

# NOTICE OF PREPARATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SCOPING MEETINGS

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**TO:** Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report in Compliance with Title 14, Section 15082(a) of the California Code of Regulations

The City of Pasadena is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified below.

**AGENCIES:** The City requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b).

**ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES:** The City requests your comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.

**PROJECT TITLE:** Affinity Project

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The Project site consists of an approximately 3.3-acre site located between 465 and 577 South Arroyo Parkway, City of Pasadena, within the County of Los Angeles. The site encompasses five parcels developed with a total of nine commercial buildings with seven businesses. The site is bound by East Bellevue Drive on the north, South Arroyo Parkway on the east, East California Boulevard on the south, and the Metro Gold Line on the west. Regional access to the site is provided by State Route (SR) 110 located approximately 0.6-mile due south on Arroyo Parkway (see Exhibit 1, Regional Location and Local Vicinity).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Project Applicant requests approval to rezone the Project site from CD-6 (Central District Specific Plan [CDSP], Arroyo Corridor/Fair Oaks subdistrict), to a Planned Development (PD) zone, and approval of a PD Plan. The Project involves demolition of six (of the nine) existing buildings totaling 45,912 square feet (sf), located at 491, 495, 499, 503, 541, and 577 South Arroyo Parkway and construction of two new buildings: (1) a 154,000-square foot (sf), 7-story (aboveground) medical office building with ground-floor commercial uses (Building A); and (2) a 184,376-sf, 7-story (aboveground) assisted living building with 85,800 sf of assisted living uses and 98,576 sf of independent living uses including up to 95 one- and two-bedroom senior housing units (Building B). As proposed, there would be five subterranean levels providing up to 850 parking spaces. Approximately 31,605 sf of open space, including public and private (for solely resident and staff use) space would be provided across the Project site.

Alternatively, the proposed PD Plan would provide the flexibility to exchange the uses in Building A from medical office and ground floor commercial for the following:

- 3,000 sf of commercial and a sales/leasing management office on the ground floor;
- Up to 197 residential dwelling units; and
- Up to 650 parking spaces in four subterranean levels (one less than the Project as proposed).

Although the Project described is anticipated to reflect the Project to be constructed, the flexibility to exchange uses in Building A would enable the Project to respond to the economic needs and demands of the City at the time of Project implementation. The proposed site layout and the aboveground height, mass, and other parameters of the Building A design would remain the same. The PD Plan would define all aspects of site design and provide caps on the types and amounts of allowable land uses, regardless of whether Building A is developed with medical office or residential dwelling units. It is noted that based on the development cap of 87 dwelling units per acre (du/acre), a total of 289 units could be constructed. Therefore, if a total of 197 units were constructed in Building A, only 92 independent living units could be constructed in Building B. Conversely, if 95 independent living units were constructed in Building B, only 194 units could be constructed in Building A. Exhibit 2, Affinity Project Site Plan, illustrates a plan view layout of the proposed Project.

A total of approximately 79,553 sf of the existing development on site would be retained and integrated into the Project, including the Whole Foods grocery store and associated 275-space subterranean parking structure at 465 South Arroyo Parkway and the two historic structures at 501 and 523 South Arroyo Parkway. The Applicant anticipates that restaurant uses would occupy the approximately 5,882 sf of space in the existing buildings to be retained at 501 and 523 South Arroyo Parkway.

A total of five levels of subterranean parking spanning both proposed buildings would also be constructed to serve the new development as well as the existing structures at 501 and 523 Arroyo Parkway under the Project. For the Project with Building A Residential/Commercial, a total of four levels of subterranean parking spanning both proposed buildings with up to 650 parking spaces would be constructed. The Project uses south of Whole Foods Market would have three ingress/egress points—one on California

Boulevard and two on South Arroyo Parkway. Whole Foods Market would retain the entrance on East Bellevue Drive and the exit onto South Arroyo Parkway.

The Project would result in the removal of 23 non-protected non-native trees on the Project site and 2 protected, non-native street trees. The Project would include a total of 25 trees in above-grade planters within the site. The 15 remaining street trees on site, which are protected by the City of Pasadena's City Trees and Tree Protection Ordinance, would be preserved in place.

The Project site is situated within the Central District Specific Plan and zoned CD-6 (Central District Specific Plan, Arroyo Corridor/Fair Oaks subdistrict). The *City of Pasadena General Plan* land use designation is High Mixed Use. As mentioned, the Applicant seeks approval to rezone the site as a PD district. The Applicant is also requesting a zoning variance for historic resources related to building height. Specifically, the Applicant is requesting an increase in allowable building height to offset the reduction in developable area due to preserving the two historic structures on the Project site.

The Project is anticipated to be constructed beginning in 2023 over a period of approximately 34 months. Project construction would occur from Monday through Saturday, without activity on Sundays or holidays, between the hours defined in Section 9.36.070 (Construction Projects) of the City of Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday and 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturday). The Project is anticipated to be opened to the public in 2026.

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** An EIR will be prepared to evaluate the Project's potential impacts on the environment and analyze alternatives. Based on the analysis in the IS, the topics anticipated to be discussed in the EIR include: Air Quality, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** The Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study will be available for public review and comment pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b), beginning on August 5, 2021 and ending on September 3, 2021.

**RESPONSES AND COMMENTS:** The City requests the public's careful review and consideration of this notice, and it invites any and all input and comments from interested agencies and persons regarding the preparation of the EIR. Please indicate a contact person for your agency or organization and send your responses and comments to: Jason Van Patten, Senior Planner; Phone: (626) 744-6760; E-mail: [jvanpatten@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:jvanpatten@cityofpasadena.net); Mailing Address: City of Pasadena, Planning and Community Development Department, 175 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101.

**SCOPING MEETING:** Two scoping meetings will be held for the Project, as detailed below. The first scoping meeting will be held with the Planning Commission to receive comments on the proposed Affinity Project Initial Study and contents of the proposed EIR. A second scoping meeting will also be held. You are welcome to attend either scoping meeting and present environmental information that you believe should be addressed in the EIR. The scoping meetings will be held as allowed by applicable health orders because of the COVID-19 pandemic; based on the current pandemic conditions, the two scoping meetings are scheduled as follows in a fully virtual format:

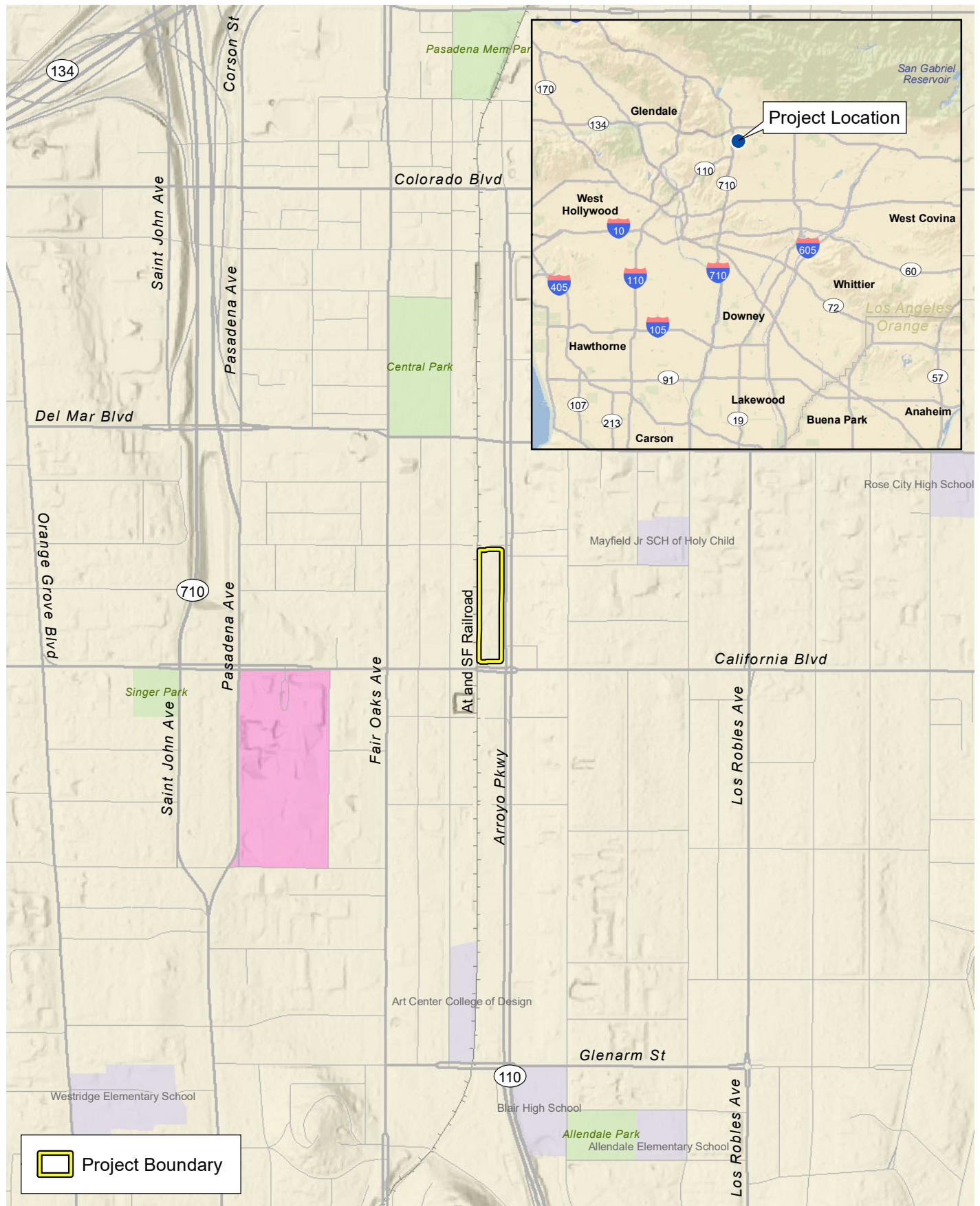
Scoping Meeting #1 (Planning Commission)  
Date: August 11, 2021  
Time: 6:30 P.M.


Scoping Meeting #2  
Date: August 26, 2021  
Time: 6:30 P.M.

Please refer to <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/planning/planned-development-39-affinity-project/> for Zoom links to participate in each scoping meeting.

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The NOP and Initial Study are available online at <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/planning/planned-development-39-affinity-project/>. If eventually allowed by health orders during the COVID-19 pandemic, the documents may be made available during regular business hours (8:00 A.M. through 5:00 P.M. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays; 9:30 A.M. through 5:00 P.M. Wednesdays; 8:00 A.M. through 3:30 P.M. alternate Fridays as of July 19, 2021) at the City of Pasadena, Permit Center, 175 N. Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA, 91101.

If you require additional information, please contact Jason Van Patten at (626) 744-6760 or submit questions and comments by email at [jvanpatten@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:jvanpatten@cityofpasadena.net).



 Project Boundary

## Regional Location and Local Vicinity

Exhibit 1

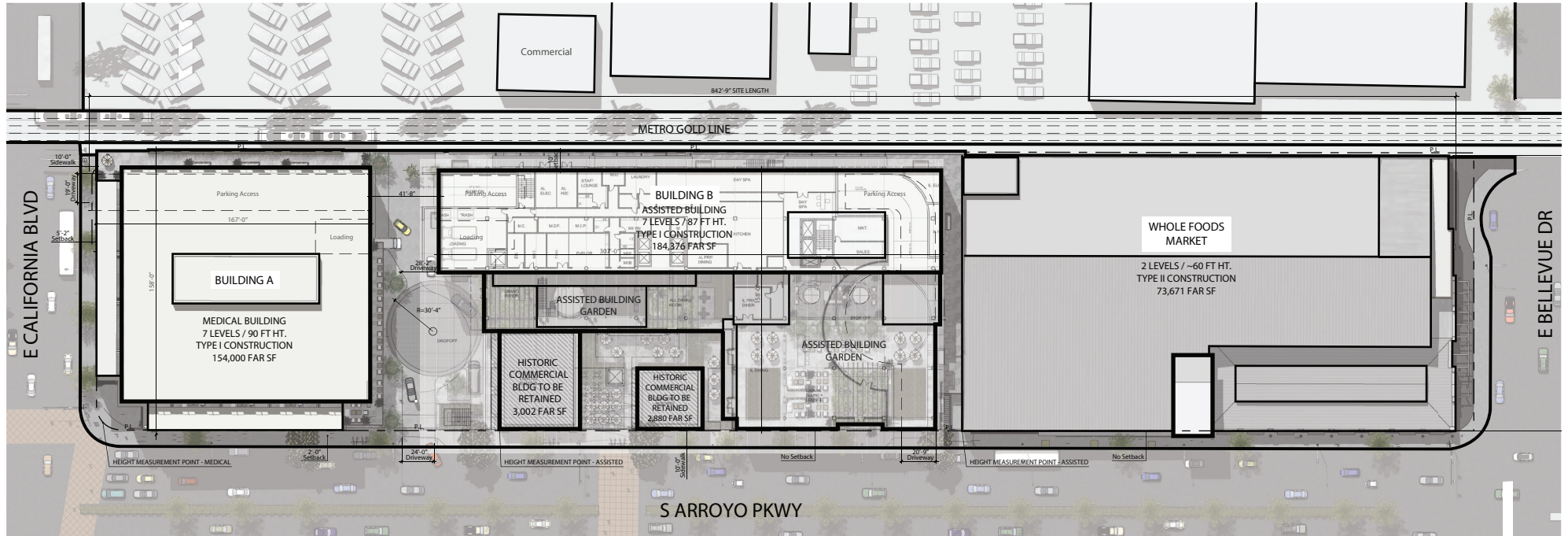
Affinity Project



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Source: Adept 2021

## Project Site Plan

## Exhibit 2

*Affinity Project*



Map not to scale

