

FINDINGS

1. Supplemental Use District - Sign District

- a. **The proposed Sign District is in conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the City of Los Angeles General Plan.**

The Bloc Sign District is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent, and provisions of the General Plan. In addition, the Bloc Sign District is consistent with and implements policies in the General Plan, Framework Element, and Central City Community Plan, a component of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, as explained below:

Framework Element. The General Plan Framework sets forth a citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element denotes the Project area as a “Downtown Center”, which is identified as an international center for finance and trade that serves the population of the five-county metropolitan region. Downtown Los Angeles is the largest government center in the region and the location for major cultural and entertainment facilities, hotels, professional offices, corporate headquarters, financial institutions, high-rise residential towers, and regional transportation facilities. The Downtown Center is generally characterized by a floor area ratio up to 13:1 and high-rise buildings.

The Project is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Framework Element as described below:

Goal 3A: *A physically balanced distribution of land uses that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a healthful living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more livable city.*

Goal 3C: *A Downtown Center as the primary economic, governmental, and social focal point of the region with an enhanced residential community.*

Objective 3.11: *Provide for the continuation and expansion of government, business, cultural, entertainment, visitor-serving, housing, industries, transportation, supporting uses, and similar functions at a scale and intensity that distinguishes and uniquely identifies the Downtown Center.*

Goal 5A: *A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.*

Objective 5.9: *Encourage proper design and effective use of the built environment to help increase personal safety at all times of the day.*

Central City Community Plan. The Central City Community Plan (Plan) categorizes the Framework's Downtown Center into various uses and defines the Project Site as Regional Center Commercial. The Plan guides the development and improvement of the community to meet existing and anticipated needs and conditions, as well as balance growth and stability.

The Sign District is consistent with the General Plan Framework and Central City Community Plan. The Sign District would provide a comprehensive set of signage regulations for a 4.3-acre site, primarily focused on creating a unique and recognizable identity through signage elements to enhance and contribute to the Financial Core Neighborhood, draw visitors to the Downtown area, and benefit the local economy, while fostering a vibrant environment with a unified aesthetic. The boundaries of the Sign District would mirror the boundaries of The Bloc property line. Due to the unique nature of The Bloc development as a regional-scale commercial center and a residential development, the proposed signage would be generally appropriate for the use of the site and is in-line with the City's signage policies. The Sign District would enhance a sense of identity by concentrating project identification signage along visible corridors, providing functional wayfinding signage and directories, and activating the site and the central on-site plaza by incorporating a variety of sign typologies. Additionally, the Digital Displays hours of operation and refresh rates are comparable to nearby sign districts, creating level opportunities for commercial identification and advertising as with other sites located within the Downtown Center area. As such, the Sign District would support the mix of housing and employment to the Downtown Center area, and the objectives of the Framework Element.

The Sign District would ensure the signs are architecturally integrated onto the buildings. A majority of the Digital Displays would be located on an existing horizontal building element that extends around the entirety of the site. Articulated by an exterior brick finish, the horizontal band is the datum that visually ties the office tower, hotel tower, and parking/retail podium together into one cohesive development. The Digital Displays would be located within the horizontal band to organize the digital signs in one zone that avoids sign clutter and provides a consistent and coherent design.

The Sign District would create a sense of place and a lively pedestrian environment by calling attention to the existing retail and restaurant uses (many of which do not have street frontage), reinforcing The Bloc development as a Downtown destination, and contributing to Downtown as a thriving commercial, residential and visitor-serving area as well as the on-going revitalization of Downtown. Further, the Sign District would complement existing Sign Districts in the vicinity of the site including the Figueroa and 7th Street Sign District (located one block west of the site) which includes the 73-story Wilshire Grand Center by proposing similar signage types, including Off-Site Digital Displays.

The proposed signage would support the identity of The Bloc by providing advertising for both on-site and off-site businesses that serve the community and region, contributing to the economic well-being of Downtown. By contributing to an iconic activity center above

the on-site Metro 7th Street/Metro Center Station portal, the signage and Project would create a regional draw, bringing new people and businesses to a site that is well served by transit. All but three of the 18 proposed signs would be located on existing on-site buildings and would generally be located on the existing building's horizontal band that extends around the entirety of The Bloc to create one cohesive development and avoid sign clutter. Other signs would be located at the top of the hotel tower, office tower and new residential tower.

Furthermore, while controlled per the Sign District as to not be obtrusive, illumination from the proposed signage would provide additional ambient lighting along the Project Site frontages and promote safety. Under the Sign District regulations, signage would be integrated and complement the Project architecture, contributing to the placemaking and active pedestrian areas in public open space.

Any off-site advertising, as discussed above, would contribute to the economic vitality of the City as well as the community. Additionally, as discussed above, the signage would support the Project Site as a regional destination, spurring additional economic activity and supporting the existing Downtown community which continues to see investment and development. Therefore, the proposed Sign District is in conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the following General Plan Elements.

b. The Sign District is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice.

The unique characteristics of the Bloc Sign District would include specific sign regulations designed to enhance the theme and unique qualities of the Sign District. The Sign District proposes a comprehensive sign program for the site, primarily focused on providing on-site Supergraphic Signs to highlight the commercial and retail uses within the center of the site, High-Rise 2 Signs to identify the building towers and development, interior Advertising Kiosks to aide in placemaking and wayfinding, and off-site Digital Display advertising to provide lighting and foster the Downtown area's lively environment along the Project's street frontages. The Sign District would permit a variety of signage types, including nine Digital Displays (two of which would be triplet signs), three Supergraphic signs, eight Advertising Kiosks, six new High-Rise Sign 2 Signs and one existing High-Rise Sign 2 Sign. All signs would be architecturally integrated into the building design, functioning as both advertising and placemaking for the Project Site. The signage would be subject to regulations such as area, height, and illumination standards, and subject to hours of operation, number and location, refresh rates for digital display elements, design regulations, and a sign reduction program for off-site signage. The regulations and provisions of the Sign District would allow for orderly signage that enhances the Project Site, and contributes to the vibrancy of The Bloc and Downtown by providing advertising for both on-site and off-site businesses that serve the community and region, contributing to the economic well-being of Downtown.

As discussed above in Finding a and Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.36 D, when acting on multiple applications for a project, when appropriate, findings may be made by reference to findings made for another application involving the same Project, the Sign District would

further a number of goals of the General Plan, support transit facilities on site, contribute to placemaking and public programming, and enhance the regional attraction of The Bloc and Downtown.

The Sign District would be in conformity with public necessity, convenience and general welfare by supporting a development with existing restaurant, retail, hotel and office uses, a publicly accessible plaza and a portal to the Metro 7th Street/Metro Center Station, and the proposed 41-story residential tower. The Sign District is in conformity with good zoning practice as the regulations would only permit orderly signage that is designed to enhance and integrate with the existing and proposed architecture and placemaking, includes standards limiting animation, regulating illumination, and requiring a reduction in overall signage for each new off-site Digital Display built. The Advertising Kiosks would be concentrated on the interior of the site and would not face any residential uses, and all Digital Displays facing residential uses have been conditioned to have illumination standards that are considerate of adjacent residential uses. The overall use of signage as a placemaking tool within a site that is an active pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development, within the heart of Downtown. The Sign District would therefore establish regulations that allow signs which are appropriate for the context of the area.

Accordingly, the Sign District is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, and general welfare, and good zoning practice.

In addition, the proposed Sign District meets the technical requirements for establishment of the district, as defined in LAMC Section 13.11. The Sign District includes one parcel in the commercial "C" zone, and the Site is comprised of one block. On October 31, 2018, the Applicant initiated the Sign District.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) FINDINGS

Introduction

The City of Los Angeles (the "City"), as Lead Agency, has evaluated the environmental impacts of The Bloc Project by preparing an environmental impact report (EIR) ENV-2021-9959-EIR (SCH No. 2022120319). The EIR was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq. (CEQA) and the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 (the "CEQA Guidelines").

The Bloc Project EIR, consisting of the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, is intended to serve as an informational document for public agency decision-makers and the general public regarding the objectives and environmental impacts of The Bloc Project, located at 700 South Flower Street, 700 West 7th Street, and 711 South Hope Street, within the Central City Community Plan area of the City of Los Angeles. The Project Site is currently developed with The Bloc, a mixed-use development comprised of hotel, office, and commercial uses, an outdoor plaza, and an on-site portal to the Metro 7th Street/Metro Center Station. The Project proposes the development of a 41-story residential tower with up to 466 condominium units, the addition of two above-ground parking levels, and the enclosure of the existing nine-story podium building's rooftop parking level. All existing

uses would remain, excluding 24,342 square feet of theater and retail uses (located in the podium building) which would be demolished to accommodate the new residential tower. Once constructed, the Project and existing uses would total 1,894,988 square feet of floor area on a 4.3-acre site, and have a maximum height of 710 feet. In addition, a Sign District would be established that includes Digital Displays, Supergraphics, High-Rise Sign 2 Signs, Advertising Kiosks, and On- and Off-site signage.

The Draft EIR was circulated for a 46-day public comment period beginning on March 28, 2024 and ending on May 13, 2024. A Notice of Availability (NOA) was distributed on March 28, 2024 to all property owners within 500 feet of the Project Site and interested parties, which informed them of where they could view the document and how to comment. The NOA was also filed with the County Clerk on April 1, 2024. The Draft EIR was available to the public at the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, and the following local libraries: Los Angeles Central Library, Chinatown Branch Library and Little Tokyo Branch Library. A copy of the document was also posted online at <https://planning.lacity.gov/project-review/environmental-review/published-documents> and was available for purchase on a USB through the Department of City Planning.

The Final EIR was then distributed in January 2025. Notices regarding availability of the Final EIR were distributed to property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius of the Project Site, as well as anyone who commented on the Draft EIR, and interested parties. Responses were sent to all public agencies that made comments on the Draft EIR at least 10 days prior to certification of the EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(b).

The Deputy Advisory Agency (DAA) certified the EIR on February 11, 2025 ("Certified EIR") in conjunction with the approval of the Project's Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. VTT-83482-CN-HCA. In connection with the certification of the EIR, the Deputy Advisory Agency adopted CEQA findings, as well as a statement of overriding considerations and a mitigation monitoring program (MMP). The DAA adopted the MMP in the EIR as a Condition of Approval. All mitigation measures in the MMP are also imposed on the Project through Condition of Approval of CPC-2021-9958-TDR-SPR-HCA, to mitigate or avoid significant effects of the Project on the environment and to ensure compliance during implementation of the Project.

NO SUPPLEMENTAL OR SUBSEQUENT REVIEW IS REQUIRED

CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387) allow the City to rely on the previously certified EIR unless a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR is required. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15163 require preparation of a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR when an EIR has been previously certified or a negative declaration has previously been adopted and one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- 1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
- 2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the

project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

- 3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:
 - A. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;
 - B. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;
 - C. Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

None of the above changes or factors have arisen and there are no substantial changes to the Project, and it is substantially the same as the approved project. No substantial changes have been identified to the surrounding circumstances, and no new information of substantial importance has been identified since the approval of the Project. There is no evidence of new or more severe significant impacts, and no new mitigation measures are required for the project.

Accordingly, there is no basis for changing any of the impact conclusions referenced in the certified EIR's CEQA Findings. Similarly, there is no basis for changing any of the mitigation measures referenced in the certified EIR's CEQA Findings, all of which have been implemented as part of the conditions of approval. There is no basis for finding that mitigation measures or alternatives previously rejected as infeasible are instead feasible. There is also no reason to change the determination that the overriding considerations referenced in the certified EIR's CEQA Findings, and each of them considered independently, continue to override the significant and unavoidable impacts of the Project.

Therefore, as the Project was assessed in the previously certified EIR, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, no supplement or subsequent EIR or subsequent mitigated negative declaration is required, as the whole of the administrative record demonstrates that no major revisions to the EIR are necessary due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified significant effect resulting from changes to the project, changes to circumstances, or the existence of new information. In addition, no addendum is required, as no changes or additions to the EIR are necessary pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

The record of proceedings for the decision includes the Record of Proceedings for the original CEQA Findings, including all items included in the case files, as well as all written and oral information submitted at the hearings on this matter. The documents and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which the City of Los Angeles' CEQA Findings are based are located at the Department of City Planning, 221 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1350, Los Angeles, CA 90021. This information is provided in compliance with CEQA Section 21081.6(a)(2).

In addition, copies of the Draft EIR and Final EIR are available on the Department of City Planning's website at <https://planning.lacity.org/project-review/environmental-review/published-documents> (to locate the documents, select "Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs)" and search for the environmental case number) (ENV-2021-9959-EIR).