

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

South Coast Area Office  
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**TH22c**

Filed: 6/3/11  
49th Day: 7/22/11  
180th Day: 11/30/11  
Staff: Al Padilla-LB  
Staff Report: 6/22/11  
Hearing Date: 7/14/11

**STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** 5-11-145

**APPLICANT:** City of Santa Monica

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 1700/1685 Main Street, Santa Monica

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The applicant proposes to construct a 6-acre municipal park with varied topography, native drought tolerant plants, walkways, water features, play area, view overlook, and restrooms. Approximately 55,000 cubic yards of fill will be imported from an adjacent construction site.

**SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:** Santa Monica certified Land Use Plan, certified in 1992; Civic Center Specific Plan, June 2005; Civic Center Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, October 2004.

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**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval with special conditions on the basis that the project, as conditioned, conforms with the public access and resource protection policies of the Coastal Act. Special Conditions include: 1) landscaping with native drought tolerant and non-invasive plants; and 2) compliance with City's water quality standards.

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**I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**MOTION:**        *I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 5-11-145 pursuant to the staff recommendation.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL:**

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PERMIT:**

The Commission hereby approves a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

**II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:**

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.

4. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
5. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

### III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

#### 1. Landscape Plan

**A.** Prior to issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit, for review and approval of the Executive Director, a landscaping plan. The plan shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect. To minimize the need for irrigation and minimize encroachment of non-native plant species into adjacent areas, all landscaping shall consist of native and/or drought tolerant non-invasive plant species. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council (formerly known as the California Exotic Pest Plant Council), or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be utilized on the property. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property. All plants employed on the site shall be drought tolerant (low water use) plants identified by U.C. Davis and the Water Resources Board. Ornamental planting with non-indigenous and non-invasive plant species is permitted within the garden areas.

**B.** The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the final plans approved by the Executive Director pursuant to this condition. Any proposed changes to the approved plans shall be reported to the Executive Director in order to determine if the proposed change shall require a permit amendment pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations.

#### 2. Water Quality Standards

With the acceptance of this permit the applicant agrees to comply with all applicable City of Santa Monica water quality requirements as required under the City's Municipal Code that are in effect at the time of approval of this permit.

### IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS:

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

**A. Project Description and Location**

The applicant, the City of Santa Monica, proposes to construct a 6- acre municipal park with varied topography, native drought tolerant and non-invasive plants, walkways, water features, children's play area, view overlook, seating benches, artwork, bicycle racks, and public restrooms (see Exhibit No. 1). The park will include various walkways for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the 6-acre site (see Exhibit No. 4). The walkways will consist of concrete pavement to be compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessible by bicyclist. A one acre site east of the 6-acre park, in front of City Hall, will be relandscaped to provide continuity with the new park and will include a water feature and walkways.

Approximately 55,000 cubic yards of fill will be imported from an adjacent construction site (CDP No. 5-08-159) to change the relatively flat 6- acre site to a site with varied topography ranging from 9 feet to 21 feet. The proposed grading and use of retaining walls will create landscaped features throughout the site, including tiered planting and seating areas, and an elevated viewing site adjacent to Ocean Avenue

The project site is located south of the Santa Monica Freeway and is bounded by Main Street to the east, Ocean Avenue to the west, and the future Olympic Drive to the south, in the City of Santa Monica (see Exhibit No. 1 and 2). City hall is located directly across from Main Street to the east. South of the 6-acre site, near the corner of the Ocean Avenue and the future Olympic Drive, there is an existing restaurant and motel covering approximately 22,000 square feet. This existing development is not part of the proposed park development and will remain.

South of the future Olympic Drive is a proposed mixed use development, that was approved by the Commission in 2008 (CDP No. 5-08-159) and is scheduled for construction within a few months, will provide the fill for the proposed park. The mixed use development will consist of 324 residential units; approximately 20,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space; and 619 on-site parking spaces, and will include construction of Olympic Drive which will extend from Ocean Boulevard to Main Street along the eastern boundary of the proposed park.

The project site previously contained a portion of the RAND Corporation building complex, which consisted of a two and a five story 295,000 square foot complex and a surface parking lot. In 2000, RAND and the City of Santa Monica entered into a Development Agreement (DA) and RAND sold a portion of their property to the City (Santa Monica Redevelopment Agency) and retained 3.7 acres for the construction of the new RAND building now located to the south of the project site. The construction of the new RAND building and demolition of the old buildings were approved by the Commission in 2001 (CDP No. 5-01-196 and 5-01-209). Along with the demolition of the former RAND buildings the site was regraded and leveled.

The proposed project, along with the previously approved mixed use development, are part of the City's Civic Center Specific Plan (CCSP) approved by the City in 1993 and amended in 2005. The CCSP also included a 700 parking space public parking structure

(CDP No. 5-03-489), a 13,300 square foot public safety building (CDP No. 5-98-269), and the recently completed 320,400 square foot RAND Corporation building (CDP No. 5-01-196), all previously approved by the Commission.

In August 1992, the Commission certified, with suggested modifications, the land use plan portion of the City of Santa Monica's Local Coastal Program (LCP), excluding the area west of Ocean Avenue and Neilson way (Beach Overlay District), and the Civic Center/RAND area, which includes the project site. On September 15, 1992, the City of Santa Monica accepted the LUP with suggested modifications. The CCSP is not part of the certified LCP.

## **B. Development**

Section 30211 of the Coastal Act states that:

*Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.*

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states in part that:

*The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural landforms, to be visually compatible with the character surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.*

Section 30252 of the Coastal Act states in part:

*The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by. . . (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation. . .*

## **Public Access and Recreation**

The proposed 6-acre municipal park is located south of Colorado Boulevard and Palisades Park, which is an approximately 1.5 mile long bluff top park overlooking Pacific Coast Highway and the Beach. The proposed park is designed to extend the pedestrian and bicycle experience of Palisades Park and adjacent streetscape through continuity of the landscaping found within Palisades Park to the new park and orientation of the pathways which will help draw people into the new park from Ocean Boulevard. The proposed park will be a passive park and is designed to be attractive for strolling, jogging, seating, and viewing. A children's playground will be included along with seating areas, a turf grass gathering area, meandering pathways, bench seating, and an elevated viewing area that is orientated with views towards the coast.

The proposed park will provide recreational opportunities for residents as well as visitors to Santa Monica, and because of its close proximity to the Pier, located at the foot of Colorado Boulevard, and Palisades Park, the new park will enhance recreational and coastal viewing opportunities in the area.

Although the park will not provide on-site parking, street parking will be provided along the future Olympic Drive (approximately 40 spaces), which will be constructed in conjunction with the adjacent mixed use development project, and along Main Street (approximately 10 spaces) adjacent to the park. Furthermore, there is additional public parking within the 876 space municipal parking structure which is part of the civic center development and located just south of City Hall, within a ¼ mile of the new park. There is also additional public street parking along Ocean Boulevard to the south and north of the project site. Since the park is designed as a passive park and will attract people from surrounding uses, such as Palisades Park, the Pier, downtown and Civic Center areas, the majority of the parking demand will be shared with the surrounding uses, therefore, the park will not significantly increase parking demand and the available parking surrounding the park will be adequate to support the park. Therefore, as proposed, the project will enhance public coastal access and recreation and will be consistent with Section 30211 and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

#### Public Coastal Views

The proposed project site abuts, and is south of the Santa Monica Freeway, and is east of Ocean Boulevard. The western or seaward side of Ocean Boulevard is developed with commercial and residential development and because of the park's location and existing surrounding development, the project site is not visible from the beach, and because of the flat grade which is at street level, the site does not provide any significant coastal views. However, the park design will take advantage of the location and through recontouring the site with imported fill and creating an elevated viewing site adjacent to Ocean Boulevard the project will provide and enhance public viewing opportunities of the coast and ocean.

Views to and from the site will further be enhanced through the proposed extensive landscaping. Landscaping will consist of native drought tolerant and non-invasive vegetation, varying from small bushes, including a mix of grasses, sages, and succulents, to large trees, such as, oaks, palms, pines, and sycamores. The proposed landscaping is designed to minimize the use of water and to be self sustaining. Existing non-native invasive plants, such as the Mexican Fan Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), if required to be uprooted and relocated due to construction activities, will be relocated outside of the coastal zone and will not be replanted on the site or within the coastal zone. Invasive plants, such as the Mexican Fan Palm, will significantly increased number of seeds being deposited in the area which could create problems with any eradication efforts due to the increase number of seedlings that could germinate throughout the area and adversely impact native vegetation. Therefore, as a special condition of the permit the applicant shall submit and implement a landscape plan that consists of drought tolerant, non-invasive plants. To ensure that the landscaping will consist of native drought tolerant and non-

invasive plants Special Condition No. 1 is required. The Commission, therefore, finds that only as conditioned, will the project be consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

### **C. Control of Polluted Runoff**

Section 30230 states:

*Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.*

Section 30231 states:

*The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.*

The proposed project poses a potential source of pollution due to construction activities and possible sedimentation from site runoff. The City, to mitigate potential impacts for all development, has adopted an Urban Runoff Ordinance. The ordinance requires projects to incorporate best management practices with extensive recommendations and measures to reduce or prevent contaminants from running off the site. The City requires all new development to achieve twenty- percent reduction of the projected runoff for the site with design features such as biofilters and retention structures, and also requires the use of oil and water separators or clarifiers to remove petroleum-based contaminants and other pollutants where necessary. The City's Best Management Practices are designed to treat, infiltrate or filter the amount of stormwater runoff up to the 85% percentile for a 24 hour storm event. The proposed project will include dry-wells and a bio-retention basin to maximize on-site water retention. Furthermore, the extensive landscaping will provide infiltration areas which will reduce the amount of run-off from the site.

Staging and storage of fill material will be contained on site and the project will incorporate best management practices during construction for erosion and sediment control. Measures will include sediment berms, wind fencing, storm drain inlet protection, mud grates at construction exits, and temporary retention or desilting basins.

Coastal Commission water quality staff has previously reviewed the City of Santa Monica's water quality standards for similar projects and have determined that the City's standards are consistent with standards imposed by the Commission. To ensure that the

development complies with the City requirements, a special condition (special condition No. 2) is necessary that requires the applicant to agree to comply with the water quality requirements of the City. The Commission, therefore, finds that, as conditioned, the development will be consistent with Section 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act.

#### **D. Cultural Resources**

Section 30244 of the Coastal Act states:

*Where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required.*

The proposed site was previously developed and has been disturbed in the past. According to the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Civic Center Specific Plan, archaeological records indicate no identifiable historical, archaeological, and/or paleontological resources exist on the project site, however, there is a small possibility of a deeply buried site being uncovered during any deep excavations.

In this particular case the site was previously developed and all development on the site was recently demolished and removed and the site regraded (CDP No. 5-01-209) as part of the relocation and construction of the new RAND facility to the south. Since all development has been removed, the proposed project will not involve any deep excavations beyond the depths of the previously disturbed soils. There has been no reported archaeological or paleontological resources found associated with the demolition and grading activity, and since grading activity for the proposed project will mainly consist of importing fill, there will be no potential adverse impact to archaeological or paleontological resources. Therefore, the Commission finds that as proposed the project is consistent with Section 30244 of the Coastal Act.

#### **E. Local Coastal Program**

Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act states that:

*Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).*

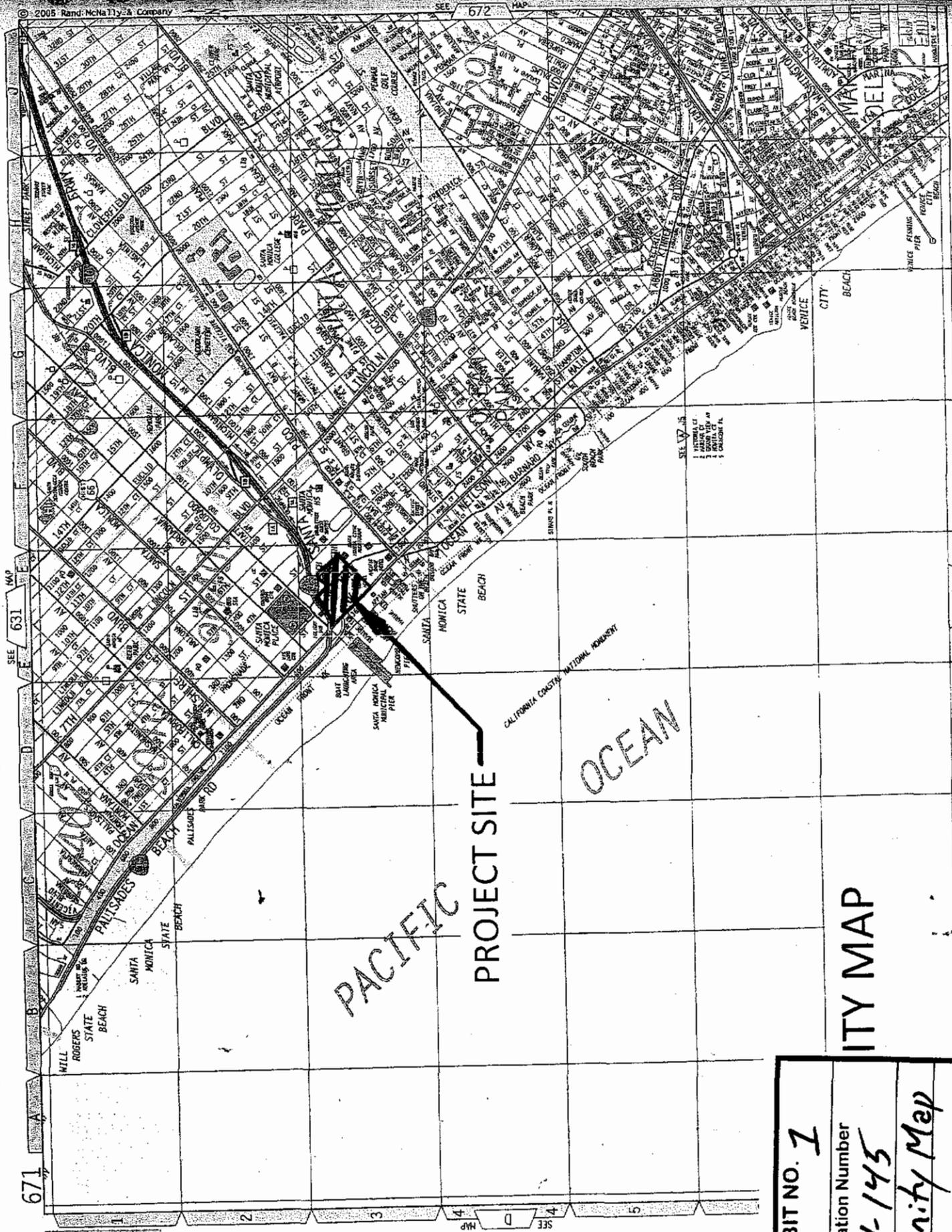
In August 1992, the Commission certified, with suggested modifications, the land use plan portion of the City of Santa Monica's Local Coastal Program, excluding the area west of Ocean Avenue and Neilson Way (Beach Overlay District), and the Santa Monica Pier. On September 15, 1992, the City of Santa Monica accepted the LUP with suggested modifications.

The subject site is suitable for development of a municipal park. As proposed the project will not adversely impact coastal resources or access. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed project will be consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the City to prepare implementation for a Local Coastal Program consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

**F. CEQA**

Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(i) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the activity may have on the environment.

There are no feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the proposed project is found consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.



671

LOS ANGELES CO

SEE 674 MAP

PACIFIC

PROJECT SITE

OCEAN

CITY MAP

EXHIBIT NO. 1

Application Number

5-11-145

Vicinity Map

California Coastal Commission

SEE 675  
 1. MOUNTAIN VIEW  
 2. STATE ST  
 3. STATE ST  
 4. STATE ST  
 5. DELICIOUS PL

SEE 701 MAP

74 1:10

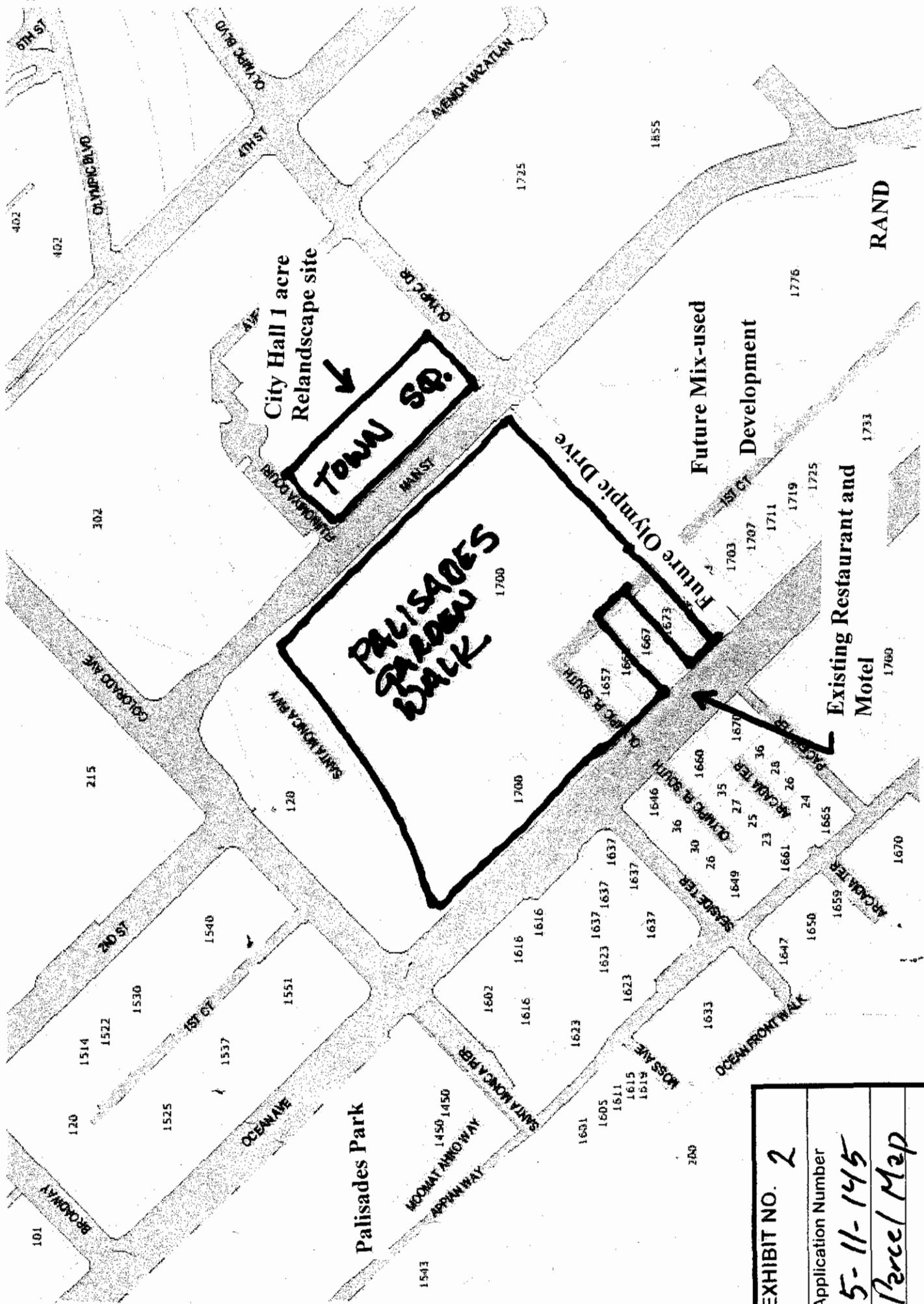
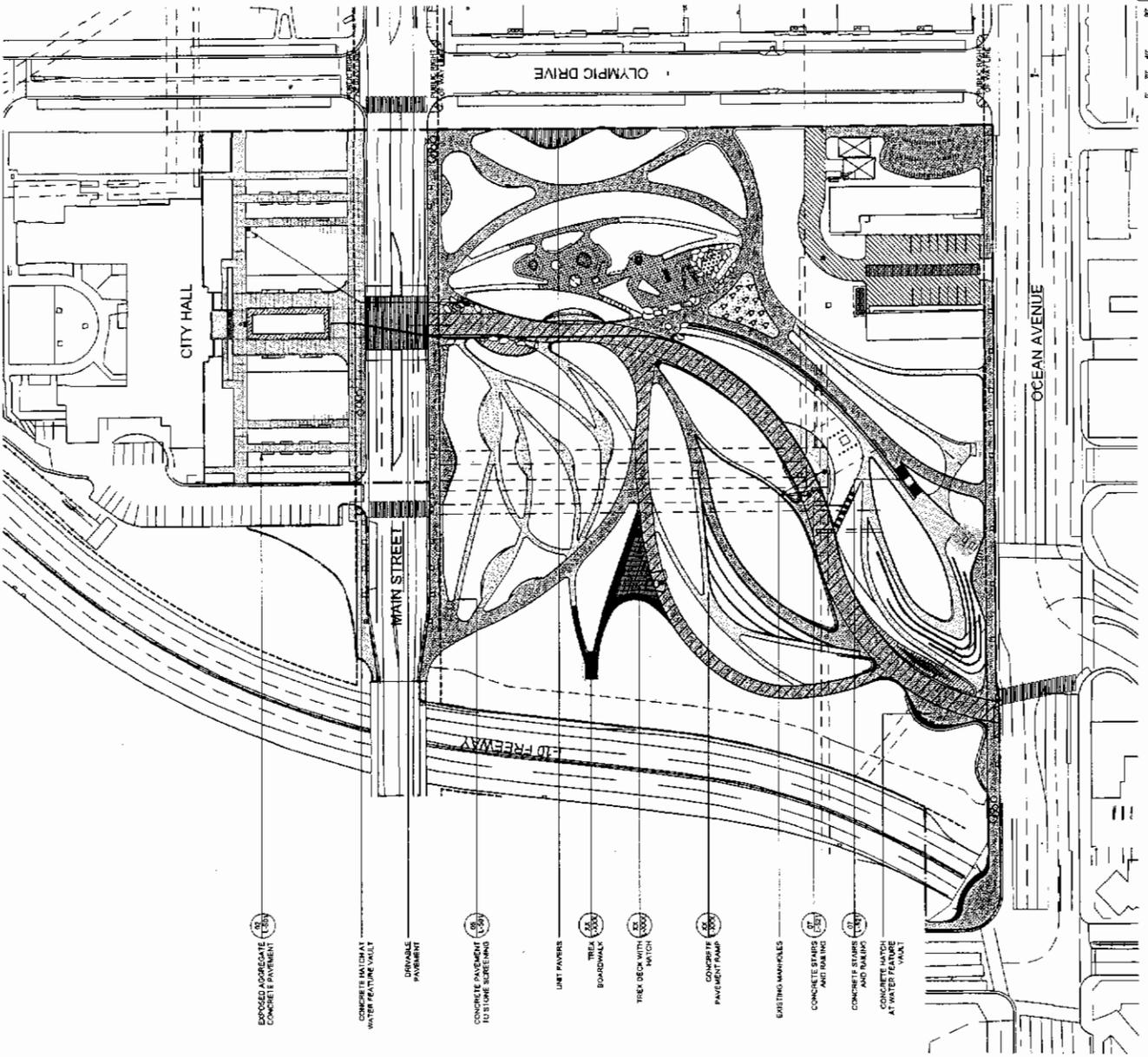


EXHIBIT NO. 2
Application Number 5-11-145
Parcel Map
California Coastal Commission



PROJECT	DATE	BY	CHECKED
JAMES CORNER CIVIC CENTER PARKS PALISADES GARDEN WALK + TOWN SQUARE	5/11/14	JM	JM
DESIGNED BY	DATE	BY	CHECKED
JAMES CORNER CIVIC CENTER PARKS PALISADES GARDEN WALK + TOWN SQUARE	5/11/14	JM	JM
SCALE	DATE	BY	CHECKED
AS SHOWN	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT NO.	DATE	BY	CHECKED
14-00000	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT NAME	DATE	BY	CHECKED
SANTA MONICA CIVIC CENTER PARKS PALISADES GARDEN WALK + TOWN SQUARE	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT LOCATION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
1000 W. OLYMPIC DRIVE SANTA MONICA, CA 90401	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
PAVING AND EDGING PLAN	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT STATUS	DATE	BY	CHECKED
FOR REVIEW	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT OWNER	DATE	BY	CHECKED
CITY OF SANTA MONICA	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT ARCHITECT	DATE	BY	CHECKED
JAMES CORNER ARCHITECTS 1000 W. OLYMPIC DRIVE SANTA MONICA, CA 90401	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT ENGINEER	DATE	BY	CHECKED
JAMES CORNER ARCHITECTS 1000 W. OLYMPIC DRIVE SANTA MONICA, CA 90401	5/11/14	JM	JM
PROJECT CONTRACTOR	DATE	BY	CHECKED
PROJECT BIDDING	DATE	BY	CHECKED
PROJECT CONSTRUCTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
PROJECT COMPLETION	DATE	BY	CHECKED



**GENERAL NOTES:**

- RUBBER SURFACES SURROUND PLAY ELEMENTS TO PROVIDE FALL HEIGHT PROTECTION APPROPRIATE TO SPECIFIC PLAY ELEMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE USOPC GUIDELINES AND ASTM.
- IS TYPICALLY THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE PLAY EQUIPMENT AND THE PROTECTIVE SURFACE IMMEDIATELY PROVIDED BY THE PLAY EQUIPMENT.
- JUMP UNITS RUBBER WITH DRAINAGE AND BED WITH CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT.

**EXHIBIT NO. 4**

Application Number  
**5-11-145**

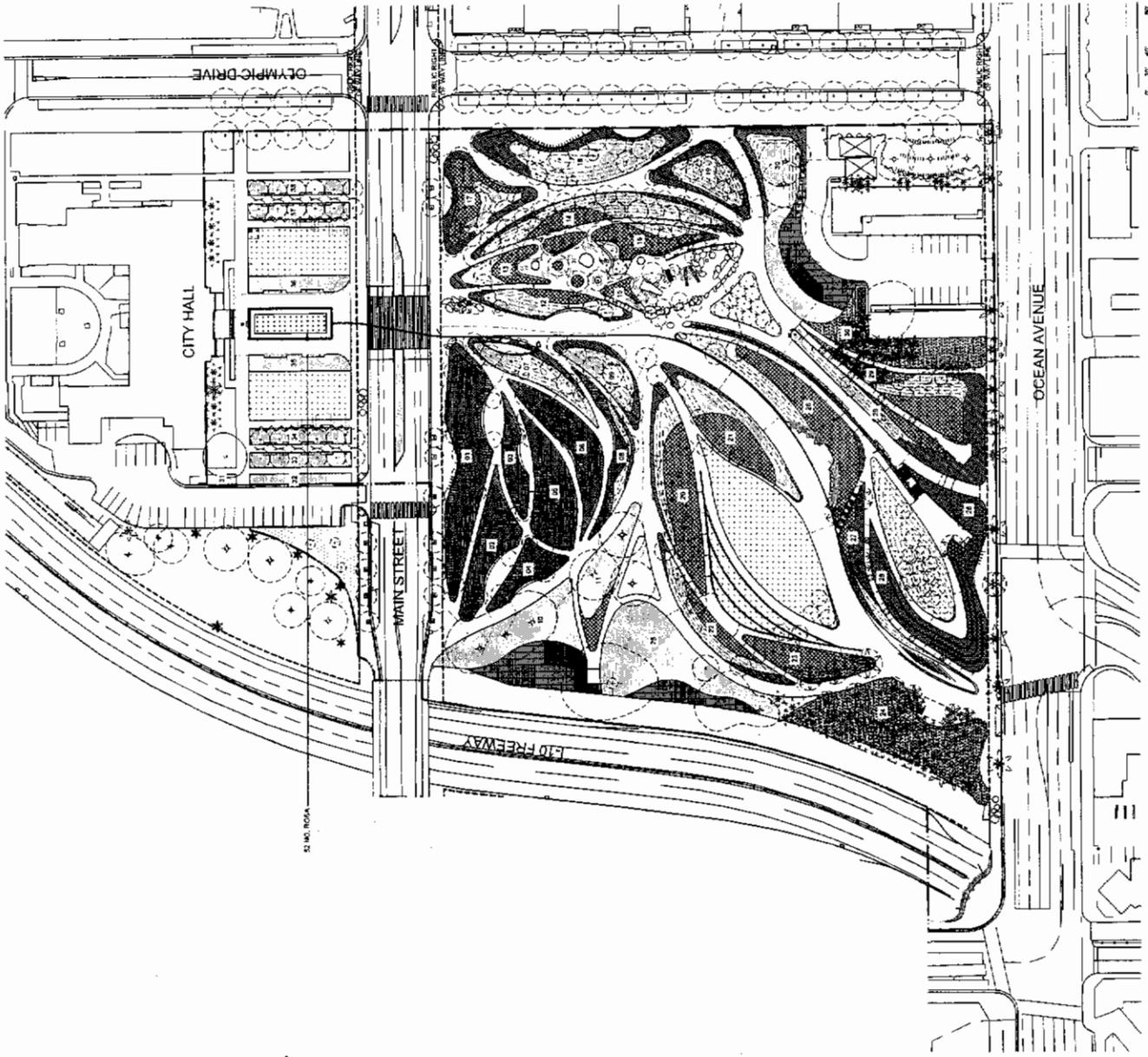
*Paving Plan*  
*Walkways*

California Coastal Commission

**LEGEND:**

[Symbol]	PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
[Symbol]	CONTACT LIMIT LINE
[Symbol]	EASEMENT LINE
[Symbol]	CONCRETE PAVEMENT TYPE 1 (LARGE AGGREGATE)
[Symbol]	CONCRETE PAVEMENT TYPE 2 (MEDIUM AGGREGATE)
[Symbol]	COMPACTED STONE SURFACING WITH METAL EDGING
[Symbol]	PERMEABLE PAVEMENT
[Symbol]	TREX DECKING
[Symbol]	ASPHALT
[Symbol]	RUBBER SAFETY SURFACE
[Symbol]	AGIATIC SAFETY SURFACE
[Symbol]	WALKWAY PAVEMENT SURFACE (REFER TO WATER FEATURE DRAWINGS)
[Symbol]	SERVICE PIT COVER
[Symbol]	BOLLARDS
[Symbol]	EDGE - STEEL
[Symbol]	EDGE - CONCRETE CURB FLUSH (FINE AGGREGATE)
[Symbol]	EASE - CONCRETE CURB RAISED (FINE AGGREGATE)
[Symbol]	SEAT WALL TO CURB TRANSITION (FINE AGGREGATE)
[Symbol]	REFERENCE FURNISHING PLAN
[Symbol]	DRINKABLE FOUNTAIN
[Symbol]	FIRE ACCESS PATH

PROJECT NO.	5-11-145
DATE	11/14/15
PROJECT NAME	SANTA MONICA CIVIC CENTER PARKS PALISADES GARDEN WALK + TOWN SQUARE
CLIENT	CITY OF SANTA MONICA
DESIGNER	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SCALE	AS SHOWN
DATE	11/14/15
PROJECT NO.	5-11-145
DATE	11/14/15
PROJECT NAME	SANTA MONICA CIVIC CENTER PARKS PALISADES GARDEN WALK + TOWN SQUARE
CLIENT	CITY OF SANTA MONICA
DESIGNER	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SCALE	AS SHOWN
DATE	11/14/15
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CLIENT	CITY OF SANTA MONICA
DESIGNER	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SCALE	AS SHOWN
DATE	11/14/15



**GENERAL NOTES:**

- SEE L-106 FOR TREE PLANTING PLAN
- SEE L-107, L-110 FOR PLANTING DETAILS
- REVISIONS TO THIS PLAN SHALL BE MADE TO ALL DISTURBED AREAS WITHIN PROJECT AND OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE TO US
- NO TREES TO BE FOLDED BY HMMT
- NO ACCORDING TO AREA AND SPACING
- LAYOUT OF ALL PLANTING BEGS

**EXHIBIT NO.** 5

**Application Number**  
5-11-145

**Landscape Plan**

California Coastal Commission

**LEGEND:**

Public Right of Way	PLANTER NUMBER REFER TO DIMENSION L-108 + 1-109
Contract Limit Line	MEADOW MIX WITH HIGHLIGHTS
1" Contours	SWALES MIX
MEADOW MIX	SUCCULENT MIX
MEADOW MIX WITH HIGHLIGHTS	PALMS AND CYCAD MIX
SWALES MIX	GARDEN MIX 1
SUCCULENT MIX	GARDEN MIX 2
PALMS AND CYCAD MIX	GARDEN MIX 3
GARDEN MIX 1	GARDEN MIX 4
GARDEN MIX 2	WATER PLANTER
GARDEN MIX 3	SHRUBS
GARDEN MIX 4	VINES
WATER PLANTER	TURF GRASS
SHRUBS	
VINES	
TURF GRASS	



