

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project applicant seeks to develop three different underutilized sites in Downtown Los Angeles, including the careful rehabilitation of an important City Historic-Cultural Monument. More specifically, the objectives of the Herald Examiner project are:

- To rehabilitate the 1913 Herald Examiner building, a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument, which ceased newspaper operation in 1989;
- To provide much needed housing, including innovative urban dwellings, for the City of Los Angeles;
- To provide high quality housing in an underutilized urban area of the City of Los Angeles;
- To provide conveniently located housing for downtown professionals who commute from neighboring communities and counties;
- To provide retail shopping and dining opportunities for the local community;
- To provide renovated office facilities for the community in the historic Herald Examiner building;
- To develop the site with a land use consistent with the intent of the Central Business District Redevelopment Plan and the City Center Project Redevelopment Plan;
- To improve and integrate the streetscape along Broadway, South Hill Street, 11th Street and 12th Street;
- To encourage privately-financed redevelopment and investment in a redevelopment area without reliance on public subsidy;
- To enhance the property tax base for the Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area and the Central City Project Redevelopment Plan;
- To provide jobs within the Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area and the City Center Project Redevelopment Area;
- To abate hazardous materials in the interest of public safety;
- To provide dedicated off-street parking for the historic Broadway building; and
- To create innovative architectural design statements that will create high quality, world-class buildings in Downtown Los Angeles.

B. PROJECT LOCATION

As shown in **Figure II-1, Project Location Map** and **Figure II-2, Context Map**, the Herald Examiner project consists of development proposed on three separate sites owned by the project applicant in Downtown Los Angeles. These three sites are identified as the Broadway site, which includes the

existing Herald Examiner building, the Hill Street site and the 12th Street site. These three sites are located in the South Park area in Downtown Los Angeles in the Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area and the City Center Redevelopment Project Area. The sites are located approximately one-half mile north of the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10), an east-west freeway and approximately three-quarters of a mile east of the Harbor Freeway (I-110), a north-south freeway. The location of each of these sites included in this proposed project is described below.

The Broadway site's Herald Examiner building, referred to as the Broadway building in this report, is located on a 41,860-square-foot lot located at the southwest corner of 11th Street and South Broadway at 1111 South Broadway. The Broadway site is bounded by South Broadway on the east, 11th Street on the north, the Press building on the west and an alley and the former Transamerica Center building on the south (currently referred to as the SBC tower). The existing layout of this site is shown in **Figure II-3, Broadway and Hill Street Existing Site Layout**.

The Hill Street site, which is located adjacent to, and immediately west of, the Broadway site discussed above, consists of an approximately 46,220-square-foot parcel located along South Hill Street between 11th Street and 12th Street at 1108 South Hill Street. The site is bounded by the Broadway site on the east, 11th Street on the north, South Hill Street on the west and an alley and the former Transamerica Center building on the south. The existing site layout for both the Broadway and Hill Street sites is shown in **Figure II-3**.

The 12th Street site is currently an asphalt-paved parking lot. The site consists of approximately 47,916 square feet and is located on the south side of 12th Street between South Broadway and South Main Street at 1201 South Main Street. The site is bounded by 12th Street on the north, South Main Street on the east, a property with two existing buildings on the south and South Broadway on the west. The existing site layout for the 12th Street site is shown in **Figure II-4, 12th Street Existing Site Layout**.

C. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The property owner, Hearst Communications, Inc. and the applicant, Urban Partners, LLC, a Los Angeles-based developer specializing in urban mixed-use projects, joined for the purpose of rehabilitating the historic Herald Examiner building and developing two nearby sites under the same ownership. Through site assessments, market studies and feasibility analyses, the project, as described herein, was defined to maximize new housing opportunities while providing funding for the rehabilitation of the Herald Examiner building.

Figure II-1, Project Location Map

Figure II-2, Context Map

Figure II-3, Broadway and Hill Street Existing Site Layout

Figure II-4, 12th Street Existing Site Layout

The project sites are located within two designated redevelopment areas: the Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area and the City Center Redevelopment Project Area. The Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area was established in 1975 under the direction of the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA). The 1,549-acre Central Business District Redevelopment Plan was adopted to address long-standing issues of blight and deterioration affecting the heart of Downtown Los Angeles.

The City Center Redevelopment Project area was established on May 15, 2002, also under the direction of the CRA. This project area replaced the Central Business District Redevelopment Project area that had governed since July 18, 1975. The City Center Redevelopment Project Area includes four sub areas: Central City East, the Financial Core, South Park and the Historic Core. The Herald Examiner project is located in the South Park sub area, which is in the southwestern quadrant of the Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area. The project also falls within the boundaries of the City Center Project Redevelopment Area. The South Park sub area is an emerging mixed use, predominantly residential, community intended to provide a full range of residential options for households of all income levels within walking distance of the Regional Commercial Core.

Other prominent land uses within the South Park neighborhood area include the Los Angeles Convention Center, Staples Center, the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) and the California Hospital Medical Center. Other land uses in the immediate vicinity of the project area include retail stores, wholesale outlets, parking structures and surface parking lots.

D. PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

1. Program

The project is comprised of three separate but related components: (1) the Broadway site; (2) the Hill Street site; and (3) the 12th Street site. **Table II-1, Project Components**, summarizes the project components. Each of these three components is described separately.

**Table II-1
Project Components**

| | Broadway Site | Hill Street Site | 12 th Street Site | Total Project |
|--|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Residential Units | 0 | 256 | 319 | 575 |
| Retail (sq. ft.) | 29,000 | 2,560 | 8,050 | 39,610 |
| Office (sq. ft.) | 39,725 | 0 | 0 | 39,725 |
| Service/Storage/ Circulation Space (sq. ft.) | 21,775 | 31,200 | 39,960 | 92,935 |
| Indoor Amenities (sq. ft.) | 0 | 1,700 | 4,630 | 6,330 |
| Outdoor Amenities (sq. ft.) | 0 | 40,065 | 100,235 | 140,300 |
| Parking Stalls | 0 | 422 | 487 | 909 |
| Number of Stories | 4 | 23 | 37 | |
| Total Program (sq. ft.) | 90,500 | 327,000 | 370,605 | 788,105 |
| Lot Size (sq. ft.) | 41,860 | 46,220 | 47,916 | 135,996 |

sq. ft. = square feet

Broadway Site

The proposed project involves the rehabilitation of the existing 103,500-square-foot Broadway building located on the Broadway site. Ms. Julia Morgan, working closely with William Randolph Hearst, designed this building in 1913 for use by the *Herald*, and later by the *Herald Examiner* newspapers. The *Herald Examiner* operation used the building from 1915 until 1989. Since ceasing production and circulation of the *Herald Examiner* in 1989, the building has remained unoccupied and used only occasionally by the film industry.

As described in the Cultural Resources Technical Report, included in **Appendix IV.L** of this EIR, the Herald Examiner building has been formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register (evaluation code “2S1”) and is listed in the California Register of Historical Resources. The building is also designated as City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #178.

Implementation of the proposed project would involve rehabilitation of the existing building in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, and thus, would respect the building’s original design. The existing bridgeway, which connects the second floor of this building to the Press building located on the parcel immediately adjacent to and west of the Broadway site, would be demolished. The remainder of the building would be rehabilitated.

Once rehabilitated, the Broadway building is estimated to contain approximately 90,500 gross square feet of floor area. Anticipated square footages and building uses, by floor, are listed in **Table II-2**, below. The proposed site plan is shown in **Figure II-5, Broadway and Hill Street Proposed Site Plan**, and the proposed east elevation is shown in **Figure II-6, Broadway Building – East Elevation**.

**Table II-2
Rehabilitated Broadway Building Square Footages**

| Building Level | Programmed Use | Total Gross Square Footage |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Basement | Storage/Service/Circulation | 12,000 |
| First Floor | Commercial/Retail/Service/Circulation | 35,800 |
| Second Floor | Commercial/Office/Service/Circulation | 35,450 |
| Third Floor | Commercial/Office/Service/Circulation | 5,500 |
| Fourth Floor | Commercial/Office/Service/Circulation | 1,750 |
| Totals | -- | 90,500 |

Figure II-5, Broadway and Hill Street Proposed Site Plan

Figure II-6, Broadway Building – East Elevation

Hill Street Site

The Hill Street site currently contains the existing 74,512-square-foot Press building, which was constructed in 1948 and ceased operation in 1989. The building was constructed adjacent to the Herald Examiner building to accommodate printing presses, paper storage and parking associated with *Herald Examiner* operations. A bridge connects the second floor of the Press building with the second floor of the Herald Examiner building described above. Although the adjacent Herald Examiner building has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, is listed in the California Register of Historic Places and has been designated as City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #178, the existing Press building located on the Hill Street site has neither been listed nor found eligible for listing in either the National or California Register of Historic Places.

Implementation of the proposed project would involve demolition of the existing unused Press building and the construction of a new 23-story, mixed-use building. The new high-rise structure is estimated to consist of approximately 256 condominium units with approximately 324,440 square feet of one and two bedroom residential units ranging in size from approximately 760 to 2,000 square feet, and 2,560 square feet of retail space. Smaller residential units are anticipated to generally be located on the lower floors and larger ones on the top floors. The proposed site plan for the new Hill Street building is shown in **Figure II-5**.

In addition to the condominium uses, the new building is anticipated to include private decks, an outdoor roof deck on the 19th floor and a plaza over the garage. Also, part of the building is anticipated to be a four-level subterranean parking structure with approximately 422 parking stalls. Approximately 1.25 parking stalls would be provided for each residential unit, and an additional 0.25 parking stalls for guest parking for each residential unit, for a total of 384 parking stalls available for use by building residents. The remaining 38 parking stalls would be available for occupants of the adjacent rehabilitated Broadway building, as no parking ever has been or is required to be provided on the Broadway site.

12th Street Site

The 12th Street site is currently developed with an asphalt-paved surface parking lot located on the southeast corner of West 12th Street and South Broadway. Demolition of this surface parking lot is proposed to allow for the construction of a new 37-story, mixed-use structure (the 12th Street building). This new building would consist of approximately 319 condominium units and 8,050 square feet of commercial/retail space on the first floor. The residential floor area in the building, approximately 362,555 square feet, is anticipated to consist of one- and two-bedroom residential units ranging in size from 875 to 1,770 square feet, as well as top-floor penthouses approximately 2,400 square feet in size.

Smaller units are anticipated to generally be located on the lower floors, and larger ones would be located on the top floors.

In addition to the condominium uses, the new building would include private decks for each residential unit, a roof deck on the 19th floor and a plaza over the garage. A six-level parking structure, with two subterranean parking levels and four above-grade parking levels, would be constructed and is estimated to provide approximately 487 parking stalls. Approximately 1.25 parking stalls would be provided per residential unit, with an additional 0.25 parking stalls provided for guest parking per residential unit. The proposed site plan for the 12th Street building is shown in **Figure II-7, 12th Street Proposed Site Plan**.

2. Design

The architectural design of the existing Broadway building located on the Broadway site exhibits a style reminiscent of the Mission Revival period with Spanish, Italian and Moorish detail. The cast-in-place concrete and concrete encased structural steel building is approximately 103,500 gross square feet. The structure has tile domes on each corner and towers bordering the entry. The building is approximately 320 feet long, 110 feet wide and has building heights of 45 feet to 125 feet. The central dome is 35 feet in diameter and 30 feet tall. The adjacent Press building, located on the Hill Street site, is slightly shorter than the neighboring Broadway building. Buildings and uses surrounding these two project sites range in height from flat surface parking lots to the 33-story former Transamerica Tower building, now known as the SBC Tower.

The scale and mass of the proposed development on the Hill Street and 12th Street sites would be comparable to, or less than, the Transamerica Center structures and the neighboring SBC Tower building, as shown in **Figure II-8, Building Height Comparisons**. The 23-story Hill Street building is estimated to be approximately 280 feet from street level to the top of the highest point of the roof parapet, and the 37-story 12th Street building is estimated to be approximately 435 feet from street level to the top of the highest point of the roof parapet. In comparison, the 33-story SBC Tower is 452 feet in height, and the two Transamerica buildings are 10 stories in height, as shown in **Figure II-9, Broadway and Hill Street Sites Proposed Site Section**, and **Figure II-10, 12th Street Site Proposed Site Section**. The new 23- and 37-story buildings proposed for the Hill Street and 12th Street sites, respectively, are anticipated to create a progression in height between the Transamerica buildings and the neighboring SBC tower.

The proposed placement of the Hill Street building is estimated to create a 50-foot-wide courtyard between the new Hill Street building and the existing Broadway building. The landscaped courtyard between the two buildings is anticipated to consist of a series of tiered gardens, separated by hedges and

Figure II-7, 12th Street Proposed Site Plan

Figure II-8, Building Height Comparisons

Figure II-9, Broadway and Hill Street Sites Proposed Site Section

Figure II-10, 12th Street Site Proposed Site Section

seat walls. The size and scale of each tier would be derived from the original structural grid of the Broadway building. The grid of the Hill Street building would also play a part in organizing the garden tiers and hedges.

The ground floor of the new Hill Street building would be 15 feet tall to create a sense of entry and grand scale, similar to the ground floor and lobby of the historic Broadway building. The Hill Street building would have a concrete wall structural system, continuous concrete balconies with operable glazed openings with a sunscreen framed on the outside of the balconies. Exterior building materials may include terra-cotta red cement fiberboard, glass fiber reinforced concrete or pre-finished sheet metal.

The penthouse structure at the top of the building is anticipated to relate to the central dome penthouse space and cupola of the historic Broadway building. Nearby references also include the former Transamerica building complex, which has a prominent penthouse structure enclosing a restaurant.

As shown in **Figure II-11, Streetscape Plan**, implementation of the proposed project would include a streetscape program that would connect the three sites and enhance the pedestrian experience. The intent of the program is to create a unified environment for the three parcels included in the proposed project. Proposed elements within the streetscape plan may include the planting of new trees at established and consistent intervals; planting of new shrubs and groundcover, as appropriate; the creation of new, enhanced and/or renovated concrete sidewalks and street lighting fixtures; potential signage and way-finding features; and a potential new landscaped median along Broadway between 11th and 12th Streets.

Improvements proposed in the streetscape program could include the intersections of 11th and Hill Streets, 11th Street and Broadway, 12th and Main Streets, and 12th Street and Broadway, creating a connected, unified site. Improvements along north-south streets could occur along the following:

- Broadway between 11th Street and 12th Street;
- Hill Street between the alleyway at the southern edge of the Hill Street site and 11th Street; and
- Main Street along the eastern edge of the 12th Street site.

Improvements along east-west streets would occur along the following:

- 11th Street between Hill Street and Broadway; and
- 12th Street between Broadway and Main Street.

3. Parking

The Broadway building currently has no on-site parking and rehabilitation of the Broadway building would not involve the provision of any on-site parking. All parking for the rehabilitated Broadway

building would be provided in the new Hill Street building's four-level subterranean parking garage. The Hill Street building parking structure would provide approximately 422 parking spaces for residents and approximately 38 shared parking spaces for retail and office uses in the Broadway building and retail uses in the Hill Street building.

The 12th Street building would provide approximately 487 parking stalls in a six-level subterranean and above-grade parking garage. Two parking levels would be located below grade, and four parking levels would be located above grade. Therefore, a combined total of 909 parking stalls would be developed as part of the development proposed by the project applicant.

4. Access and Circulation

Pedestrian access to the Broadway building would remain in its current configuration, with an entrance to the building provided via South Broadway through the Grand Lobby. In addition, pedestrian access to the new commercial uses in the rehabilitated Broadway building is anticipated to be provided via the courtyard adjacent to the building.

For the Hill Street building, vehicular access to the parking structure, loading dock, and services would be provided from South Hill Street and South Main Street via a driveway located on the south side of the site. Pedestrian access would be available from 11th Street.

For the 12th Street building, vehicular access to the parking structure, loading dock and services would be provided via Broadway and Main Street. Pedestrian access would be available to the building from 12th Street, as shown in **Figure II-7**.

E. PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the proposed project would be phased and involve separate construction activities and timelines at each of the three project sites. Construction at the Broadway site would include abatement of hazards in the existing Broadway building, selective demolition, and then rehabilitation in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Building Rehabilitation. Construction at the other two project sites is anticipated to involve the demolition of existing on-site uses, excavation for the subterranean parking structures, construction of the parking garages and then construction of the new buildings. All construction staging would occur within each of the proposed project sites.

Figure II-11, Streetscape Plan

1. Broadway Site

Construction activities for the rehabilitation for the Broadway are approximated to begin in late 2006 and are estimated to be complete by 2008. These activities are anticipated to occur in two phases, including (1) building abatement, and (2) building rehabilitation. The approximate length of time associated with these two construction phases proposed for the Broadway site is provided in **Table II-3**, below.

**Table II-3
Broadway Site
Construction Phasing and Equipment**

| Construction Phase | Approximate Length | Typical Equipment Associated with Construction Phase |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Building Abatement | 4 months | Excavator w/hoe-ram |
| Building Rehabilitation | 6 months 12 months | Hydro-crane Small loader |

2. Hill Street Site

Construction activities for the demolition of the existing 74,512-square-foot Press building on the Hill Street site and construction of the new tower building are anticipated to begin in 2007 and occur in several phases, including (1) building abatement and demolition; (2) shoring and excavation; (3) parking structure and podium construction; and (4) tower construction. Prior to constructing the parking structure, approximately 64,400 cubic yards of soil are anticipated to be excavated to accommodate the four levels of subterranean parking. All construction is estimated to occur during the hours of 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturday, consistent with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinance. No construction activities would occur on Sundays. Construction is anticipated to be complete in 2009. The approximate timing for each of the construction phases proposed for the Hill Street site is provided in **Table II-4**, below.

**Table II-4
Hill Street Site
Construction Phasing and Equipment**

| Construction Phase | Approximate Length | Typical Equipment Associated with Construction Phase |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Building Abatement and Demolition | 6 months | Excavator w/hoe-ram |
| Shoring and Excavation | 4 months | Excavator (2) Pile drilling |
| Parking Structure and Podium Construction | 10 months | Hydro-crane Small loader |
| Tower Construction | 16 months | Hydro-crane Small loader |

3. 12th Street Site

Construction activities for the demolition of the existing surface parking lot on the 12th Street site and construction of the new tower building are estimated to begin in 2008 and occur in several phases, including (1) parking structure excavation; (2) parking construction; and (3) tower construction. Prior to constructing the parking structure, approximately 54,567 cubic yards of soil would be excavated to accommodate the two levels of subterranean parking. The alley at the south end of the site would be demolished in order to construct underground parking beneath it. All construction is estimated to occur during the hours of 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturday, consistent with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinance. No construction activities would occur on Sundays. Construction is estimated to be complete in 2010. The approximate timing for each of the construction phases proposed for the 12th Street site is provided in **Table II-5**, below.

**Table II-5
12th Street Site
Construction Phasing and Equipment**

| Construction Phase | Approximate Length | Typical Equipment Associated with Construction Phase |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Parking Structure Excavation | 4 months | Excavator (2) Pile drilling |
| Parking Structure Construction | 12 months | Hydro-crane Small loader |
| Tower Construction | 20 months | Hydro-crane Small loader |

F. INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This EIR will serve as the primary source of environmental information for the actions and approvals associated with the development of the Herald Examiner project. In accordance with Section 21002.1 of the CEQA Statute, this EIR is intended to provide the City of Los Angeles with information as to the environmental effects of the project, alternatives to the project, and mitigation measures which may reduce or avoid any significant effects. This EIR will also be used as an information document by other public agencies in connection with any approvals or permits necessary for construction and operation of the Herald Examiner project.

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning is acting as lead agency as defined by CEQA for environmental review of this project. Upon certification of the EIR by the City of Los Angeles, a variety of discretionary and ministerial actions will be required, including, but not limited to:

1. Broadway Building

- Cultural Heritage Review;
- Vesting tract map for retail subdivision purposes;
- All other building and construction related permits granted under the authority of the Department of Building and Safety;
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Averaging Conditional Use Permit (CUP) with the Hill Street and 12th Street buildings or other appropriate entitlements;
- An Alcohol CUP; and
- Other approvals as necessary.

2. Hill Street Building

- FAR Averaging CUP to share excess floor area among the Broadway building, Hill Street building and 12th Street building as a unified site;
- Variance from residential density limitation;
- Possible variance for floor area;
- Vesting tract map for condominium subdivision purposes;
- Site Plan review;
- All other building and construction related permits granted under the authority of the Department of Building and Safety;
- An Alcohol CUP; and
- Other approvals as necessary.

3. 12th Street Building

- FAR Averaging Conditional Use Permit to share excess floor area among the Broadway building, Hill Street building and 12th Street building as a unified site;
- Variance from residential density limitation;
- Possible variance for floor area;
- Vesting tract map for condominium subdivision purposes;
- Vacation of Right-of-Way for the alley (part of vesting tentative tract map);
- Site Plan Review;
- All other building and construction related permits granted under the authority of the Department of Building and Safety;
- An Alcohol CUP; and
- Other approvals as necessary.