2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section describes the proposed project, including the project applicant, project location, major project characteristics, project objectives, and discretionary approvals needed for project approval.

2.1 PROJECT APPLICANT

Soto Capital, LP P.O. Box 17119 Beverly Hills, CA 90209

2.2 LEAD AGENCY AND CONTACT PERSON

City of West Hollywood 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard West Hollywood, CA 90069 Contact: Laurie Yelton, Associate Planner, (323) 848-6890

2.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located at 8555 Santa Monica Boulevard in the City of West Hollywood. The project site encompasses 55,138 square feet (sf) (approximately 1.27 acres) and includes five parcels (APNs: 4339-005-010, 4339-005-011, 4339-005-012, 4339-005-013, and 4339-005-025). Figure 2-1 shows the location of the site within the region and Figure 2-2 shows the site location within West Hollywood.

2.4 EXISTING SITE CHARACTERISTICS

2.4.1 Current Land Uses and Designations

The project site currently contains three two-story commercial buildings and two surface parking lots on commercial parcels comprised of five lots that are 42,164 sf in size and three single-family residences (approximately 3,728 square feet) on three residential lots that are 12,974 sf in size. The commercial buildings contain a restaurant (2,475 sf), office space (4,211 sf), a health club (4,058 sf), a hair salon (6,218 sf), and other retail shops including a pharmacy, massage parlor, pet supply store, shipping store, vitamin store, and framing gallery (totaling 10,426 sf). A surface parking lot for retail customers is located on the western portion of the project site and is accessible from Santa Monica Boulevard. A second surface parking lot with single and tandem spaces for employees is located on the northern portion of the project site and accessible from West Knoll Drive. Regional access is provided by the U.S. 101 and Santa Monica Boulevard (Highway 2).

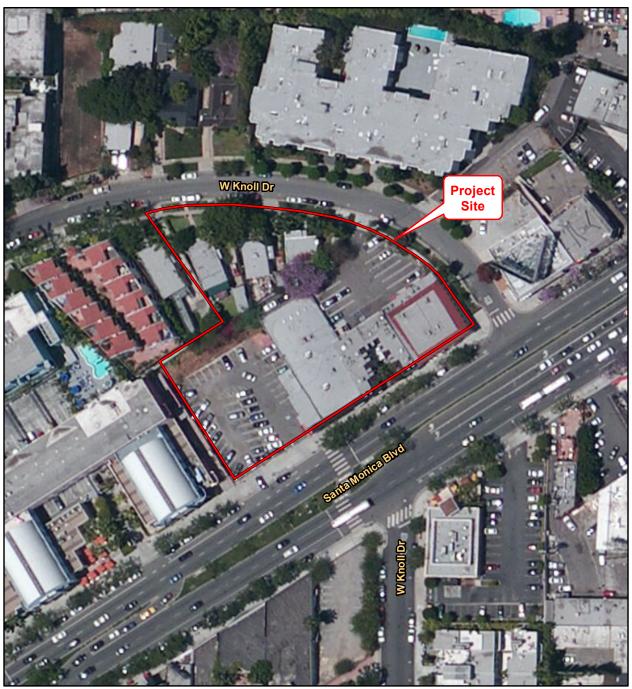
Figure 2-3 shows photos of existing site conditions.



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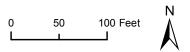




Photo 1: Existing retail/commercial uses on the project site.



Photo 2: Existing single-family residence located at 8532 West Knoll Drive on the residential portion of the project site.

The 42,164-square-foot portion of the project site that currently contains commercial buildings is zoned and has a General Plan land use designation of Commercial, Community 1 (CC1). This portion of the site is also within the West Hollywood General Plan's Commercial Subarea 2, Transit Overlay Zone, and Mixed-Use Incentive Overlay Zone. The 12,974-square-foot northern portion of the project site that currently contains three single-family residences is zoned Residential, Multi-Family High Density (R4B) and has a General Plan Land Use Designation of High Density Residential (R4B). Figure 2-4 shows the zoning for the project site and surrounding uses and Figure 2-5 shows the General Plan land use designations for the project site and surrounding uses.

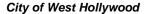
The CC1 land use designation provides for commercial and mixed-use development along major corridors, including Santa Monica Boulevard. The designation allows for a variety of commercial uses, including retail, offices, and restaurants, as well as a mix of residential, commercial, and office uses. The base Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 1.5 and the base height is 35 feet. The Transit Overlay Zone is intended to encourage mixed-use development in locations with adequate transit service to reduce the need for auto trips. The Mixed-Use Incentive Overlay Zone encourages a mix of residential and commercial uses and allows mixed-use projects to receive an additional 0.5 FAR (maximum of 2.0) and 10 feet in height (maximum of 45 feet). The R4B designation provides for high-density multi-family housing and allows for residential buildings that are four stories and 45 feet in height. In areas designated CC1 and R4B, density bonuses are allowed for projects that include affordable housing. The density bonus allows increases of up to 35% in FAR (equivalent to an additional 0.7 FAR based on the 2.0 FAR inclusive of the mixed-use bonus) and/or unit count, and allows up to three affordable housing incentives or concessions, including an additional 10 feet in height, reductions in setbacks, and other concessions necessary to facilitate the provision of affordable housing. In addition, mixed-use projects that achieve a minimum of 90 points on the West Hollywood Green Building Point System Table are eligible to receive an additional 0.1 FAR. Table 4.5-2 in Section 4.5, Land Use and Planning, shows the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan requirements for the CC1 and R4B zones.

2.4.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is located in a neighborhood characterized by a mix of residential and commercial uses. Figure 2-6 shows the project site and surrounding uses. To the west of the project site is the Ramada Plaza Hotel, a four-story hotel building with ground-floor retail. Immediately northwest of the project site is a one-story single-family home and a three-story multi-family condominium building. East of the project site is the one-story commercial store Healthy Spot. Across Santa Monica Boulevard to the south are one- to two-story commercial, retail, and restaurant buildings. Across West Knoll Drive to the north are one- to four-story multi-family residential uses.

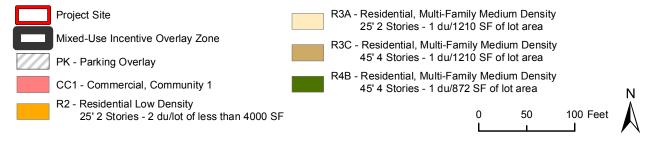
2.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project would involve the demolition of the three existing two-story commercial structures (approximately 27,338 square feet) as well as three existing one-story single-family residences and surface parking areas, and the construction of a mixed-use development on the same site (see Figure 2-7). Detailed floor plans, building elevations and landscaping plans are





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Project Site Zoning

Figure 2-4

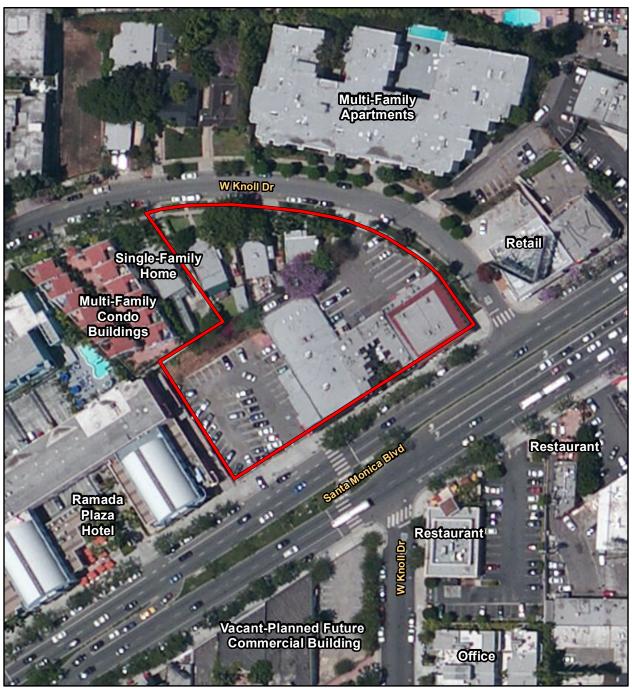


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Project Site General Plan Land Use Designation

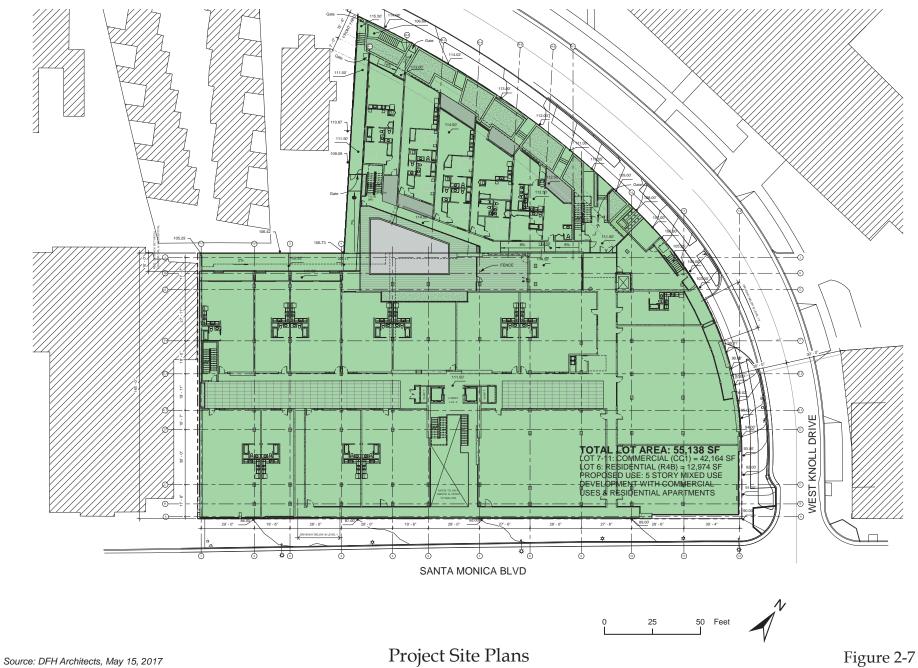
Figure 2-5



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Project Site and Surrounding Uses



2-9

provided in Appendix B. The proposed project would be 55 feet in height and would include 97 apartment units (15 of which would be designated as affordable housing), 2,820 sf of restaurant and cafe uses, 16,673 sf of live/work use (12 units), 15,678 sf of retail space, a 3,718 sf hair salon, and 6,079 sf of creative office space. Commercial uses would be on the first floor and partially on the second floor. Residential units would be on levels 2, 3, 4, and 5. Apartment units would range in size between 461 and 1,863 square feet (not including patios and balconies).

The project also includes three levels of parking with 337 vehicle parking spaces (which includes 1 additional space beyond the required number of spaces) and 35 bicycle parking spaces. One level of the parking structure would be fully subterranean. The first floor and mezzanine parking levels would be partially subterranean.

The major characteristics of the proposed project are summarized in Table 2-1. Details regarding consistency with the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan, building architecture and design, site access and parking, landscaping, green building features, and utilities are described below.

2.5.1 Consistency with Zoning Ordinance and General Plan Requirements

The larger 42,164-square-foot portion of the project site is zoned and has a General Plan land use designation of CC1 and the smaller 12,974-square-foot portion of the project site is zoned and has a General Plan land use designation of R4B. The area zoned R4B would only contain residential uses and would not include the retail or restaurant uses associated with the project. Because the project spans multiple legal lots, a lot tie is required to hold the lots together as one parcel for the purpose of creating a single building site. The resulting building site would have split zoning which is allowed in the West Hollywood Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed project would meet the requirements of SB 1818 (California Government Code Section 65915 et seq.), the State law that provides for density bonuses and incentives for projects that include affordable housing, and the City of West Hollywood's inclusionary housing ordinance by providing at least 20% of the baseline units as affordable housing. The proposed project includes 82 market-rate rental units and 15 affordable rental units (7 very low-income and 8 moderate-income). Accordingly, the project is eligible for a 35% density bonus.¹

The project applicant is seeking a density bonus based on the percentage of affordable units, as well as three associated regulatory "concessions" pursuant to state law (SB 1818 and West Hollywood Municipal Code (WHMC) Section 19.22.050). The requested concessions are:

- An additional story (adding not more than 10 feet to overall project height)
- A 10% reduction in minimum front yard setback.
- Allow a minimum aggregate site area of 55,138 square feet for a mixed-use project that spans both the CC1 and R4B zoning districts, in lieu of the minimum aggregate area of 60,000 square feet otherwise required by Section 19.36.170.A.1 of the West Hollywood Zoning Ordinance.

¹ The project is eligible for a 20% density bonus for providing 10% of the baseline number of units for low income households, and a 15% density bonus for providing 20% of the baseline number of units for moderate income households, for a total density bonus of 35%.



Table 2-1 Project Characteristics

Project Site Size	55,138 square feet (sf) (1.27 acres)		
Parcel Numbers	4339-005-010 4339-005-011 4339-005-012 4339-005-013 4339-005-025		
Building Floor Area	Commercial Restaurant/Café: 2,820 sf Live/work space: 16,673 sf Retail: 15,678 sf Office: 6,079 sf Hair Salon: 3,718 sf Subtotal: 44,968 sf		
	Residential Apartments: 90,819 sf Residential Lobby: 639 sf Residential Recreation Room: 610 sf Residential Storage: 2,876 sf Subtotal: 94,944 sf		
	Circulation (stairs, elevators, corridors, trash chute); waste/recycling; electrical; shower/locker: 3,823 sf Total Floor Area: 143,735 sf		
Parking	Commercial: 123 Live/Work Single: 9 Live/Work in Tandem: 50 Residential Single: 40 Residential in Tandem: 114 Extra parking spaces: 1 Total provided: 337 spaces		
	Bicycle: 35 spaces		
Unit Summary	1-bedroom: 40 2-bedroom: 57 Total Apartment Units: 97 units		
	Live Work/Units: 12 units		
Affordable Housing	Very Low Income Units: 7 Moderate Income Units: 8 Total Affordable Housing: 15 units (out of the 97 total units)		
Height	55 feet		
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	2.8 (CC1 portion only)		
Setbacks	Commercial Zone Front (facing SMB): 0 feet Rear: 10 feet & 25 feet Side: 5'-0" to15'-0" feet		
	Residential Zone Front (facing West Knoll): 15 feet 6 inches Side (facing adjacent residence): 7 feet		

The applicant is also seeking height and FAR bonuses based on the proposed mixed-use nature of the project in accordance with the Mixed-Use Development Overlay Zone, a FAR bonus for the provision of affordable housing pursuant to Section 19.22.050 of the WHMC and SB 1818, and a FAR bonus available to mixed-use projects that achieve a minimum of 90 points on the West Hollywood Green Building Point System Table.

The project height is measured as provided by Section 19.20.080.B.2.c. of the WHMC.² The proposed mixed-use structure would be 55 feet in height measured from the ground surface at the north side (rear) of the structure facing West Knoll. At the south side (front) of the structure facing Santa Monica Boulevard, the height of the building would be approximately 48 feet from the ground surface to the top of the third floor. At the front of the building facing Santa Monica Boulevard, the building would have 5 stories above ground, and the fourth floor would be set back approximately 8 feet from the facade. The fifth floor would be set back approximately 27 feet from the façade, and the roof approximately 37 feet from the façade. At the rear facing West Knoll, the building would have four stories above ground (see Appendix B for building elevations).

The total floor area for the project would be 143,735 sf. On the commercial lot, the total floor area would be 118,059 sf on a 42,164 sf lot for an FAR of 2.8. While the City does not apply an FAR to calculate density on the residential lot, for informational purposes, the FAR for the combined commercial and residential lots is 2.61 (143,735 sf on a 55,138 sf project site).

Consistency with the applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan are shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2
Consistency with Zoning Ordinance and General Plan Requirements

Requirement	Allowed	Actual Provided by Proposed Project
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	CC1 Base FAR: 1.5 + Mixed-Use Bonus FAR: 0.5 + 35% Density Bonus for Affordable Housing: 0.70 +Green Building Bonus FAR: 0.1 Total Allowed = 2.8	CC1: 2.8
	R4B: N/A	R4B: N/A
Building Height	CC1 Allowed Height: 35 ft, 3 stories + Mixed-Use Bonus Height: 10 feet, 1 story + Affordable Housing Concession: 10 ft, 1 story Total Allowed: 55 feet, 5 stories	CC1: 55 ft, 5 stories
	R4B Allowed Height: 45 ft, 4 stories + Affordable Housing Concession: 10 ft, 1 story Total Allowed: 55 ft, 5 stories	R4B: 55 ft, 4 stories

² The proposed structure would be 55 feet in height measured from the ground surface at the north side (rear) of the structure facing West Knoll Drive. At the south side (front) of the structure facing Santa Monica Boulevard, the height of the building would be approximately 48 feet from the ground surface to the top of the third floor. The fourth floor façade would be set back approximately 8 feet from the façade. The fifth floor façade would be set back approximately 27 feet, and the roof set back approximately 37 feet from the façade (see Appendix B for building elevations).



2.5.2 Building Architecture and Design

The proposed building would be a contemporary style building. The building is designed to include a system of horizontal and vertical layers and a framing system intended to break up the building's massing and de-emphasize the building's height. Materials used for the building's façade would include concrete, parklex wood, plaster, painted corrugated metal and painted perforated metal screens.

The first story would include concrete and glass construction. The frontage along Santa Monica Boulevard includes a plaza to accommodate planters, a water feature, and access to an elevated sidewalk on the second level. The fourth and fifth levels would include a colorful wall paneling system. The façade on the third, fourth, and fifth levels facing Santa Monica Boulevard is set back with the use of balconies in order to reduce the overall scale of the building.

On the east side of the building as it follows the curve of West Knoll Drive towards residential uses, more neutral colors and materials would be used. These include plaster, corrugated metal painted grey and glass. The north façade that faces West Knoll Drive would include warmer materials such as wood wall panels, wood slat railings, and landscaped balconies.

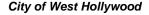
The west façade, at the southwest portion, is set back approximately 15 feet at the property line to accommodate approximately 800 square feet of open and landscaped private open space. At the northwest portion, the building is set back approximately 5 feet to accommodate additional balconies. The third floor balconies and open space would include planters to allow vines to grow on the first and second floor walls below.

2.5.3 Open Space

The proposed project includes common and private open space per City of West Hollywood Municipal Code requirements. In total, the proposed project would have the required 2,000 sf of common open space, with an additional 2,785 sf of open space, and approximately 20,987 sf of private open space. The first floor of the building would include an approximately 26-footwide public plaza intended for planters and a water feature. Each residential unit would include a minimum of 120 square feet of open space either in the form of a patio or balcony. The second floor of the building (the first floor of the residential space) would include all 2,000 sf of common open space that would consist of courtyards, a pool, a residential lobby, and a recreation room. In addition, the roof top would include a hot tub with a seating area and sundeck.

2.5.4 Landscaping

The landscaping plan is shown in Appendix B. The proposed project would include landscaping along the building façade of Santa Monica Boulevard, on the sidewalks along Santa Monica Boulevard and West Knoll Drive, in the proposed first-floor plaza, in common open space areas, and on the roof. The eight existing Chinese Elm trees along Santa Monica Boulevard and three of the eight landscape trees along West Knoll Drive would remain. Two additional street trees (*Ulmus parviflora*) would be planted along Santa Monica Boulevard Two trees on the sidewalk along West Knoll Drive would be removed in order to make space for the



driveway entrance. Three additional landscape trees would be planted along West Knoll Drive that would match the existing landscape trees.

Plants along the building façade of Santa Monica Boulevard would be grown in raised steel planters. Colored concrete planters would be located on both sides of the building entrance on Santa Monica Boulevard. California-native plants would be utilized along West Knoll Drive. The northern and northwest boundary of the project site would include a high wood fence with green screen vines.

The proposed project would involve a "green" or "sustainable" roof with solar panels covering a substantial portion of the roof top, two landscaped areas, a hot tub and sundeck, and mechanical equipment integrated in the roof top design.

Site landscaping would include climate-appropriate, drought-tolerant and native plants such as Aloe Vera, Nyalla Mat Rush (an ornamental grass), Ceanothus, Deer Grass, and Rebud trees.

2.5.5 Site Access, Parking, and Loading Areas

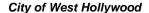
Vehicular site access would be provided by two driveways - one driveway on Santa Monica Boulevard and one on West Knoll Drive (see Appendix B, site plans and elevations for depictions of driveways, site access, parking areas, and loading areas). Primary commercial access to the project site would be from Santa Monica Boulevard and residential access would be both from Santa Monica Boulevard and West Knoll Drive. The Santa Monica Boulevard driveway would allow right and left-turns into the project site, and right-turns only out of the project site. The driveway on West Knoll Drive would allow left- and right-turns ingress, but would be restricted to right-out egress only.

The Santa Monica Boulevard driveway would be approximately 232 feet west of West Knoll Drive and the West Knoll driveway would be approximately 111 feet north of Santa Monica Boulevard. The driveways would serve both inbound and outbound traffic. Both driveways would be right-turn-out only driveways and both driveways would allow both left and right turns into the project site. The Santa Monica Boulevard driveway would be 24 feet wide and the West Knoll Drive driveway would be just over 25 feet wide.

Parking would be provided on three levels: the subterranean level, first level, and mezzanine level. All parking areas would be enclosed. The subterranean level would include a waterproofing system which would prevent water intrusion into the building.

First floor and subterranean parking levels would be accessed by the driveway on Santa Monica Boulevard. These levels would serve commercial, live/work and residential uses. The first floor would provide 75 total parking spaces. This would include 28 single parking stalls (including 2 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible stalls) for commercial uses, 3 single parking stalls and 44 parking stalls in tandem for live/work uses.

The subterranean level would provide 159 total parking spaces. This would include 95 parking stalls (53 single and 42 in tandem) for commercial uses (including 4 ADA), 12 parking stalls for live/work uses (6 single and 6 in tandem), 51 parking stalls (11 single stalls and 40 stalls in



tandem) for residential uses (including 1 ADA), and one extra single space. A roll-up gate would prevent commercial parking in the residential parking area.

The mezzanine level would provide residential parking only and would include 103 parking stalls (29 single stalls and 74 stalls in tandem) including 2 ADA accessible spaces. This level would be accessed by the driveway on West Knoll Drive. The mezzanine level is in between the first floor and second floor.

Inside the parking areas, the drive aisle widths would vary from 24 feet to 28 feet with two-way operation. The ramps providing access between the parking levels are 26 feet wide. Most of the proposed parking spaces would be standard or modified standard spaces and 41 of the proposed parking spaces would be compact parking spaces, in compliance with WHMC 19.28.090. The driveway entrance on Santa Monica would have a 3% grade and the driveway entrance ramp on West Knoll would have a 5% grade with 10% grade transition at the top. The ramp between the first level and the subterranean level would have a 20% grade with an 8-foot, 10% grade transition at the top.

The loading area, serving all uses on the project site, would be accessed from Santa Monica Boulevard. Trucks would enter the Santa Monica Boulevard driveway and then reverse into the loading area.

2.5.6 Utilities

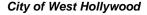
Electricity would be provided by Southern California Edison, solid waste and wastewater service would be provided by the City of West Hollywood, and water service would be provided by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The proposed project would connect to existing sewer and water lines in Santa Monica Boulevard, West Knoll Drive, and on the north side of the property.

The proposed project would involve bio-treatment best management practices (BMPs) in order to meet the City's Low Impact Development (LID) requirements. The proposed project includes raised planters and landscaped areas (mentioned previously) that would be designed to treat storm water runoff. Storm water runoff from upper floors would be diverted to the second-floor planters and the landscaped area in the northern part of the project site along West Knoll Drive for filtration. Runoff would be diverted to existing storm drain facilities along West Knoll Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard.

2.5.7 Green Building Features

The proposed project includes solar panels, would use energy- and water-efficient systems and would incorporate environmentally-friendly materials in order to conform to the City of West Hollywood's Green Building Program. The proposed project would achieve 90 points on the City's Green Building Point System Checklist. In order to reduce energy use, the proposed project would include a rooftop solar photovoltaic system which would offset a portion of the building's energy use with renewable energy. The solar panels are estimated to generate at least 87,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. In addition, the proposed project would exceed



Title 24 California Building Code energy efficiency standards by 15% and would include Energy Star appliances, lighting and signage. The proposed project would also include programmable thermostats and ceiling fans in residential units. In order to reduce water use, the proposed project would install low-flow showerheads, tankless water heaters and water -efficient toilets and faucets.

The proposed project would include recycled-content materials in the foundation, insulation, and landscaping. In addition, the interior spaces would use materials composed of recycled content or rapidly renewable and sustainably harvested resources. In order to provide increased indoor air quality, No-VOC paints and low-VOC sealants and adhesives will be used and carpet will not be installed. High-efficiency HVAC systems will be used to minimize exposure to toxins and dust by managing ventilation and filtration. Three cubic feet of space for the collection and storage of recyclables would be provided in each unit.

2.6 GRADING AND CONSTRUCTION

Project construction is estimated to last approximately 22 months. The estimated construction schedule would be as follows:

- *Demolition, excavation & shoring 5 months*
- Underground utilities & waterproofing 2 month
- Construction of subterranean parking and level one 3 month
- Construction of concrete levels (mezzanine level and level 2) 2 months
- Steel frame and deck, upper floors 4 months
- Facade and tenant improvements 3 months
- Finish and site work 3 months

The subterranean parking level would have a depth of up to 11 feet with an additional 3-foot deep footing. The proposed project would require the export of approximately 49,800 cubic yards of earth material. Assuming an average truck load of 16 cubic yards, approximately 3,113 round trip truckloads would be needed to export the material. Hauling is estimated to occur over a period of approximately four months. Haul and export routes available include:

- East on Santa Monica Boulevard to U.S. 101
- South on La Cienega Boulevard to I-10
- West on Santa Monica Boulevard to I-405

2.7 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the proposed project are to:

• Provide additional housing opportunities and contribute to the residential development of mixed-use areas by incorporating residential uses into an existing core of nearby community facilities, employment centers, retail goods and services, and restaurants to enhance the area's overall urban character.

- To provide rental housing to satisfy the varying needs and desires of all economic segments of the community, including low and moderate-income households, maximizing the opportunity for individual choices, and contributing to the City of West Hollywood's housing stock.
- Develop the site in accordance with the City of West Hollywood policies and designations while furthering the goals and objectives of the General Plan.
- Create a consistent pattern of development and uses along Santa Monica Boulevard that serve project residents and the surrounding community by redeveloping an underutilized site.
- Create a modern, high-quality, multi-use development that offers unique living experiences while promoting an active pedestrian environment and access to restaurant and retail uses in the area.
- Enhance pedestrian activity along Santa Monica Boulevard by providing street-level, street-facing retail and restaurant uses along Santa Monica Boulevard.
- Provide housing and retail near alternative means of transportation, and provide sufficient on-site parking for the project.
- Expand the economic base of the City, maintain economic vitality, and foster the City's fiscal health by, among other things, providing for commercial and retail activities which generate substantial sales and property tax revenue.
- Promote the efficient use of water and energy through incorporation of water and energy conservation measures.

2.8 REQUIRED APPROVALS

The proposed project would require the discretionary approval of the City of West Hollywood Planning Commission. If appealed, the City Council would make decisions related to approval prior to initiation of construction.

Specifically, the following approvals would be required:

- *Certification of the Final EIR;*
- Approval of Development and Demolition Permits;
- Approval of a Density Bonus pursuant to WHMC Section 19.22.050(D);
- Approval of Affordable Housing Concessions, pursuant to WHMC Section 19.22.050(E), as follows:
 - 1) An additional story, not to exceed 10 feet of total project height (WHMC Section 19.22.050.E.2(a);
 - 2) Ten percent reduction in minimum front setback (WHMC Section 19.22.050.E.2(b)); and
 - 3) Allow a minimum aggregate site area of 55,138 square feet for a mixed-use project that spans both the CC1 and R4B zoning districts, in lieu of the minimum aggregate area of 60,000 square feet otherwise required by WHMC Section
- Approval of building design and materials, as well as landscaping;
- Any other approvals or permits that would be necessary for construction and operation of the project, including a lot tie agreement and utility relocation permits

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