

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CITY CLERK'S USE

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
200 NORTH SPRING STREET, ROOM 360
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

(California Environmental Quality Act Section 15062)

Filing of this form is optional. If filed, the form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152 (b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167 (d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project. Failure to file this notice with the County Clerk results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

LEAD CITY AGENCY

City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

COUNCIL DISTRICT

11

PROJECT TITLE

Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO), Century/Aviation Subarea

LOG REFERENCE

ENV-2017-4366-CE and
CPC-2017-4365-ZC

PROJECT LOCATION

The majority of properties zoned for commercial use in the area generally bounded by Sepulveda Blvd. to the west, 96th St. to the north, La Cienega Blvd. to the east, and 102nd St. to the south within the Westchester - Playa Del Rey Community Plan area.

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:

The establishment of the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) would institute development regulations and urban design standards for the subject area. The CPIO would be established to enhance the unique character of the district through design and development standards and parking regulations to implement the goals and policies of the Westchester-Playa del Rey Community Plan. Lastly, urban design guidelines were developed to improve the built environment of the district and complement the development regulations and urban design standards in the CPIO.

The Century/Aviation CPIO is part of the City of Los Angeles' Transit Neighborhood Plans project, which is intended to establish new development regulations that better support transit ridership, reduce automobile dependence, and improve regional air quality. The CPIO implements the goals of the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan, which identifies the need for pedestrian-oriented design guidelines and a mix of uses that serves airport travelers and visitors.

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT, IF OTHER THAN LEAD CITY AGENCY:

CONTACT PERSON

PATRICIA DIEFENDERFER

AREA CODE

213

TELEPHONE NUMBER

978-1170

EXT.

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check One)

STATE CEQA GUIDELINES

CITY CEQA GUIDELINES

☐ MINISTERIAL☐ Sec. 15268☐ Art. II, Sec. 2b☐ DECLARED EMERGENCY☐ Sec. 15269☐ Art. II, Sec. 2a (1)☐ EMERGENCY PROJECT☐ Sec. 15269 (b) & (c)☐ Art. II, Sec. 2a (2) & (3)☒ CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION☐ Sec. 15308 *et seq.*☐ Art. II, Sec. 2Class 8 Category _____ (City CEQA Guidelines)☒ OTHER: State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and City of LA CEQA Guidelines Article II, Section 2(m)

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: See attached narrative.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATING THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOUND THE PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT.

SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FEE:

RECEIPT NO.

REC'D. BY

DATE

DISTRIBUTION: (1) County Clerk, (2) City Clerk, (3) Agency Record Rev. 11-1-03 Rev. 1-31-06

IF FILED BY THE APPLICANT:

NAME (PRINTED)

SIGNATURE

DATE

February 15, 2018

Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay, Century/Aviation Subarea

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

Prepared by:

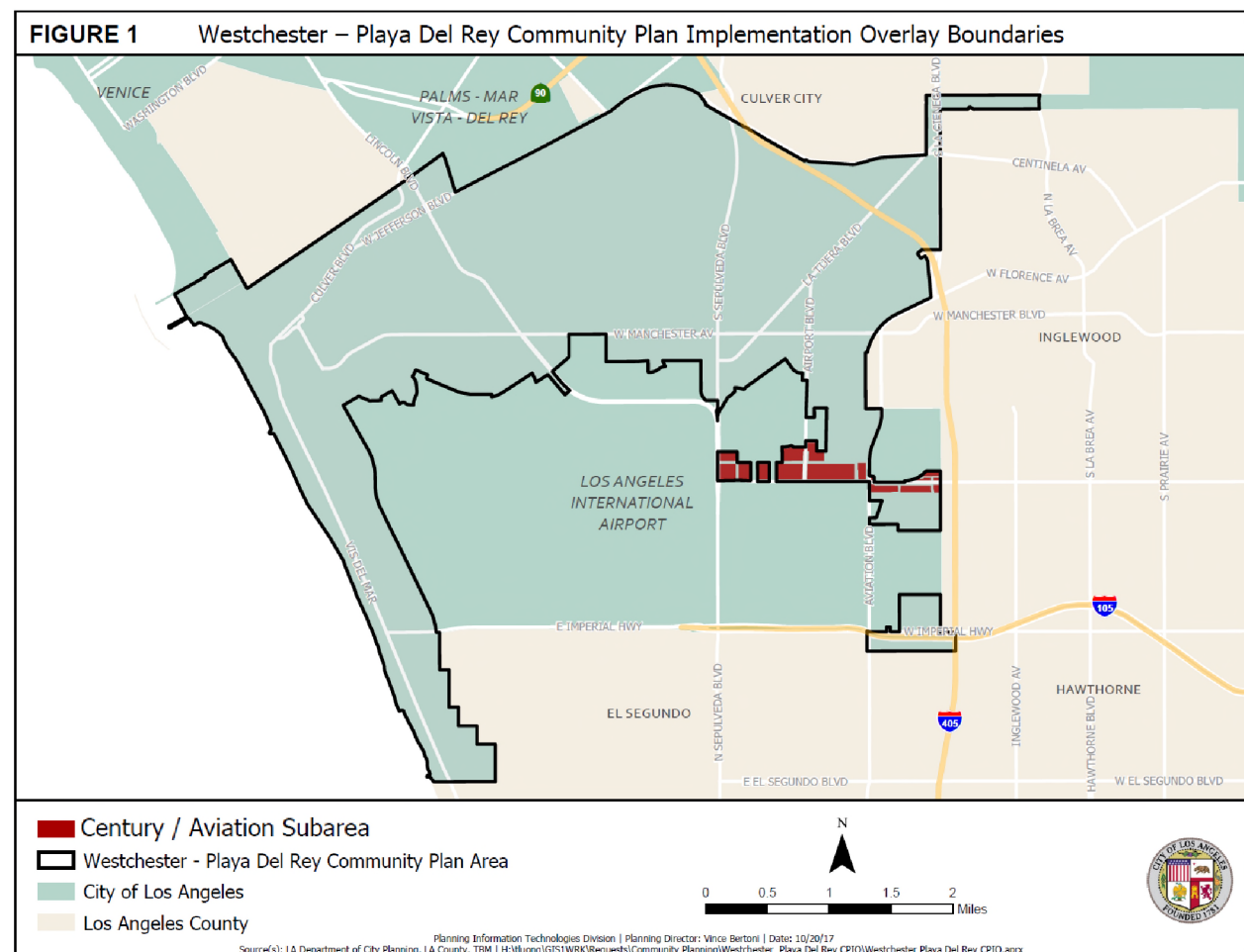
Los Angeles Department of City Planning
Community Planning Bureau
200 N. Spring Street, Room 667
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Contact: Andrew Jorgensen
Phone: 213-978-1281

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) NARRATIVE:**ENV-2017-4366-CE****I. PROJECT LOCATION**

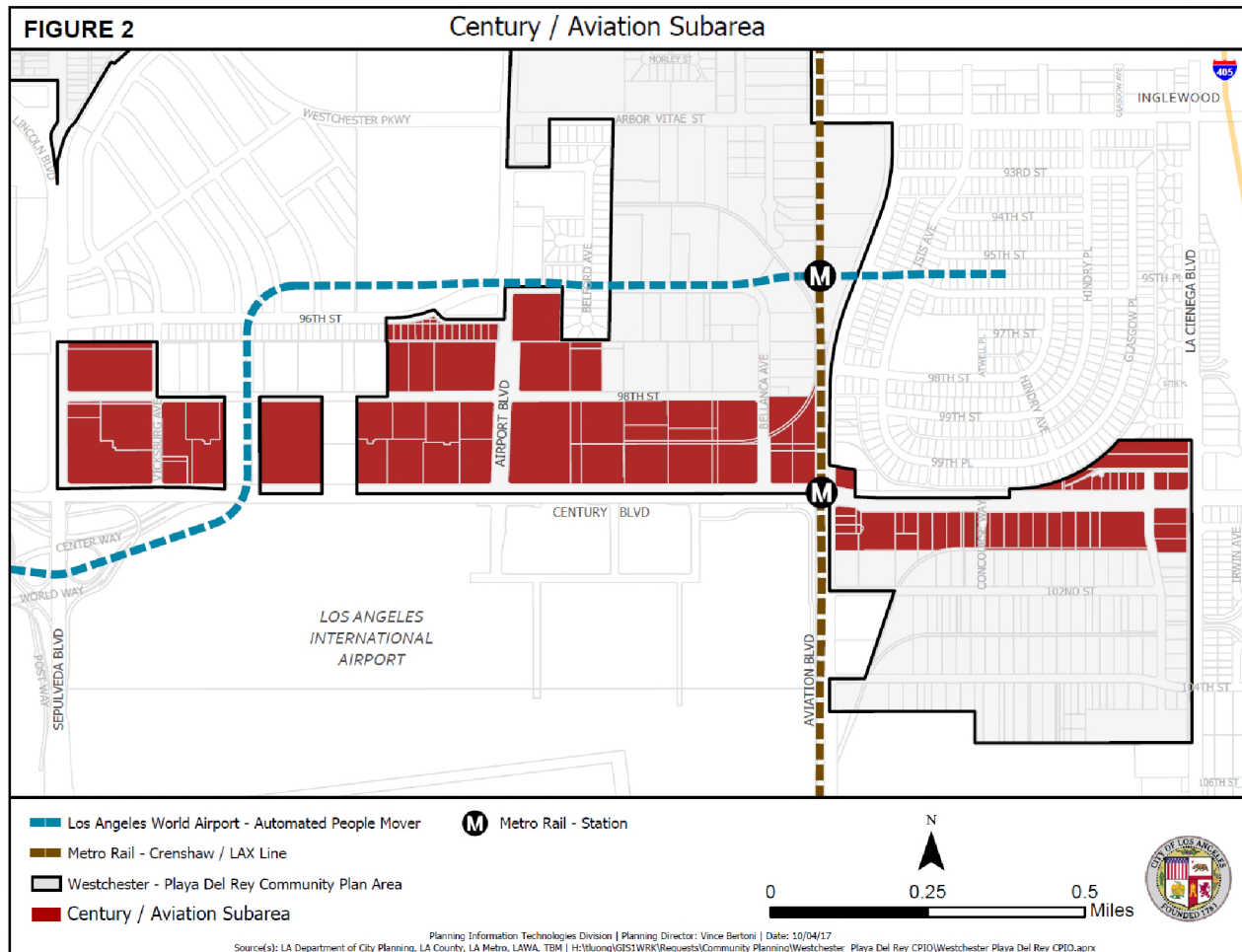
The Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO), Century/Aviation Subarea encompasses select commercially and industrially zoned properties in the Century Boulevard/98th Street corridor which stretches approximately 1.5 miles between Sepulveda and La Cienega Boulevards. The Project is located wholly within the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan (W-PDR or Community Plan) and adjacent to the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Specific Plan. The City has determined that the every parcel of proposed CPIO is within Transit Priority Areas and thus consistent with the aforementioned criteria.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CPIO and its Century/Aviation Subarea are part of the City of Los Angeles' Transit Neighborhood Plans project, which is intended to establish new development regulations that better support transit ridership, reduce automobile dependence, and improve regional air quality. The CPIO intends to implement the W-PDR Community Plan which contains goals and objectives regarding the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor, which calls for the establishment of pedestrian-oriented and other design guidelines that were envisioned to be established through a subsequent planning process.



The CPIO ordinance establishes specific development regulations and urban design standards within the Century/Aviation Subarea (Subarea). The project also includes the development of accompanying urban design guidelines. The CPIO's boundaries (see Figure 1) are identical to the boundaries of the W-PDR CP, but the supplemental development regulations will only apply to the Century/Aviation Subarea (see Figure 2). This Subarea is generally bounded by 96th St. and 102nd St. to the north and south and La Cienega Blvd. and Sepulveda Blvd. to the east and west. The formation of the Subarea serves to integrate supplemental development regulations to ensure that future development includes a wide array of visitor-serving and commercial uses and improves the pedestrian orientation and economic vitality of the area.



The Community Plan contains goals and objectives regarding the Century Boulevard corridor which call for the establishment of pedestrian-oriented design guidelines; however, this was not established at the time. The Subarea would implement the following relevant goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Community Plan:

- **Goal 2: Encourage a strong and competitive commercial sector that promotes economic vitality and serves the needs of the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community through safe, accessible, and well-designed commercial districts, while preserving the historic and cultural character of the community. (CP p. III-10)**
 - **Objective 2-2: Strengthen and enhance the major commercial districts of the community into distinctive, pedestrian-friendly areas providing shopping, civic, social and recreational activities. (CP p. III-11)**
 - **Objective 2-3: Enhance the land use compatibility, visual appearance, design, and appeal**

- of commercial development. (CP p. III-13)
 - Policy 2-3.1: Enhance the visual appearance and appeal of commercial properties by regulating design, signage, landscaping, and similar issues wherever possible. (CP p. III-13)
 - Objective 2-4: Further improve and enhance the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor as a hotel, shopping and entertainment district serving airline travelers and visitors. (CP p. III-14)
 - Policy 2-4.1: Develop the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor to offer a wide variety of hotel accommodations, shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities and other services for air travelers and other visitors to the area. (CP p. III-14)
 - Program: The Plan designates the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor for Regional Center Commercial to permit the development of a wide array of visitor-serving and commercial uses and services. This designation also prohibits industrial uses that would be incompatible with such development. (CP p. III-14)
 - Policy 2-4.2: Coordinate the future development of the Century Boulevard/ 98th Street Corridor with the development and access to the Los Angeles International Airport and its ancillary facilities. (CP p. III-14)
 - Program: The local Business Improvement District (BID), and the appropriate City agencies (Planning, Transportation, Engineering, etc.) should coordinate with Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA) Department regarding the patterns of development and access to the airport, and how this commercial district can be configured to more effectively serve travelers, visitors, etc. (CP p. III-15)
 - Policy 2-4.3: Establish a Conference Center within the district to further enhance the available services and allow the accommodation of larger meetings, conventions, etc. (CP p. III-15)
 - Program: The Plan supports the concept of a Conference Center within the district, and recommends that the local Business Improvement District (BID) seek assistance from the Community Development Department and other City, state and federal governmental agencies regarding funding and the other issues involved in developing such a facility. (CP p. III-15)
 - Objective 5-1: Preserve existing open space resources and wherever possible develop new open space (CP p. III-22)
 - Objective 11-2: Ensure that the location, intensity, and timing of development is consistent with the provision of adequate transportation infrastructure (CP p. III-37)
 - Objective 15-1: Pursue Transportation Demand Management Strategies that maximize vehicle occupancy, minimize average trip length, and reduce the number of vehicle trips (CP p. III-45)
 - Chapter 5 Urban Design; Design Considerations for Special Areas; D. Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor: The Community Plan contains several guidelines for the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor such as the creation of pedestrian paths, the creation of a long-term plan to guide development, and the implementation of design guidelines for pedestrian amenities, building orientation, access, and landscaping. This is in order to “address issues such as building orientation, access, pedestrian amenities, landscaping, signage, and other relevant concerns (CP p. V-15).”

The Subarea would establish supplemental development regulations within the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor as called for in the Community Plan. It would enhance the unique character of the project area through design standards and parking regulations to implement the goals and policies of the W-PDR Community Plan for the purpose of creating an enhanced pedestrian character with a greater number of active uses. The implementation of enhanced urban design standards will improve the built environment of the district, and additional voluntary guidelines will inform subsequent decision-making when discretionary actions are being requested. Thus, the formation of the CPIO and the Subarea, by itself, does not propose or authorize any development. Nor does it change any land uses, building heights, densities or intensities.

Through the implementation of supplemental development regulations and design guidelines, the CPIO Subarea intends to better guide future development on the corridor by:

- Encouraging active ground floor and visitor-serving uses that lead to an enhanced pedestrian environment;
- Improving the visual character and design of new commercial development by imposing various requirements that will ensure consistency in: setback and yard requirements; street wall; mid-block passageway requirements; ground floor frontage; entrances; window transparency; and, entrance placement;
- Requiring that buildings be oriented to the street to improve pedestrian circulation and to minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts;
- Breaking up building massing;
- Encouraging the provision of publicly accessible open space in new developments; and,
- Including design-specific requirements for parking structures to ensure pedestrian safety and improved design.

It would also require less parking for infill, employment center projects within a designated Transit Priority Area. The CPIO is consistent with Senate Bill 743, which added Section 21099 (d)(1) of the Public Resources Code to state that a project's aesthetic and parking impacts shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment if: 1) the project is a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project, and 2) the project is located on an infill site within a transit priority area. LADCP has determined that the every parcel of proposed CPIO is within Transit Priority Areas and thus consistent with the aforementioned criteria.

Future development within the boundaries of the Subarea would be required to conform to the supplemental development regulations and other regulations of the City of Los Angeles, and would be subject to review on a project-by-project basis to determine project-specific compliance with CEQA. As no specific projects that would be subject to the regulations set forth in the CPIO have been identified, analysis of environmental impacts associated with unidentified future projects would be speculative. The CPIO Subarea would not change any land uses or permit development of greater height or density than permitted by the Community Plan and previously analyzed in the Final EIR.

Simultaneously, a streetscape plan is being prepared for Century Boulevard, from La Cienega Boulevard to Sepulveda Boulevard, matching the east and west boundaries of the CPIO. The Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan is not a part of this project. The CPIO and the streetscape plan are not dependent on each other, thus each has independent utility. The City would still have an interest in adopting one, even if the other were not adopted. Each is not a reasonably foreseeable consequence of the other and can be implemented separately from the other if one is not adopted. The Streetscape Plan contains a constrained alternative for buildout in the event that development on adjacent properties does not permit full buildout of the streetscape plan. As a result, a separate environmental document, a Categorical Exemption, has been prepared for the streetscape plan.

III. CEQA DETERMINATION

A. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308

The State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15308 establishes a categorical exemption for actions or activities that meet the following criteria:

. . . [A]ctions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. Construction activities and relaxation of standards allowing environmental degradation are not included in this exemption.

The stated purpose of the development and design standards and accompanying guidelines of the CPIO is to develop, improve, and enhance the urban design and aesthetic character of the corridor along Century Boulevard within the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan area. The regulations of the proposed CPIO would be more protective of the environment, including the aesthetic environment, than the current regulations by establishing standards for building massing and aesthetics beyond what is required by the underlying zoning. The CPIO is intended to develop a unique sense of place and identity for Century Boulevard and to complement any adopted Streetscape Plans by enhancing the public right of way through the design of abutting buildings by improving the pedestrian-orientation of new buildings and by ensuring that parking and vehicular circulation be sited to reduce conflicts with pedestrians. The CPIO would additionally further implement policies and programs (see above) adopted in the Community Plan. The CPIO, however, does not relax any environmental standards nor does it authorize any specific construction or development projects.

Further, the CPIO is not expected to create any additional adverse impacts to any environmental resources. The CPIO, by itself, does not propose or authorize any development. It does not change any land uses, building heights, densities or intensities. Therefore, it would not create or enable any additional impacts by itself or cumulatively when reasonably foreseeable development occurs in accordance with the new standards.

B. Exceptions to Exemptions

The State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15300.2 outlines 5 exceptions to the use of a Categorical Exemption:

- (a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located -- a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

This subsection is not applicable as the proposed CPIO is not categorically exempt in the applicable Classes (3, 4, 5, 6, and 11).

- (b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

The CPIO, by itself, does not propose or authorize any development. It does not change any land uses, building heights, densities or intensities. The proposed CPIO seeks to implement supplemental development standards and design guidelines which are intended to better shape development on the corridor and would: be more protective of the environment than the current regulations; regulate the visual character and design of new commercial development; require buildings to be oriented to the street; regulate building massing and other architectural features; and, encourage the provision of publicly accessible open space in new developments.

Since allowable land uses, densities, and densities are not changing and additional standards to regulate the visual character of new buildings would be enacted, when taken together the reasonably foreseeable development of the corridor using the new standards would be less impactful to the environment than is allowable under current regulations.

Therefore, the proposed ordinance would not be expected to generate cumulative impacts as its regulations are more protective of the environment than the current underlying zoning. If other ordinances of similar nature were enacted, no additional adverse impacts would accumulate. The ordinance serves to reduce adverse environmental impact and so an accumulation of similar ordinances would serve only to further reduce adverse environmental impacts.

- (c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no unusual circumstances that would create the reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment. To the contrary, the proposed ordinance is more protective of the environment than current regulations. It does not propose or authorize any specific new development or construction, and does not propose to change land use, heights, or densities. As further elaborated below, even if any of the threshold circumstances were found to exist for an exception to an exemption (e.g., scenic highway, sensitive environment, historic resource, unique circumstance, etc.), the project will not foreseeably result in a significant impact to the environment.

- (d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.*

This exception is not applicable, as the proposed project is not located in a designated scenic highway nor does it seek to regulate any scenic highways or property adjacent to any scenic highways. . Nevertheless, it will not result in damage to scenic resources and is reasonably expected to enhance and improve the visual quality of the adjacent right of way.

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

This exception is not applicable, as the proposed project is not located on a hazardous waste site and none of the properties within the plan area are located on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- (f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

Several properties within or adjacent to the CPIO area were identified as potential historical resources according to the City's historic resource survey, SurveyLA (see below). None of these buildings have been designated as HCMs. As stated previously, the proposed CPIO does not approve any particular development or allow for or seek to implement additional development rights. Finally, the CPIO does not allow for increased building height, intensity or density of development than what is permitted in the W-PDR Community Plan. As such, the CPIO does not create any new incentives that would encourage the demolition of existing buildings, including buildings as potentially historically significant. Therefore, even with the identification of buildings and structures that are potentially historically significant, the CPIO's regulations would not cause reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts to those buildings.

Address	Building Type	Significance Statement
5310 W. Century Boulevard	Industrial	No statement recorded.
5959 W. Century Boulevard (Tishman Airport Center Building)	Commercial	Excellent example of Corporate International architecture; designed by significant architect Welton Becket & Associates.
6151 W. Century Boulevard (McCulloch Building)	Commercial	Excellent example of Corporate International architecture; designed by significant architect Welton Becket & Associates.

98 th Street, east of Airport Boulevard (Air Raid Siren No. 150)	Institutional	Air raid siren; rotating type on freestanding pole. Associated with World War II and Cold War military infrastructure.
9841 N. Airport Boulevard (Airport Century Building)	Commercial	Excellent example of Corporate International architecture; designed by significant architect Welton Becket & Associates.
Multiple (Airport Industrial Tract Historic District)	Industrial	Excellent example of an airport-adjacent industrial tract from the 1950s; many of the buildings were designed by notable architect S. Charles Lee and developed by Lee and Los Angeles industrial tract developer Samuel Hayden.
Source: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, http://historicplacesla.org/map , published November 27, 2013. Accessed on November 29, 2016		

Conclusion

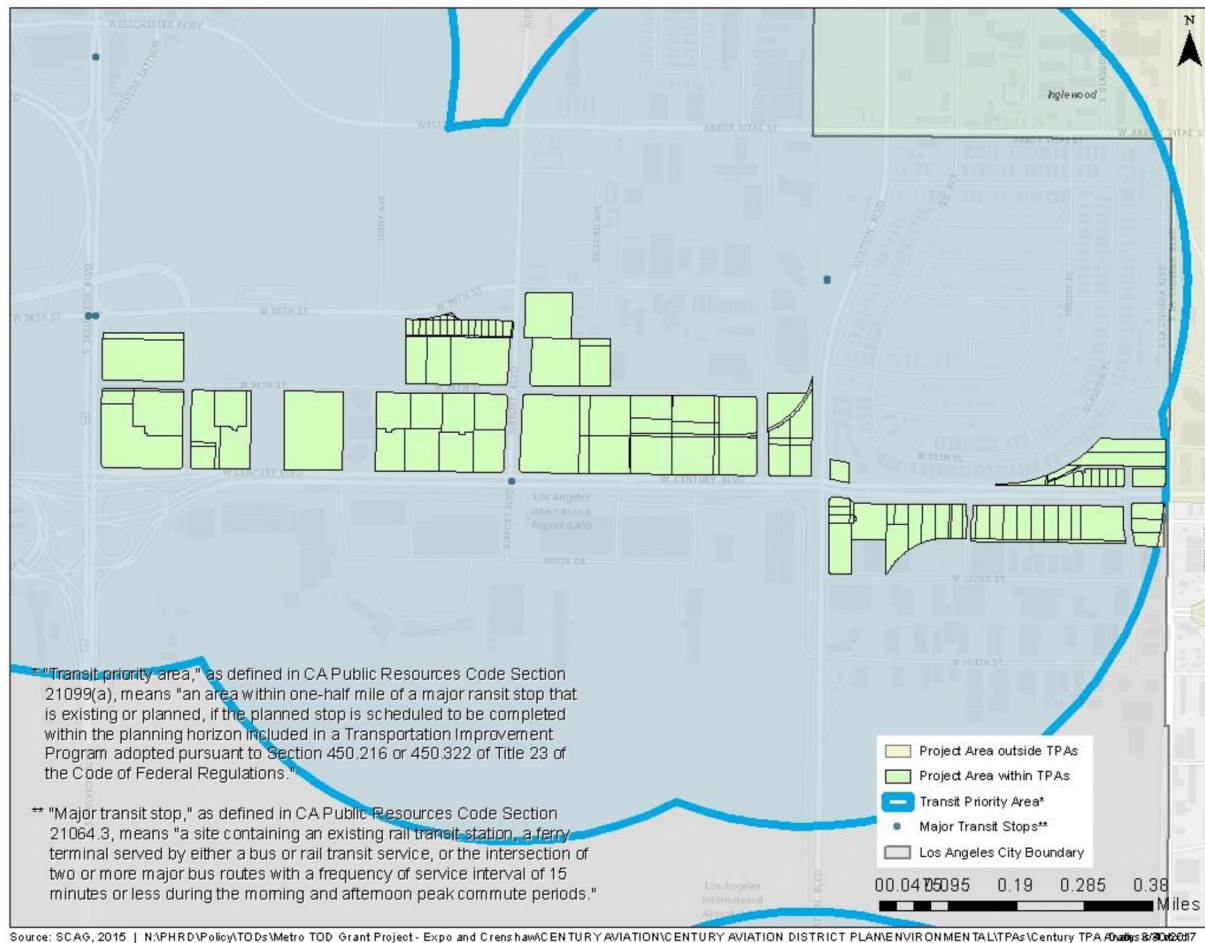
Pursuant to the above, the proposed project does not meet any of the exceptions as specified by CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 and thus the project qualifies for the above stated exemption.

C. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and City of Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines Article II, Section 2, class (m)

The State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) establishes the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. In addition, the City's CEQA Guidelines, Article II, Section 2, class (m) also exempt ordinances that do not result in an impact on the physical environment.

Senate Bill 743, modified Section 21099 (d)(1) of the Public Resources Code to state: *Aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment.* Given the employment center nature of the project area and that each parcel within the project's boundaries is wholly or partially within a Transit Priority Area (as shown in Figure 3), the City can determine that any potential aesthetic or parking impacts of the CPIO would be less than significant in accordance with Public Resources Code, Section 21099(d)(1). The location within Transit Priority Areas reasonably addresses questions regarding parking adequacy and deficiencies in parking capacity related to parking incentives for certain desired uses as described in the CPIO.

Further, the CPIO is not expected to create any additional impacts to other environmental resources. The CPIO, by itself, does not propose or authorize any development. It does not change any land uses, building heights, densities or intensities. Therefore, it would not create or enable any additional impacts by itself or when future development according to the new standards occurs. Thus, it can be seen with certainty that the CPIO will not have a significant impact on the environment and is not subject to CEQA per Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines and Article II, Section 2, class (m) of the City's Guidelines.

Figure 3: Overlap of the Proposed CPIO with Transit Priority Areas

Century Aviation CPIO	
TPA	SQFT
TPA Overlap	4,440,316.78
Proposed CPIO	4,450,536.69
% Overlap	99.77%

IV. Conclusions

The Century/Aviation Subarea would result in the establishment of a CPIO and Subarea with supplemental development regulations and design standards, with accompanying urban design guidelines. The CPIO, by itself, does not propose or authorize any development. It does not change any land uses, building heights, densities or intensities. The proposed CPIO seeks to implement supplemental development standards and design guidelines which are intended to better shape development on the corridor and would: be more protective of the environment than the current regulations; regulate the visual character and design of new

commercial development; require buildings to be oriented to the street; regulate building massing and other architectural features; and, encourage the provision of publicly accessible open space in new developments.

As discussed above, the proposed CPIO qualifies for categorical exemptions under Sections 15308 and 15061 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Article II, Section 2, class (m) of the City of Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines, and does not trigger any of the exceptions to categorical exemptions outlined in Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Further, it would not result in any new significant impacts in any impact areas. Therefore, the proposed CPIO is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

PREPARED BY:

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

2/23/18

DATE



BY

Andrew Jorgensen