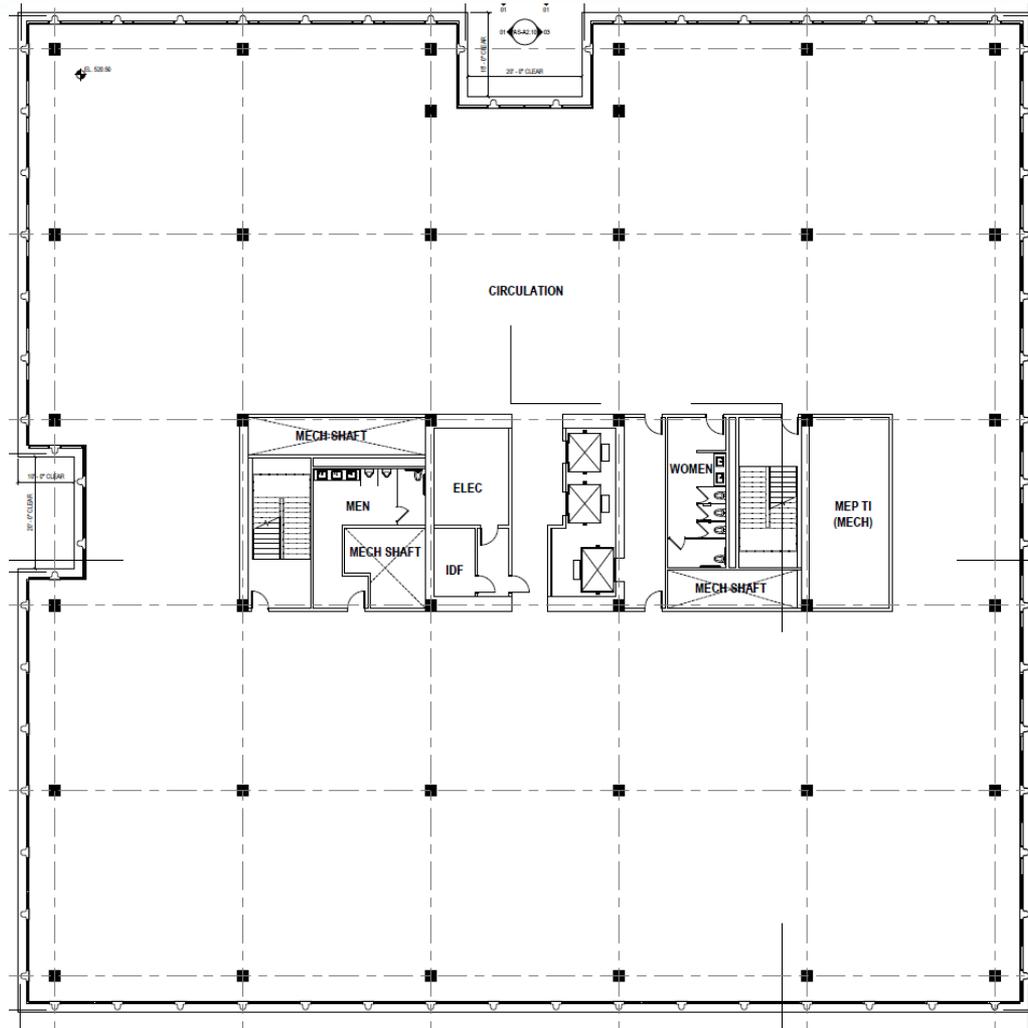
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Third Floor Plan

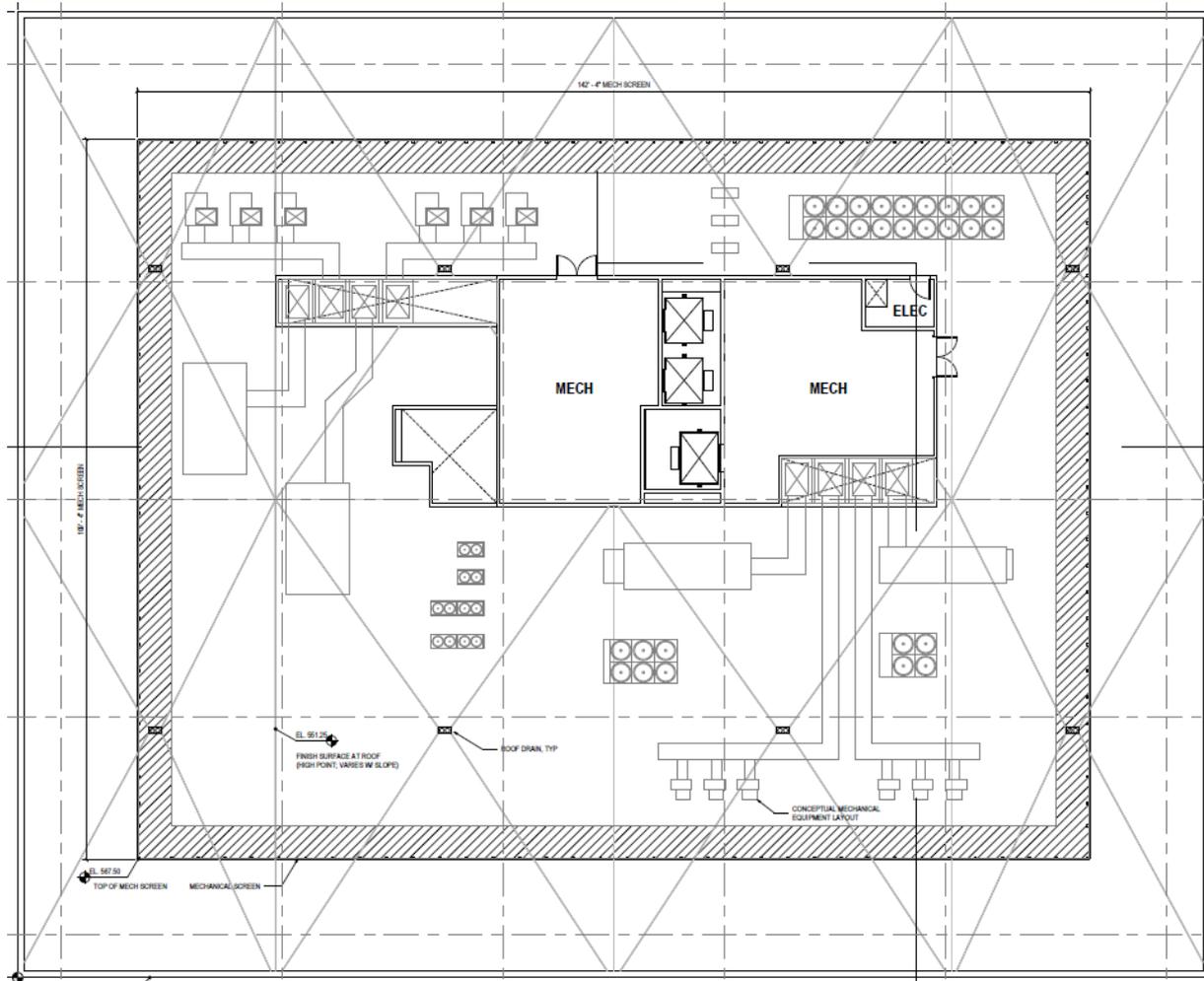
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Roof Plan

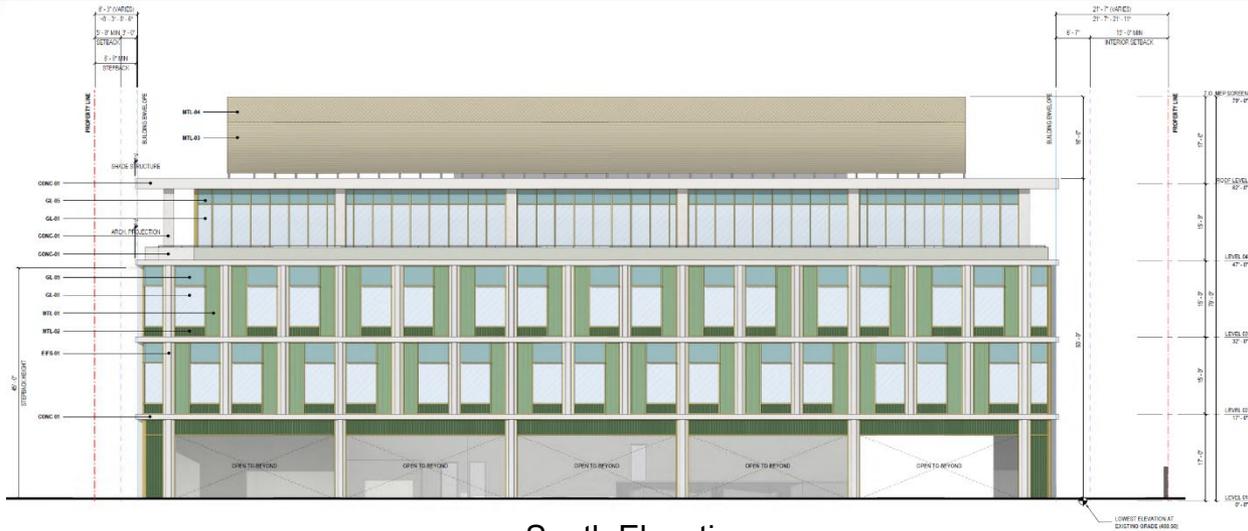
Planning & Community Development



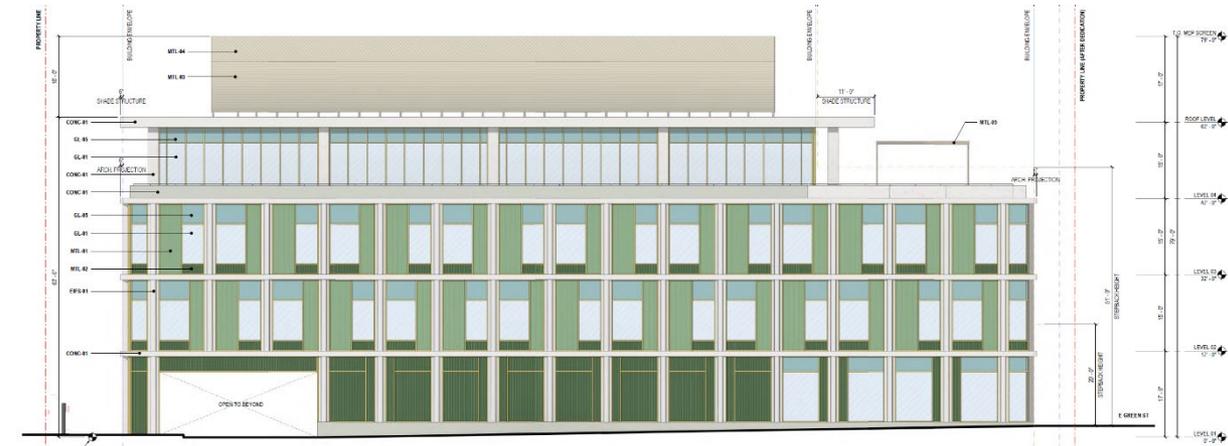


South and East Elevations

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South Elevation



East Elevation

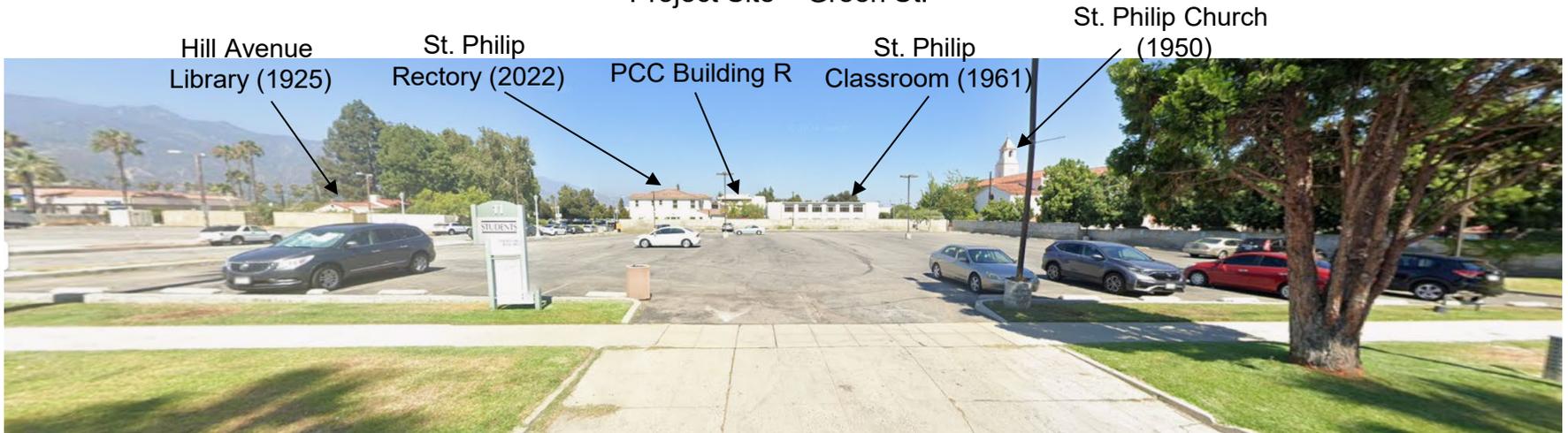


Existing Conditions

Planning & Community Development



Project Site – Green St.



Project Site – Holliston Avenue



Existing Conditions

Planning & Community Development



1299 E. Green St



Surface Parking Lot – across from project site



Hill Ave Branch Library

North side of E. Green Street



St. Philip Apostle Church Parish Center



PROJECT SITE



PCC Child Development Center

South side of E. Green Street



Council Options

Planning & Community Development

- Approve as proposed.
- Approve with modifications.
- Disapprove based on inconsistency with design guidelines.
- Remand any new information provided to the Design Commission for a report, prior to the Council's final decision on the appeal.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- The City required the supporting technical studies for a Class 32, Categorical Exemption. The applicant asserts that this application is not a project that is subject to CEQA. The applicant argues “as a code compliant project that only requires Design Review approval and no other discretionary land use approval, no CEQA review is required or warranted for the Project pursuant to the appellate court’s holding in McCorkle Eastside Neighborhood Group v. City of St. Helena (2019) 31 Cal.App.5th 80 (“McCorkle”).”
- Under McCorkle, CEQA applies only to discretionary projects, which are projects that require the exercise of judgment or deliberation when the public agency or body decides to approve or disapprove a particular activity. The application of CEQA to a design review ordinance depends on the scope and interpretation of the local ordinance; CEQA will not apply if the city lacks discretion to address environmental effects. Pasadena’s design review approval process is different from the City of Saint Helena’s design review process considered in McCorkle. In case this application is determined by a court to be a discretionary project for the purposes of CEQA, the staff recommends that the City Council find this project is exempt from CEQA review under an in-fill exemption.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- To qualify for this exemption, a project is required to meet the following criteria:
 - > a. The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.
 - As described in detail in this report and supporting attachments, the project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation, all applicable general plan policies and the applicable zoning designation and regulations. The project does not require any variances and meets all applicable development standards.
 - > b. The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
 - The project site is less than one acre in size and surrounded by urban uses including a school and church, a community college, a day care center, a mixed-use residential and commercial building and multi-family residences.
 - > c. The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.
 - The site is a paved surface parking lot with no value as habitat for any special status species.
 - > d. Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.
 - The technical studies in Attachment F demonstrate that the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise or air quality. Potential impacts to water quality will be avoided by adherence to applicable regulations and permitting requirements by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and the City's Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan ordinance.
 - > e. The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.
 - The project has been reviewed by all utility providers, which determined that they are able to serve the project.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- In addition, to qualify for any CEQA exemption, the project must meet the following criteria per §15300.2 (Exceptions):
 - > a. Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.
 - The proposed project qualifies for a Class 32 exemption and therefore this exception is not applicable.
 - > b. Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.
 - There are no other proposed projects of the same type in the same place as the proposed project. There are no projects of the same type within the immediate area, and the nearest closest comparable facility is located more than a mile west at 26 N. Euclid Ave.
 - > c. Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
 - There are no unusual circumstances associated with the proposed project. It is a land use that is authorized to be developed on the site by the Zoning Code and located on a standard flat, rectangular parcel at a standard street intersection in a developed urban area of the City of Pasadena.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- **Exceptions to Exemptions continued.**
 - > d. **Scenic Highways.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.
 - The only designated state scenic highway in the City of Pasadena is the Angeles Crest Highway (State Highway 2), which is located north of Arroyo Seco Canyon in the extreme northwest portion of the City. The project site is not within the viewshed of the Angeles Crest Highway. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impacts to designated state scenic highways.
 - > e. **Hazardous Waste Sites.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
 - The project site is not included on a list of hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. See further discussion of hazardous materials concerns on page 9 of the staff report prepared for the January 27, 2026 Design Commission meeting in Attachment D.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- **Exceptions to Exemptions continued**
 - > f. Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.
 - The property is a vacant surface parking lot and does not contain any historical resources. St. Philip the Apostle Church at 151 S. Hill Avenue is adjacent to and east of the subject property. The church was constructed in 1949-1950 and designed by architect Roland Coate; however, it has not been evaluated for historical significance. Additional buildings associated with the church and school were built after the construction of the main church. A 2005 Initial Study prepared for the church and school's master plan did not identify any historical resources on the master plan site. Regardless of the church's potential for historical significance, the project would not result in a substantial adverse change to any of the buildings associated with the church and school. CEQA defines "substantial adverse change" to a historical resource as follows: "...physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- **Exceptions to Exemptions Continued**

- > f. Historical Resources continued.

- The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:
 - » (A) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
 - » (B) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
 - » (C) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.



Environmental Analysis

Planning & Community Development

- **Exceptions to exemptions continued**

- > **f. Historical Resources continued.**

- The project would not demolish or alter any of the physical characteristics of the St. Philip the Apostle Church and School property. It would be built on an adjacent site that is currently a surface parking lot, which is not a characteristic of the church and school property that would contribute to its potential historical significance and, as such, replacement of the parking lot with a new structure would not have the potential to alter the physical characteristics of the church that would convey its potential historical significance. In addition, the setting of the church and school itself has changed significantly over time including construction of a library/auditorium building in 1961, replacement of the convent with surface parking in 2005, demolition of the former parish hall and expansion of the existing school buildings in 2008, and construction of a new rectory in 2021. A Master Plan was approved for the site in advance of the more recent construction and the CEQA document for the Master Plan did not identify any historically significant structures on the site. The setting surrounding the school and church has also changed significantly over time including expansion of Pasadena City College to the east and construction of several new structures in the immediate vicinity including the Pasadena City College Child Development Center at 1324 E. Green Street in 1995, several apartment buildings along Holliston Avenue constructed between 1953 and 1985, and a mixed-use building at 1299 E. Green Street in 2009. Therefore, construction at the adjacent site will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.