



**REVISED NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE
ST. JAMES PARK CAPITAL VISION AND PERFORMING ARTS PAVILION PROJECT**

FILE NO: PP16-037
PROJECT APPLICANT: City of San José Parks, Recreation &
Neighborhood Services Department
APNs: 467-21-014 and 467-21-001

Project Description: The project includes both physical and programmatic changes to St. James Park, an approximately 8.5-acre urban park in downtown San José. Physical changes to the park may include, but are not limited to, construction or installation of a performing arts pavilion; streetscape improvements; a central plaza; small commercial buildings (e.g., cafés, vendors, or a beer garden); public restrooms (temporary portable and/or permanent); gateway monuments that include signage and lighting features; improvements to the public transit stops; an outdoor fitness cluster; an interactive water feature; temporary loading zones for park events; designated vendor spaces or food truck parking; equipment for computer/internet use throughout the park; and landscape amenities (e.g., movable furniture, bollards, benches, tree grates, etc.).

Programmatic changes to the use of the park may include, but are not limited to, new music and performing arts events at the performing arts pavilion; and new commercial uses at the park (such as a café or vendors), street performers, festivals, and a farmers' market. The project also proposes permanently vacating the segment of North 2nd Street that bisects the site (from East St. James Street to East St. John Street), which would prohibit vehicle and bus through-traffic.

Location: St. James Park, bordered by East St. James Street to the north, East St. John Street to the south, North 1st Street to the west, and North 3rd Street to the east.

As the Lead Agency, the City of San José will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project referenced above. The City welcomes your input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your area of interest, or to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. If you are affiliated with a public agency, this EIR may be used by your agency when considering subsequent approvals related to the project. The project description, location, and probable environmental effects that will be analyzed in the EIR for the project can be found on the City's Active EIRs website at www.sanjoseca.gov/activeeirs.

A previous Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the EIR was circulated to the public and local, state, and federal agencies on May 25, 2016 and a public scoping meeting was held on June 15, 2016. Since the circulation of the NOP in 2016, the regulatory framework has changed and the project has been refined. This revised NOP reflects the current regulatory setting (specifically the City's recent adoption of the Downtown Strategy 2040 and City Council Policy 5-1 Transportation Analysis Policy) and clarifies the project description. The Revised NOP will circulate for the standard 30-day

comment period. Appendix A of the EIR will include both NOPs and all of the comments received during both circulation periods.

According to State law, the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice; however, we would appreciate an earlier response, if possible. Please identify a contact person, and send your response to:

City of San José
Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement
Attn: Krinjal Mathur
200 East Santa Clara Street, 3rd Floor Tower
San José CA 95113-1905
Phone: (408) 535-7874, E-mail: krinjal.mathur@sanjoseca.gov

Rosalynn Hughey, Director
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

4/3/19
Date


Deputy

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April 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts, and to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, and the requirements of the City of San José. The EIR analysis will tier from the San José Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR (SCH # 2003042127), to the extent possible.

In accordance with Sections 15120 et seq. of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will include the following:

- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, probable environmental impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) cumulative impacts.

A previous Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the EIR was circulated to the public and local, state, and federal agencies on May 25, 2016 and a public scoping meeting was held on June 15, 2016. Since the circulation of the NOP in 2016, the regulatory framework has changed and the project has been refined. This revised NOP reflects the current regulatory setting (specifically the City's recent adoption of the Downtown Strategy 2040 and City Council Policy 5-1 Transportation Analysis Policy) and clarifies the project description, and will circulate for the standard 30-day comment period. Appendix A of the EIR will include both NOPs and all of the comments received during both circulation periods.

2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

The approximately 8.5-acre project site is located in Downtown San José. It is bordered by East St. James Street to the north, East St. John Street to the south, North 1st Street to the west, and North 3rd Street to the east. Regional, vicinity, and aerial maps of the project site are provided in Figures 1-3.

3.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Multiple Master Plans have been prepared for the park over the years, the most recent of which were the 1985 Master Plan and the 2002 Master Plan Update prepared for the City of San José Redevelopment Agency. The Master Plan Update provides a vision for the future development of the park, establishing an appropriate and attractive plan as well as programming to activate and promote its use, consistent with the Downtown Strategy 2040 and the Envision San José 2040 General Plan (2040 General Plan) EIRs. Furthermore, in 2016 the City conducted a design competition for St. James Park. As a result of that effort, the winning design (see Project Description below) builds upon the vision outlined in the Master Plans.

4.0. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The physical and programmatic changes proposed are described below. The project also proposes permanently vacating the segment of North 2nd Street that bisects the site (from East St. James Street to East St. John Street), which would prohibit vehicle and bus through-traffic. The Light Rail Transit (LRT) system and associated platform will remain along North 2nd Street.

Physical Changes to the Park

Physical changes to the park may include, but are not limited to, construction or installation of:

- a performing arts pavilion with an amplified sound and lighting system (including large digital screens) for outdoor performances;
- streetscape improvements, including new pedestrian and street lighting;
- a central plaza;
- small commercial buildings built for the purposes of leasing to private entities for commercial purposes (e.g., cafés, vendors, or a beer garden);
- public restrooms (temporary portable and/or permanent);
- gateway monuments that include signage and lighting features;
- improvements to the public transit stops;
- an outdoor fitness cluster;
- an interactive water feature;
- temporary loading zones for park events;
- designated vendor spaces or food truck parking;
- equipment for computer/internet use throughout the park; and
- landscape amenities (e.g., movable furniture, bollards, benches, tree grates, etc.).

Physical changes could also include:

- relocation of historic markers;
- removal and replacement of non-heritage trees;

- reunification of the park by connecting the two halves of the park through the use of pedestrian paths and other complementary design elements, including the permanent vacation of North 2nd Street to prohibit vehicle and bus traffic between East St. James Street and East St. John Street; and
- renovation and possible relocation of the children's playground and associated equipment.

Programmatic Changes to the Park

Programmatic changes to the use of the park may include, but are not limited to:

- new music and performing arts events at the performing arts pavilion; and
- new commercial uses at the park (such as a café or vendors), street performers, festivals, and a farmers' market.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO BE ANALYZED

The EIR will address the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The City anticipates that the EIR will focus on the following issues:

Aesthetics

The EIR will describe the existing aesthetic conditions of the project site and immediate vicinity. The EIR will evaluate the project's impact to scenic vistas and scenic resources. The project's consistency with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality will also be discussed. The EIR will also evaluate the project's light and glare impacts. Mitigation measures for aesthetic impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

Air Quality

The EIR will describe existing local and regional air quality and the air quality impacts of the proposed project in accordance with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) CEQA Guidelines. The impact of the project on local emissions and regional air quality plans will be analyzed. Development-level impacts due to construction, including toxic air contaminants and diesel particulate matter will also be analyzed for the project. Mitigation measures will be identified, where and when appropriate.

Biological Resources

The EIR will include a description of the existing biological setting and an analysis of impacts to biological resources such as habitats, special-status species, trees (e.g., Heritage Trees and ordinance-sized trees), and biologically sensitive areas, based on the analysis included in the Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR. The project's consistency with the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (the "Habitat Plan") will also be discussed. Impacts from the proposed project will be described and mitigation measures will be identified, where and when appropriate.

Cultural Resources

St. James Park, located within the St. James Square City Landmark District and the St. James Square National Register Historic District, is considered a historical resource under CEQA. St. James Park is listed as a contributing site to both districts. The EIR will describe existing cultural resources in the City Landmark and National Register districts and vicinity of the park based upon available inventories of historic resources, including the Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR. The potential for cultural resources, including archeological and historic resources, to be affected by the project will be assessed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant cultural resource impacts, where and when appropriate.

Energy

The EIR will identify the potential for the project to result in significant energy impacts. Mitigation measures for energy impacts will be identified, where and when appropriate.

Geology and Soils

The EIR will identify geologic and seismic hazards based on the Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR. The EIR will describe any geologic constraints or risks resulting in impacts to development proposed and identify mitigation measures, where and when appropriate.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The EIR will describe the regulatory context surrounding greenhouse gas emissions. The EIR will discuss whether the project would generate significant greenhouse gas emissions or conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A project-specific greenhouse gas analysis will be prepared and mitigation measures will be identified, where and when appropriate.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The EIR will describe existing conditions and impacts resulting from hazardous materials contamination from current or former uses in the Downtown using information in the Downtown Strategy 2040 and General Plan 2040 EIRs to the extent possible. Hazards associated with aircraft operations of the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport will also be described. Mitigation measures will be identified for impacts resulting from or to development included in the project, where and when appropriate.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The EIR will describe existing hydrology and water quality and will evaluate flooding, drainage, and water quality impacts that would result from or impact development in the Downtown. Information from the Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR will be utilized to the extent possible. The EIR will identify mitigation measures, as appropriate.

Land Use

The EIR will describe existing land uses in the vicinity of the park and the project's consistency with plans and policies including the current Envision San José 2040 General Plan and General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram. The EIR will describe the changes in land uses proposed by the project and identify land use compatibility impacts, as necessary. Mitigation measures will be described for any significant land use impacts.

Noise and Vibration

The EIR will describe the existing noise environment and noise impacts resulting from construction and implementation of the proposed project, using the analysis in the Downtown Strategy 2040 EIR to the extent possible. Noise impacts will be identified for: (1) proposed land use changes that will expose sensitive receptors to noise or vibration levels exceeding those considered normally acceptable based on the City's policies; and (2) changes in the noise environment resulting from the project, including those related to traffic. Impacts from the proposed Performing Arts Pavilion will be quantitated and described, and mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified.

Population and Housing

The EIR will describe anticipated changes in projected population, jobs, and housing as a result of the proposed project. Population and housing impacts will be addressed and mitigation measures identified, where and when appropriate.

Public Services

Increases in demand for public services resulting from the project will be estimated in the EIR based upon a qualitative estimate of demand for police, fire, and medical services. Likely impacts to the physical environment that could result from these increased demands will be identified. Mitigation measures, such as programs and funding mechanisms for new facilities will be identified, as appropriate.

Transportation

The EIR will describe the existing traffic conditions in the vicinity of the park and Downtown, and evaluate the transportation impacts of the project including the project's consistency with the City's Transportation Analysis Policy (City Council Policy 5-1), approved by City Council on February 27, 2018. The potential parking demand will be determined by factoring in geographical location and transit accessibility, and utilizing parking occupancy data for nearby City parking garages. An evaluation of the closure of North 2nd Street to vehicles and buses will be completed. Traffic impacts resulting from the proposed project and related mitigation measures for significant impacts will be identified.

Utilities and Service Systems

The EIR will describe the anticipated demand for utilities and services, including water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and solid waste resulting from the proposed project. Exceedance of the existing

capacity of existing infrastructure, such as water, stormwater, and sanitary sewer pipelines will be identified. Mitigation measures for utility and service impacts will be identified, as appropriate.

Cumulative Impacts

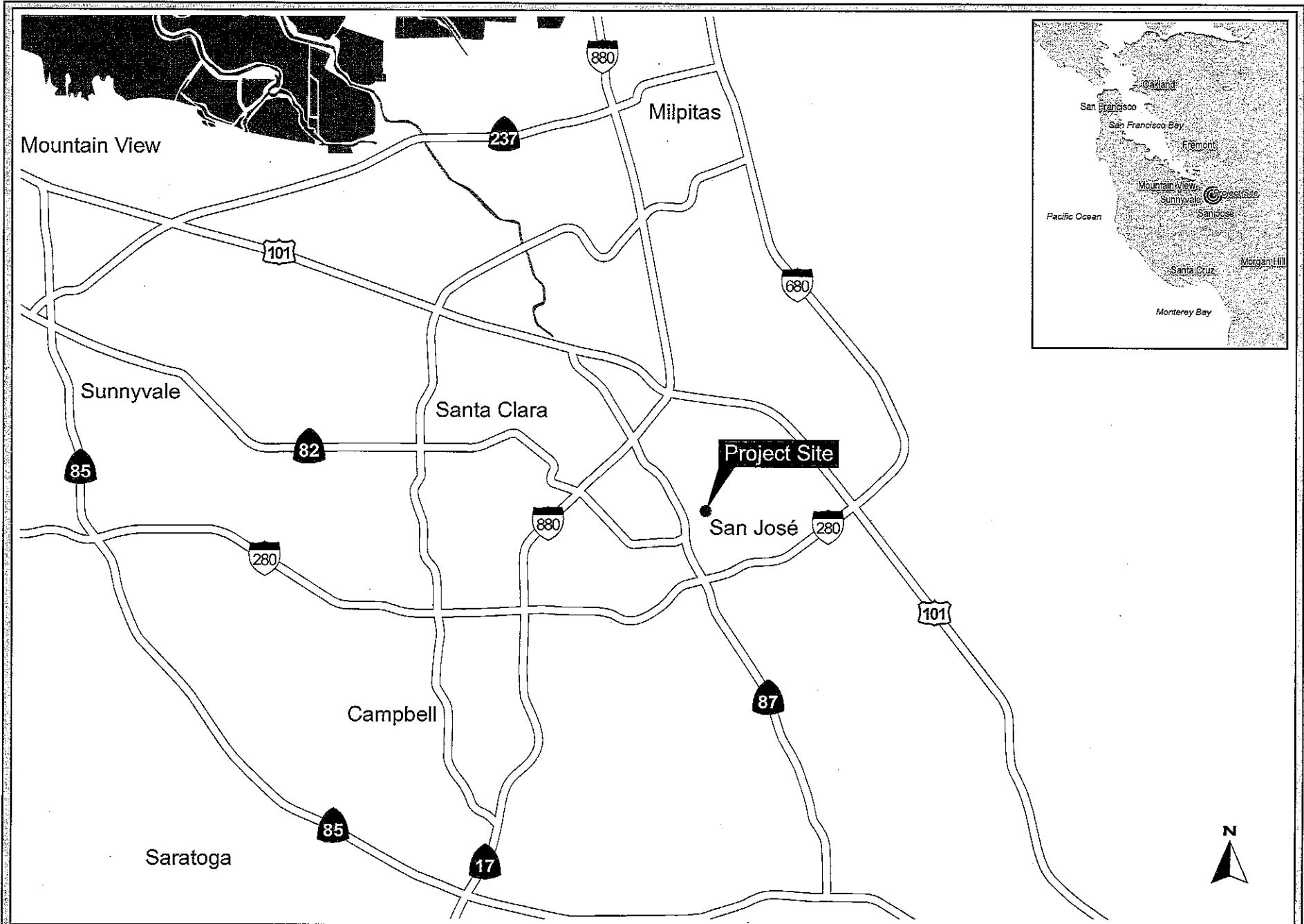
Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130, the EIR will discuss the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable project-level and programmatic projects. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce and/or avoid significant impacts, as appropriate.

Alternatives

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, based on the results of the environmental analysis. A No Project Alternative shall also be evaluated along with its impacts. The alternatives discussion will focus on those alternatives that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the proposed project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant environmental effects identified in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6). The environmentally superior alternative(s) will be identified based on the number and degree of associated environmental impacts.

Other Sections

The EIR will also include all other sections required under the CEQA Guidelines, including: agriculture and forestry resources, hydrology and water quality, mineral resources, tribal cultural resources, wildfire, growth-inducing impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes references, and EIR Authors. Relevant technical reports will be provided as appendices.



REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1

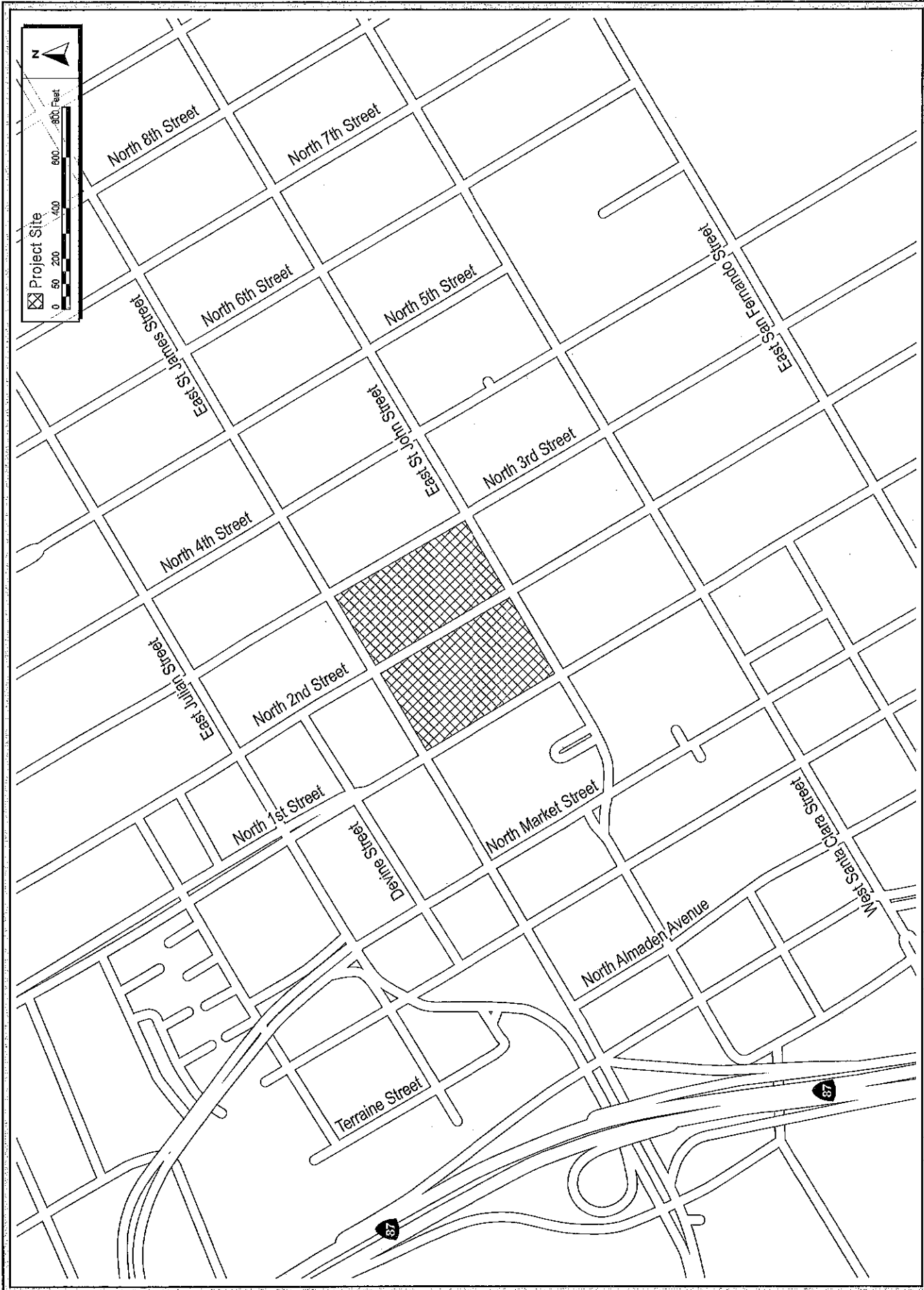
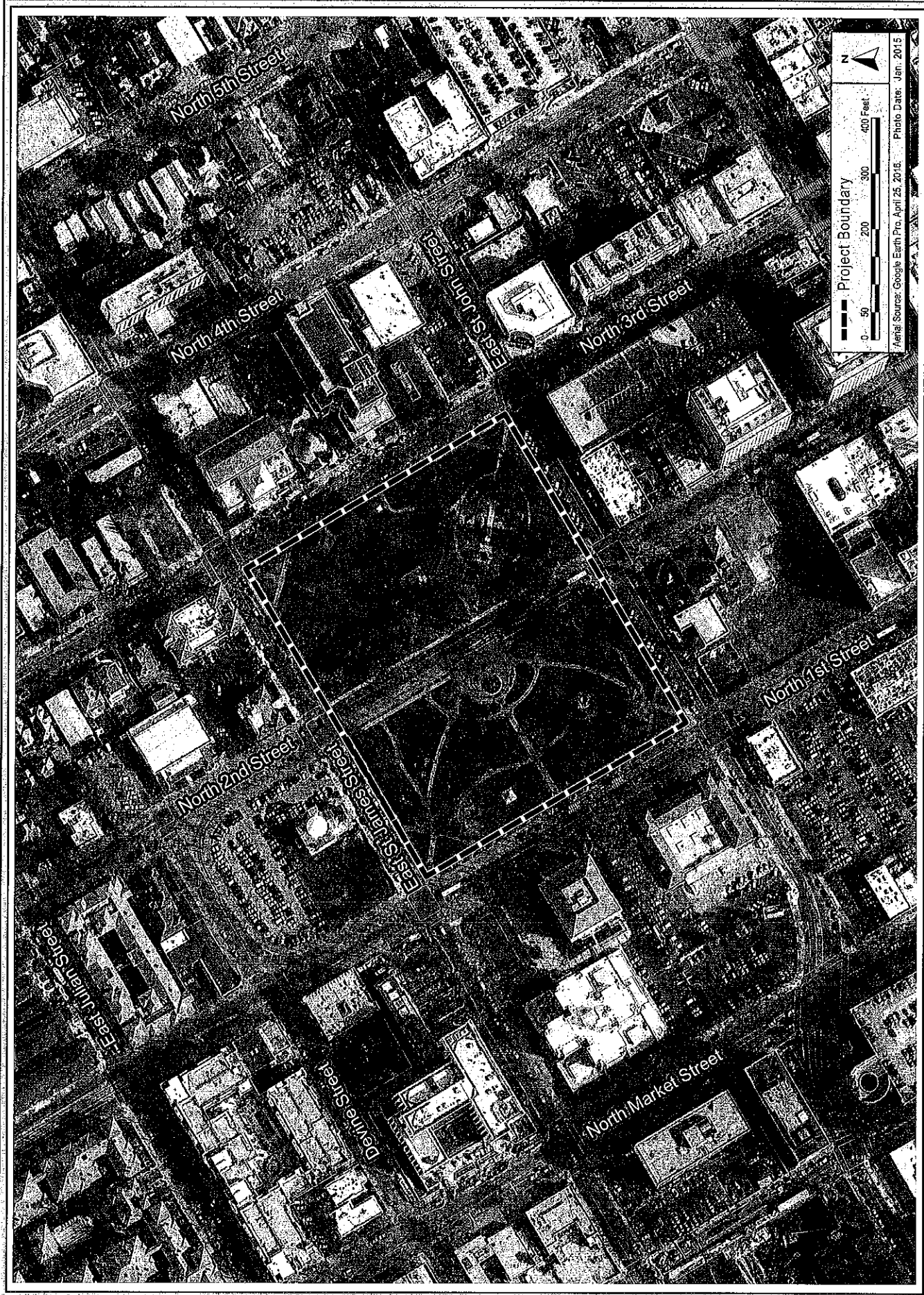


FIGURE 2

VICINITY MAP



Project Boundary

0 50 100 200 300 400 Feet

Aerial Source: Google Earth Pro, April 25, 2016. Photo Date: Jan. 2015

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

FIGURE 3

