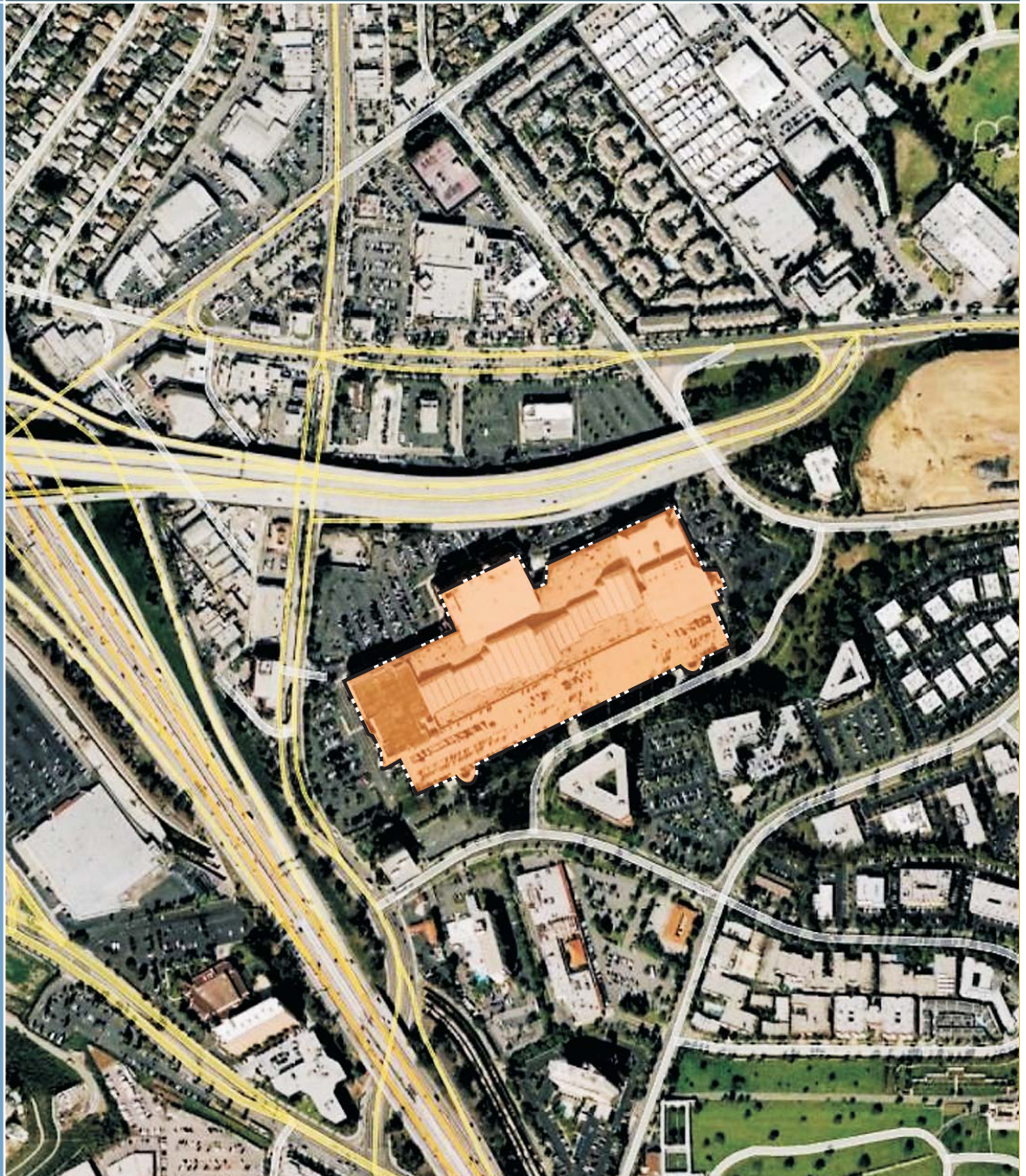


ADDENDUM
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
EXPANSION / REMODELING OF FOX HILLS MALL
CULVER CITY



December 2007

ADDENDUM MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION EXPANSION / REMODELING OF FOX HILLS MALL CULVER CITY

PREPARED FOR:

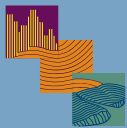
CITY OF CULVER CITY
Department of Community Development
9770 CULVER BOULEVARD
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA 90232

PREPARED BY:

PCR SERVICES CORPORATION
233 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 130
SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA 90401

APPLICANT:

WESTFIELD CORPORATION



December 2007

II. PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM TO THE ADOPTED IS/MND

Section 15164(b) of the CEQA Guidelines provides that an addendum to an adopted MND may be prepared if some changes or additions are necessary and none of the conditions described in Section 15162 of the Guidelines calling for the preparation of a Subsequent MND have occurred. Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines specifies that a Subsequent MND need only be prepared if:

1. Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous MND 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 MND due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
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 negative declaration was certified as complete shows any of the following:
 - a. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous MND,
 - b. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous MND,
 - 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
 - d. Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous MND would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background.....	1
Approved Project	1
Master Sign Program	3
II. PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM TO THE ADOPTED IS/MND.....	4
III. THE CURRENT PROJECT AND THE MASTER SIGN PROGRAM.....	6
The Current Project.....	6
Master Sign Program	6
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	14
Aesthetics.....	15
Transportation Safety.....	29
Global Climate Change.....	31
V. CONCLUSION.....	34

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Location of the Project.....	2
2 Level 1 Plan	7
3 Level 2 Plan	8
4 Level 3 Plan	9
5 Roof Level Plan	10
6 Freeway Oriented Signs.....	12
7 Vertical Signs.....	13
8 View Locations	17
9 View 1 - State Route 90 Eastbound to Interstate 405 Southbound Transition	18
10 View 2 - Residential Neighborhood along Westchester Bluffs at Riggs Place near Kentwood Avenue	19
11 View 3 - Interstate 405 Northbound at Slauson Avenue Exit.....	20
12 View 4 - Residential Neighborhood at 11505 Segrell Way (between Berryman Avenue and Slauson Avenue.....	21
13 View 5 - Residential Neighborhood at Hannum Avenue and Bush Way	22
14 View 6 - Residential Neighborhood at 10751 Cranks Road: Elevation 154 feet	23
15 View 7 - Office Depot Parking Lot at 5640 Sepulveda Boulevard	24
16 View 8 - Slauson Avenue at State Route 90 West Entrance.....	25
17 View 9 - Los Angeles County Assessor's Office at 6120 Bristol Parkway.....	26

I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

This document is an Addendum to an adopted Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration regarding the expansion and remodel of the existing Westfield Fox Hills Mall (Mall). The Mall is located at 200 Fox Hills Mall in the City of Culver City on nearly 44 acres of land. This property is identified in Figure 1 on page 2 and is adjoined by five public roadways including Sepulveda Boulevard on the west and West Slauson Avenue to the north; Hannum Avenue is easterly, and Green Valley Circle as well as Fox Hills Drive from the southern property line. In addition, the Interstate 405 (I-405) is aligned immediately west of Sepulveda Boulevard across from the Mall and the Marina Freeway, or State Route 90 (SR 90), actually transects the project site in an elevated configuration.

The existing Mall was opened in 1975 and is improved with some 1,054,150 square feet of mixed retail space including department stores, numerous smaller retail shops, restaurants, and related uses, and also including a freestanding office building at the southwest corner of the site. There are 4,359 parking spaces presently serving the Mall. A major objective of the City for the Mall at the time of its opening was the hope that this large new retail development would serve as an attractive new gateway to the City of Culver City as well as an important cachement of sales tax revenue associated with patronage of City residents, residents from surrounding communities and, importantly, from nearby freeway traffic. While the Mall enjoyed some success in its early years, it has more recently fallen on slower times. This decline has been attributable to successful introduction of newer and upgraded competing properties, limited upgrading attention at the subject Mall, and to the fact that, despite appreciable effective freeway frontage, only limited freeway visibility has ever been established at the Mall.

APPROVED PROJECT

Westfield Corporation, Incorporated acquired the Mall as the primary property owner in October 1998, and as representative of all of the site's property owners filed a complete Site Plan Review application (Case No. SPR P-2005027) for the expansion and remodeling of the existing Mall in August, 2005. The application proposed demolition of some 180,000 square feet of existing space including the existing freestanding office building, and new construction of slightly over 446,000 square feet of new retail and related space in a multi-level configuration with rooftop parking. The total resulting floor area within the Mall after demolition and new construction was to be 1,320,465 square feet. In addition, a Parking Demand Study determined



a minimum parking need for 4,233 spaces, which could be further reduced by 170 spaces to a minimum of 4,074 spaces due to the existing on-site transit center and future improvements. This latter minimum on-site parking supply was imposed on the expanded Mall project. Onsite and offsite elements were to include architectural improvements such as outdoor plazas and signage; retail and restaurant uses with associated onsite consumption of alcoholic beverages; revisions to vehicle access ramps and expansion of the parking structure; parking lot improvements including striping, curbing, landscaping and handicapped parking upgrades; relocation of two primary driveway locations and realignment of medians and left turn pockets along Sepulveda Boulevard; and signalization of the Hannum Avenue driveway.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the environmental consequences of the project proposed in the Westfield application were thoroughly addressed in an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) prepared by the City initially on August 31, 2005 and subsequently revised September 8, 2005 and November 2, 2005. On November 9, 2005, this MND was adopted by the Culver City Planning Commission with a finding that the proposed project would not cause any significant adverse environmental impacts. On the same date, the Planning Commission also approved the subject of SPR P-2005027 via Resolution No. 2005-PO19. This approval is referred to throughout the balance of this document as the “Approved Project.”

MASTER SIGN PROGRAM

Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Chapter 17.330 specifies a comprehensive system for regulation of signs in Culver City including types of signs, maximum sign areas, maximum sign heights, maximum number of signs, and locations of signs. The CCMC provides for master sign programs (MSP) as a mechanism “...to modify the CCMC and to ensure the signs for a uniquely planned or designed development or area are most appropriate for that particular development or area.”[17.330.050(D)(2)] A MSP “...may be initiated by the City or Redevelopment Agency for a particular area in furtherance of a specific plan, revitalization program, overlay zone or other area wide planning tool.” [17.330.050(D)(2)(c)] Freeway-oriented signs, or those signs that are intended to be essentially visible only from a freeway, are prohibited by the ordinance unless the Director approves and issues a permit pursuant to the MSP to allow such signs. Planning Commission Resolution No 2005-PO19 approving Westfield’s expansion and remodel of the Mall (the Approved Project), requires that Westfield submit a MSP for the exterior signs proposed as part of the “Approved Project. Westfield did submit such a MSP in September 2007. That MSP, specifically those signs considered freeway-oriented signs, is the primary subject of this Addendum to the adopted IS/MND.

The purpose of this Addendum is to analyze the environmental effects associated with the Master Sign Program (MSP) which, as part of its approval of the Approved Project, the Planning Commission required Westfield to submit to the City's Planning Manager. If the analyses presented herein demonstrate that the MSP will not result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of the effects identified in the Adopted IS/MND. Pursuant to Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Subsequent MND is not required. With such analytic demonstration an Addendum would be the appropriate documentation to address the potential impacts of the Westfield MSP.

III. THE CURRENT PROJECT AND THE MASTER SIGN PROGRAM

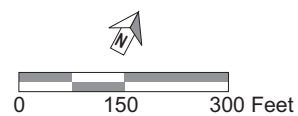
THE CURRENT PROJECT

In the two years since the Planning Commission action regarding the Approved Project, spatial organization and design details have evolved somewhat. However, the scale, massing and mix of previously intended uses remain unchanged. Today, the same amount of demolition is programmed and new construction will provide some 444,130 square feet of new retail and related floor area for a total of 1,318,450 square feet within the new Mall upon completion, or somewhat less than approved by the Planning Commission in the Approved Project. Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 on pages 7, 8, 9 and 10 illustrate plans for Levels 1, 2, 3 and the Roof Level in the Current Project.

Within the Current Project, a new northwest entrance via Sepulveda Boulevard will become a prominent “front door” entrance to the Mall. The pedestrian connection to the transit station adjoining West Slauson Avenue will be enhanced and landscaped. The new mall floor and sections of the existing terrazzo floor will be updated with a stone tile and polished concrete floor, providing contrast to brighter repainted walls and ceilings in lieu of the monochromatic palette between floor, wall and ceiling in the existing Mall. Tile pavers throughout the expansion’s second level, and in select areas of the existing second level, will provide a needed updating. Full height, all-glass handrails will occur through the mall expansion and will replace the steel picket and wire mesh handrails in the existing Mall. The existing food court will be reconfigured and re-imaged, from new amenities and updated flooring to a ceiling renovation and expanded entry vestibule and seating areas, and a fourth level entry and sky lobby overlooking the new court will connect shoppers via elevator and cart escalator to a second level Target entrance. Parking will expand over the roof of a new Target store in the southwest corner of the property providing a total of 4,152 spaces on-site, or roughly 78 spaces more than the minimum number established by the Planning Commission in the approval of the Approved Project. Each of these improvements within the Current Project is in substantial conformance with the Approved Project.

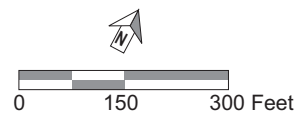
MASTER SIGN PROGRAM

The Master Sign Program (MSP) anticipated in the Planning Commission’s decision to approve the Approved Project has now been submitted to the City’s Planning Manager by Westfield. In addition to an array of site, tenant and directional signage, the MSP includes a set of freeway-oriented signs intended to be visible from the I-405 and SR 90 Freeways. The



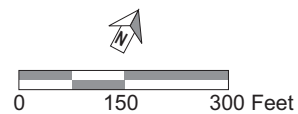
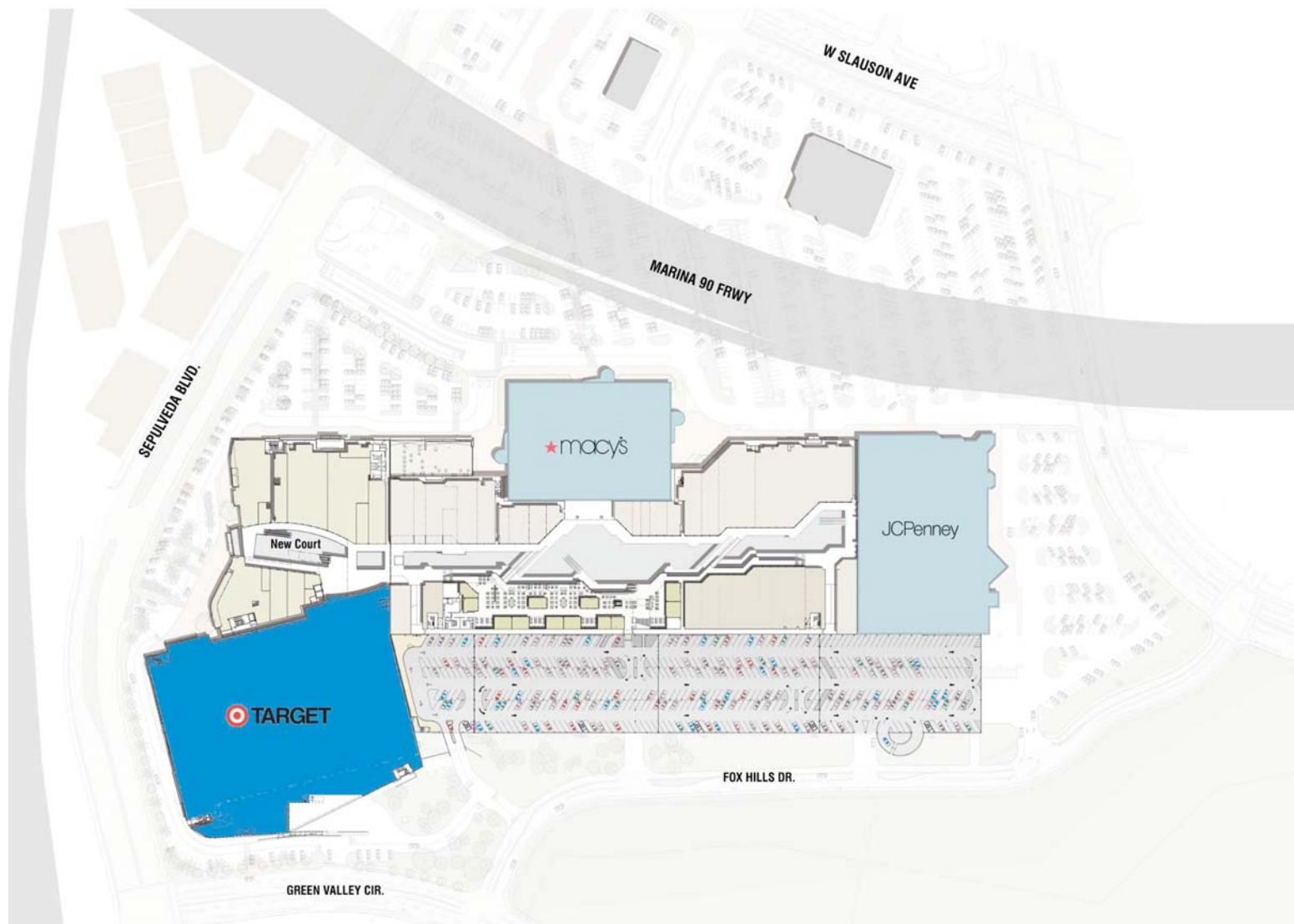
Source: omniplan, 2007

Figure 2
Level 1 Plan



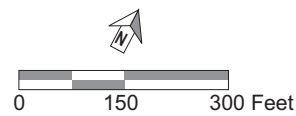
Source: omniplan, 2007

Figure 3
Level 2 Plan



Source: omniplan, 2007

Figure 4
Level 3 Plan



Source: omniplan, 2007

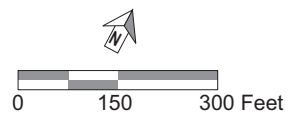
Figure 5
Roof Level Plan

locations of these freeway-oriented signs are identified in Figure 6 on page 12 and include three types of signs. Three vertical signs (Signs AP-A) are proposed to be oriented primarily to the I-405 Freeway and would be located atop the expanded Mall structure's western façade overlooking Sepulveda Boulevard. Each would provide two separate display panels approximately 70 to 80 feet high and 35 feet wide facing generally opposite directions. Refer to Figure 7 on page 13 for an illustration of these vertical signs in conjunction with the expanded Mall building profile and in cross-section of the property looking east.

In addition, four façade-mounted sign panels (Signs AP-B) would be located on the expanded Mall's western façade and on the western ends of the Mall's northern and southern facades. These would be oriented to both freeways as appropriate and would vary in size from 14 feet high and 48 feet wide to 29 feet high and 64 feet wide. Finally, four pole-mounted billboard-type signs (Signs AP-C) would be located in the parking lot north of the Mall primarily addressing the SR 90 Freeway, which is elevated over the project site approximately 27 feet. These pole-mounted signs would each be as high as 60 feet above grade. Three of these latter signs would provide sign panels 14 feet high and 48 feet wide, while a fourth is proposed in a more vertical configuration with three panels 40 feet high and 24 feet wide. The content on all eleven freeway-oriented signs would consist of fixed copy and images (that is, they would not be digitally sequencing) and each would be illuminated. Each would be operable from 5:00 A.M. to daylight and from dusk to midnight.

All of these signage panels will be powered with solar collectors (photovoltaic or other systems, as appropriate) made either a part of the respective signage structures or located elsewhere on the property. As a result, operation of all eleven freeway-oriented signs will be power grid and carbon neutral.

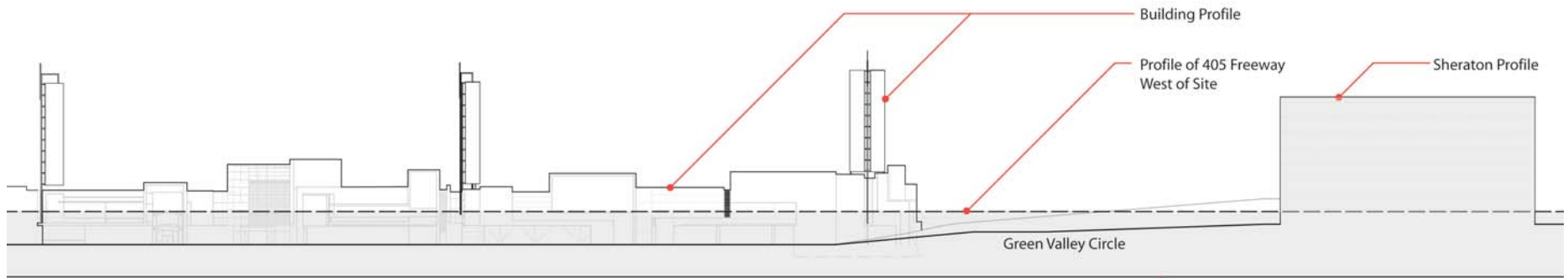
The freeway-oriented signs evaluated in this document represent the Applicant's intent with regard to locations and scale. However, the depictions presented herein represent conceptual illustrations rather than finished designs. Each such sign would comply with applicable city, state and federal regulation with regard to size, materials and structure, illumination and content.



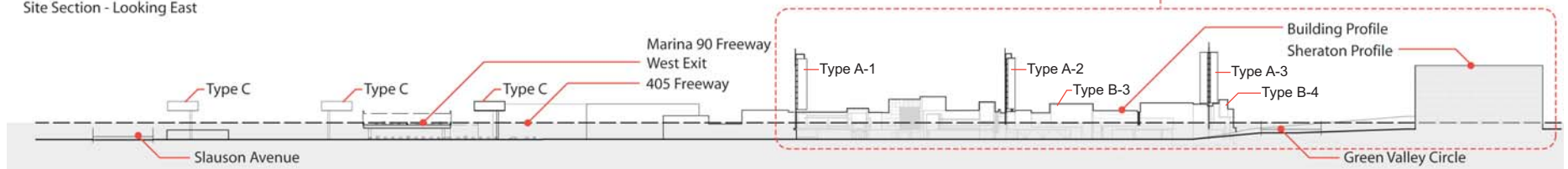
Source: omniplan, 2007

Figure 6
Sign Location Plan

Enlarged Building Profile



Site Section - Looking East



No scale

Source: omniplan, 2007

Figure 7
Building Profile and
Site Section

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The MND regarding the Approved Project that was adopted by the Culver City Planning Commission on November 9, 2005 was based on an Initial Study prepared by the City. The Initial Study was comprised of the State CEQA Environmental Checklist, a formal listing of 83 separate questions organized within 18 environmental categories, each of which was addressed with supporting analysis and discussion and each concluded with a finding that the Approved Project would have either no impact or less than significant impact. The Approved Project was determined to have no potentially significant impacts.

As it has evolved in the ensuing two years since the Approved Project was approved, the Current Project is virtually the same as the Approved Project, though roughly 2,000 square feet smaller. And, while not detailed for consideration by the Planning Commission, the Master Sign Program (MSP) that has now been submitted by Westfield was contemplated by the Commission which made its preparation, submittal and approval by the City a condition of approval in Resolution No. 2005-P109. Therefore, construction and operation of the Current Project should have the same environmental consequences as documented relative to the Approved Project in the City's MND, except insofar as the effects of constructing and operating the freeway-oriented signage within the MSP are concerned.

In its own right, the MSP would not be expected to effect the conclusions reached in the MND for the Approved Project regarding any of several resource issues (specifically Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, or Mineral Resources) since no such resources are associated with the project site or because, in the case of geology and soils, the project's effects including the MSP effects would be identical to those without it.

With regard to the effects of project construction and operational behaviors on on- and off-site infrastructure, systems and elements, the Current Project including the MSP will either have the same effects as the Approved Project because the relevant conditions are the same (specifically Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality) in either case, or because the type and magnitude of project behavior will be the same (specifically Air Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Population and Housing, Transportation/Traffic, Public Services, Recreation, Utilities and Services Systems). Any hazardous conditions as may be associated with the project site will be common to either the Approved Project or the Current Project and will not change, and the Current Project including the MSP will have the same propensity to use hazardous materials as necessary in daily operations as the Approved Project because the uses

and sizes of uses are virtually identical. The MSP will not affect the amount of rainfall that falls on the project site nor the design of drainage improvements planned for the property or the associated affects on water quality. The MSP will not cause the Current Project to generate more traffic than was forecast for the Approved Project because the traffic generation for the Approved Project evaluated in the MND assumed that the expanded Mall would attract the very trips from the freeways that the MSP is designed to attract. Thus, air pollution emissions from vehicles driving to and from the Mall would not change. Vehicle noise would not change. Effects on roadway and intersection capacity would not change. Demand for public services, public utilities and recreation would not change since the respective signs would not generate demand for such services, facilities or utilities or because, as in the case of electric power, the signs will be powered entirely by power grid-neutral solar energy. Similarly, the Current Project with the MSP can be expected to have much the same land use relationship with the array of surrounding land uses as would the Approved Project since the profile of surrounding uses is fully compatible with major urban retail activity and expected associated advertising and signage. With regard to population and housing, the MSP would be passive with respect to population growth and neither the Approved Project nor the Current Project including the MSP can be expected to displace any existing population or housing.

Notwithstanding the foregoing conclusions, the MSP could have the potential to affect three environmental subjects: Aesthetics, Transportation Safety and Global Climate Change. The MSP's potential effect on Aesthetics is apparent due to the MSP's evident intent to be visible from the freeways, and questions regarding Transportation Safety arise out of concern that such visibility could translate into driver distraction. Global climate change is included here because it is a comparatively recent issue, was not included in the City's 2005 MND, and is not yet included in the State CEQA Environmental Checklist. Each of these topics is addressed separately below.

AESTHETICS

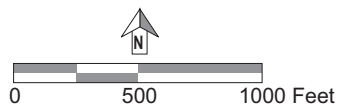
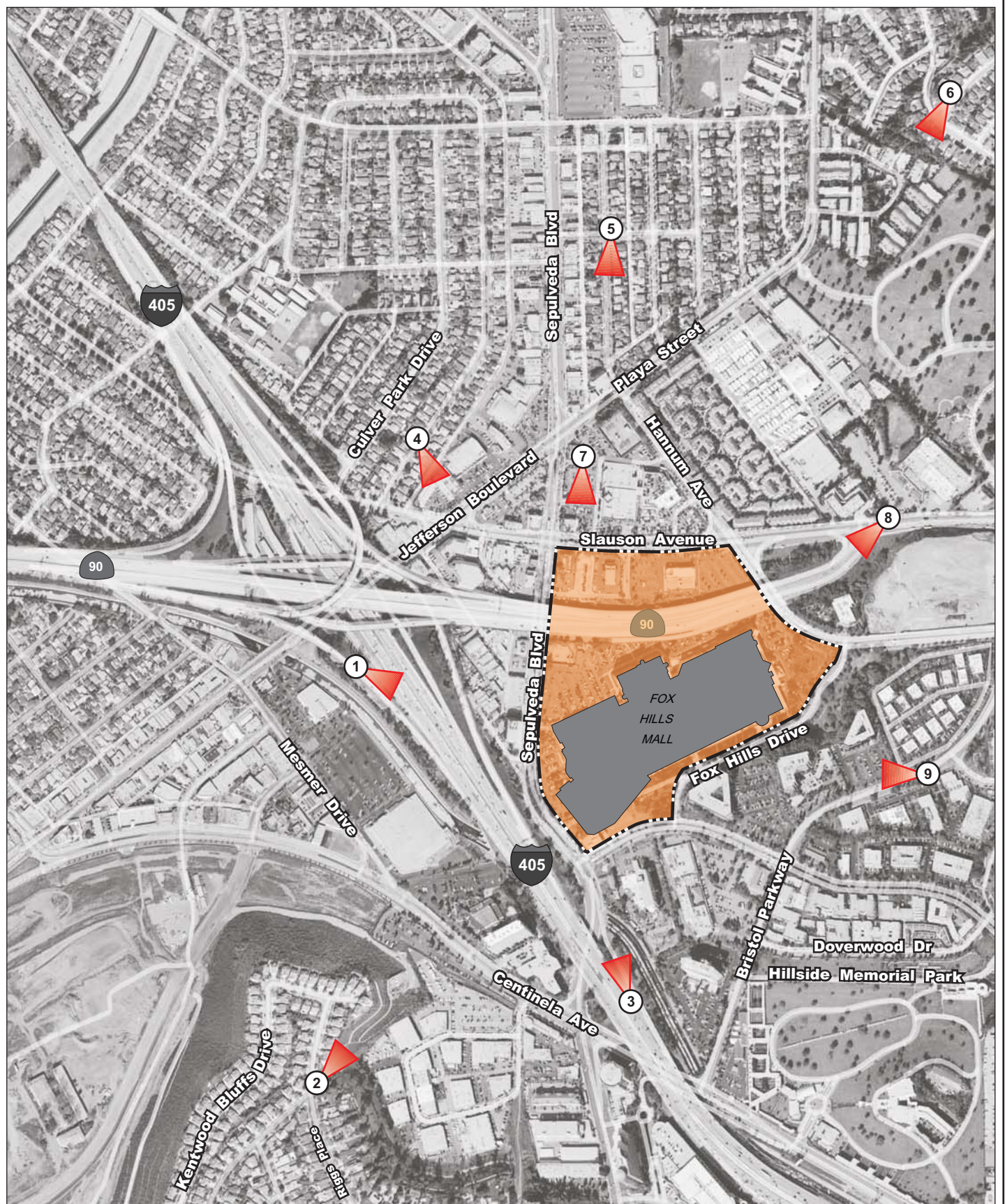
As there are no designated scenic highways or recognized scenic resources in the project locale, implementation of the proposed MSP could not be expected to adversely affect any such resources. However, the 11 freeway-oriented signs proposed within the MSP are intended to be visible from the I-405 and SR 90 freeways as well as local arterials, and as a result, would likely also be visible from other parts of the surrounding community. Therefore, this assessment is intended to determine where such signage might be visible from and whether it could significantly alter the visual character of the locale as seen from a wide variety of perspectives reflecting the full range of community sensitivity

For this assessment, nine view locations were selected by City staff as representative of widely diverse perspectives associated with different land uses and topographic character in the locale. The nine view locations are listed as follows and are identified by number in Figure 8 on page 17:

- View 1: State Route 90 Eastbound to Interstate 405 Southbound Transition (Figure 9),
- View 2: Residential Neighborhood along Westchester Bluffs at Riggs Place near Kentwood Avenue (Figure 10),
- View 3: Interstate 405 Northbound at Slauson Avenue exit (Figure 11),
- View 4: Residential Neighborhood at 11505 Segrell Way (between Berryman Avenue and Slauson Avenue (Figure 12),
- View 5: Residential Neighborhood at Hannum Avenue and Bush Way (Figure 13),
- View 6: Residential Neighborhood at 10751 Cranks Road: Elevation 154 feet (Figure 14),
- View 7: Office Depot Parking Lot at 5640 Sepulveda Boulevard (Figure 15),
- View 8: Slauson Avenue at State Route 90 West Entrance (Figure 16), and
- View 9: Los Angeles County Assessor's Office at 6120 Bristol Parkway (Figure 17).

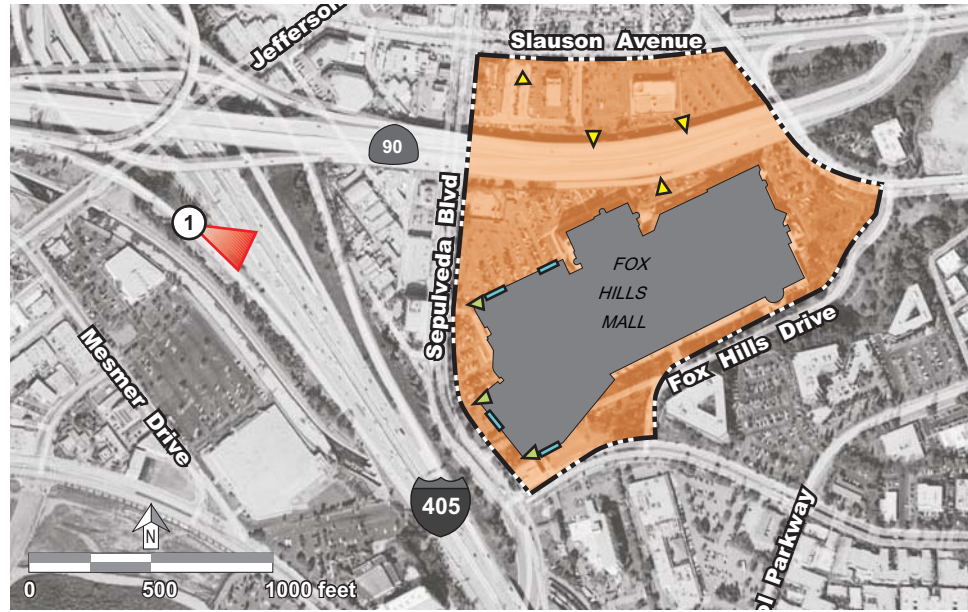
Three of the view locations represent freeway or arterial views: Views 1, 3 and 8. Views 2, 4, 5 and 6 are located in residential neighborhoods. Views 7 and 9 are located in retail or business commercial districts. Collectively these vantages are believed to represent each of the perspectives that may be characteristic of the particular community surrounding the Fox Hills Mall property. At each of the view locations digital photographs were taken toward the Mall property, which could be seen in the camera lens in some but not all views. Then with the aid of global information systems technology, the digitized view locations were integrated with the digitized Mall expansion architectural designs and the placement and dimensions of the proposed freeway-oriented signage to produce accurate photo simulations of the expected views from each of the nine vantages.

In addition, at the direction of City staff, each of the three taller signs proposed atop the new west end of the expanded Mall structure along Sepulveda Boulevard were simulated at four different heights: 120 feet above grade as proposed by the applicant, and 100 feet, 80 feet and 50 feet above grade, respectively. These simulations are presented in Figures 9 through 17 on pages 18 through 26. Each of these figures is presented with the view location mapped in the



Sources: Google Earth, 2007; PCR Services Corporation, 2007.

Figure 8
View Location and
Orientation Map



View Location 1: State Route 90 Eastbound to Interstate 405 Southbound Transition



Existing View 1 of the Project Site.



View 1 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 1 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 1 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



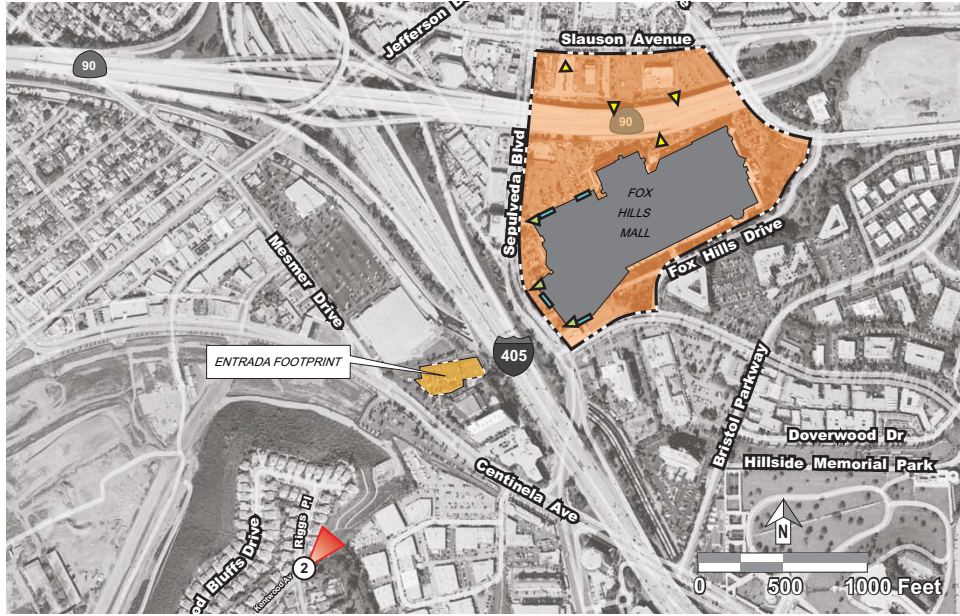
View 1 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 2: Residential Neighborhood along Westchester Bluffs at Riggs Place near Kentwood Avenue



Existing View 2 of the Project Site.



View 2 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 2 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 2 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



View 2 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 3: Interstate 405 Northbound at Slauson Avenue exit



Existing View 3 of the Project Site.



View 3 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 3 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 3 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



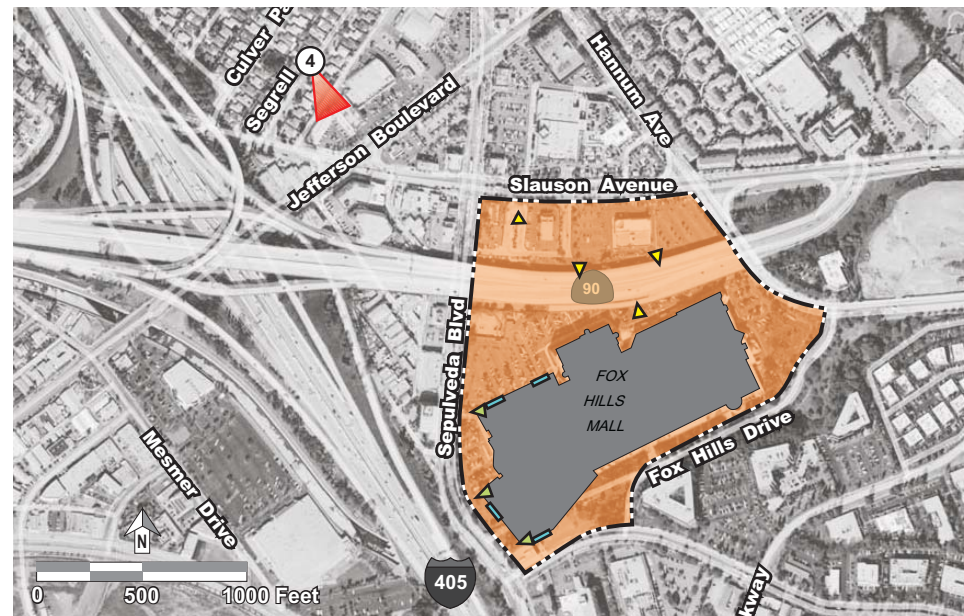
View 3 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 4: Residential Neighborhood at 11505 Segrell Way (between Berryman Avenue and Slauson Avenue)



Existing View 4 of the Project Site.



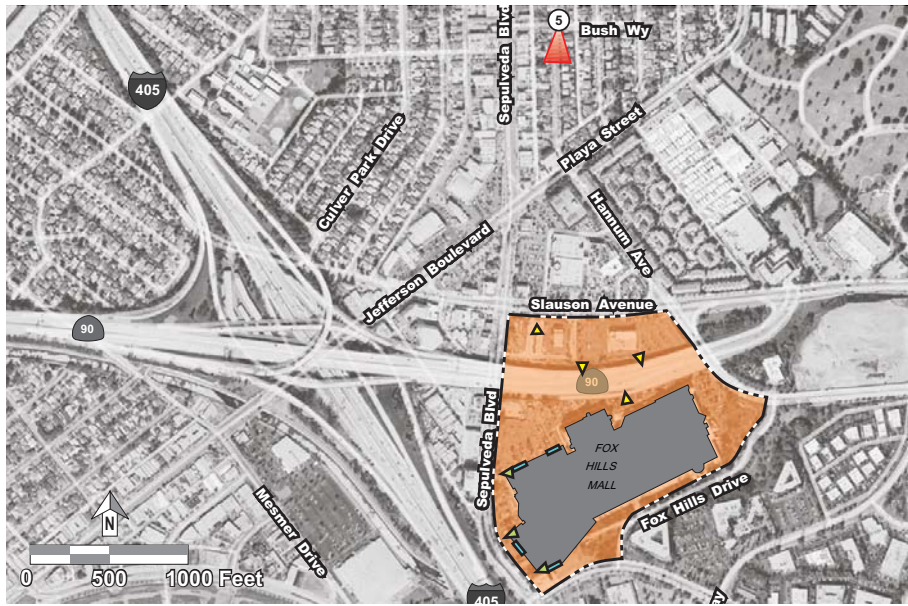
View 4 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 5: Residential Neighborhood at Hannum Avenue and Bush Way



Existing View 5 of the Project Site.



View 5 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 5 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 5 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



View 5 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



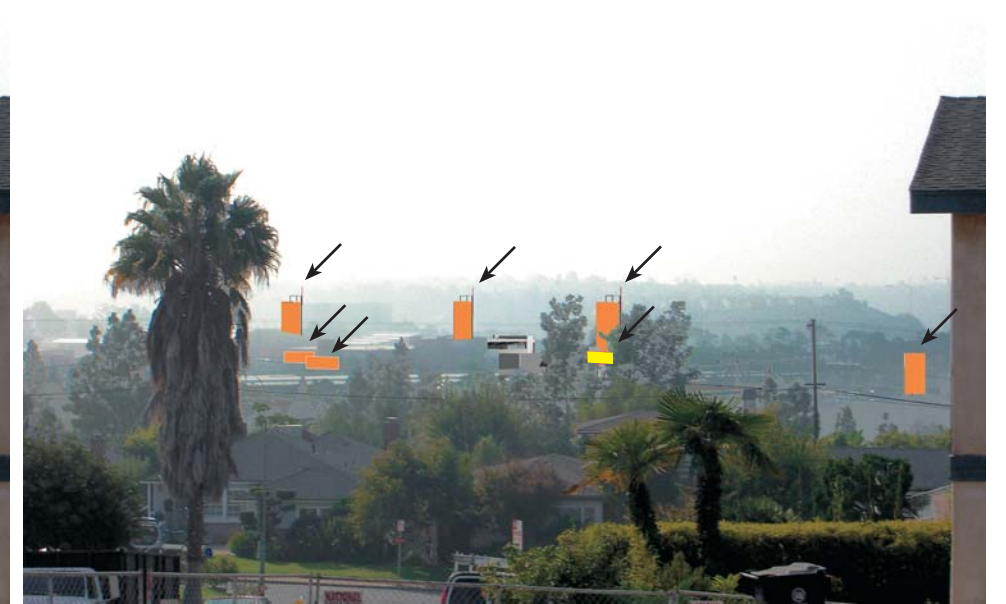
Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 6: Residential Neighborhood at 10751 Cranks Road: Elevation 154 feet



Existing View 6 of the Project Site.



View 6 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 6 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 6 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



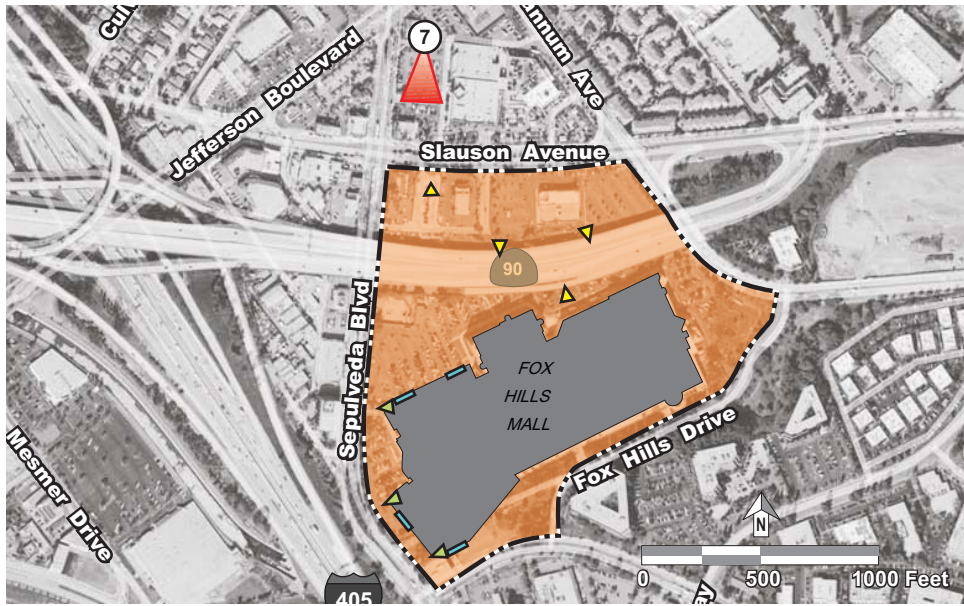
View 6 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 7: Office Depot Parking Lot at 5640 Sepulveda Boulevard



Existing View 7 of the Project Site.



View 7 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 7 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 7 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



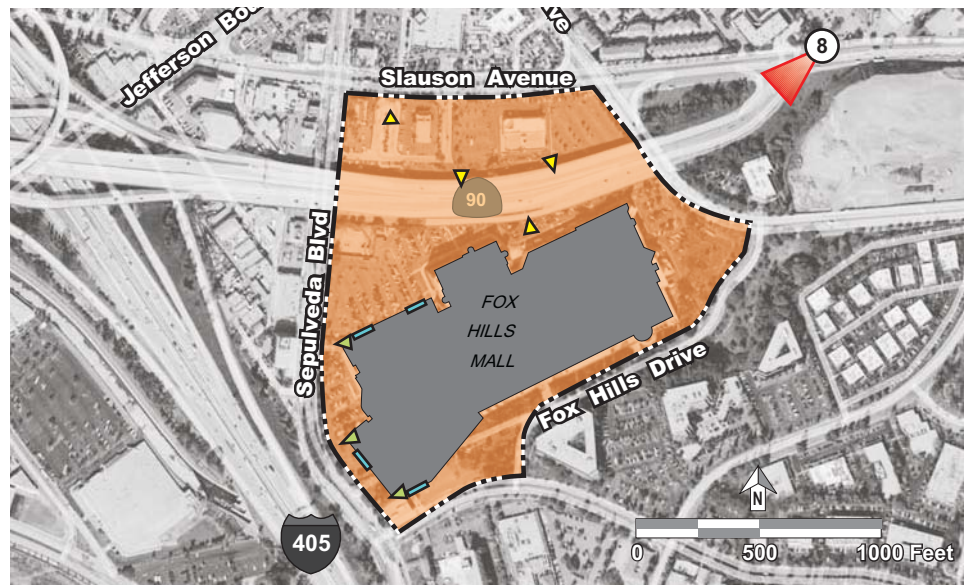
View 7 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 8: Slauson Avenue at State Route 90 West Entrance



Existing View 8 of the Project Site.



View 8 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



View 8 of the Project with Signage Height at 100 Feet Above Grade.



View 8 of the Project with Signage Height at 80 Feet Above Grade.



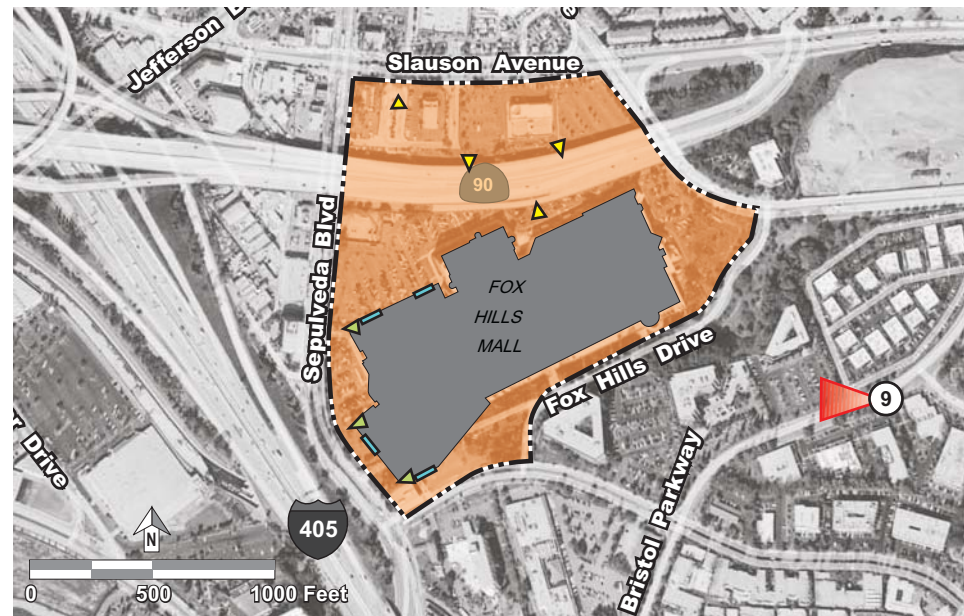
View 8 of the Project with Signage Height at 50 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation



View Location 9: Los Angeles County Assessor's Office at 6120 Bristol Parkway



Existing View 9 of the Project Site.



View 9 of the Project with Signage Height at 120 Feet Above Grade.



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Be Visible from Respective Vantages



Indicates Sign Panels that Would Not Be Visible due to Intervening Structures, Topography, or Vegetation

upper left hand position, while the photograph of existing views is presented in the upper center position. The simulation of the signs as proposed with the three tallest signs at 120 feet above grade is in the upper right position, and the simulations of the three taller signs at 100, 80, and 50 feet, respectively, occupy the lower left, center and right positions. In two instances, Views 4 and 9, none of the signage would be visible even at the highest heights, and in these instances simulations at the lower heights were not completed. No copy or graphic images are represented on any of the sign panels. Where the sign panels would be visible from the respective vantages, they are represented in the respective figures by an artificial orange color so that they can be made out in the figure; however, there is no intent that the actual signs would be so colored. Also, in instances where the signs could not be visible due to intervening buildings, landscape or topography, the hidden signs are depicted in their accurate locations in a bright yellow color so that the reader will understand why they would not be seen.

Freeway/Arterial Views. From the two freeway views, one at the eastbound SR-90 to the southbound I-405 transition (View Location 1) and the other at the northbound off-ramp from the I-405 to Sepulveda Boulevard (View Location 3), the three tallest signs are plainly visible at the proposed 120-foot height and are increasingly obscured by intervening buildings or trees at the lower heights. At 50 and 80 feet above grade, respectively, little of any of the signs would be visible, while at 100 feet the upper portions of each sign would be visible. At the proposed height of 120 feet, the signs do not appear out of scale with the surrounding built environment and during the daytime or when illuminated at night would not seem to exceed reasonable expectations for advertising displays in an urban setting.

From the arterial location at the terminus of SR-90 at Slauson Avenue (View Location 8), relatively little of any of the signs would be visible even at the highest proposed heights due to intervening Mall building mass and trees. Virtually none of the tallest signs along Sepulveda Boulevard would be visible at the lower heights, though the billboard-types sign along the SR-90 alignment would be quite visible to drivers on the freeway, itself.

Views from Residential Neighborhoods. Four views from residential neighborhoods were simulated, two from view locations at the edge of higher terrain from which panoramic views are available (View Locations 2 and 6) and two from view locations within neighborhoods on the urban plain characteristic of most of Culver City (View Locations 4 and 5). From the two elevated vantages, the project site is in the intermediate distance. From the Kentwood location (View Location 2), visibility of the three vertical signs proposed along Sepulveda Boulevard increases from barely visible at the lowest height to plainly visible at the highest 120-foot height, though the billboard-type signs would not be visible at all. At a maximum height above grade of 120 feet, the three signs appear to have a height close to that of the existing Radisson Hotel though significantly less mass. While plainly visible and they would add new content to the view but would not substantively alter the visual character of the entire

view. They also would be visible when illuminated at night, and would be seen against a rather highly illuminated urban backdrop. Despite being visible within that backdrop, they would not be expected to redefine the nature of the nighttime view. It should be noted that in the event the City approves the Entrada Office Tower Project proposed along Centinela Avenue as depicted in the map in Figure 9, that proposed structure would obstruct views of the northern-, most sign along the Sepulveda Boulevard frontage. As this vantage is moved northerly and westerly along the bluff face, the Entrada structure would obstruct views of the proposed signs more completely.

From the Cranks Road vantage (View Location 6), visibility of the three vertical signs also changes from barely visible to plainly visible as the height increases and three of the four billboard signs would also be visible in the foreground. As in the case of views from the Kentwood neighborhood, the visibility of the proposed signs, even at the highest heights, would not be expected to significantly alter the character of the existing view during daytime or nighttime.

Views from the Segrell Way and Hannun Avenue vantages (View Location 4 and 5) will not permit visibility of any of the sign with in the proposed MSP at any heights due to low viewing angles, distance and the presence of taller intervening structures and trees. It is believed that this condition is typical; of views toward the Mall from residential areas located below the bluffs and Baldwin Hills.

Views from Commercial Areas. The two remaining view locations were taken from the Office Depot parking lot immediately north and across Slauson Avenue from the Mall property (View Location 7) and from within the business park east of the Mall along Bristol Parkway (View Location 9). Due to close proximity to the northernmost proposed billboard-type sign at the Office Depot vantage, this sign would be quite visible when not screened by trees, while the even at 120 feet above grade the three vertical signs would maintain a relatively distant perspective. At lower heights, the signs recede to only limited visibility at most. Due to the relatively larger scale of structures in the Bristol Parkway area , little if any visibility of the signs proposed in the MSP would be expected except as may be available from the higher floors of west-facing buildings.

In conclusion, despite the intent of the proposed freeway-oriented signs in the subject MSP to be visible, they would not be universally visible from all vantages within the surrounding community. Evaluation of simulations of the proposed signage program from a reasonable selection of vantages representing the range of perspectives and sensitivities in this community indicate that it will not be visible at all from large tracts of residential neighborhoods occupying the urban plain in Culver City, that they would not exceed current expectations for advertising displays in the commercial sectors of an urban environment, and that while plainly visible at the

highest proposed heights they would not significantly alter the character of existing views from hillside locations during the daytime or at night.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

“Outdoor advertising has been a fixture on America’s roadways since there were roadways. From the “Burma Shave” signs and “Mail Pouch Tobacco” signs of the 1920’s, to the jumbo neon spectaculars and computer controlled images on skyscraper curtain walls that grace Times Square, Hollywood and Las Vegas today, outdoor advertising has always been present in our built environment. Although the pros and cons of billboards have been debated for more than 50 years, it is perhaps their influence on traffic flow and safety that has been most controversial.”¹

Notwithstanding differences of opinion may exist regarding billboards’ and other roadway-oriented signs’ effects on traffic safety, the Legislature of the State of California included the following language in the Outdoor Advertising Act and Regulations, as amended:

“The Legislature finds:

- (a) Outdoor advertising is a legitimate commercial use of property adjacent to roads and highways.
- (b) Outdoor advertising is an integral part of the business and marketing function, and established segment of the national economy, and should be allowed to exist in business areas, subject to reasonable controls in the public interest.”

The Outdoor Advertising Act precludes displays that obstruct motorists’ visibility of traffic signs, or appear to simulate or imitate traffic safety signs giving warning to motorists, or include red or blinking or intermittent light likely to be mistaken for a warning or danger signals, or any associated illumination that could be considered vision impairing due to brilliance, or that is placed upon trees or painted upon rocks or other natural features. It also limits sign animation or message/image sequencing, sometimes called flashing, on digital or electronic signs to changes in content frequency of not less than every four seconds. The Act also limits the size of advertising displays that promote businesses, goods or services not located on the property on which the advertising is displayed to a maximum area of 1200 square feet and maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum length of 60 feet. However, no such size limitations exist for advertising displays on the property for which businesses, goods or services are being advertised.

¹ *“Outdoor Advertising Act and Regulations,” 2005 Edition. California Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Operations, Outdoor Advertising Program.*

The thrust of each of these restrictions is to preserve the traffic safety value of traffic signs and to insure that advertising displays do not interfere with driver visibility or vision, as well as to safeguard the public interest in natural features as may exist along the State's highways, all while preserving the right to advertise as a reasonable use of commercial property.

While the Outdoor Advertising Act appears to establish an acceptable balance between the right to advertise and driver safety, the advent of new technologies that have introduced large-scale, very bright, high resolution signs with changing images to the roadside have added to the concern about advertising causing driver distraction. The subject has only begun to be examined in the scientific literature and clear consensus has not emerged. Two studies prepared for or submitted to the Foundation for Outdoor Advertising Research and Education were recently released. The first, "A Study of the Relationship between Digital Billboards and Traffic Safety in Cuyahoga County, Ohio,"² concluded: "The conclusion of this study is that digital billboards have no statistical relationship with the occurrence of accidents. The analysis and statistics in Cuyahoga County demonstrate that accidents are no more likely to occur along sections of Interstate routes near digital billboards than those without them." The second study, "Driving Performance and Digital Billboards: Final Report,"³ stated its conclusion as follows: "Although there are measurable changes in driver performance in the presence of digital billboards, in many cases these differences are on a par with those associated with everyday driving, such as the on-premises signs located at businesses. Conventional billboards were shown both in the current study and in the Charlotte study to be very similar to baseline and comparison events in terms of driver behavior and performance; thus, the design of digital billboards should be kept as similar as possible to conventional billboards."

A third study was commissioned by the Maryland State Highway Administration specifically to peer review the two studies just cited. This last study, "A Critical, Comprehensive Review of the Two Studies Recently Released by the Outdoor Advertising Association of America"⁴ concluded that acceptance of the conclusions in the two previously cited studies was premature and inappropriate. The author concluded by saying, "...that no research yet published can fully answer the question of whether EBBs (electronic billboards) create a sufficient distraction of drivers' attention that they should be banned or strictly regulated under certain roadway, environmental, and traffic conditions."

² "A Study of the Relationship between Digital Billboards and Traffic Safety in Cuyahoga County, Ohio," Tantala and Associates, 2007.

³ "Driving Performance and Digital Billboards: Final Report," Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Center for Automotive Safety Research, 2007.

⁴ "A Critical, Comprehensive Review of the Two Studies Recently Released by the Outdoor Advertising Association of America," The Veridian Group, 2007.

Against this background of regulation and study, the MSP submitted by the Applicant consists of 11 separate freeway-oriented sign elements: three vertically oriented sign structures to be mounted atop the roof of the expanded Mall (two advertising panels per sign structure), four façade mounted advertising panels, and four billboard-type advertising displays (three with two advertising panels per billboard structure and the fourth with three panels). As each of these advertising displays is proposed on the Fox Hills Mall property and would only be advertising establishments located, or goods and services available, within the Mall or on the premises, these signs do not appear to be limited in size by the Outdoor Advertising Act. While all of these signs are intended to be seen from adjoining roadways and freeways, none would interfere with driver visibility of traffic conditions, signals or signs. They would not simulate traffic signs in a manner that could cause driver confusion and they would not project intense beams of light that might interfere with driver vision. And notwithstanding insufficient evidence to conclude that digital or electronic signs with image sequencing do not cause driver distraction leading to higher accident risk, none of the signs proposed in the subject MSP would be digital. Even though the Outdoor Advertising Act sanctions sign animation with changes no more frequent than every four seconds, all freeway-oriented signs in this MSP are proposed as illuminated fixed image advertising displays with no animation or electronic image changes.

On the basis of the foregoing circumstance, it is concluded that the freeway-oriented signs within the proposed MSP would achieve the balance between the recognized right to advertise in commercial areas and driver safety intended by the Outdoor Advertising Act. No adverse impact on traffic safety is anticipated.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

The subject of global climate change is one that has arisen relative to specific projects since the Planning Commission's approval of the Approved Project in November 2005. Global climate change refers to changes in average climatic conditions on Earth as a whole, including temperature, wind patterns, precipitation and storms. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are compounds found in the Earth's atmosphere that play a critical role in determining the Earth's surface temperature. These gases allow high-frequency solar radiation to enter the Earth's atmosphere, but retain the low frequency energy which is radiated back from the Earth to space, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon is known as the greenhouse effect. The anthropogenic (human) contribution to global climate change attributable to emissions of GHGs is currently one of the most important and widely debated scientific, economic and political issues in the United States.

An understanding of the fundamental processes responsible for global climate change has improved over the past decade, and predictive capabilities are advancing. However, there remain

significant scientific uncertainties, for example, in predictions of local effects of climate change, occurrence of extreme weather events, effects of aerosols, changes in clouds, shifts in the intensity and distribution of precipitation, and changes in oceanic circulation. Due to the complexity of the Earth's climate system, the uncertainty surrounding climate change may never be completely eliminated. Because of these uncertainties, there continues to be significant debate as to the extent to which increased concentrations of GHGs have caused or will cause climate change, and with respect to the appropriate actions to limit and/or respond to climate change. In addition, it is impossible to link a single development project with future specific climate change impacts.

In response to growing scientific and political concern regarding global climate change, California has recently adopted a series of laws to reduce both the level of GHGs in the atmosphere and to reduce emissions of GHGs from commercial and private activities within the State. Most importantly among these, in September 2006, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, also known as Assembly Bill 32 (AB32), into law. AB32 commits the State to achieve the following:

- Reduce current GHG emissions to 2000 levels by 2010 (which represents an approximately 11 percent reduction from emissions projections if current GHG production rates are not altered, or so called "business as usual")
- Reduce current GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (25 percent below "business as usual")
- Reduce California's statewide GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

To achieve these goals, AB32 mandates that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) establish a quantified emissions cap, institute a schedule to meet the cap, implement regulations to reduce Statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources, and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that reductions are achieved.

At present, there are no state or local agency greenhouse gas emission significance thresholds. AB32 did not set a significance threshold for GHG emissions, although the EPA, CARB or another agency may issue regulations at some point to set forth significance criteria for CEQA analysis. In the interim, none of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide, the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) CEQA Air Quality Handbook, the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan, or any other relevant source of authority for air quality impacts sets forth significance thresholds for GHG emissions.

AB32 suggests that there is a *de minimis* level of emissions below which CARB will not regulate. AB32 directs CARB to “recommend a *de minimis* threshold of greenhouse gas emissions below which emissions reduction requirements will not apply” by January 1, 2009.⁵ In addition, AB32 charges CARB with meeting the statewide target “in a manner that minimizes costs and maximizes benefits for California’s economy, improves and modernizes California’s energy infrastructure and maintains the electric system reliability, maximizes additional environmental and economic co-benefits for California, and complements the state’s efforts to improve air quality.”⁶ It directs CARB to begin emissions monitoring and annual reporting by January 1, 2008, starting first with those emissions sources “that contribute the most to statewide emissions.”⁷ As a result, some projects may be permitted to emit GHGs without having a significant impact.

Since the subject of global climate change was not addressed in the City’s 2005 MND, it is appropriate to address it here relative to the MSP proposed for the Fox Hills Mall. Implementation of the MSP has the potential to generate GHG emissions during construction as well as operation. On-site construction activities related to installation of the signage would result in GHG emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels in construction equipment. However, due to the short duration of construction activities emissions are likely to be minimal. Given that the design of the project has resulted in a reduction of 2,000 square feet of finished retail space, it is expected that emissions from construction of the proposed project including the MSP would be on the same order as those originally contemplated for the Approved Project. Therefore, GHG emissions due to construction of the Current Project including the MSP would be on the same order of those that would be emitted during construction of the Approved Project.

Following construction, operation of the MSP’s freeway-oriented signage will be powered entirely via solar energy, through the installation of photovoltaic or other appropriate collectors either as part of the signage structures, themselves, or located elsewhere on the Mall property. As a result, the environmental consequences of the freeway-oriented signage relative to global climate change is that it will generate no net GHG emissions, on an annual basis. Relying on renewable energy sources, such as solar, is a proven strategy for reducing or eliminating GHG emissions, is supportive of the State’s goals, and results in a project-related emissions profile that is better than “business as usual”. This progressive commitment should serve as a positive example in the transition to sustainable times.

⁵ H&SC § 38561(e).

⁶ H&SC § 38501(h).

⁷ H&SC § 38530(b)(1).

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the specific environmental analyses previously presented in Section IV, the proposed Master Sign Program would not cause new significant environmental impacts upon the three issue areas for which the proposed project might be expected to generate concern: Aesthetics, Transportation Safety or Global Climate Change. Moreover, when the project that was approved by the Planning Commission in November 2005 (Approved Project) is compared with the project as it has evolved in the subsequent two years (Current Project), the Current Project is so similar to the Approved Project, albeit slightly smaller, that it is in substantial conformance with the Commission's approval. Therefore, with respect to each of the other 15 general issue areas in the State CEQA Checklist the Current Project's impacts would not be different from those attributed to the Approved Project by the Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted by the Commission at the time of its approval, each of which were determined to be less than significant.

PCR Santa Monica

233 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 130
Santa Monica, CA 90401

TEL 310.451.4488

FAX 310.451.5279

PCR Pasadena

55 South Lake Avenue, Suite 215
Pasadena, CA 91101

TEL 626.204.6170

FAX 626.204.6171

PCR Irvine

One Venture, Suite 150
Irvine, CA 92618

TEL 949.753.7001

FAX 949.753.7002

