



Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting for the City Center Mixed-Use Project Environmental Impact Report

DATE: November 1, 2019

TO: Office of Planning and Research, Reviewing Agencies and Other Interested Parties

FROM: City of Laguna Niguel Community Development Department, 30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

PROJECT TITLE/SUBJECT: City Center Mixed-Use Project – Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

PROJECT APPLICANT: Laguna Niguel Town Center Partners, LLC

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: November 4, 2019 through December 4, 2019

SCOPING MEETING: November 13, 2019

The City of Laguna Niguel (City), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared this Notice of Preparation for the City Center Mixed-Use Project (Project) and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary. The EIR will be prepared under the terms and requirements of CEQA.

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation is (1) to serve as the Notice of Preparation to potential Responsible Agencies, federal agencies involved in funding or approving the Project, and Trustee Agencies responsible for natural resources affected by the Project, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, and (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the preparation of the EIR, environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR, and any related issues from interested parties other than those noted above, including interested or affected members of the public.

PROJECT LOCATION: Located within the City, the Project site (Assessor's Parcel Number 656-242-18) is approximately 25 acres and is owned by the County of Orange. The County will lease the property to Laguna Niguel Town Center Partners, LLC in order to develop and operate the proposed Project. The property consists of the South County Justice Center (closed in 2008), the Orange County Library, a County maintenance yard, and undeveloped land. It is immediately adjacent to City Hall and Orange County Fire Station No. 5, neither of which are part of the Project site. The site is generally bounded by Pacific Island Drive to the north, Alicia Parkway to the east, Crown Valley Parkway to the south, and multifamily residential communities to the west. Attached Figures 1 and 2 provide a vicinity map and aerial plan, respectively.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project proposes specialty retail, restaurants, office, a new County library, community-oriented event/programmable space, integrated residential apartment homes, and extensive walkable open spaces, paseos, and plazas. The Project includes development of approximately 206,500 square feet of commercial and civic uses and 275 multifamily residential units. The commercial/civic space is proposed to be comprised of a wide range of uses, such as restaurants, food hall, retail shops, new relocated County library, health/wellness focused retail and medical office, and creative office space. The residential component of the proposal is comprised of two apartment buildings, one 200-unit apartment building and one 75-unit townhome apartment building. On-site parking accommodations for the Project

includes a combination of surface parking and a multi-level parking structure. The development vision includes a focus on creating a landmark project for the City with an architecture design blending traditional styles with modern elements. The Project's Site Plan is included as attached Figure 3.

It is anticipated that the Project will be built in one phase with construction activities estimated to span approximately 20-26 months. Construction activities include: grading and excavation; construction of foundation and structure; installation of exterior and interior finishes; installation of mechanical, electrical, plumbing; installation of landscape and irrigation; installation of furniture and equipment.

DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS: Development of the Project would require the following approvals from the City:

- **General Plan Amendment** - The General Plan Land Use Element designates the property as "Community Commercial," "Professional Office," and "Public/Institutional." The General Plan Statistical Summary identifies 348,480 square feet of total projected commercial square footage for the profile area. The proposed General Plan Amendment would add the "Residential Attached" land use designation to the site to allow development of the 275 proposed multifamily residential units. It would also modify the Land Use Element's description and statistical summary for this profile area.
- **Zoning Code Amendment & Zone Change** - The Project site is currently zoned "Community Commercial" (CC) and "Public/Institutional" in the Laguna Niguel Zoning Code (LNZC). The proposed Zoning Code Amendment would introduce a new Mixed Use zoning district and corresponding development/use standards that would then be applied as the new zoning district for the Project site through a Zone Change.
- **Site Development Permit** - Provides for review of the physical development of the Project site for conformance with the applicable provisions of the LNZC, including development standards (minimum property line setbacks, maximum building height limit, parking requirements, etc.), and community design guidelines (site planning, building architecture and landscaping).
- **Tentative Tract Map** - To subdivide the site consistent with California's Subdivision Map Act and the LNZC Subdivision Code.
- **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)** - To address reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts resulting from the legislative and Project specific discretionary approvals pursuant to CEQA.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The City has determined that a full-scope EIR is required in connection with the Project so an Initial Study has not been prepared. An EIR will be prepared for the Project in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA Statute and Guidelines, as amended. Based on the City's preliminary analysis of the Project, the following environmental impact categories and their associated impact thresholds will be examined in the EIR.

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| ▪ Aesthetics | ▪ Land Use and Planning |
| ▪ Agricultural and forest resources | ▪ Mineral resources |
| ▪ Air Quality | ▪ Noise |
| ▪ Biological Resources | ▪ Population/Housing |
| ▪ Cultural Resources | ▪ Public Services |
| ▪ Energy | ▪ Recreation |
| ▪ Geology and Soils | ▪ Transportation/Traffic |
| ▪ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ▪ Tribal Cultural Resources |
| ▪ Hazards and Hazardous Materials | ▪ Utilities/Service Systems |
| ▪ Hydrology/Water Quality | ▪ Wildfire |

The EIR will address the short- and long-term effects of the Project on the environment. It also will evaluate the potential for the Project to cause direct and indirect growth-inducing impacts, as well as cumulative impacts. A mitigation monitoring program will be developed that will describe specific mitigation measures that are to be implemented that will reduce potential significant environmental impacts to less than significant levels, as required by CEQA. Should a significant impact not be able to be mitigated, a Statement of Overriding Consideration is required to be prepared that would be considered by the City.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT: CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) requires that "an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives." The anticipated range of alternatives to be addressed for the Project will include alternatives that are specifically required by CEQA (i.e., No Project, No Action/No Development). Additional land use alternatives to be addressed could include a modified development/density alternative.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION: The City is soliciting comments on the scope of the EIR for a period of 30 days, beginning November 4, 2019 and ending 5:00 p.m. on December 4, 2019. Please address all comments in writing to: John Morgan, Development Services Manager, City of Laguna Niguel, Community Development Department, 30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677, or by email to jmorgan@cityoflagunaniguel.org. Pursuant to the CEQA Statute Section 21080.4, Responsible Agencies must submit any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt. Please also provide the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project.

All parties that have submitted their names and mailing addresses will be notified of the availability of the Draft EIR. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list or have any questions or need additional information, please contact John Morgan, Development Services Manager at 949.362.4332 or by email, noted above.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a public scoping meeting in order to receive public comments on the scope of the EIR. The meeting will be held on **November 13, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.** at the City Council Chambers located at 30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677. For further information, please contact John Morgan, Development Services Manager at 949.362.4332 or by email, noted above.

Attachments: Vicinity Map
Aerial Plan
Project Site Plan

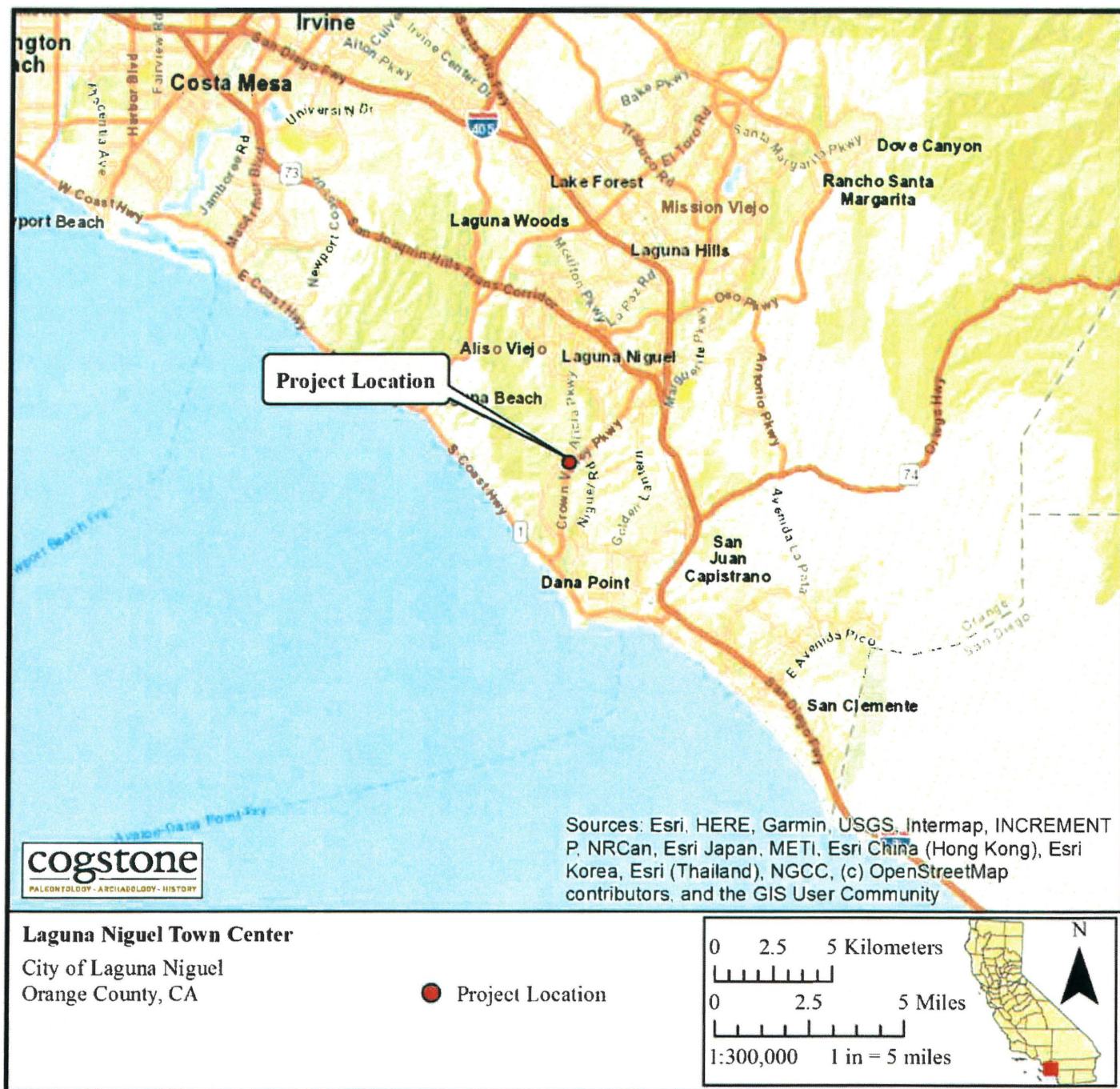


Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map



Figure 2. Project Aerial Plan



Figure 3 - Project Site Plan