
II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

A. OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a brief overview of the project site's regional and local setting. Additional descriptions of the environmental setting as it relates to each of the environmental issues analyzed in this EIR are included in the environmental setting discussions contained within Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis). Also provided in this section is a list of related projects, which is used as the basis for the discussions of cumulative impacts throughout Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis).

Regional Setting

The 0.57-acre project site is located in the Westwood Community of the City of Los Angeles, approximately sixteen miles west of downtown Los Angeles (see Figure II-1). Regional access is provided by the San Diego Freeway (I-405), which is approximately two miles west of the project site, and the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10), located approximately two and one half miles south of the site.

Local Setting

The 0.57-acre (25,017-square foot) project site is located at 10250 Wilshire Boulevard within a highly developed urban area. It is bounded by Comstock Avenue to the west, Wilshire Boulevard to the north, The Los Angeles Country Club to the east, and Club View Drive to the south (see Figure II-2). The project site is vacant, topographically flat, and on-site vegetation consists of some ornamental trees that occur both along the eastern boundary and in the southeast corner of the site.

The project site is within the Westwood Community Plan (Community Plan) area, which designates the site as High Multiple-Family Residential. The Comprehensive Zoning Plan of the City of Los Angeles designates the project site as [Q]R5-3 (Residential). The Height District designation "3" for this zone allows total floor area of up to ten times the buildable area of the project site. The [Q] condition (Ordinance No. 163,194) requires that a Design Review administered by the Westwood Community Design Review Board be conducted for proposed development on the project site.

The project site is also located within the West Los Angeles Transportation Improvement and Mitigation Specific Plan (TIMP), and the Wilshire-Westwood Scenic Corridor Specific Plan (Corridor Specific Plan). As shown in Figure II-3, the TIMP is generally bounded by the City of Beverly Hills, Beverwil Drive, Castle Heights Avenue, National Boulevard, and Hughes Avenue on the east; Sunset Boulevard on the north; the City of Santa Monica and Centinela Avenue on the west; and Venice Boulevard on the south. The TIMP applies to the issuance of building permits for properties in the Westwood, West Los Angeles, Brentwood-Pacific Palisades, and Palms-Mar Vista Del Rey District

Plan Areas. As shown in Figure II-4, the Corridor Specific Plan is generally bounded by Linbrook Drive to the north, Club View Avenue to the east, Ashton Avenue to the south, and Glendon Avenue to the west. The purpose of the Corridor Specific Plan is to minimize traffic and parking problems along Wilshire Boulevard, enhance the aesthetic qualities of the Specific Plan Area, encourage more open space, reduce the impact of high density residential development, and reduce the impact of shadows caused by high-rise buildings within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. However, the Corridor Specific Plan exempts projects for which an application for a Tract Map or Parcel Map was filed for City approval during the period of July 25, 1972 to June 5, 1980, inclusive. Since an application for a Tract Map for the project site was filed for City approval in 1977, the project is exempt from The Corridor Specific Plan

Existing Land Uses

As shown by the aerial photograph in Figure II-5, the irregularly-shaped project site is currently undeveloped with no existing structures. It has recently been employed for seasonal use, both as a pumpkin sales lot and as a Christmas tree sales lot. It was also used as an equipment storage yard during construction of the UCLA Medical Center.

Surrounding Land Uses

The area immediately surrounding the project site is developed with multi-level residential buildings, single-family residential uses, the Los Angeles Country Club, and a Department of Water and Power (DWP) distributing station. "The Comstock," an approximately 20-story-tall high-rise apartment complex that consists of two towers, is located to the northwest of the project site on Wilshire Boulevard. The Los Angeles Country Club adjoins the project site on two sides: directly north (across Wilshire Boulevard), and directly east. Four two-story single-family residential uses are south of the project site, across Club View Drive. West of the project site, on the southwest corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Comstock Avenue, is the Beverly Hills Plaza Hotel, a four-story hotel. The DWP facility is located on the northeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Comstock Avenue, north of the project site and adjacent to the northern portion of the Country Club. Refer to Figures II-6 through Figure II-10 for a photograph location map and existing views of the project site and surrounding uses.

Figure II-1 Regional Location Map

Figure II-2 Project Location Map

Figure II-3 West Los Angeles Transportation Improvement and Mitigation Specific Plan

Figure II-4 Wilshire-Westwood Scenic Corridor Specific Plan

Figure II-5 Aerial Photograph

Figure II-6 Photograph Location Map

Figure II-7 Views of the Project Site: Views A & B

Figure II-8 Views of the Project Site: Views C & D

Figure II-9 Views of the Project Site: Views E, F & G

Figure II-10 Views of the Project Site: Views H & I

Figure II-11, View of the Surrounding Land Uses, Views J & K

Figure II-12, View of the Surrounding Land Uses, Views L & M

Figure II-13, View of the Surrounding Land Uses, Views N & O

B. RELATED PROJECTS

Section 15130 of the 2004 CEQA Guidelines stipulates that EIRs must consider the significant environmental effects of a proposed project as well as “cumulative impacts.” A cumulative impact is defined as an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355). As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(1), the cumulative impacts discussion in an EIR need not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR. Cumulative impacts may be analyzed by considering a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts [CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(A)].

All projects that are proposed (i.e., with pending applications), recently approved, under construction, or reasonably foreseeable that could produce a cumulative impact on the local environment when considered in conjunction with the proposed project are included in an EIR. These projects can include, if necessary, projects outside of the control of the lead agency. If a concise list of related projects is not available, cumulative impacts may be analyzed using the regional or area-wide growth projections contained in an adopted or certified general plan or related planning document.

In this EIR, cumulative impact analyses are provided for each environmental issue discussed in Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis), and can be found in each respective subsection (e.g., Air Quality, Traffic, etc.). Table II-1 lists the related projects that were considered in each cumulative impact analysis. The related project list consists of all potential projects located within an approximate one and one-half mile radius of the project site, and was obtained from the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, the City of Beverly Hills, and recent studies of projects in the area. Additionally, the related projects list includes a number of projects that are proposed on the UCLA Campus, as detailed in the University’s Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP). In total, 35 projects have been identified, including retail, commercial, office, and multiple-family land uses. The locations of the related projects are depicted in Figure II-14.

**Table II-1
Related Projects List**

Map No.	Project Description	Address	Size
1	Apartment	NEC Wilshire Bl./Devon Ave.	19 du
2	Century City Shopping Center	10250 Santa Monica Bl.	71,000 sf
3	General Office	10270 Constellation Bl.	791,000 sf
4	Fox Studio Expansion (remainder est.)	10201 W. Pico Bl.	360,000 sf
5	General Office	Constellation Bl. & Avenue of the Stars	508,600 sf
6	Office, Retail, and Cultural Use	2000 Avenue of the Stars	825,800 sf
7	Condominium	552-558 Hillgreen Dr.	9 du
8	High School Addition	9760 W. Pico Bl.	14,800 sf
9	Retail	456 N. Camden Dr.	1,750 sf
10	General Office <i>Retail (Existing)</i>	9844 Wilshire Bl.	95,000 sf <i>9,633 sf</i>
11	Hotel Expansion	150 Lasky Dr.	42 rm
12	Condominium	133 Spalding Dr.	4 du
13	Congregate Care	129 S. Linden Dr.	75 du
14	Hotel	9730 Wilshire Bl.	204 rm
15	Condominium Retail	9590 Wilshire Bl.	20 du 12,000 sf
16	Condominium	125 S. Camden Bl.	40 du
17	Health Club	9601 Wilshire Bl.	30,000 sf
18	Retail (expansion)	326 N. Rodeo Dr.	4,544 sf
19	Screening Room	150 El Camino	66 st
20	Office Restaurant	265 N. Beverly Dr.	41,500 sf 3,500 sf
21	Retail	338 N Canon Dr.	11,900 sf
22	Retail General Office	438 N. Beverly Dr./ 439 N. Canon Dr.	78,000 sf 12,000 sf
23	Cultural Center	469 N. Crescent Dr.	34,000 sf
24	Health Spa to replace existing Health Club	9641 Sunset Bl.	2,000 sf

**Table II-1
Related Projects List (con.)**

Map No.	Project Description	Address	Size
25	Harvard-Westlake Middle School 12 employees (net)	700 N. Faring	122,000 sf
26	University of California, Los Angeles Southwest Campus Housing (2,000 bds) Northwest Campus Phase II Development Intramural Field Parking Structure ⁰ Physics and Astronomy Building Luck Research Ctr., Thermal Energy Storage California NanoSystems Institute Academic Health Center Seismic Replacement Remaining 2002 LRDP Growth	UCLA Westwood Campus	882,000 sf 296,700 sf 1,500 sp 101,900 sf 95,000 sf 166,000 sf 1,710,000 sf --
27	Retail High-Turnover Restaurant Medical Office Theater (34,000 sf)	SEC Broxton Ave./Le Conte Ave.	15,000 sf 2,993 sf 74,000 sf 1,135 st
28	Theater Expansion (12,900 sf)	10886 Le Conte Ave.	106 st
29	Shopping Center Apartment	1001 Tiverton Ave.	115,000 sf 350 du
30	Apartment Specialty Retail <i>Specialty Retail (Existing)</i>	10852 Lindbrook Ave.	19 du 6,100 sf <i>16,100 sf</i>
31	Condominium	10804 Wilshire Bl.	93 du
32	Condominium <i>Hotel (Existing)</i>	10776 Wilshire Bl.	119 du <i>66 rm</i>
33	Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Office	11000 Wilshire Bl.	937,000 sf
34	Gas Station w/ Convenience Market	10991 Santa Monica Bl.	6 pu

**Table II-1
Related Projects List (con.)**

Map No.	Map No.	Map No.	Map No.
35	Department Store Specialty Retail Quality Restaurant Office Condominium Luxury Condominium Department Store (Existing)	Wilshire Bl. Between the Los Angeles County Club and Merv Griffin Way	180,000 sf 20,000 sf 10,000 sf 10,000 sf 240 du 26 du 200,000 sf
<i>Source: Crain & Associates, November 4, 2004. (See Appendix D, Traffic Report.)</i>			

Figure II-14, Related Projects Location Map