Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of the executive summary is to provide a clear and simple description of the project and its potential environmental impacts. Section 15123 of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* requires the executive summary to identify each significant effect with proposed mitigation measure(s) and alternatives that would minimize or avoid that effect. The summary is also required to identify areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public, and issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate the significant effects.

Project Location and Setting

The City of Pasadena (the City) is located approximately 10 miles northeast of the City of Los Angeles in the County of Los Angeles. Regional access to the City is provided by State Route 134 (SR 134), Interstate 210 (I-210 or Foothill Freeway), State Route 110 (SR110), and Interstate 710 (I-710). The project site is located at 233 North Fair Oaks Avenue, located immediately south of I-210. The 42,000 square foot site is bordered by Corson Street on the north, Fair Oaks Avenue on the east, Walnut Avenue on the south, and a vacant parcel on the west.

The project site is located within the Central District Specific Plan, and is zoned CD-1. The General Plan Land Use designation for the site is Specific Plan. The surrounding area is developed with mostly commercial uses and semi-public uses. Saint Andrew's Church, Saint Andrew's daycare, and office and retail uses are located to the east of Fair Oaks Avenue and the project site. The Parson's campus (an office complex) is located to the south of the project site. A vacant lot and Beckham's Grill restaurant are located west of the site. North of the site is Corson Street as well as the Foothill Freeway/I-210, and further north of the freeway are commercial and industrial uses.

Memorial Park, a 5.3-acre City park, is located one block from the project site. Southeast of the park is the Memorial Park Gold Line light rail station, which is approximately one quarter mile to the east of the site. The proposed project site is located within walking distance of Old Pasadena (approximately one-quarter mile south of the site), the Pasadena Civic Center (approximately one-half mile east of the site), and a variety of other historically designated buildings and districts. The project site is not located within an historic district.

The project site is located within the Central District Specific Plan. The Specific Plan area encompasses 960 acres corresponding to the areas recognized by Pasadena residents as "downtown." Included within the boundaries of the Specific Plan area are activity centers known as Old Pasadena, the Civic Center, the Playhouse District, and South Lake Avenue. Significant uses and structures within the Central District Specific Plan include the Old Pasadena area, St. Andrews Church, Pasadena Playhouse, City Hall, the Pasadena Central Public Library, the Y.W.C.A. building, and the Pasadena Humane Society.

Project Objectives

The objectives for the proposed project include the following:

- Create a premier hotel development that adheres to the intent and the requirements of the City's General Plan and the Central District Specific Plan.
- Create a hotel development that complements the existing neighboring uses intended to support the Old Pasadena Business District.
- Create a northwest entrance to the historic Old Pasadena that is compatible with its urban context and encourages pedestrian-oriented, less-motorized transportation, particularly within Old Pasadena.
- Strategically place a hotel use to help extend Old Pasadena north, while creating a link between Old Pasadena and Northwest Pasadena.
- Locate a new hotel within proximity of a major public transportation facility (the Gold Line) to support public transportation throughout the area.

Project Characteristics

The proposed project involves the construction of a 144-room, five story extended stay hotel on a flat, vacant lot at 233 North Fair Oaks Avenue in Pasadena. The hotel would be approximately 94,091 square feet in size.

The building footprint for the proposed hotel would be approximately 35,705 square feet, leaving approximately 6,112 square feet of open space on the site. The proposed project would include approximately 2,880 square feet of landscaping and a total of nine trees would be planted on the site, mostly along North Fair Oaks Avenue.

In addition to the 144 guest rooms, the hotel would contain approximately 1,200 square feet of meeting space, an approximately 750 square foot breakfast room and associated kitchen facilities (for hotel guests only), a lobby, laundry and housekeeping facilities, and an outdoor recreational area with a swimming pool. One level of underground parking is proposed and would accommodate 117 parking spaces. The proposed project would cater to extended stay guests; as such, all 144 guest rooms would include individual kitchens.

The proposed project varies in height from 17 feet up to 65 feet. If the applicant is not able to meet the requirements of the Height Averaging, they would have to apply for a variance, or meet the height restrictions of 60 feet allowable by the Central District Specific Plan standards.

The proposed hotel would be staffed by approximately eight full-time employees. Because the proposed project is a hotel, the facility would be open 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project are anticipated to include site preparation, excavation, grading, construction of the new hotel, application of coatings, paving, painting/striping, installation of lighting/security lighting, and landscaping. Construction would occur in one phase lasting approximately 13 months. Grading of the project site is anticipated to take approximately two months, building sub-phase (i.e., construction of underground parking level)

would last for four months, construction of the hotel structure would last approximately 13 months, and application of architectural coatings would last approximately four months.

Alternatives to the Project

CEQA requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) describe a range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed project that could feasibly avoid or lessen any significant environmental impacts, while attaining the basic objectives of the project. Comparative analysis of the impacts of these alternatives is required. In response to the significant impacts associated with the proposed project, the City developed and considered the following alternatives to the project:

- Alternative 1 – No Project

  The No Project Alternative is the No Build Alternative and assumes that the proposed extended stay hotel would not be constructed; the site would remain in its current vacant state.

- Alternative 2 – Residential Project

  The Residential Project Alternative assumes a fully residential project would be constructed in compliance with the existing zoning for the project site. Under existing codes, a 94,091 square foot residential project would be constructed, with a total of 84 units and up to 105 parking spaces.

- Alternative 3 – Commercial Office Project

  The Commercial Office Project Alternative assumes the maximum allowable build-out of the project site with commercial and office uses. Under this alternative, a 94,091 square foot commercial office project would be constructed with approximately 282 parking spaces.

The *State CEQA Guidelines* require that an environmentally superior alternative be identified from the alternatives considered in an EIR. The No Project Alternative would result in no environmental impacts and therefore would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative to the proposed project. However, as required by *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e) (2), if the No Project Alternative is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative, a second build alternative must be identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative. As such, the code-compliant Alternative 2, Residential Project Alternative, would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative to the proposed project. However, given that the proposed project would not result in any significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, the Residential Project Alternative would not avoid or reduce the severity of significant environmental impacts, and would instead result in greater health risk impacts associated with the proposed project.

Areas of Known Controversy

The *State CEQA Guidelines* require a Draft EIR to identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by other agencies and the public. Comments were received from public agencies and interested parties in response to the circulated Notice of Preparation (NOP). In compliance with *State CEQA Guidelines*, the City held one scoping meeting on July 11, 2012, to solicit comments and to inform the public of the proposed EIR. Comments received in response to the published NOP (provided in Appendix A) identified environmental topics that local and regional agencies recommended for analysis in the Draft EIR. These topics include:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Greenhouse Gases
- Noise and Vibration
- Transportation and Circulation

Issues to be Resolved

The *State CEQA Guidelines* require an EIR to present issues to be resolved by the lead agency. These issues include the choice between alternatives and whether or how to mitigate potentially significant environmental impacts. The major issues to be resolved by the City of Pasadena, as the Lead Agency for the project include the following:

- Whether the recommended mitigation measures should be adopted or modified;
- Whether additional mitigation measures need to be applied to the project; and
- Whether the project or an alternative should be approved.

Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

A summary of the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project, mitigation measures included to avoid or lessen the severity of potentially significant environmental impacts, and residual impacts, is provided in Table ES-1, Summary of Project Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts, below.

Table ES-1 Summary of Project Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts

Significance Threshold and Project Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Aesthetics		
The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (i.e., blocking views of the San Gabriel Mountains from public vantage points or from the adjacent uses).	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; on the contrary, the project would be considered an improvement in comparison to the existing vacant lot.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would create a new source of increased levels of ambient lighting and glare in the immediate vicinity of the site; however, emanating light would be consistent with the ambient nighttime illumination levels of existing development and proposed exterior lighting would be shielded and oriented in a manner that will prevent spillage.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
Air Quality		
The project would not conflict with implementation of the applicable air quality plan.	No mitigation is required	No impact

The project would create emissions from vehicle trips along surrounding local streets and the highway, but would not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any nonattainment criteria pollutant.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
Cultural Resources		
The project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section15064.5.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
Although, the likelihood of encountering archaeological resources on the project site is considered low, the project could potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.	**MM CR-1**: Prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities on the project site, a qualified archaeologist shall be retained in the event that cultural resources are discovered during grading activities. No further disturbance shall occur in the vicinity of the discovery until the archaeologist examines and evaluates the discovery. Should archaeological resources be found during project ground-disturbing activities, the Archaeologist shall first determine whether it is a “unique archaeological resource” pursuant to Section 21083.2(g) of the PRC or a “historical resource” pursuant to Section 15064.5(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines. If the archaeological resource is determined to be a “unique archaeological resource” or a “historical resource”, the Archaeologist shall formulate a mitigation plan in consultation with the City of Pasadena that satisfies the requirements of the above-referenced sections, and the applicant shall implement the mitigation plan. If the Archaeologist determines that the archaeological resource is not a “unique archaeological resource” or “historical resource”, s/he will record the site and submit the recordation form to the California Historic Resources Information System at the South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University, Fullerton. The Archaeologist shall prepare a report of the results of any study prepared as part of a testing or mitigation plan, following accepted professional practice. The report shall follow guidelines of the California Office of Historic Preservation. Copies of the report shall be submitted to the City of Pasadena and to the California Historic Resources Information System at the	Less than significant impact

	South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University, Fullerton.	
Although, the likelihood of encountering paleontological resources on the project site is considered low, the project could potentially destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.	**MM CR-2**: Prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activities (i.e., grading and excavation), a qualified Paleontologist shall be retained and shall attend the pre-grading meeting. Paleontological monitoring shall be conducted, as determined necessary by the Supervising Paleontologist, during grading and other excavation work. Recommended hours for monitoring activities shall be established by the Supervising Paleontologist. It shall be the responsibility of the Supervising Paleontologist to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City, the appropriate level of monitoring necessary based on the tentative map level grading plans, when available. Any paleontological work at the site shall be conducted under the direction of a qualified Paleontologist. If a fossil discovery occurs during grading operations when a Paleontological Monitor is not present, grading shall be diverted around the area until the Monitor can survey the area. Any fossils recovered, along with their contextual stratigraphic data, shall be donated to the City of Pasadena or County of Los Angeles or other appropriate institution with an educational and research interest in the materials. The Paleontologist shall prepare a report of the results of any findings as part of a testing or mitigation plan following accepted professional practice.	Less than significant impact
The project could potentially unearth/disturb previously undiscovered human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.	**MM CR-3**: If human remains are encountered during excavation activities, all work shall halt and the County Coroner shall be notified (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 5097.98). The Coroner will determine whether the remains are of forensic interest. If the Coroner, with the aid of the qualified Archaeologist, determines that the remains are prehistoric, s/he will contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC shall be responsible for designating the most likely descendant (MLD), who will be responsible for the ultimate disposition of the remains, as required by Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. The MLD shall make his/her recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD's recommendation shall be followed if feasible, and may include scientific removal and non-destructive analysis of the human remains and any	Less than significant impact

	items associated with Native American burials (California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5). If the landowner rejects the MLD's recommendations, the landowner shall rebury the remains with appropriate dignity on the property in a location that will not be subject to further subsurface disturbance (PRC Section 5097.98).	
Greenhouse Gases		
The project would generate greenhouse gas emissions as a result of vehicles traveling to and from the hotel, natural gas combustion from space heating, disposal of solid waste, and electricity used directly by the building and indirectly to supply water to the site and to treat wastewater; however, these emissions would not exceed the SCQAMD's proposed significant threshold for commercial land uses.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gasses.	No mitigation is required	No impact
Noise and Vibration		
The project would expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.	**MM NOISE-1**: Prior to the issuance of building permits the applicant shall prepare an acoustical study demonstrating what sound reducing measures will be incorporated into the construction of the project to ensure the interior noise levels for habitable rooms do not exceed 45dB. This study shall be reviewed and approved as part of the building permits issued for the project. The following are suggested measures that can be used to achieve a noise reduction. The final measures shall be presented in the acoustical analysis and incorporated into the plans submitted for building permits: ▪ If a 15-20 dBA reduction is needed, the following may suffice: a. Air Conditioning or a mechanical ventilation system; b. Windows and sliding glass doors should be double paned glass and mounted in a low air filtration rate frames (0.5 cfm or less, per American National Standard Institute (ANSI) specifications); and c. Solid core exterior doors with perimeter weather stripping and threshold seals. ▪ If a 20-25 dBA reduction is needed, the following may suffice: a. Same as No. 1 a-c; b. Exterior walls consist of stucco or brick veneer. Wood siding with a one-half inch thickness fiberboard underlayer may also be used; c. Glass in both windows and doors should not exceed 20 percent of the	Less than significant impact

	floor area in a room; and d. Rood or attic vents facing the noise source should be baffled. ▪ If a 25-30 dBA reduction is needed, the following may suffice: a. Same as No 2 a-d; b. The interior sheetrock of exterior wall assemblies should be attached to studs by resilient channels. Staggered studs or double walls are acceptable alternatives; and c. Window assemblies should have a laboratory-tested STC rating of 30 or greater (windows that provide superior noise reduction capability and that are laboratory-tested are sometimes called "sound rated" windows). **MM-NOISE-2**: Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the project, a sound test shall be performed to the satisfaction of the Pasadena Health Department and the Building Division of the Planning Department demonstrating that the interior noise level of habitable rooms do not exceed 45 dB. **MM-NOISE-3**: The project shall adhere to all applicable requirements of the Noise Restrictions Ordinance during project construction and operation. A Construction Related Noise Plan is required as part of the Construction Staging Plan and must be reviewed by the Building Division and the Department of Transportation and approved prior to the issuance of a grading permit. This plan should show the location of any construction equipment and how the noise from this equipment will be mitigated by such methods as: temporary noise attenuation barriers; preferential location of equipment; and use of current technology and noise suppression equipment.	
The project would not expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not cause a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
Transportation and Circulation		
The project would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the	No mitigation is required	No impact

circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit.		
The project would conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.	**MM TRANS-1**: The project applicant shall contribute funds to the Neighborhood Traffic Management Capital Improvement Program Fund Number 75210, which would be used to implement traffic management measures to protect neighborhoods potentially influenced by the project's traffic north of I-210 and west of St. John Avenue.	Less than significant impact
The project would not increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersection) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not result in inadequate emergency access.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact
The project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.	No mitigation is required	Less than significant impact