



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Long Beach, CA 90802

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November 19, 2009

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve finding of conformity with the adopted General Plan for several public right-of-way vacations bounded by Broadway, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Magnolia Avenue, and Maine Avenue. (District 1)

APPLICANT: City of Long Beach Redevelopment Agency  
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
(Application No. 0910-07)

## BACKGROUND

The subject rights-of-way are located north of Broadway, south of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, east of Magnolia Avenue, and west of Maine Avenue (Exhibit A – Location Map). The vacations, all located within a 5.92-acre project site, consist of one block of 60-foot-wide Daisy Avenue; two blocks of an existing 655-linear-foot, 10-foot-wide east-west alley; one block of an existing 360-linear-foot, 15-foot-wide north-south alley on the eastern half of the project site; and one block of an existing 360-linear-foot, 15-foot-wide north-south alley on the western half of the project site.

Proposed vacations are necessary for the construction of a new 545,000-square-foot regional courthouse consisting of 31 civil and criminal courtrooms and related accessory uses. The Long Beach City Council and State Public Works Board have previously approved a real property exchange agreement between the City's Redevelopment Agency and the State's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The agreement focuses on the vacant subject site in exchange for the existing, State-owned courthouse property located at 415 W. Ocean Boulevard.

## DISCUSSION

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65402, no street, parcel or alley may be vacated until such action has been submitted to, and reported upon by, the Planning Commission as to its conformity with the adopted General Plan. The General Plan consists of 11 elements, each possessing equal authority on land use matters. A review

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Application No. 0910-07

November 19, 2009

Page 2 of 2

of the two relevant elements and specific General Plan consistency findings are presented as follows:

**Land Use Element**

The subject site in its entirety is designated Land Use District (LUD) No. 7, Mixed Uses. Land uses permitted in this district include employment centers and those that elevate the importance of a particular site within the urban structure of the City; both are aims achieved by the courthouse project. As such, the vacations and resulting courthouse project are not in conflict with the goals set forth in the Land Use Element.

**Transportation Element**

According to the Transportation Element's "Base Year Level of Service – Downtown" map (Figure 5b), the portion of Daisy Avenue that lies within the project site is identified as having a Volume/Capacity Ratio of less than 0.9, meaning, at worst, intersections are "functional," and at best traffic operations are "uncongested." Given this data revealing relatively low vehicle traffic figures on Daisy Avenue, the street (and adjacent alley) vacations will not figure to create a significant increase in traffic to the road network abutting the project site. A conformity finding with regards to the Transportation Element can therefore be made.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Mitigated Negative Declaration #2009051102 was prepared by the Lead Agency on the State Courthouse Project, the AOC, and reviewed and accepted by the City of Long Beach Redevelopment Agency on August 17, 2009 (Exhibit B – Mitigated Negative Declaration).

Respectfully submitted,



CRAIG BECK  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

CB:DB:MH

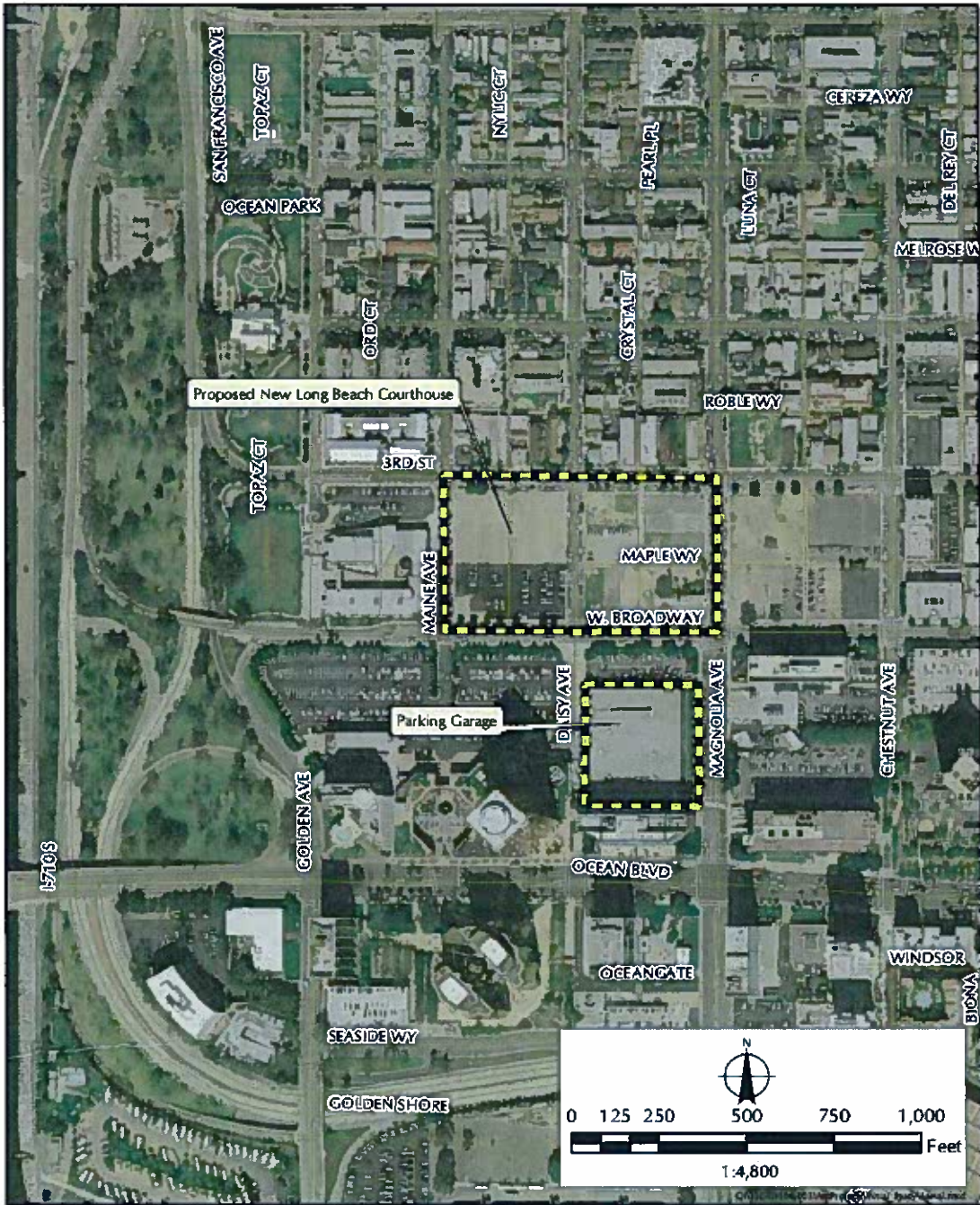
Exhibits

- A. Location Map
- B. MND #2009051102

# EXHIBIT A - LOCATION MAP

1  
2

## Figure 2. Aerial Map



Proposed Property Boundary

**FIGURE 2**  
Aerial Map

3

# **New Long Beach Courthouse Final Initial Study**

August 6, 2009

**Administrative Office of the Courts  
2860 Gateway Oaks, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95833**

**With Assistance From:  
Sapphos Environmental, Inc.  
430 North Halstead Street  
Pasadena, California 91107**

**&**

**ATC Associates, Inc.  
25 Cupania Circle  
Monterey Park, CA 91755**



1 **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

2 The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the staff agency of the Judicial Council of  
3 California. The AOC is responsible for implementation of the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002,  
4 landmark legislation that shifts governance of California courthouses from California counties to  
5 the State of California.

6  
7 The AOC proposes to construct a new courthouse facility with 31 courtrooms and approximately  
8 545,000 building gross square feet (BGSF) of space in the City of Long Beach (City) for the  
9 Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles (Superior Court). The site is approximately  
10 1,000 feet north of the Superior Court's current courthouse. The City's Redevelopment Agency  
11 (Agency) owns the proposed courthouse site.

12  
13 The proposed project will provide 31 courtrooms to the Superior Court's available facilities, and  
14 the new courthouse will provide increased space for public, staff, and secured in-custody  
15 detainees. The facility will also provide space for County staffpersons that routinely interact with  
16 the Superior Court, commercial office space for tenants, retail space, and parking facilities for  
17 the commercial office space and retail tenants. This document analyses construction of the  
18 proposed courthouse as well as operational effects of the proposed courthouse.

19  
20 The AOC will act as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency for this  
21 project. Therefore, the AOC is responsible for CEQA compliance for this project including  
22 preparation of the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration and adoption of a Final  
23 Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration.

24  
25 ***1.1 STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS***

26  
27 In accordance with Government Code Section 70391 and CEQA (Public Resources Code Section  
28 21000-21177) and pursuant to Section 15063 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations,  
29 the Judicial Council typically acts as the CEQA Lead Agency for courthouse projects. The  
30 Judicial Council has delegated its project approval authority to the Administrative Director of the  
31 Courts (ADOC). The ADOC considers a project's potential environmental impacts in his  
32 evaluation of the proposal project. If the ADOC finds that there is no evidence that the project  
33 (either as proposed or modified to include mitigation measures) may cause a significant effect on  
34 the environment, then the ADOC will adopt a Negative Declaration for the project. Alternatively,  
35 if the ADOC finds evidence that the proposed project may cause a significant environmental  
36 effect (after the addition of mitigation measures); the ADOC will determine that an  
37 environmental impact report is necessary to analyze project-related and cumulative  
38 environmental impacts.

39  
40 The AOC's headquarters is located at 455 Golden Gate Avenue in San Francisco, CA 94102-  
41 4272

42  
43 The AOC is the project sponsor through a private/public funding partnership that includes a  
44 private firm (the Project Company). The Judicial Council will own the facility, and the Project

1 Company will design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the facility. The Project Company  
2 will determine the actual amount of commercial office and retail spaces available to third parties;  
3 the configuration of spaces; vehicle and pedestrian entrances; building height, mass, and bulk;  
4 and architectural expression.  
5

6 ***1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS INITIAL STUDY***

7 The purposes of this Initial Study are to:

- 8
- 9 1. Facilitate environmental assessment of the project,
  - 10 2. Enable the AOC to modify the proposed project to mitigate significant environmental  
11 impacts,
  - 12 3. Provide the AOC with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare  
13 an EIR or Negative Declaration, and
  - 14 4. Provide factual documentation for a Negative Declaration finding that the proposed  
15 project will not have a significant environmental effect.
- 16

17 Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following specific disclosure requirements  
18 for inclusion in an Initial Study:

- 19 1. A description of the project, including the location of the project;
  - 20 2. An identification of the environmental setting;
  - 21 3. An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other  
22 method provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to  
23 indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
  - 24 4. A discussion of ways to mitigate any significant effects identified in the Initial Study;
  - 25 5. An examination of whether the project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and  
26 other applicable land-use controls; and
  - 27 6. The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in preparation of the  
28 Initial Study.
- 29  
30

1 **2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

2

3 The AOC proposes to acquire a courthouse site in the City; construct a new courthouse facility,  
4 and operate the facility to serve the Superior Court, County offices that routinely interact with  
5 the Superior Court, and miscellaneous commercial and retail tenants. To provide additional  
6 parking for the proposed new facility, the project also includes improvements to the parking  
7 garage that currently serves the existing courthouse. The project may also close a portion of  
8 Daisy Avenue and make minor modifications to surrounding streets, pedestrian crossings, and  
9 on-street parking spaces. As part of the real estate acquisition arrangements, the AOC will  
10 transfer its ownership of the existing Long Beach Courthouse to the Agency in exchange for the  
11 Agency's property that will be the site for the new court facility. The Agency has indicated that  
12 the Agency does not intend to utilize the existing courthouse building for local government  
13 operations, and the Agency will clarify its plans for the building in a future CEQA document.

14

15 **2.1 PROJECT TITLE**

16 New Long Beach Courthouse

17 **2.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

18

19 The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a new trial court facility that meets the needs of  
20 the Superior Court for the Superior Court's Southern District of Los Angeles County area.

21

22 The AOC's New Long Beach Courthouse project objectives are:

23

- 24 • Provide the Superior Court with at least 380,000 BGSF for 31 courtrooms and improved  
25 facilities to enhance security, improve public access, and provide space for the Superior  
26 Court's staff;
- 27 • Provide adequate space and facilities for use by County justice-related agencies that  
28 routinely interact with the Superior Court; and
- 29 • Provide adequate space and facilities for private commercial and retail uses that seek to  
30 operate near the Superior Court.

31

32 **2.3 PROJECT LOCATION**

33 The New Long Beach Courthouse (proposed project) site is an approximately 5.9-acre site  
34 consisting of 52 parcels located in Long Beach, California (Figure 1). The Agency currently  
35 owns the proposed courthouse site (see Figure 2 and Figure 3), and the State owns the current  
36 courthouse and the nearby parking structure.

37

1 The proposed project site is located within the U.S. Geological Survey (U.S. Geological Survey)  
2 7.5-minute Long Beach topographic quadrangle (Figure 4, Topographic Map).<sup>1</sup> The 405 San  
3 Diego Freeway is roughly 3.6 miles north of the proposed project site, and the 710 Long Beach  
4 Freeway is located approximately 0.18 miles southwest and 0.36 miles west of the proposed  
5 project site. West Broadway provides access to the proposed project site from Interstate 710  
6 (Long Beach Freeway), which intersects the Proposed New Long Beach Courthouse Area and  
7 Parking Garage (described below). Interstate 710 also exits at Ocean Boulevard south of the  
8 proposed project site and connects to the site at Magnolia Avenue. The proposed project site is  
9 approximately 0.5 mile north of the Pacific Ocean.

10  
11 The Courthouse project's areas include:

- 12
- 13 • Proposed New Long Beach Courthouse Area—The proposed courthouse facility's site is  
14 a two-block parcel bounded by 3rd Street to the north, Magnolia Avenue to the east, West  
15 Broadway to the south, and Maine Avenue to the west (See Figure 3, Local Vicinity  
16 Map). This area is flat and is currently predominantly vacant, with the exception of  
17 parking spaces operated by a private firm immediately north of West Broadway between  
18 Maine Avenue and Daisy Avenue. Daisy Avenue extends through the site from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
19 to West Broadway. Mixed-use commercial and residential buildings formerly occupied  
20 the site. After completing the West Gateway Environmental Impact Report in 2005, the  
21 Agency removed the structures. The Agency has removed all structures from the site;
- 22 • Long Beach Courthouse—The State acquired the courthouse from the County in 2007  
23 under the provisions of Senate Bill 1732. The building's address is 415 West Ocean  
24 Boulevard, and its Assessors Identification Number is 7280-025-900. The courthouse has  
25 approximately 320,000 square feet of space, is ten stories tall, and occupies an  
26 approximately 3.8-acre parcel. The Superior Court occupies approximately 122,000  
27 square feet of space, and County offices currently occupy the remainder of the facility.  
28 The facility has an underground parking area with approximately 35 secured parking  
29 spaces and a surface parking lot for approximately 205 vehicles. The County and  
30 Superior Court utilize the underground parking area. The County and Superior Court also  
31 use the surface parking lot, but the City leases most of the surface lot's spaces;
- 32 • Parking Garage—The State is in the process of acquiring the courthouse-related parking  
33 structure from the County. The structure's address is 101 Magnolia Avenue, and its  
34 Assessors Identification Number is 7278-015-944. The structure's parcel covers  
35 approximately 2.7 acres. The Superior Court and County share use of the parking  
36 structure.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photorevised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, Long Beach, California, Topographic  
Quadrangle. Reston, VA.