

## **II. Project Description**

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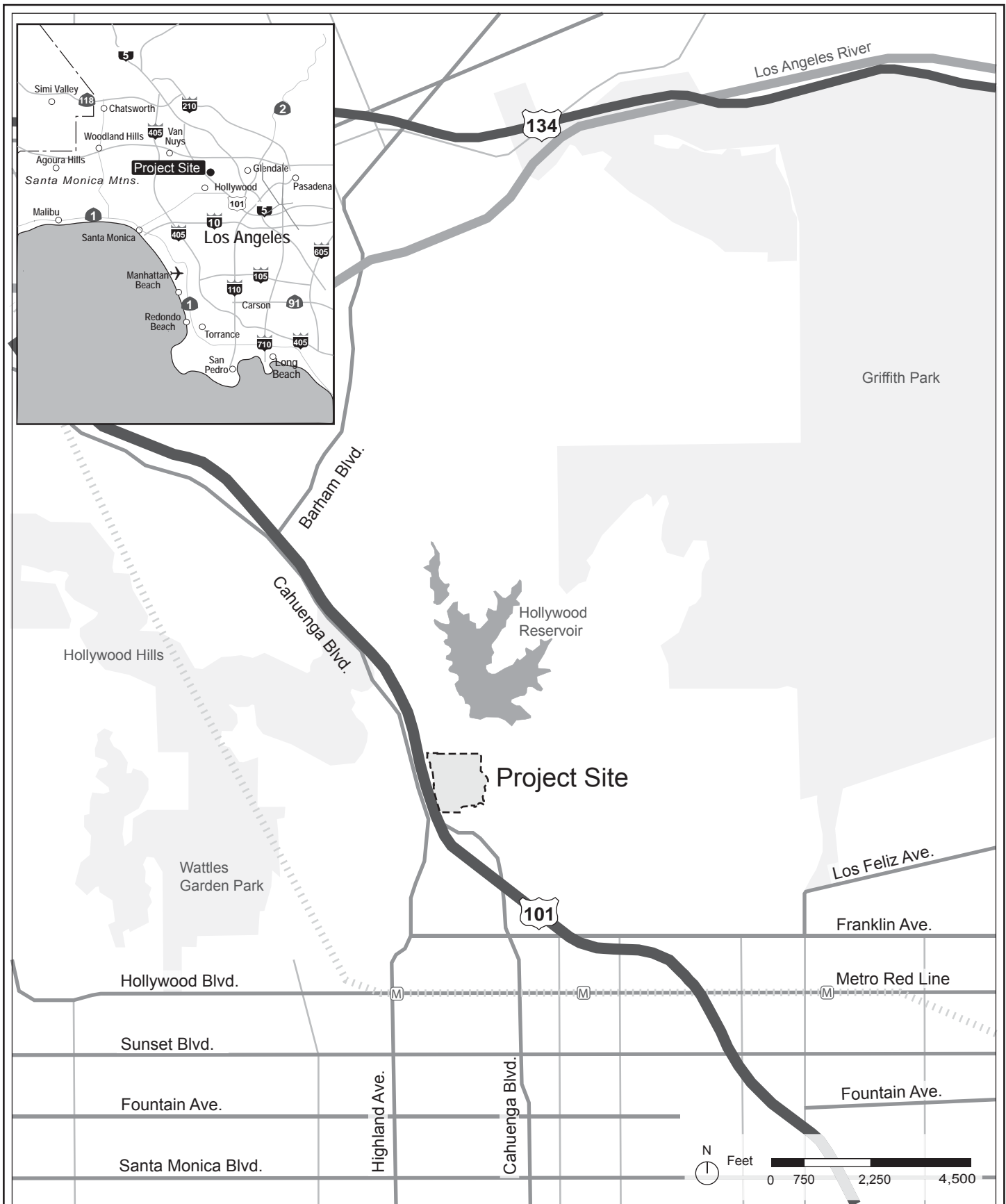
### **1. Introduction**

The County of Los Angeles proposes improvements to the John Anson Ford Theatres (the Project) located at 2580 Cahuenga Boulevard East in the Hollywood Community of the City of Los Angeles (the Project Site). The Ford Theatres, one of the oldest performing arts venues in Los Angeles, are owned by the County of Los Angeles and operated through a three-way partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and the Ford Theatre Foundation.

The Project includes the rehabilitation of portions of the existing 1,196-seat historic Amphitheatre and the development of approximately 59,230 square feet of new buildings and approximately 48,750 square feet of outdoor plaza areas, all within the current boundaries of the Ford Theatres property and primarily within the areas of the Project Site already developed. These improvements, which would be developed in several phases, would include a 299-seat theatre, a multi-purpose flex space, a restaurant, office spaces, enhanced parking facilities, support facilities, and visitor amenities. The Project would also provide for improved exterior landscape areas and enhanced vehicle and pedestrian circulation. An approximately 0.75-mile hiking trail located between two trailheads along the north and south ends of the proposed parking facilities is also proposed. These improvements would enhance existing facilities and provide for new artistic programming opportunities that together would activate the Project Site and transform the existing Ford Theatres from a single-use performing arts facility open primarily on weekends to a multi-use cultural and recreational destination open daily for a wide variety of users.

### **2. Project Location**

The Project Site comprises an approximately 32-acre County of Los Angeles regional park within the Hollywood Hills located approximately six miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles and approximately 12 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. As shown in Figure II-1 on page II-2, primary regional access is provided by US 101 (Hollywood Freeway), which runs north-south west of the Project Site. The major arterials providing regional and sub-regional access to the Project Site vicinity include Cahuenga Boulevard, Highland Avenue, and Franklin Avenue.



**Figure II-1**  
Regional Location Map

### 3. Background and Existing Project Site Conditions

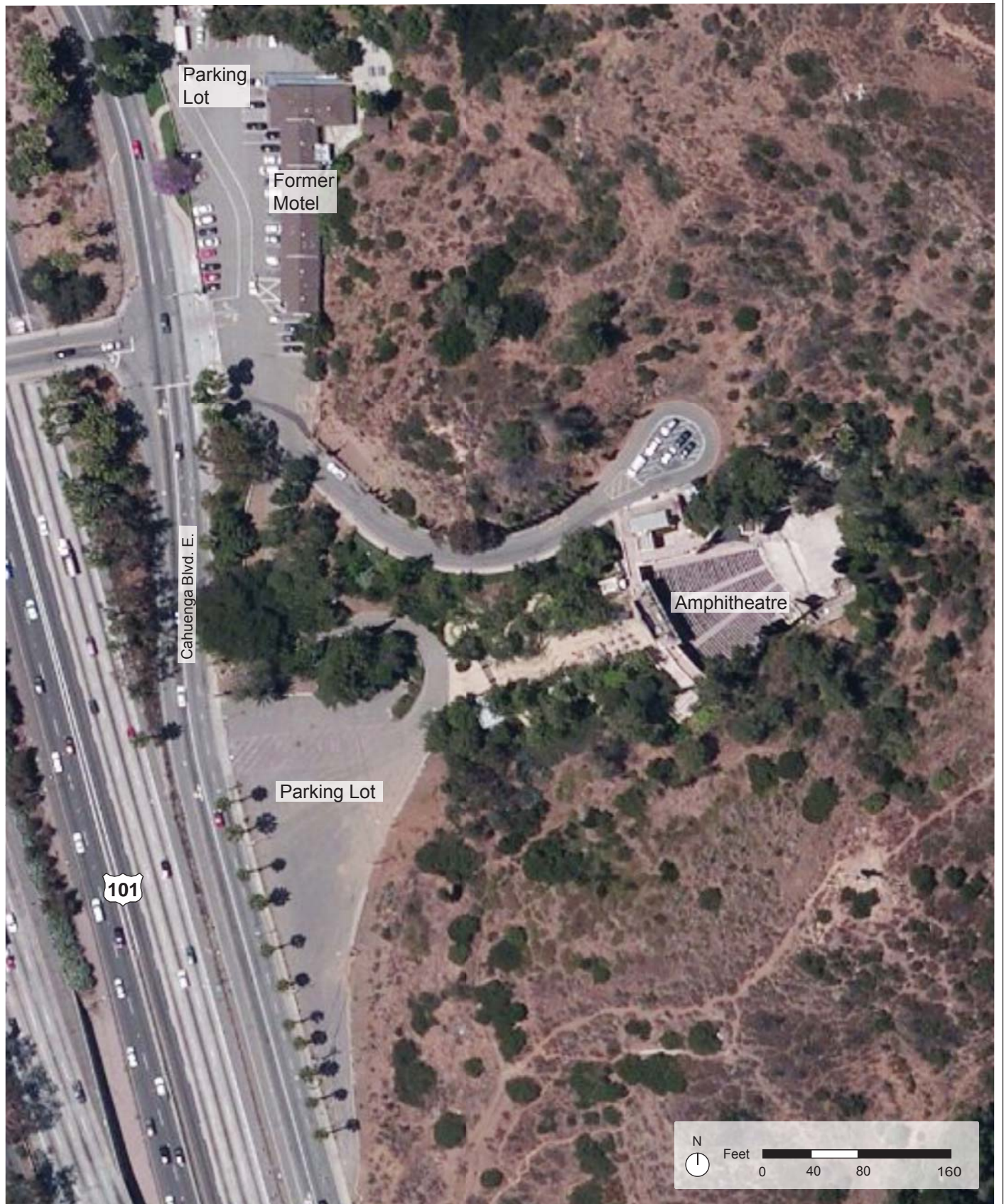
#### a. Background

The site of the existing Amphitheatre was originally owned by Christine Wetherhill Stevenson and Chauncey D. Clark who together provided for the construction of an outdoor amphitheatre to host Stevenson's *The Pilgrimage Play*. This play was performed in a wooden amphitheatre from 1920 to 1929, until the original structure was damaged by a brush fire in October 1929. The existing Amphitheatre, built on the same site as the original amphitheatre, was constructed of board-formed concrete, and was designed in the style of ancient Judaic architecture to resemble the gates of Jerusalem. The existing Amphitheatre opened in 1931 and in 1941 the existing Amphitheatre and the land surrounding it was deeded to the County of Los Angeles. *The Pilgrimage Play* was performed at the Amphitheatre from 1931 until 1964, when a lawsuit forced its closure due to the play's religious nature. In 1976, the existing Amphitheatre, previously known as the Pilgrimage Theatre, was renamed the John Anson Ford Theatre in honor of the late Los Angeles County Supervisor's significant support of the arts. The Amphitheatre was evaluated as a potential historic resource in 1994 and determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Today, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission operates the Ford Theatres as a center that fosters the excellence, diversity, vitality, understanding, appreciation and accessibility of the performing arts in Los Angeles County. The Ford Theatre Foundation, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and the Department of Parks and Recreation, supports programs that nurture artists, arts organizations and community, providing a gateway for the people of greater Los Angeles to discover and appreciate cultures of their region and the world. The Ford Theatres programming builds capacity of the arts organizations with which it partners, not only to produce work for the Amphitheatre stage, but also to strengthen the regional arts ecology. The Arts Commission provides technical assistance and marketing support to artists and organizations participating in its flagship Partnership Program and returns approximately 75 percent to 95 percent of earned ticket revenue to partner artists. Through this program the County has created opportunities for nearly 200 arts organizations in Los Angeles County to expand their audiences, push their creative boundaries, embrace artistic innovations, and raise their visibility and fundraising capacities. However, site challenges currently restrict the number of visitors and the kinds of programming that can be accommodated at the Ford Theatres.

#### b. Existing Project Site Conditions

As shown in the aerial photograph provided in Figure II-2 on page II-4, the approximately 32-acre Project Site currently includes the open-air 1,196-seat Amphitheatre

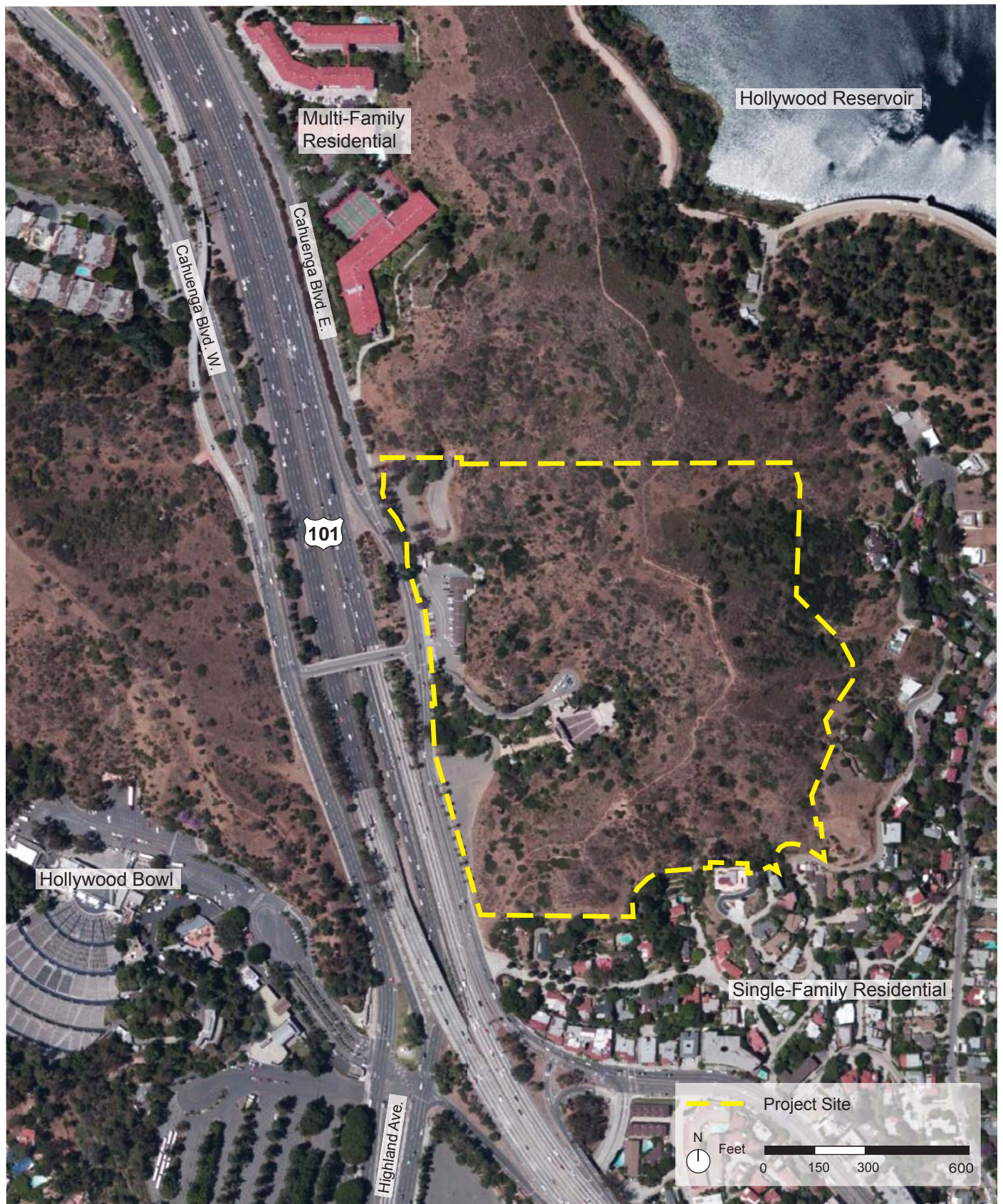




with support spaces (i.e., dressing rooms, performer restrooms, green room) below; an 860-square-foot projection booth and control room located above the Amphitheatre seating; an indoor venue located below the Amphitheatre providing approximately 87 seats referred to as [Inside] the Ford; a two-story, approximately 320-square-foot concessions building; a 365-square-foot box office; a plaza and picnic area referred to as Edison Plaza; surface parking areas; and a former 10,500-square-foot motel building currently used as staff offices for the Ford Theatre Foundation, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The Project Site also includes one cell tower and associated structures along the northwest portion of the Project Site and an additional cell tower along the northwestern property boundary. Other facility support spaces, such as storage and maintenance areas and restrooms, are also located throughout the Project Site. Landscaping is provided along driveways, surface parking areas, and pedestrian pathways. Additionally, while there are no designated hiking trails within the Project Site, there are existing user-created trails in the hills behind the Amphitheatre and around a cross that is not part of Project Site. These user-created trails are not recognized as official trails. As shown further below in Table II-1 on page II-15, the existing buildings on the Project Site comprise a total of approximately 35,811 square feet, while the outdoor plaza areas comprise approximately 3,580 square feet. Overall, approximately 3.5 acres of the 32-acre Project Site comprises developed area, including the existing structures described above and asphalt-paved surface parking areas. The remaining areas (approximately 28.5 acres) are comprised of undeveloped open space.

As illustrated in Figure II-3 on II-6, the topography of the Project Site is widely varied from moderately sloping surface parking areas along the western portion of the Project Site to steep hillsides that are vegetated primarily with chaparral and scattered trees along the northern, southern, and eastern portions of the Project Site. Based on the varying topography of the Project Site, the buildings and structures within the Project Site similarly feature varying heights ranging from approximately 15 feet from adjacent grade (approximately 547 feet above sea level) to approximately 62 feet from adjacent grade (approximately 574 feet above sea level). The Amphitheatre and associated structures and support spaces are primarily located internal to the Project Site, nestled within the surrounding hillsides, while the former motel building and surface parking areas front Cahuenga Boulevard East. As such, views of the Project Site along Cahuenga Boulevard and the Hollywood Freeway are limited to the former motel building, surface parking areas, electronic sign identifying the Ford Theatres, perimeter walls and landscaping, and the vegetated hillsides. Views of portions of the main Amphitheatre gate/entrance and the stairway leading to the Amphitheatre as well the wall running along the top of the Amphitheatre and associated signage are available in the background.

Access to the Project Site is available via four driveways along the east side of Cahuenga Boulevard East. The northernmost driveway, located north of the intersection of





Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge, is primarily used for egress at the end of events and is occasionally used for overflow stacked parking. The driveway at Pilgrimage Bridge and Cahuenga Boulevard East provides primary access to the Project Site. During events, this driveway is used for patrons entering by passenger vehicle and for shuttle access from the Universal City/Studio City Metro Red Line Station. During non-event times, this driveway serves as the main ingress and egress point for employees and vendors. The southern driveways, located south of the intersection of Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge, are primarily used for egress from the southern surface parking lot at the end of events. Within the Project Site, pedestrian access to the Amphitheatre is available from the main entrance located at the bottom of the entryway adjacent to the box office, and from a secondary entrance located at the Amphitheatre level, adjacent to the circular driveway. During events, the circular driveway at the secondary entrance at the Amphitheatre level serves as the performer entrance to the lower level Amphitheatre support spaces, shuttle and vehicular loading and unloading, and media truck parking. The circular driveway also provides access for trash pickup and fire truck staging. Pedestrian access to the Project Site is available from several locations along Cahuenga Boulevard East, including via the four driveways described, as well as a walkway located in front of the former motel. The Amphitheatre, including the [Inside] the Ford Theatre, Edison Plaza, and the concessions building are currently enclosed within a wrought iron perimeter fence with wrought iron entry and exit gates at the main entrance and secondary entrance.

The Project Site currently provides approximately 350 to 380 stacked parking spaces within three surface parking areas that are comprised of asphalt and dirt areas. Two surface parking lots, referred to herein as the north parking lot and the south parking lot, are located along Cahuenga Boulevard East. A third surface parking lot, providing disabled parking spaces, is located adjacent to the secondary entrance at the Amphitheatre level. During events, parking is also available at the Universal City/Studio City Metro Red Line Station. A shuttle is provided to and from the Ford Theatres during evening events. The Hollywood Bowl also utilizes the existing parking facilities at the Ford Theatres during non-event days or during low-attendance events at the Ford Theatres.

Lighting within the Project Site includes pole lighting within the surface parking and entry areas, exterior building lighting, stage and production lighting, and security lighting. Signage consists of an electronic sign identifying the Ford Theatres along Cahuenga Boulevard East, near one of the southern driveways, and wayfinding signage internal to the Project Site. An illuminated sign identifying the Ford Amphitheatre is also located on the wall running along the top of the Amphitheatre wall, which was installed to attenuate noise from the Hollywood Freeway.



As provided further below in Table II-2 on page II-20, the Ford Theatres currently hosts an average of approximately 184 events throughout the year, including 84 events within the Amphitheatre from May through October and approximately 100 events within the [Inside] the Ford from November through April. An average of approximately 50,640 people attend events within the Amphitheatre during the May through October event season and approximately 4,000 people attend events within the November through April event season for a total event season attendance of approximately 54,640 people. During the event season, the hours of operation for the Ford Theatres are from 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M., Monday through Sunday. Currently, there are approximately 20 County Arts Commission, County Department of Parks and Recreation, and Ford Theatre Foundation employees and up to 140 Los Angeles Philharmonic employees within the Project Site.

As noted above, the Ford Theatres are operated through a three-way partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and the Ford Theatre Foundation.

### **c. Approved Amphitheatre Improvements**

In September 2013, the County of Los Angeles approved and prepared a Notice of Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15331, Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation (Class 31) for the restoration and rehabilitation of portions of the existing Amphitheatre consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. As described in more detail below, these improvements will provide for hillside stabilization, stage reconstruction, disabled access and code compliance improvements, theatrical systems infrastructure improvements, and mechanical and electrical systems upgrades.

The hillside stabilization improvements will include the installation of compatible stone-clad retaining walls and drainage improvements along the rear of the stage to stabilize the existing slope and reduce runoff from the surrounding hillside. The stage reconstruction will include the removal of the existing two-level concrete Amphitheatre stage structure to allow the installation of an improved stage structure, including the placement of new and upgraded foundations that meet current code requirements; new wood stage flooring and supports; an under stage drainage system; enhanced stage support and ADA-compliant performer spaces; and new ADA-compliant restroom facilities and associated plumbing. Code-required upgrades for fire/life safety and disabled access will also be implemented. Theatrical systems infrastructure improvements include

improvements to the stage pit such as new steps and traps.<sup>1</sup> In addition, new energy-efficient theatrical and audio-visual infrastructure to replace existing antiquated systems, including a lighting/sound proscenium truss and lighting towers, will also be implemented. Other improvements involve the rehabilitation of portions of the stage buildings and towers, including the removal of the exterior paint to provide water-resistant surfaces and to return the structures to their original color, and the installation of new roofing, windows, doors, and interior infrastructure for power, heating, and air conditioning. A new addition at stage left to accommodate an audio rack room and related heating, ventilation, and air conditioning will also be provided.<sup>2</sup> As part of these improvements, approximately 24 trees are anticipated to be removed based on their health, root structure, and impact to the stabilization of the adjacent hillside. Such trees will be replaced with new landscaping, including new trees and shrubs. Where feasible, some of the trees proposed to be removed may be relocated throughout the Project Site.

Implementation of these improvements will provide enhanced theatrical infrastructure and performer amenities and will address long-deferred maintenance and needed repairs, including mitigation of water infiltration and provision of slope stabilization.

## 4. Surrounding Uses

As shown in the aerial photograph provided in Figure II-3 on page II-6, the area surrounding the Project Site includes a mix of residential uses and open space. Specifically, the Project Site is bounded by 4-story multi-family residential buildings and open space to the north, single- and multi-family residential uses to the east and south, and Cahuenga Boulevard to the west. The uses north, south, and east of the Project Site are separated from the developed areas of the Project Site by open space areas and the steep topography formed by the canyon setting of the Project Site.

The Hollywood Bowl, also a County-owned historically significant cultural destination, is located southwest of the Project Site across Cahuenga Boulevard and the Hollywood Freeway.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Since approval of the restoration and rehabilitation Amphitheatre improvements set forth in the Notice of Exemption, the proposed theatrical systems infrastructure improvements have been modified to exclude the proposed traps.

<sup>2</sup> Since approval of the Notice of Exemption, the restoration and rehabilitation Amphitheatre improvements have been modified to exclude the proposed addition at stage left.

<sup>3</sup> The Hollywood Bowl comprises approximately 70 acres and includes an Amphitheatre with a seating capacity of approximately 17,376; four surface parking lots, with approximately 2,700 parking spaces, (Footnote continued on next page)

## 5. Project Purpose and Objectives

Section 15124(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that the project description shall contain “a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project.” Section 15124(b) of the CEQA Guidelines further states that “the statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project.” The underlying purpose of the Project is to enhance on-site programs that support the work of County of Los Angeles artists and arts organizations by offering programs that meet the specialized needs of a broader cross section of the regional arts community, including emerging theatre, dance, and music ensembles and multi-disciplinary collaborations; to expand opportunities for diverse County residents to come together by creating new spaces and programs that better serve the community; and to ensure the future of the Amphitheatre as an active and relevant historic resource. The Project’s specific objectives are as follows:

### Historic Rehabilitation of the Amphitheatre

- Preserve the historic integrity of the Amphitheatre by providing improvements necessary to respond to damage from water intrusion, soil erosion, and structural decay, and ensure its future viability as a cultural and historical resource for the communities of Los Angeles County.
- Provide operational improvements for the historic outdoor Amphitheatre that includes modern technical infrastructure and performing arts technology and amenities to support world class theatrical and cultural experiences for patrons and program participants while providing improved access to the Ford Theatres and its canyon park setting as a public cultural and recreational destination.

### Additional Artist and Patron Site Enhancements

- Support the development of Los Angeles County-based artists, arts organizations and arts producers that represent diverse performing arts genres, disciplines, and communities by providing an on-site natural progression of appropriately-sized enclosed rehearsal and performing arts spaces which can be used at the same time to expand creative capacity, create new work, and increase audiences.

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*and a valet parking area; 15 picnic areas; concession services; box offices; a museum; and other visitor shops and amenities.*

- Repurpose the areas of the Ford Theatres currently used for on-grade parking to meet existing critical program needs of the regional arts ecosystem, including a much needed mid-size theatre space and low- to no-cost, accessible flexible spaces for rehearsals and performances year-round for artists, particularly dance and theatre groups, which do not have sufficient right-sized rehearsal and performance spaces in Los Angeles County.
- Enhance patron pre-show and post-show experience by providing plaza areas and support functions for meeting, dining and picnicking, while enabling visits of variable lengths by the creation of non-stacked parking to ease ingress and egress.
- Further the Ford's capacity for community building by creating new small and medium interstitial spaces and opportunities for artists, audiences, and the public to interact, dialogue, and find meaning and expression through the arts on the Project Site.
- Create pedestrian and vehicular circulation access that is integrated with a transit center and sufficient on-site parking so as to provide for improved and safer patron arrival and departures.
- Enhance the Ford Theatres' role as a County Regional Park by increasing public access to the entire site, integrating passive recreational opportunities, and encouraging visitors to experience the natural landscape and views of surrounding iconic landmarks from a formal trail within the park boundary.
- Mitigate noise pollution from the adjacent Hollywood Freeway to provide a more pastoral experience focused on the stage and preserve audience views of the natural landscaped canyon from inside the Amphitheatre.
- Provide for improved operation and maintenance relating to stage logistics including set loading and unloading and set staging areas in close proximity to the Amphitheatre.
- Provide on-site accessible modern office space to accommodate daily personnel and improve communication and interaction of staff with the arts community.
- Provide site improvements that are focused on areas of the site that have been previously developed and preserve the canyon setting of the Project Site.



## 6. Description of the Project

### a. Overview of the Proposed Development

The Ford Theatres Project is proposed to enhance existing facilities and provide for new artistic programming opportunities that together would activate the Project Site and transform the existing Ford Theatres from a single-use performing arts facility open primarily on weekends to a multi-use cultural and recreational center open daily for a wide variety of users. The Project is comprised of the following primary components: (1) rehabilitation of certain portions of the existing Amphitheatre; (2) the Ford Terrace, which would include a two-story structure with one level of office space and lower-level concessions area and a raised plaza deck above a service level; (3) the Ford Plaza, which would be set atop a new three-level parking structure and plaza deck featuring a restaurant, a 299-seat theatre, a new box office, a conference room, and offices and visitor amenities; (4) the Transit Center, which would include a designated area for bus and valet drop-off, a new three-level parking structure, an event space, and a maintenance facility; and (5) a 0.75-mile hiking trail. Conceptual site plans illustrating the development of the Project are provided in Figure II-4 and Figure II-5 on pages II-13 and II-14. In addition, Table II-1 on page II-15 provides a summary of the proposed improvements. A more detailed discussion of the proposed improvements is provided below.

#### (1) Amphitheatre Rehabilitation Improvements

Within the Amphitheatre, the Project would replace the existing approximately 860-square-foot projection booth and control room located to the rear and above the Amphitheatre seating with a new 800-square-foot projection booth and control room. The existing projection booth and control room is not a character-defining feature of the Amphitheatre and includes an access stair that obstructs the primary audience circulation at the Amphitheatre level. The new projection booth and control room would be designed to enable the return of the walkway at the Amphitheatre level to its original condition. Existing lighting positions along the back of the Amphitheatre would also be removed and replaced with an upgraded lighting platform that would be integrated within a new sound wall proposed along the rear of the Amphitheatre. The proposed sound wall, which could measure up to 48 feet in height, is intended to enhance performances by shielding the Amphitheatre from traffic noise from Cahuenga Boulevard and the Hollywood Freeway. In addition, a retractable shade structure would provide cover for the Amphitheatre during day time performances.

#### (2) Ford Terrace

As shown in Figure II-5 on page II-14, north of the Amphitheatre the existing circular driveway and disabled parking adjacent to the secondary entrance would be modified to









- LEGEND
1. Historic Amphitheatre
  2. Existing Edison Plaza
  3. Existing Stairs and Picnic Area
  4. Existing Box Office – Repurposed to Museum
  5. Existing Fire Pump Relocated
  6. Existing Power Shed
  7. Existing Stage Improvements
  8. Existing Lighting Infrastructure
  9. Historic Lighting Positions
  10. Existing Upslope Audio Visual Addition
  11. Existing Elevator
  12. New Parking Structure 1 below Ford Plaza
  13. New Circulation Elevators to Parking
  14. New 299-Seat Theater
  15. New Restaurant
  16. New Box Office
  17. New Ford Theatres Offices and Amenities
  18. New Meeting Room
  19. New Ford Terrace
  20. New Sound Wall at Ford Terrace
  21. New Artist Performance Entrance
  22. New Service Court
  23. New Control Booth
  24. New Sound Wall at Existing Amphitheatre
  25. New Concession/Office
  26. New Transit Center
  27. New Transit Plaza
  28. New Flex Space
  29. New Parking Structure 2
  30. New Trail and Trail Head
  31. New Central Plant
  32. New Transformer(s)
  33. New Generator
  34. New Maintenance Area
  35. New Cell Tower
  36. New Signal



**Table II-1  
Summary of Proposed Improvements**

Use	Existing		Proposed			Net New Project Development		Total Project Site Development after Project Implementation	
	Area	Seats	Demo.	Area	Seats	Area	Seats	Area	Seats
<b>Amphitheatre</b>		1,196							1,196
<i>Lower Level/[Inside] the Ford</i>	4,780	87			(87)		(87)	4,780	
<i>Mezzanine</i>	1,760			400 <sup>a</sup>		400		2,160	
<i>House</i>	8,000							8,000	
<i>Stage</i>	3,300							3,300	
<i>Wings</i>	1,500							1,500	
<i>Projection Booth and Control Room</i>	860		(860)	800		(60)		800	
<i>Rack Room/Towers</i>	806							806	
<b>New Theatre</b>					299		299		299
<i>House</i>				3,000		3,000		3,000	
<i>Stage</i>				2,300		2,300		2,300	
<i>Back Stage</i>				1,000		1,000		1,000	
<i>Control Room</i>				500		500		500	
<i>Lobby</i>				1,200		1,200		1,200	
<b>Flex Space</b>					99		99		99
<i>Seating</i>				3,000		3,000		3,000	
<i>Stage</i>				2,000		2,000		2,000	
<i>Storage</i>				3,300		3,300		3,300	
<b>Concessions/Restaurant</b>	320		(320)	6,400 <sup>b</sup>		6,080		6,400	
<b>Box Office/Museum</b>	365							365	
<b>Offices</b>	10,500		(10,500)	24,160 <sup>c</sup>		13,660		24,160	



**Table II-1 (Continued)**  
**Summary of Proposed Improvements**

Use	Existing		Proposed			Net New Project Development		Total Project Site Development after Project Implementation	
	Area	Seats	Demo.	Area	Seats	Area	Seats	Area	Seats
<b>Maintenance</b>				3,000 <sup>d</sup>		3,000		3,000	
<b>Workshop/Storage</b>	2,650			2,370 <sup>e</sup>		2,370		5,020	
<b>Shops/Visitor Amenities</b>				1,200		1,200		1,200	
<b>Central Plant</b>				2,200		2,200		2,200	
<b>Restrooms</b>	970			2,400		2,400		3,370	
<b>Total Building Area</b>	35,811			59,230		47,550	311	83,361	1,594
<b>Total Occupied Plaza Areas</b>	3,580			48,750		48,750		52,330	
<b>Parking</b>	350 to 380 spaces			500 spaces		120 to 150 spaces		500 spaces	

( ) denotes negative number

<sup>a</sup> This includes the proposed expansion of the men's restroom on the mezzanine level.

<sup>b</sup> Includes the approximately 2,500-square-foot concessions area within the Ford Terrace and the approximately 3,900-square-foot restaurant within the Ford Plaza. Note the 1,000-square-foot outdoor seating area of the restaurant is not included in the concessions/restaurant square footage.

<sup>c</sup> Includes approximately 2,500 square feet of office area within the Ford Terrace, the approximately 17,600-square-foot three-story office building within the Ford Plaza, the 560-square-foot box office, the 1,000-square-foot conference room, and approximately 2,500 square feet of office space within the Transit Center associated with the maintenance area.

<sup>d</sup> Includes the approximately 2,000-square-foot garage and 1,000-square-foot yard within the maintenance area.

<sup>e</sup> Includes the approximately 1,570-square-foot workshop within the Ford Terrace and 800 square feet of storage area as part of the maintenance area.

Source: Levin and Associates, December 2013.

accommodate a dedicated artist performance entry and provide for a two-story office and concessions building and an approximately 3,750-square-foot plaza collectively referred to as the Ford Terrace. The two-story building would include approximately 2,500 square feet of office space in one level above an approximately 2,500-square-foot concessions area at the first level. To the west of the two-story building would be a raised plaza deck that would serve pre- and post performance concessions, private receptions, and intermission concessions. The plaza would feature landscaped raised planters with built-in benches along the perimeter and a sound wall along the eastern perimeter of the plaza. Access to the plaza would be from a staircase from the existing Amphitheatre walkway and an accessible ramp that would encircle the existing elevator tower. Beneath the plaza, the modified driveway would form a service level referred to as the Service Court providing a loading dock and stage loading area to serve events and general facility maintenance such as trash and recycling pickup, as well as fire department access. An approximately 1,570-square-foot workshop to support performances would also be provided within the Service Court adjacent to the loading dock. To provide for these improvements, the Project would require removal of the existing two-story approximately 320-square-foot concessions building located adjacent to the secondary entrance. In addition, disabled parking located adjacent to the secondary entrance would be accommodated within the parking structures proposed as part of the Project, as described further below.

In addition, the existing approximately 1,895-square-foot, 87-seat [Inside] the Ford located at the lower level of the Amphitheatre and the associated lighting, stage, and theatrical amenities would be re-purposed as a self-serve food marketplace area and provide space for storage. New ADA-accessible restrooms would also be provided at the lower level.

### (3) Ford Plaza

West of the Amphitheatre, generally within the existing south surface parking area, the Ford Plaza would be developed and would include a three-level parking structure, referred to as the south parking structure, which would provide approximately 250 parking spaces. A plaza deck that would serve as the primary gathering space for the Ford Theatres would be created above the parking structure. The plaza deck would create approximately 45,000 square feet of outdoor plaza areas that would be used as picnic and community space and provide visitors with views of the surrounding hillsides. As part of the Ford Plaza, the existing 365-square-foot box office located at the main entrance would be repurposed as a museum/gallery for the Ford Theatres and just west of the existing box office an approximately 560-square-foot box office would be constructed. A three-story building providing approximately 17,600 square feet of office uses and approximately 1,200 square feet of shops/visitor amenities would be located adjacent to the new box office. This three-story building would terrace south at the foothill of the plaza level. In addition, at the southern boundary of the Ford Plaza, an approximately 1,000-square-foot

conference room would be built to support the adjacent office space. Adjacent to the conference room would be an outdoor area that could accommodate small informal performances, musical entertainment, and/or overflow/support monitors to view events occurring within the indoor venues. North of these uses within the Ford Plaza would be an approximately 3,900-square-foot, 150-seat restaurant that would include a 1,300-square-foot kitchen/bar and a 2,600-square-foot indoor seating area. An approximately 1,000-square-foot outdoor seating area would also be included. The restaurant would serve as the main cooking facility for the site concessions and would provide a flagship ambiance with visibility from main transportation routes. East of the restaurant, an indoor performance venue comprised of approximately 8,000 square feet and including 299 seats would be provided. This facility would feature acoustic treatments, a proscenium stage and full theatrical lighting and rigging that would be able to accommodate multi-disciplinary performances. Backstage spaces within the new venue would include performer restrooms, dressing rooms, and a prep area for special events. The lobby would feature a glass curtain-wall system with pivoting doors to create an indoor/outdoor space at the edge of the Ford Plaza. This facility would expand upon and enhance the existing [Inside] the Ford programming and would eliminate the challenge of sound bleeding between the [Inside] the Ford space as it is located underneath the Amphitheatre seating area.

#### (4) Transit Center

A Transit Center consisting of a bus/van loading and unloading zone, a three-level parking structure referred to as the north parking structure, a rehearsal and event space referred to as the Flex Space, and a maintenance area would be constructed along the northwestern extent of the Project Site. Specifically, upon entering the Ford Theatres from the existing primary access at the intersection of Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge, the Transit Center would provide a staging area for buses to load and unload. From this area, vehicles would also be directed south to the parking structure within the Ford Plaza or north to the three-level parking structure proposed within the Transit Center. The north parking structure would provide approximately 250 parking spaces. The approximately 8,300-square-foot Flex Space would be constructed at the lowest level of the parking structure. The Flex Space would provide approximately 99 retractable seats and would include full theatrical lighting, performer restrooms, dressing rooms, and a prep area for special events. A plaza area referred to as the Transit Plaza would also be located below the parking structure. The upper deck of the parking structure would extend over the Flex Space and the Transit Plaza. At the upper deck, an approximately 6,300-square-foot maintenance area consisting of office, storage, garage, and yard areas would be provided. To provide for these improvements, the Project would require removal of the existing two-story approximately 10,500-square-foot former motel building currently used as office space for Ford Theatre Foundation, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and Philharmonic staff.

### (5) Hiking Trail

As illustrated in Figure II-4 on page II-13, the Project would also include a 0.75-mile ridgeline trail with trail terminations at the north and south parking structures within the Transit Center and the Ford Plaza, respectively. The trail would be approximately four feet in width and would feature natural-type fencing as well as “sutter wall” style retaining walls, where required or necessary, and cut-in granite steps where areas of steep terrain are proposed. Hand-railing may also be provided at the steps. The trail alignment may utilize portions of existing user-established informal trails. The hours of operation for use of the trail would observe standard park hours of sunrise to sunset.

Overall, as provided above in Table II-1 on page II-15, implementation of the Project would result in approximately 47,550 net new square feet of new facilities and approximately 48,750 net new square feet of outdoor plaza areas within the Project Site.

To evaluate the operational changes of the Ford Theatres associated with implementation of a Master Plan for the site, the County and the Ford Theatre Foundation, in consultation with Community Arts Resources, Inc., prepared the report titled *The Ford, Transformed: Realizing the Potential of Ford Theatres County Regional Park*, included as Appendix O of this Draft EIR. The Project was derived from the Master Plan process and includes some of the same components envisioned in the Master Plan, with modifications. As analyzed in *The Ford, Transformed* report and summarized in Table II-2 on page II-20, with the new event spaces to be provided, the average number of annual events is estimated to increase from 184 events to approximately 331 events and the average number of annual attendees is estimated to increase from 54,640 people to approximately 93,725 people. As provided in Table II-2, events within the Amphitheatre would continue to be held from May through October. In addition, events within the proposed Flex Space and the proposed 299-seat theatre would be held year round with scheduled periods of down time for maintenance.

The hours of operation at the Ford Theatres would continue to be from 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M., Monday through Sunday. To accommodate the increase in programming, it is anticipated that existing County Arts Commission, County Department of Parks and Recreation, and Ford Theatre Foundation staffing within the Project Site would increase from approximately 20 employees to up to 105 employees or an increase of approximately 85 employees. In addition, the existing 140 Los Angeles Philharmonic employees within the Project Site are anticipated to relocate their offices off-site. With the relocation of these employees, the Project would result in an overall net decrease of employees on-site.



**Table II-2  
Summary of Events and Attendance**

Facility	Existing Schedule			Future Expanded Schedule		
	Number of Shows	Average Attendance per Event	Total Series Attendance	Number of Shows	Average Attendance per Event	Total Series Attendance
<b>Amphitheatre</b> 1,196 seats May--October						
Partner Events	40	760	30,400	40	850	34,000
Rental Events	20	700	14,000	20	800	16,000
Family Events	8	620	4,960	16	600	9,600
J.A.M. Sessions	16	80	1,280	20	100	2,000
<i>Total Attendance</i>			<i>50,640</i>			<i>61,600</i>
<b>Inside the Ford</b> 87 seats November--April						
Partner Events	90	40	3,600			
Rental Events	10	40	400			
<i>Total Attendance</i>			<i>4,000</i>			
<b>New Theatre</b> 299 seats year round						
Partner Events				160	165	26,400
Rental Events				15	165	2,475
<i>Total Attendance</i>						<i>28,875</i>
<b>Flex Space</b> 99 seats year round						
Rentals				10	75	750
Open Rehearsals and Readings				50	50	2,500
<i>Total Attendance</i>						<i>3,250</i>
<b>Total Events</b>			<b>184</b>			<b>331</b>
<b>Total Audience</b>			<b>54,640</b>			<b>93,725</b>
<p><i>Source: The Ford, Transformed: Realizing the Potential of Ford Theatres County Regional Park, Community Arts Resources, Inc., October 2012.</i></p>						

## **b. Design**

The proposed improvements would be designed to complement the existing historic character of the Ford Theatres. The Project is designed to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995) Weekes and Grimmer. The new construction would be differentiated from the existing development that would remain and would be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the Amphitheatre, thereby protecting its historic integrity by avoiding any substantial adverse change in the significance of an historic resource. The Project is also designed to minimize building footprints and remain primarily within the developed areas of the Project Site. Specifically, implementation of the Project would further develop portions of the existing 3.5 acres of developed area within the Project Site and would extend onto approximately 0.8 acres of undeveloped area. Upon buildout of the Project, approximately 4.3 acres of the 32-acre Project Site would comprise developed area. The remaining approximately 27.7 acres would comprise undeveloped open space. In addition, to reduce the massing, the new buildings and parking structures in particular would be integrated into the existing topography of the Project Site. Building heights would range from approximately 15 feet to 67.5 feet in height as measured from adjacent grade with elevations ranging from 515 feet to 610 feet above sea level. Materials, such as wood, brick, stucco, metal panels, concrete and glass are anticipated to be used in the construction of the buildings.

The new buildings and infrastructure would also be designed to be environmentally sustainable and to achieve certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design (LEED®). The Project would also be designed to meet the County's green building requirements. Design features to reduce energy use throughout the buildings would include natural ventilation, use of daylighting controls, efficient lighting, and efficient mechanical systems and equipment through the implementation of a new central plant, transformers, and a generator. Water use would be reduced by the installation of water-efficient fixtures, equipment, and systems. Water use in irrigation would also be reduced by the use of native, drought-tolerant landscape and efficient irrigation systems. In addition, local air quality would be enhanced by the reduction of VOC-containing construction materials. Construction activities would also make use of local, recycled, and renewable materials where possible and reuse construction materials such as grading debris within the Project Site. Similarly, the use of renewable and recyclable materials during construction, and the diversion of waste materials from landfills, would reduce long-term environmental effects of the Project. The Project would also enhance on-site recycling as part of its operations.

### **c. Access and Parking**

Access to the Project Site would continue to be available via the four existing driveways along the east side of Cahuenga Boulevard East with some on-site configuration and circulation modifications. In addition, to facilitate access and circulation within the Transit Center, the Project includes one new driveway between the northernmost driveway and the main entrance at the intersection of Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge. The northernmost driveway, which is currently used primarily for egress at the end of events, would be reconfigured internally to provide direct access to the proposed maintenance facility and allow egress from the north parking structure. The proposed driveway between the northernmost driveway and the main entrance would provide right-turn only egress from the Transit Center and the parking structure. The driveway at Pilgrimage Bridge and Cahuenga Boulevard East, which currently provides primary access to the Project Site, would be maintained in its existing location and configuration. The southern driveways would also be maintained in their existing locations with the southernmost driveway providing ingress to the south parking structure and the other driveway providing egress. At the driveway providing egress from the south parking structure, the Project proposes a new signal to allow for safer left turns from the driveway to Cahuenga Boulevard East. Ingress and egress to the south parking structure would also be provided from the main entrance. Within the Project Site, access to the Amphitheatre would continue to be provided at the existing main entrance. In addition, new pedestrian pathways would be provided for access to the new areas. As described above, the existing circular driveway at the secondary entrance would be modified to form the Service Court, which would provide a loading dock and stage loading area to serve events and general facility maintenance such as trash and recycling pickup as well as fire department access. The Project would also include bicycle amenities.

Upon buildout of the Project, parking would be provided within two new three-level parking structures that would generally be located within the existing north and south surface parking areas that would be removed as part of the Project. Upon completion, the Project would provide a total of approximately 500 parking spaces within two parking structures and a net increase of approximately 120 to 150 parking spaces, including additional ADA parking spaces. Parking would also continue to be available at the Universal City/Studio City Metro Red Line Station. A shuttle would continue to be provided to and from the Ford Theatres during evening events. In addition, use of the Ford Theatres parking facilities by the Hollywood Bowl may continue.

### **d. Landscaping**

A variety of native and drought tolerant plant material would be used to enhance and complement the existing plant material on the hillside. In addition, mature native trees

would be planted and enhanced with complementary native vegetation. To screen off-site views of the south parking structure, the proposed landscape would berm up to cover the exposed areas of the parking structure, thereby bringing the park-like setting of the Ford Theatres to the Cahuenga Boulevard East street edge. In addition, along the proposed trail, landscape improvements may include habitat restoration and enhanced plantings.

Implementation of the Project would require the removal of approximately 143 trees, including cypress, pine, palm, eucalyptus, ficus, sycamore, and olive trees. This number includes the trees proposed to be removed as part of the approved Amphitheatre improvements described above. The Project would also relocate approximately 20 trees throughout the Project Site. As part of the Project, trees to be removed would be replaced on a minimum 1:1 basis.

### **e. Lighting and Signage**

The Project would feature illuminated building façades on the north parking structure, the new theatre, the restaurant, and the proposed sound wall. In addition, the Project would include exterior lighting along vehicular and pedestrian pathways and at the upper level of the north parking structure for security and wayfinding purposes. Accent lighting to highlight architectural features, landscape elements, and the Project's signage would also be incorporated. Lighting throughout the plaza areas would also be provided. The Project would also include new theatrical lighting within the Amphitheatre. Light fixture control devices could be implemented, as necessary, to minimize glare.

Project signage would include various identity signs including a central identity sign. The identity signs may include the existing Ford Theatres sign along Cahuenga Boulevard East, which would be relocated to the main entrance at Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge. Alternatively, a new marquee sign that would be double-sided with LED screens on both sides could be provided along Cahuenga Boulevard East at the main entrance. The Project would also include internally illuminated graphic signs along the façades of the new theatre, the north parking structure, and the restaurant. In addition, a large sign identifying the Ford Theatres would be placed along the proposed sound wall. This sign is anticipated to be illuminated. The proposed sound wall and sign would replace the existing wall and sign along the top of the Amphitheatre wall. Monitors that would be used for a variety of purposes such as publicizing events, promoting the available food services, assisting in wayfinding, and for broadcasting sold-out events may also be provided in the plaza areas and other public spaces throughout the Project Site. The Project would also include interpretive signage along the proposed hiking trail and throughout the Project Site to provide information about the history of the Ford Theatres, Ford programs and local flora and fauna. Lastly, wayfinding signs would be located throughout the Project Site, including at parking structure entrances and elevators.

## **f. Utilities**

The Project would provide a generator east of the office and concessions building within the Ford Terrace and north of the building would be a service yard and transformers. An approximately 2,200-square-foot central utility plant is also proposed east of the main entrance at Cahuenga Boulevard East and Pilgrimage Bridge. The central utility plant would include cooling towers, chillers, a fire pump and other associated equipment. Alternatively, the Project could provide a decentralized air-cooled system. Additional transformers would be installed within the Ford Plaza adjacent to the 299-seat theatre, at the central utility plant, at the north entrance of the north parking structure, and near the south trailhead termination. Electrical service for the Project is proposed to be provided via underground utility lines. Alternatively, electrical service for the Project may be provided via approximately 15 to 17 overhead electrical poles along Cahuenga Boulevard East. These electrical poles could measure up to 65 feet in height. In addition, temporary electrical poles could be installed within the Project Site until full build-out of the Project. Other utility improvements proposed as part of the Project would include new natural gas service, sewer and water connections, and drainage improvements. As shown above in Figure II-4 on page II-13, the Project would also integrate and relocate the existing cell towers and associated structures to allow construction of the Transit Center.

## **g. Fire Protection and Security Features**

As the Project Site is located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, a fuel modification plan would be required to minimize the risk of wildfires. The fuel modification plan for the Project would set forth buffer zones around the proposed structures. The fuel modification plan would also specify requirements pertaining to landscape irrigation, thinning and removal of brush and dead plant materials, removal of non-native plant species, and maintenance of the buffer zones. One of the primary goals of the fuel modification plan and associated landscaping and irrigation would be to provide adequate defensible space around all potentially combustible structures within a fire environment. Accordingly, routine landscape maintenance would be required per the County Fire Department's Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines. A preliminary fuel modification plan has been prepared by the Project in consultation with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, and is included in Section IV.J.1, Public Services—Fire Protection of this Draft EIR. A final fuel modification plan would be submitted to the Los Angeles County Fire Department for approval prior to the issuance of Project construction permits. The Project would also include an upgraded fire system, including the installation of on-site fire hydrants, as illustrated in Section IV.J.1, Public Services—Fire Protection, and an upgraded water supply line. The enhanced fire system would be a dedicated separate fire service system with no shared connections to the domestic supply lines. Refer to Section IV.J.1, Public Services—Fire Protection, of this Draft EIR, for further discussion.



The Project's design would also incorporate security features to provide for the safety of on-site employees and visitors. These features would include high-definition surveillance cameras and signage along the hiking trail. Entryways, lobbies, and parking areas would also be well illuminated and designed to eliminate areas of concealment.

## **7. Project Construction and Scheduling**

The Project could be implemented in several phases to provide flexibility to continue operating the Ford Theatres during construction. Construction of the Project may be completed as early as 2020. In the event construction of the Project occurs as one phase, or in consolidated phases, the Ford Theatres would be expected to close and no events would be held until buildout of the Project or completion of the phase(s) under construction. Construction activities would include demolition of several existing facilities, grading and excavation, and construction of new structures and related infrastructure. It is estimated that the Project would require approximately 107,094 cubic yards of export. Based on the proximity of the Hollywood Freeway to the Project Site, it is anticipated that haul trucks and delivery trucks would access the Project Site traveling northbound on Cahuenga Boulevard East from the Hollywood Freeway (US-101) and would exit the Project Site onto Cahuenga Boulevard East and travel northbound on Cahuenga Boulevard East to the Hollywood Freeway. As part of the Project, a Construction Management Plan would be implemented during construction to manage construction traffic and ensure that adequate and safe access and parking remains available during construction activities. Construction worker parking and construction staging would be accommodated on-site. Construction activities would comply with Section 12.08.440 of the Los Angeles County Code, which prohibits noise-generating construction activities between the hours of 7:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. Monday through Friday, before 8:00 A.M. or after 6:00 P.M. on Saturday, and anytime on Sundays or legal holidays in the absence of certain emergencies.

## **8. Necessary Approvals**

Discretionary approvals from the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors will be necessary for the Ford Theatres Foundation to implement the Project.